

BGS BUZZ

Spring 2021 Edition



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Spring Magazine

Editor's message

Welcome to the Spring 2021 edition of the BGS Buzz!

I am very proud to present you some beautifully written pieces about some of the most crucial (and sometimes upsetting) events and debates that have dominated the news recently. I am very impressed with the depth of knowledge and maturity our reporters have shown.

Also in this edition, you will find out about some really cool and exciting events that have taken place in school, as well as some extracurricular activities.

I wish you all a wonderful Easter break, hoping you will all be able to spend time with your loved ones with the easing of the restrictions.

Ms Contini



Magazine Co-Ordinator: Ms Contini

Reporters: Tallulah Price-Toplis, Karol Escudero Mancera, Lauren Dempsey, Maya Bhogal, Micheline Adofo, Deborah Akinbode, Oliver Suarez-Jimenez, Tofunmi Onakoya, Marie Touray

With thanks to: Mrs Snelling, Katie Henderson, Mr Asker, Mr Villazon, Shakeel Majeed

Spring Magazine

Headteacher's message

Welcome to the Easter edition of the BGS magazine.

A year ago I exclaimed in this magazine, "What a unique situation we find ourselves in!" I was writing these words while in school with just one student and 5 members of staff. It was eerily quiet and my desk was the tidiest it had ever been. I had no concept at that point of how catastrophic the pandemic was going to be. We have all had to adapt to situations that we simply could not have imagined just one year ago.

We are still in a situation far from what we used to consider normal but it has moved a little closer to our previous normal since we returned to school in March. We began our staggered return on 8th March, mass-testing most of the student body 3 times before providing you all with kits to test at home. Today I was giving out test kits to students for twice-weekly self-testing over the Easter holiday. Who could have guessed this a year ago?

A year ago at the February half term, we had managed to squeeze in our trips before the lockdown in March. This year there was no ski trip, classics trip or economics and business trip during half term.

But you, students, have adapted and taken all this change in your stride. In December we were expecting to return to school in some phased way until we heard on 4th January that we were going into another lockdown. You stepped up to our improved virtual learning environment and made the most of those frustrating weeks when you couldn't be in school. Then, as you returned in March, you calmly and sensibly participated in the mass testing process, enabling it to run more efficiently than we had ever imagined in our planning. You have come back to our classrooms wearing face coverings and again, without a fuss, adapted and cooperated with this inconvenience. Year 13 and year 11 students have had to be so patient in simply not knowing what would happen this summer and are still having to live with some uncertainty in how their grades will be awarded this summer, following the cancellation of their examinations. The current Year 7 have never experienced an assembly together as a year group and we have all missed that important coming together as a year group each week.

I would also like to take this opportunity to thank the whole school community for the tremendous support you have shown us already in 2021. So many parents sent messages of support and appreciation for the work teachers were doing with their children during the weeks of virtual learning in January and February, despite the additional burden it placed on parents at home. The parent volunteer team we assembled for the mass Covid-19-testing was incredible. Their commitment and efficiency in implementing the challenging requirements of the government's testing initiative was remarkable. We had hoped to be able to test about 80 students per hour at maximum capacity; in practice, we achieved peaks of nearly 200 per hour! Once again, this has confirmed that the very best in the BGS community is brought out in times of greatest need. Thank you all for your tremendous support.

And finally, I owe a huge debt of gratitude to every member of staff for their sustained support and commitment to our students through such challenging and uncertain times. The support staff team that coordinated the complex and vital administration of the Covid-testing programme could market their system! Our teachers have had to adapt to more change and have done so with patience and grace which calms our students. Thank you all for another term of exceptional service.

Finally, thank you to Miss Contini and her magazine team for editing this rich publication.

Although the weather is not set to be as spring-like as we may have hoped for the Easter break, I hope the gradual lifting of national restrictions puts a spring in your step. Happy Easter!

Mr Elphick

FINAL RESULTS

HOUSE YEAR

2020-21:



1st JOHNSON	84 points
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2nd KIRKMAN	70 points
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3rd MABBS	69 points
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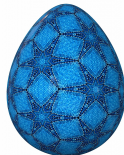
4th= PROTHERO	66 points
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4th= COLLINS	66 points
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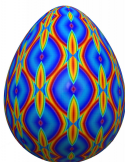
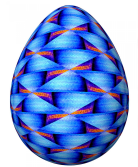


6th WELLMAN	38 points
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CONGRATULATIONS

JOHNSON!





Current Affairs and Issues

Abortion: A woman's imperative right to choose



In a modern society, with growing acceptance and tolerance in most places of the world, issues that some may argue to be dealt with are further being neglected by those who hold the power for change. The issue of abortion laws in the western world seems far away and distant, as whilst we do have members of our own parliament who disagree with abortion, the general consensus in the western world is that the woman bearing the embryo has the choice to whether or not she would like to abort her child. However in places all over the world, abortion is seen to be taboo and unthinkable, which not only strips the rights away of women but a more equal society as a whole.

The opinion of pro-life or pro-choice has been a debate that has spanned across decades and has created political divide amongst many. Whilst many argue on the side of pro-life, that the abortion equates to 'killing a child', some may say that those who believe in pro-choice have the interest of the woman at heart. The right to abort a child allows a woman to have a say over her child's life and in many cases, abortion is the right way to go for many circumstances. For example, in a case of perhaps being unable to financially, medically or mentally support a child, instead of putting the child into the already overfilled and chaotic foster system, abortion may spare an unhappy life for the child. This consideration allows a woman not only to make an informed decision on their child's potential wellbeing, but also to have this right to choose, and not have someone else make this decision for them.

An example of a country in which women do not have this right to choose what is best for the unborn child is Poland, a country in which there is a controversial near-total ban on Abortion, which was enforced in January 2021. The court ruling only allowed abortion in cases of rape or incest, or when the pregnancy threatens the life of the mother. In many cases, this restriction on a women's right to choose to have an abortion leaves many unfit mothers with the issue of having to bring up a young child in a perhaps poor way. This in turn may damage the parent's mental health and the relationships they have around them. In retaliation however, the majority of Poles opposed a stricter ban and demonstrations took place in Polish cities around the time of the ban. Some may argue that due to Poland's conservative government, which has strong ties to the country's powerful Catholic Church, they support this ruling.

Many Poles who disagree with this urge their government to look to the example of Argentina who only recently legalised abortion, and it is shown that cases of women's death due to either mental health issues surrounding carrying an unwanted pregnancy has decreased significantly since this law has been instated. Additionally, more than 3000 women had died as a result of unsafe, underground abortions in Argentina and now due to this lifting of the ban, Argentinian women or those assigned female at birth now have the choice and the right to choose the fate of their pregnancy.

This then allows us to consider the question of abortion, and whether our influence as young western people can affect those around the world struggling to get the rights around the world. We are lucky in the sense that we are growing up in a tolerant society, but not everyone has that privilege, and the issues in places like Poland are widespread and still going on, unconscious to us.

By Maya Bhogal, Year 12.

The Atlanta spa shootings.

On March 16, 2021, three spas in the Atlanta (Georgia) metropolitan area were targeted in a series of mass shootings. Eight people were killed, six of whom were Asian women, and one person was wounded.

A suspect, 21-year-old Robert Aaron Long, was taken into custody later that day. Anti-Asian hate crimes have more than doubled during the coronavirus pandemic, adding to the fear that many Asians in the United States are experiencing. In Los Angeles, for instance, the number of hate crimes directed against Asians was up more than 100% from 2019 to 2020. Despite Atlanta police having said it is too early to know the suspect's motive, Robert Long did tell police that he believed he had a sex addiction and that he saw the spas as "a temptation ... that he wanted to eliminate" - Cherokee County sheriff's Capt. Jay Baker reported.

There has been significant uproar concerning the media's handling and portrayal of the suspect's vile actions, particularly with regards to the fact that numerous news platforms were reluctant to label this as a hate crime and properly condemning Long as they have done to other terrorists.



"Sex" is a hate crime category under Georgia law and if the suspect was targeting women out of hatred for them or scapegoating them for his own problems, many share the opinion that this should be dealt with as a hate crime.

Additionally, the level of planning evident in the shootings suggests the suspect was motivated by something more than just a "bad day", his actions indicate that he targeted a specific type of person on this particular day, and he did so not only at one location, but also at a second and third.

President Joe Biden and Vice President Kamala Harris traveled to Atlanta to condemn the shootings and the rising number of hate crimes against Asian Americans. Biden and Harris did not explicitly state whether or not they considered the shootings a hate crime, nevertheless they noted that regardless of the shooter's motivation, the killings occurred at a time when hate crimes against Asian Americans are on the rise.

**#STOP
ASIAN
HATE**

Delaina Ashley Yaun, 33; Paul Andre Michels, 54; Xiaojie Tan, 49; and Daoyou Feng, 44, were fatally shot at the site of Tuesday's first shooting which was followed by the killings of Soon Chung Park, 74; Hyun Jung Grant, 51; Suncha Kim, 69; and Yong Ae Yue, 63, within an hour of the first shooting.

Members of the Atlanta Korean American Committee Against Asian Hate Crime held a vigil at the scene of two of the massage parlor shootings in Atlanta, in remembrance of the victims. Despite the grief and anger caused by the death of these innocent women, these events have highlighted the detrimental impacts of misogynistic ways of thinking as well as anti-Asian racism and how these separate issues within society often intersect.

Marie Touray, Year 12.



From left: Xiaojie "Emily" Tan, Sun Cha Kim, and Hyun Jung Grant

Sarah Everard's case and the truths we must face as a society.

At the beginning of this month we learnt about the shocking news about Sarah Everard. This heinous crime reminded us once again of the fact that women are constantly targeted and often feel unsafe, with more than four-fifths of young women in the UK having been subjected to sexual harassment. What happened to Sarah Everard was terrible and it brings great sadness, as these events have been normalised or not given importance in the last years.

During this month, we had International Women's Day on the 8th of March, where we should have celebrated the lives of women. It's a time to recognise female trailblazers, to agitate for political change, to connect with women's history, and to take action for gender equality. But this year I think we all realised that it wasn't the case. Instead we learnt how much needs to be done to improve the safety of women.

Just a fact to put into perspective, among women aged 18-24, 86% said they had been sexually harassed in public spaces. This shows although talking about this topic may not be necessarily common, women face this on a day to day and it doesn't always have to be reflected in deaths or murders but it starts with objectifying women, and sexually harassing or assaulting women.



The event has caused much more awareness of this topic and for women to speak up, showing the depth of this problem which needs to be resolved as we call for change. Many women have come forward about violence and their personal experiences which have affected them. This has triggered marches and protests this past month in London, as hundreds joined together.

I believe that this topic is extremely important and needs to be addressed, as this affects every woman in this society and our future generations. I think that all women should be respected, and should have the basic right to be safe when walking out at night.

To conclude I believe that we should all reflect on this and remember the events of Sarah Everard as this is a reality that we are living in today.

Karol Mancera, Year 12



Body modifications in modern-day society

In Social and cultural anthropology this term, we have been learning about 'The Body' as our area of inquiry. For those of you who do not know, Anthropology is the study of humankind and the four major fields of anthropology include biological, linguistic, archaeology, and social and cultural. Social and cultural anthropologists spend years of their lives conducting fieldwork, living with the society they are studying, and participate in the daily life of the community. In order to conform to the American Anthropological Association Code of Ethics (AAA code of ethics) before an ethnographic study can be fully published it is important for the anthropologist to: not bring harm to the society being studied, to be open and honest regarding their work, to obtain informed consent and necessary permissions throughout the observation, to weigh competing ethical obligations due to collaborators and affected parties, to make their results accessible, to protect and preserve their records and finally to maintain a respectful and ethical professional relationship with participants. After their study has been completed, they would then write a summary of their observations in the form of an ethnographic study and they have met all AAA codes of ethics the ethnography can be published. An ethnography is the study of a society's culture in their own environment with research being collected through the use of methods such as participant observation, in-depth interviews, focus groups, and textual analysis.

The body as an area of inquiry has several subtopics within it such as commodified bodies, marginalized bodies, mechanized bodies, the politicised body, the modified body, and bodily practices. Although several of these subtopics are still very much relevant in today's society, modified bodies appear to be on the rise more and more as time has gone on and societal expectations are increasing also. The term "modified body" can be defined as making deliberate changes to the body for cultural reasons for example plastic surgery. As a result of social media continuously being used to portray the ideal image of the "perfect body" and social platforms such as Instagram being used to further emphasise these ideals. With celebrity influencers such as Kim Kardashian being seen as a role model for a lot of young women the constant portrayal of bodily image and the importance of being accepted and being seen as "desirable" by society has caused a surge in more and more young women going through procedures and more than often regretting it. It is estimated that the global cosmetic surgery and procedure industry is expected to reach USD 43.9 billion by 2025, according to a new report by Grand View Research, Inc as a result of its high demand.

There is an importance in explaining and educating young women on the negative sides of cosmetic surgery which is evident in the case of Molly Mae Hagues, former love island star. The 21-year-old has embarked on a mission to become “more natural” recently, as she’s had various procedures reversed as a result of her finding acceptance and loving her natural appearance. Molly Mae has gone through lip and face fillers and has shared with her millions of followers the psychological impact these procedures have caused her such as trolling, online bullying, and constant negative backlash from fans. She quotes, “I think I’ve taken all the steps that I want to take now in reversing all the mistakes I made with the fillers, getting things done that I didn’t necessarily need to get done and didn’t think through at the time, about two or three years ago”. She has since had her fillers dissolved and can be seen as a positive influence on the younger generation as she portrays the importance of self-love and accepting yourself for who you are and not allowing societal pressure to cause you to go through procedures that you have not fully thought through at such young ages in order to be accepted by society.



Molly Mae Hagues - left: after lip and face fillers; right: having had fillers dissolved.

The British Association of Aesthetic Plastic Surgeons (BAAPS) says its doctors were reporting up to 70% increases in requests for virtual consultations during the current Covid period, as patients continued to consider treatments they’d be able to get once they could see their surgeon face to face again. These figures portray the power and influence that social media has and how it shapes our mindset and views, especially on our appearance, causing it to impact our mental health. It is crucial during these periods of time to self-reflect and have moments of time where we have self-love, appreciation, and confidence. We as young people need to protect our mental health, with breaks from social media and technology, in general, being seen as a good way to better our mindset as well as giving us an opportunity to connect with the real world. Remember that not everything that you see online is real and social media can be a facade and lastly in the words of Robert Morley “To fall in love with yourself is the first secret to happiness”.

The crime bill, proto-fascism and the invisible protests.

With the brutal, barbaric and repulsive murder of Sarah Everard being obviously pushed to the forefront of any domestically circulated forms of media, it would make sense that something as mundane as the 'Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts bill' would get pushed to the media's background. Even in any less mundane newsweek, I still doubt that the passing of a crime bill in parliament would get any attention from the media. After all, isn't a crime bill just one of hundreds of bills that are debated in parliament every year?

Well, no. The truth is, although in many ways the crime bill is just another policy paper that may or may not be implemented, there is one section of the 300 page document that should be etched into our psyche. Why is this? Well, because our freedom to protest is being dangerously threatened by the Home Secretary Priti Patel.



Is it any wonder that in the same week the Met Police were roundly criticised for their actions at the Sarah Everard vigil, the police are getting even more power in shutting down protest? Part 3 of the bill allows the police to shut down any protests that they believe constitute 'public nuisance'. This term is not only vague and open to interpretation, giving the Police and Home Secretary too much discretionary power, but it also fails to consider the fact that by definition, a protest is supposed to cause nuisance and disruption. Is it any wonder that this bill is the brainchild of a certain home secretary, who has previously described the BLM protests as being 'dreadful' due to a statue being brought down? Unsurprisingly she also said that she doesn't like protest. Let me remind you those words are coming from the most powerful woman in a supposedly free country.

Once you get into the actual policy changes that this bill proposes, the underlying feeling of proto-facism is even more strongly invoked. Whilst almost the entirety of the bill is perfectly non-radical and even in some aspects agreeable, the restrictions on freedom of speech are terrifyingly callous. It's a tragedy that in the same week of Sarah Everard's death, the punishment for 'desecration of statues' is now more severe than the punishment for rape. So essentially, anyone involved in the toppling of Colston's statue is (in the government's eyes) a greater security threat than a rapist. On the topic of Sarah Everard's murder, the police's embarrassing response to the protests may become a feature of *any* protest, as of course, they have received more power.

Indeed, police chiefs now have the ability to not only curtail protest, but also impose start and end times, set noise limits and apply these rules to static protests and even one person demonstrations. So if taken to the extreme, one person putting up a banner or postcard about any cause that could be seen as 'disruptive', could be fined up to £2,500 for not following police instructions. Effectively, this bill could lead police to have the power to curtail any form of free speech, and is clear evidence of democratic backsliding in the UK.



But the main question is, why has there hardly been any media attention on this, when the bill is effectively a Tory-led coup? Of course, there is the matter of Sarah Everard, but aren't the protests a gloomy foreshadowing of a potentially proto-fascistic future? Whilst social media has been inundated with people voicing their concerns about this bill, 50,000 tweets are not gonna change the government's mind, especially if there has been (as aforementioned) not enough media coverage on the passage of the bill. Also some question why Keir Starmer is not putting up any opposition against this draconian bill. Some wonder if he is too scared of taking Boris to the blade, or if he is indeed as indifferent as he appears, especially as the biggest criticism has paradoxically come from the DUP and Theresa May,, rather than from the leader of the opposition.

So overall, many argue that this piece of legislation is a Tory attempt to pander to the wrong side of the culture war, even though the bill equally affects right-wing protests as well. It is also worth noting that violent protests against the bill have been ongoing in Bristol for about a week now, and a sector of the UK population is clearly showcasing their distaste for the closest lurch towards facism we've seen in the UK.



AUTISM AWARENESS WEEK



World Autism Awareness Week is taking place from the 29th of March to 4th April this year, with the goal of educating people about ASD and celebrating autistic people.

*HOW AUTISM IS
PORTRAYED IN THE MEDIA*



*WHAT AUTISM ACTUALLY
LOOKS LIKE*



WE ARE ALL DIFFERENT

One of the main aims of the education side of Autism Awareness Week is to debunk the myths and stereotypes about autistic people. Much like how neurotypical people vary in almost every conceivable way, neurodiverse people also vary, hence there is no continuum of autism and we cannot definitively categorise or label autistic people (as we would never do with neurotypical people).

Two of the biggest myths about ASD is that it is a childhood condition and that it only affects boys. This is completely untrue as autism is a lifelong condition which people are born with and is not exclusive to any sex or gender. Media portrayal tends to only depict autism in white men, due to a diagnostic sex ratio of ASD, but autistic people are in every demographic of gender, sex, ethnicity, race and religion.

There are also incorrect beliefs that autism can be 'cured' and that vaccines can cause autism. Autism is a neurological difference that is caused by a person's genetics and hence, cannot be caused or 'cured' by any vaccine or medicine. Although there have been some older studies suggesting a link between certain vaccines and an ASD diagnosis, these have been proved to be fraudulent, and even further there are high quality research studies involving hundreds of thousands of people which prove there is no link between vaccines and autism. Similarly, the idea of a 'cure' characterises ASD as a disease which is inherently bad and only negatively affects lives, but autism is part of a person's identity and shapes how they perceive and experience the world. There is no 'cure' for someone's identity and although some charities, misguidedly, advocate for a 'cure' this is not possible nor is it right to advocate to change a person's natural way of living.

Everyone is encouraged not just to increase their awareness of ASD but to improve their acceptance. Neurotypical people can best understand autistic culture and the autistic experience by listening to autistic voices. Non-autistic people do not face the same social and sensory challenges that many autistic people do, therefore, it is up to us to make reasonable adjustments, educate ourselves and change our behaviours in order to be considerate to autistic people and help them. Simple things like lowering the volume of a film, talking quieter, turning the brightness down on your phone can all make a difference to an autistic person.

A former BGS student, who is autistic, started a blog on her life as an autistic person, called 'I Don't Look Autistic (-Well who the hell does?)' and I strongly recommend checking it out to gain an insight into the autistic experience. She has different posts on language, terminology, personal perspective and information and this can all be found on <https://i-dont-look-autistic.com/>.



By Katie Henderson, Year 13.

Meghan Markle & Prince Harry's interview with Oprah Winfrey



Nearly 2 million people around the globe watched Prince Harry and Meghan Markle's wedding, and from the outside, most people would agree that it looked like something out of a fairytale and appeared to suggest a new day for the modern British monarchy. This union led to them becoming one of the most talked about couples in the media. Then in January 2020, Harry and Meghan stunned the world when they decided to step back as senior members of the royal family.

On Monday 8 March 2021, an interview between Oprah Winfrey, Meghan Markle and Prince Harry was broadcast on ITV between 9 pm and 10:50 pm. Before the meeting proceeded, Meghan agreed that she doesn't know what Oprah's going to ask her, that no subject is off-limits and that she's not getting paid to participate in the interview.

During the discussion, the topic of security was brought up. The security provided to the royal family comes from taxpayers and the decision of how much security a person is provided with is made by the Metropolitan Police alongside the British government. It is determined by many factors, including public duties and place in succession to the throne. Meghan revealed that she, Prince Harry and Archie were told they would not receive royal protection, resulting in Tyler Perry, (an American actor, producer and director) offering up a house in Southern California which they lived in for three months with security also provided by him.

Additionally, Meghan spoke about the concern within the royal family about her baby's skin tone, and Harry condemned his relatives for failing to criticize colonial undertones in media coverage. Meghan told Winfrey that an unnamed member of the family raised the issue of how dark their unborn baby Archie's skin would be while she was pregnant. There were several "concerns and conversations about how dark his skin might be when he was born," she said, in one of the most stunning revelations from the interview.

The discussion also highlighted the struggles that Meghan was going through mentally as she also shared that she "didn't want to be alive anymore" during her pregnancy with Archie. She went to "one of the most senior people" but was told it wouldn't look good if she looked for help. Harry has been open in the past about seeking therapy for his mental health struggles but told Oprah that he felt helpless in dealing with Meghan's.



"I had no idea what to do," he said. "I wasn't prepared for that. I went to a very dark place as well."

More recently, Meghan Markle's father, Thomas Markle reportedly drove to Oprah's home, which is just miles away from Meghan and Harry's mansion, in an attempt to communicate with Oprah and to personally deliver a letter asking her to interview him to talk about their strained relationship.

Naturally, this interview was highly controversial and some claim it dealt a devastating blow to the monarchy, particularly due the accusations of racism, bullying and of not having supported someone who was suicidal. The Queen was very quick to express her concern, saying racism claims would be investigated. Some also pointed out that such accusations should not surprise anybody, as after all the Monarchy's history is deeply intertwined with Britain's colonial past, which was bolstered by racism.

Others criticised Meghan Markle for having been naive and not understanding the importance of the role she stepped into, but especially for thinking she could change a centuries old institution.

It is not yet clear what the long term impact of this interview will be, so it will be very interesting to observe whether it will result in any real change.

By Micheline Adofo, Year 12

LGBT+ History Month

BGS has celebrated the achievements of people in the LGBT+ communities during the month of February, and every week students were introduced to an LGBT+ hero.



Take a look at some other amazing trailblazers!

By Tallulah Price-Toplis



Lord Waheed Ali made history in April 1999 by coming out as gay in the House of Lords and openly discussing it. He has spent much of his career in politics advocating LGBT rights and raising awareness of the subject. He is one of a handful of openly gay, Muslim politicians.



Sergeant Lonergan has been an army reservist for more than 20 years. He came out as gay when the ban was lifted and was one of the first Army personnel to march in the London Pride in 2008. He made the decision to transition to male shortly before their 50th birthday. He has since gained a position on the Kent police diversity board where he was able to contribute to policy changes that would protect and support both the transgender and non binary officers to follow him.



Trans model and activist Munroe Bergdorf, faced down L'Oreal, one of the biggest beauty companies in the world and not only lived to tell the tale, but thrived - creating and educating a legion of fans (and critics), while constantly celebrating her blackness and transness.

Professor David K. Smith research is centered on nanochemistry. Smith is openly gay and uses his voice to write and speak about the topic at public events, voicing his experience as a gay scientist. His work promoting diversity in the STEM community has been widely recognised.



LGBT+ and struggling with lockdown?

The pandemic has disproportionately affected LGBT+ people, especially as many of them were stuck at home with often unaccepting or even abusive family. If you have also been similarly affected, here is a [link](#) to Stonewall's website, that will direct you to ways in which you can get support.

Queen Nzinga of Ndongo and Matamba.



Queen Nzinga of Ndongo and Matamba was queen of the Ambundu Kingdoms of Ndongo and Matamba (located in present-day northern Angola). She ruled during the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade and fought for the independence and stature of her kingdoms against the Portuguese colonisers. Not only was she a woman leading the resistance against colonialism, but she was also a queer icon.

In 1641, forces from the Dutch West India Company seized Luanda and in response to this, Queen Nzinga soon sent a diplomatic mission to negotiate with the Dutch. She forged an alliance with the Dutch against the Portuguese and ended up defeating the Portuguese army in 1644. She implemented guerrilla warfare tactics, created hidden caves, and stocked up on supplies to prepare her people for a potential long standing siege. She also made an unusual decree, establishing her kingdom as a safe haven for runaway slaves seeking refuge from the European colonists.

She was only able to do all this because she realized that, to remain viable, she had to present herself as a man. The thing about Nzinga is her title was Ngola, and Ngola means king in Kimbundu. Queen Nzinga ruled dressed in full male clothing as a king, and she had a harem of young men dressed as women who were her concubines. These 'young men' were called 'Chibados' and they were third gender people who were born male but lived as women. So, to use modern day terminology, that made Queen Nzinga a cross-dresser with drag-queens for wives who fought against colonialism!

Queen Nzinga is an inspiration to people of the LGBT+ community, and to women and girls worldwide.

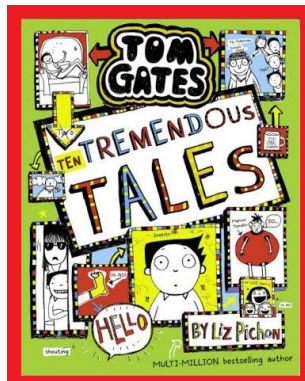
**News from departments and
extracurricular activities!**

English Department

With the spring term coming to a close we take a look back at all that has gone on in the English Department this year. Enjoy!

Liz Pichon's (British Illustrator and Children's Writer) Workshop.

During the last term, students from the lower years were invited to join in a virtual meeting with Liz Pichon. They learned how to doodle in the style of the illustrator, whilst also participating in a Q&A. Here is a sample of illustrations and reviews from the attendee



Anis Houmani
Year 8

Tom gates event with liz pichon!

The event began at 2pm, with Liz Pichon showing us a collection of doodles she drew. The drawings interpreted real life objects. She then read an extract from her newest book *tremendous tales* celebrating ten years of Tom Gates! She read an extract of Tom recalling his conversation with Delia after she was told to babysit him. It was a very good story! Then Liz gave us a drawing master class on how to draw in her illustrating style, and showed us how she presented her books. She also showed us things she'd drawn on like a skirt and a pair of shoes! Liz also talked a bit about the Tom Gates TV show and showed us a trailer of it. The event ended with Liz answering a few questions from fans and saying goodbye. All in all, it was a really cool event where we learnt tips for writing and drawing! I really enjoyed learning how to draw Tom Gates, the art style is super cool!

Jessica Davis Year 7



Elizabeth Smirnova
Year 8

The Live stream with Miss Pichon was very exciting as Tom Gates was one of the book series that I loved when I was in year 4. The call was very interesting as there was a variety of small activities such as drawing, asking questions and hearing stories about Liz's writing of the books. I enjoyed the doodle session as it was very interesting to see how Liz draws her illustrations. One thing I did not anticipate was that she was directly answering people's questions, which made it feel less like she was on script and more like she was simply talking to us. Overall it was a good experience and I hope we have more events like it in the future. Due to the covid situation it is almost impossible to do school trips and workshops so this was just as fun.

Aggeliki Mirza Year 7



Isabelle Raphael
Year 7

We are living in an increasingly digital age. In the UK alone it has been estimated that secondary school children spend a total of over 6 hours a day on their screens. The Telegraph newspaper reiterated this point by suggesting that British children were spending nearly 2 days a week on their computers and phones. As a result, far less time is being spent on activities such as reading and writing for enjoyment. Yet it has been proven how beneficial creative writing is, especially with regards to mental health. It has been found to build confidence, self-expression, better communication skills and improve mental and emotional health. The much loved author C.S. Lewis emphasised the importance of writing when he said, "You can make anything by writing." With this in mind, the year 7's were set the task of writing a 500 word story. The writing competition encouraged children to read more for enjoyment and write using their imagination. The results were very impressive and showed a wealth of talent! The winning entry from each form was judged by the English prefects and a prize given to the gold, silver and bronze recipients.

Bronze award: Isabelle Gorman, 7PTV.

Silver award: Naima Mendjeli, 7PDH.

Gold award: Karan Abrol, 7AJW.

Well done to all those who participated with a special congratulations to the medal winners!

Class Winners

7KJP

Eva Wang

7REL

Louis Luckman

7ACR

Rebecca Kidby

7CPB

Iev Griffin

7AJW

Karan Abrol

7PDH

Naima Mendjeli

7PTV

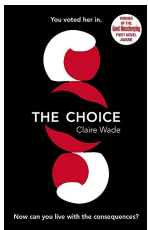
Isabelle Gorman



World Book Day 2021

This year, World Book Day was different. Like many things, it had to be done online due to the Covid 19 Pandemic. But that didn't stop the English department! Normally, students from the lower years would come into school dressed in costumes of their favourite book characters. Instead, due to the temporary move to online classes in the months January to February they were told to change their picture on google meets to that of their favourite book character. Some time during the day was assigned for students to do some reading of books they enjoyed. As the day went on, Sasha, an English prefect, arranged a World Book Day quiz for the younger years to participate in. All in all, it shows that despite the challenges facing us in lockdown the BGS students were able to experience and enjoy much that the English Department has to offer. The two lockdowns have forced us to give up many of the things we enjoy and often take for granted. Thankfully, reading and writing are two of the few privileges we have been able to hold onto and enjoy!

Book Recommendations



I would recommend reading The Choice by Claire Wade which is a very thought provoking book. Despite the fact that it seems to be far fetched at the beginning you soon realise how easy it is with those entrusted with power to abuse power. Good intentions can spiral out of control. The government's idea to ban sugar and baking was intended for good, however it soon got out of hand and the government became a dictatorship. I feel that it is very relevant to us in this day and age during coronavirus due to the restrictions the government is putting on our lives (not in a bad way!).

Jacob Orchard, Year 12, English Prefect

*Mr Morris's recommended read:
'Terrorist' by John Updike*

Written in the wake of 9/11, and published in 2006, 'Terrorist', by John Updike, is a very brave attempt to enter the consciousness of an Islamic teenager who has been radicalised. I read it during the first lockdown, and, even now, my hands start to sweat as I remember the almost unbearable tension of its final pages.



Mrs Eacott's recommended read:

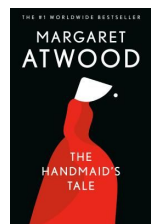
'The Midnight Library' by Matt Haig



A simply written but enjoyable book. Between life and death there is a library, and within that library, the shelves go on forever. Every book provides a chance to try another life you could have lived. To see how things would be if you had made other choices . . . Would you have done anything differently, if you had the chance to undo your regrets?

*Mr Martin's recommended read:
'The Handmaid's Tale' by Margaret Atwood*

If you enjoy dystopian (future and imagined societies) narratives such as Orwell's 1984 or Huxley's Brave New World, then this could well be for you. The USA is now a fundamental society known as Gilead that faces a population crisis and environmental disaster. In Gilead, fertile women are forced to "serve" families as handmaids in order to repopulate society. A story of change, suffering, survival, togetherness and hope. A great, if horrifying, read and now a TV series.



Book Review: To Kill A Mockingbird, by Harper Lee

After a few months of being recommended this book, I finally got around to reading it. My dad had suggested it to me on numerous occasions and after giving me the book from the 'Take a Book' shelf in his school's library I couldn't put it off any longer. I don't really know what was preventing me from reading it - I think the fact it had a fair amount of controversy behind it had distracted me from the literacy and the incredible writing of Harper Lee. On top of this, it was the first book I had picked up for months after being in a stressed headspace where reading wasn't one of my priorities. You have to face up to controversy on occasion and I am glad I did, as I think 'To Kill a Mockingbird' is a beautiful story and one that every young adult should read.

The main controversy in this story is of course the harsh and racist views of characters in the mid 1930s in Maycomb, Alabama. This is a town that is close-knit, yet nobody really truly knows one another. Racism was and still is a huge issue in society, and this story highlights just how horrifically many black people were treated. The prejudice, hatred and general ignorance that so many of the white characters portray is despicable - even children brought up then had racist views. When brought up with ignorant views, how can one change when that is all they have ever known? This book features moral education as a key affair - Jem and Scout, who have been brought up by a father who is open minded and works as a defense attorney, both accept everyone, no matter what they look like or what colour their skin is. Due to the fact their father is defending a black man named Tom Robinson, they face hatred from children their age, who have been raised to believe that anyone of another colour is inferior and like dirt on the ground. It sickens me to know that now, nearly 100 years later, there is still racism in our world. How can people really discriminate just because we look different? It doesn't make sense to me.

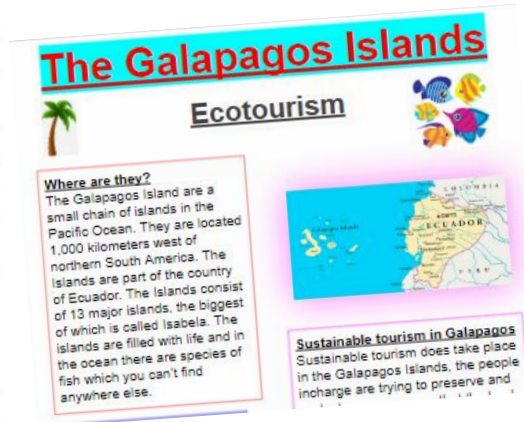
My favourite aspect of this story was the importance of the character 'Boo Radley'. After doing some research into his character, it appears that he is on the Autism Spectrum. His character is one that is so misunderstood and so many people turn against him. As someone who is aware of autism, it made me so amazed to see that his character is actually more caring and sensitive than a lot of the other neurotypicals (meaning not autistic/ neuro-atypical). This is stunning to me, as in a world where people on the autism spectrum are not supposed to be as understanding of social cues, he is actually better at it than those who are prejudiced. Maybe this is because he doesn't understand what it means to hate another person due to differences, however this innocence is one that is incredibly special. Similar to Scout and Jem, he proves that you are not born with hatred, you are simply taught to believe certain things and to act in certain ways.

'A mockingbird symbolises innocence. This is why it is a sin to kill one.' By ridding innocence you are committing a sin, and throughout the book, a number of characters can be identified as mockingbirds - innocents who have been injured or destroyed through contact with evil. It is a powerful story and I loved it and recommend it to anybody who wants to face up to controversy and educate themselves.

By Isobel Long, Year 12.

Geography News.

The spring term has been hugely productive for our geography students and as always we have been impressed with the effort that our students have put into all of their work. Even more so than ever as most of the term work has been completed at home. Throughout remote learning a number of students have also been clocking up merits by taking part in the weekly quiz that is a part of the school newsletter, Mrs Belton owen has enjoyed opening her email each Monday to see all the quiz responses.



Year 7 students have completed a unit on tourism while studying at home and this ended with a short project on ecotourism.

Year 7 have also looked into their personal geography exploring their own connections to the world around them. On the return to the school the year group have started their new topic which is map skills with a focus on OS maps skills such as distance, 4 & 6 figure grid references. Why not use some of the time in the Easter break to explore your local area using an OS map.



Elizabeth Evans' Personal Geography



I am a western transverse flute player, and I decided to put this into my personal geography! The oldest flute have been found in modern-day Germany, but some have been found in France and Asia, notably China and India. The Chinese flutes found have the name xihou and yue. These were made from bamboo or other hollowed-out reeds. Types of flute during that time varied, but the most popular ones were hollowed-out bone flutes, bamboo flutes like the suona (loud instrument), the xiao (loud-blow bamboo flute) and the xihou, a transverse blow bamboo flute. The transverse flute had spread into Europe by way of Germany, and was known as the German flute. And that's some of the flute's history!



Seddikhani Manor is a beautiful manor with the only functioning windmill in Uzbekistan. It is also where my little brother William had his christening party.

Year 8 have worked on the unit of rivers while completing work at home and are enjoying our new topic of globalisation. We have been looking at the factors that have created our connected world and the global production of everyday products. The students have produced some amazing maps that locate the production chain of goods.

Year 9 completed the urban world unit while at home and have now begun work weather hazards. We have just completed a detailed case study looking at the "Super" typhoon Haiyan. We are now going to look at the impact of extreme weather in the UK.

It has been great to have our GCSE groups back in the classroom. Our year 10 have completed work on the unit of work that is the economic world. While working at home this saw students focus on Nigeria and how its economy has changed and how this is supporting the development of the country. This also saw students look at the role of transnational corporations within NEEs. We are now looking at the UK's economy and how this has changed and the impacts on this, including the North south divide and the movement away from employment within the industrial sector.

Location
The Philippines is a member of ASEAN. It is located in Southeast Asia, between the South China Sea and the Pacific Ocean.

Membership
The Philippines joined ASEAN in 1964. It is a founding member of the organization.

Background information and data facts
The Philippines is a developing country. It has a population of over 100 million people. The country's economy is based on agriculture, manufacturing, and services.

Why is the Philippines an important country?
The Philippines is an important country because it is a member of ASEAN. This gives it access to the ASEAN market, which is one of the largest in the world. The Philippines is also a major trading partner for many countries in the region.

Primary impacts	Secondary impacts	Immediate responses	Long term responses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ASEAN has helped to bring about economic growth in the Philippines. ASEAN has helped to bring about economic growth in the Philippines. ASEAN has helped to bring about economic growth in the Philippines. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Due to the effects of the ASEAN, many people have moved from the Philippines to other parts of the world. Due to the effects of the ASEAN, many people have moved from the Philippines to other parts of the world. Due to the effects of the ASEAN, many people have moved from the Philippines to other parts of the world. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> People who have moved from the Philippines to other parts of the world have helped to bring about economic growth in the Philippines. People who have moved from the Philippines to other parts of the world have helped to bring about economic growth in the Philippines. People who have moved from the Philippines to other parts of the world have helped to bring about economic growth in the Philippines. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ASEAN has helped to bring about economic growth in the Philippines. ASEAN has helped to bring about economic growth in the Philippines. ASEAN has helped to bring about economic growth in the Philippines.

What is a common danger and why is it so deadly?
A common danger in the Philippines is the threat of typhoons. Typhoons can cause a lot of damage and loss of life. They can also cause a lot of economic damage.

Students are currently presenting their researched topic to their classes. Year 11 has been focusing hard on a Decision Making Exercise which requires them to study a current geographical issue and make a justified decision about whether the project should go ahead or not. In this case, the issue is whether or not a road should be built through the Peruvian Amazon to connect the West coast of Peru through to the East coast of Brazil. We look forward to the students writing their answers to the question.

Year 12 have been studying infographics and answering exam questions to help prepare them for their mock in the Summer term. The IB places a huge emphasis on the use of infographics therefore it is useful that Y12 have familiarised themselves with these graphics early on. Before we break for Mocks, we will be starting the climate change unit and polishing up the IAs.

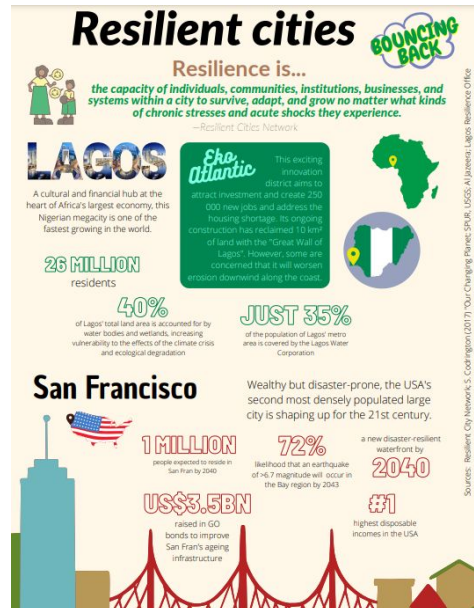
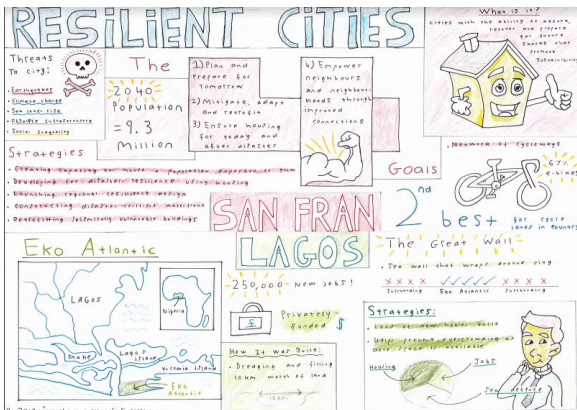
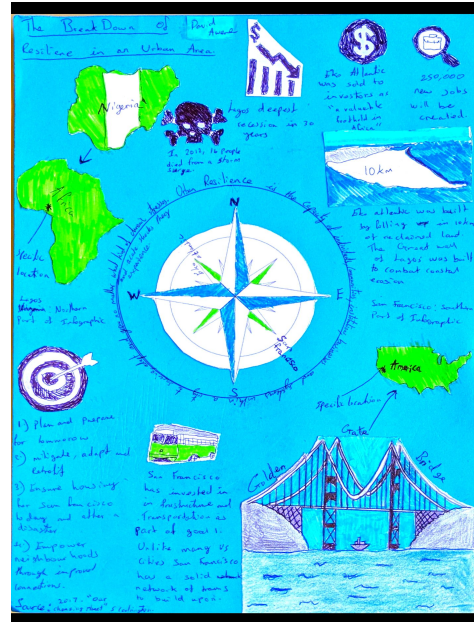
Year 13 SL students have completed the IB geography course and are now focusing on using their geography knowledge and skills to design a new sustainable urban environment. Their work will be presented in class in small fayres where work will include models and posters to show off the design, including what makes it sustainable and why we need to move towards a more green urban environment. HL students are completing the final unit of work that is part of the higher level extension before pulling the topics within this unit of course together. We have been impressed with the continued effort and focus of the students and wish them every success in their IB.

By Mrs Belton-Owen



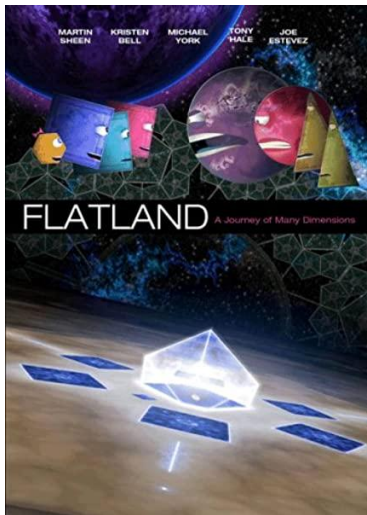
Photo (from left to right) -

David Awere (runner up with blue infographic), Sam Gee (winner with the computer produced infographic) and James Hunt (runner up with the hand drawn landscape infographic)



Philosophy: Flatland (2007)

The best movie to show your philosophy class!



A Brief Summary of Flatland

Flatland is an animated movie directed by Jeffrey Travis based on the book by Edwin A. Abbott. It initially takes place in flatland, a 2 dimensional world where its inhabitants can only see in 1 dimension (so they are 2D shapes that can only perceive things in a singular dimension , so they see lines). 'A Square' is the protagonist of the film , he is a lawyer who is visited by a 3D being named 'A Sphere' . A Square at first cannot perceive a third dimension so then A Sphere abducts him and takes him to 'space land'.

What we liked and disliked about the film

The animation style is poor and the colour scheme is distracting at best. Nevertheless , the slightly unorthodox style of animation does separate flatland from other animated movies. The voice acting really helps to bring these characters to life, as we absolutely rely on line delivery as none of the characters have readable facial expressions.

Although the movie may not look great , it does an excellent job of explaining the theory of 4 dimensions to an audience of students. It introduces you to the second first and third dimension and clearly explains how they work and how different beings from different dimensions would perceive any dimension other than their own. This movie illustrates very well the thought experiment devised by Abbott, in a digestible and easier to understand form.

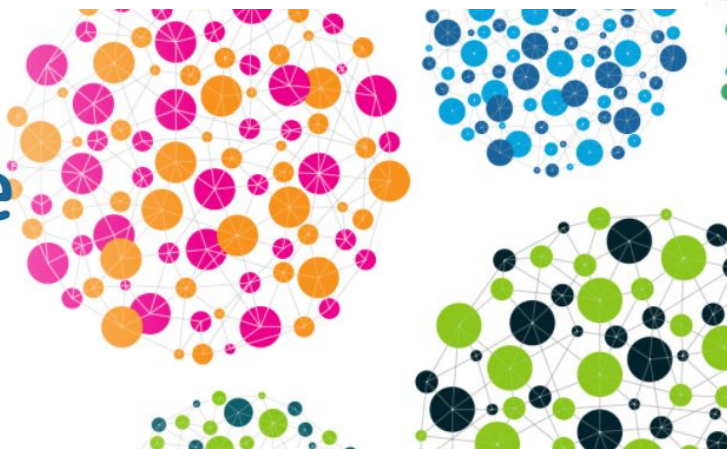
Why should I watch it ?

This movie makes the theory of the 4th dimension accessible to anyone - which is amazing because it promotes young people to discuss and try to understand very abstract and unfamiliar topics. This movie can also be used to explain mathematical and philosophical concepts.

This movie also has its fair share of comedic moments which blend nicely with the maths and philosophy elements. This movie manages to tackle maths , philosophy, politics and comedy all in one and for that , we think in its own way , it's an amazing movie. (It's also available to watch for free on YouTube) .

By Tamia McDermott and Roisin Wynne, Year 12

5-14 March British Science Week 2021



For most of the spring term we have been practicing distance learning which meant we have had a lot less interaction with our teachers and friends but towards the end of the home learning was British Science Week, from the 5th to the 14th of March, and Mrs Moore organised science and STEM focused activities for us to participate in.

We attended online webinars through the organisation “I’m a scientist” which is a graduate student led company that runs STEM enrichment programs and connects students with professionals within the science and STEM community from all around the world. These scientists, researchers and engineers volunteer to attend webinars in which students may ask questions about their careers and interests in live, real time chats as a way for us to shape our understanding of the STEM world and the wide range of paths that we may take.

The chemistry focused talk we attended was led by 5 scientists whose careers and areas of research spanned from the commercial production of drug molecules and drug testing to the study of cancer to measuring volcanic gases from space and researching the production of nitrogen without a carbon dioxide by-product. It was really helpful getting the opportunity to speak to scientists from very different areas of STEM to help us really start to understand the different routes we might take in the future and I think everyone had at least one scientist to talk to within a career they might aspire to. Within these chats we got the opportunity to ask questions based on the volunteers profiles and they answered loads of the different questions we sent in lots of detail.

In particular, we asked many questions about how they became interested in their career paths and advice on choosing university courses. We received many useful responses, for example that the research conducted at different universities or the practical components of different courses may affect your university choices; they also spoke about how you could also enter STEM through apprenticeships and they stressed how as scientists they are constantly learning and teaching each other in ways that they never even considered.

We were also very interested in what the everyday work in these careers looked like and how these different areas had been impacted by COVID-19 which has left many people working from home and has possibly changed the way in which we can collaborate and work as a team forever.

We really appreciated how these professionals took time out of their day to speak to us. Overall it was a brilliant opportunity, giving us an insight into the world of STEM outside of the classroom and answered our questions with interesting and useful answers. For example, did you know that teratomas (a type of tumor) sometimes look like human body parts because the cells they originate from are stem cells which can become different human tissues?!

I know that it definitely made me feel more secure in that many of them didn't have careers planned out and sometimes struggled with science at school, and it was a really excellent opportunity.

By Lauren Dempsey, Year 12



Click [here](#) for more info on this programme!



Students connect with working scientists

I'm a Scientist is an online, student-led STEM enrichment activity. It connects school students with scientists through energetic real-time text based chats.

The activity is running throughout the year.

Find out more and take part this term:

- [Teachers >](#)
- [Scientists >](#)
- [Funders >](#)

Students can:

- **Chat** with real scientists, in real time
- **Ask** any questions they like
- **Vote** for their favourite scientists

It all happens online. It's safe and secure. It's free for UK schools.



New, cool, COVID-safe hobbies!

Finding Digital Art.

Traditional art has always been difficult for me, and I always thought I was bad at drawing because everyone else could draw amazing things on paper and I just didn't have a talent for that especially in art lessons where I always got the lowest grade. However, a few years ago I got a drawing tablet and wanted to try digital art and I was actually able to draw so much better than I could with a pencil. I always thought that I wasn't talented at art in general but I found a way to express creativity through drawing in a less traditional way. I've been drawing for a few years and did it whenever I felt like it but I never really took it seriously and didn't progress much. Starting the IB really helped me have more motivation to improve and work on my drawings more as I chose to do it for my CAS. I gave myself goals and a set amount of work I had to do and I have progressed more in the last few months than I have in years. I'm currently focusing on calligraphy as I have always found that sort of writing really nice and have never been able to do it myself especially with a pen. I chose to practice calligraphy by writing inspirational quotes as I always want my art to mean something. I have watched countless tutorials and it took me a while to learn how to write letters in different ways. Here is a quote that I have illustrated and will leave you with to hopefully motivate you to work on a skill that you want to improve because even if you think you're bad at it now you can improve.

By Victoria Joyce, Year 12

Interested in trying it for yourself? Check out this [tutorial!](#)

Check out two brilliant pieces Victoria has created in the next two pages!



Education

is the most

powerful

WEAPON

~ Nelson Mandela

The
expert
in anything
was once a
beginner

Chess: The perfect COVID-safe competition!

It's not just social distancing that makes students want to avoid a mate!



Ever since the pandemic hit, people were looking for new pastimes, new occupations, new games to occupy their minds. For many, chess unexpectedly came in as a way of stimulating their brain; what used to be a game thought to be played only by professionals and intellectuals has now become a hobby for all walks of life! I personally picked up chess during the first lockdown and was immediately hooked. One stereotype about chess is that it takes too long to grasp the basic concepts. Looking back on my first touch with chess, and seeing newcomers during House Chess, I have realised that the transition from learning the ways that the different pieces move to experimenting with different openings is not as big as it seems.

All of the above resulted in me spearheading House Chess, supported by Mr Asker! Having already played on a chess platform called Lichess.org during the initial lockdown, I felt like I knew the site well enough to organise some chess tournaments. Additionally, the fact that this was going to be one of the few House Competitions this academic year, really motivated me to make it the most worthwhile for the students involved!

This year's House Chess started on the 31st of January and finished on the 28th of March. We have over 70 people signed up for our online team, and they have participated in their respective age group tournament for the past nine Sundays, with each game being played in the 5+3 time control. (This means that each player had a total of five minutes to make all of their moves, but they were awarded a 'bonus' of an extra three seconds each time they made a move. It's a format that rewards quick thinkers, but puts a lot of pressure on all the players!)

With House Chess being online, less skilled players were given a chance to take part, as the barrier to entry was so low. Unlike there being only a limited amount of chess boards at school (and, obviously, severe limits to face-to-face interactions between students), all students had to do was sign up to Lichess, join their House team (Senior or Junior) and the school team. To recognise the contributions of players of all abilities, Mr Asker wanted to reward students not only for their performance in both categories but also for their participation. This felt like the most fair way to do things as it did not deter newcomers from immediately losing contact with the sport right after House Chess.

Particular congratulations go to Behzod, who came first in the Junior Competition, to Ereife, who came first in the Senior Competition, and to Johnson House, for having the largest number of players across the two Competitions.

Finally, I just wanted to say thanks to Mr Asker and the pupils involved for trusting me, and for their consistent commitment throughout these nine weeks of House Chess! If you were intrigued at all by this year's House Chess, I advise you to visit [Lichess.org](https://lichess.org) (or [Chess.com](https://chess.com)) to sign up for a free account!

By Shakeel Majeed, Year 10



Congratulations Edgar!



Edgar Fedorcenko 9ML came first in the **Oxford University Computing Challenge** for the Intermediate age group this year. This is a national competition held every year and entered by hundreds of schools across the country. The final round was held online, on 18th March and Edgar got every single question right, *and* finished in just 45 minutes out of the 1 hour allowed. Well done Edgar!





**Have a wonderful Easter
break!**