

BGS BUZZ

winter 2023 edition



Message from the Editor

Welcome to the Winter 2023 edition of the BGS Buzz! What a busy and exciting term we just had! I know we are all looking forward to a well deserved break, and I can guarantee reading this magazine will be a perfect way to unwind, to learn about some really interesting issues and to enjoy all the amazing things our fantastic students have achieved this term. Have a great break, and for those of you who celebrate it, have a lovely Christmas. Wishing you all a healthy, peaceful and happy new year!

School Magazine Editor: Ms Contini

BGS Buzz team: Scarlett Basquil, Zoe Handscombe, Hannah Benedict, Rihanna Szczygielska, Emma Murati, Michael Ato, Yu Xin Zhao, Khushkaran Singh Irvine, Malak Rezk, Poppy White, Jesse Oshogwe, Matida Jackson.

Special thanks to: Mrs Snelling, the PE department, the DT department, the Music department, the Drama department, Mr Griffin and Ms Lusted

Apologies if I have missed out anybody!!

Ms Contini

Message from the Headteacher

Hello to everyone,

It's a great privilege to present this fun-packed magazine to you, with lots of articles written by our students and many highlights from this term. It's especially nice to do it at Christmas, which is one of my favourite times of the year. Regardless of faith or religion, I hope that the festive season is a time when we can all enjoy the Christmas spirit, which, for me, is about shared humanity, acts of kindness and spending time with loved ones. I hope that you are safe and happy this Christmas, and able to spread warmth and cheer amongst your family and friends.

Enjoy reading our magazine.

Mr Gilmore
Headteacher

House News

CURRENT STANDINGS



1ST MABBS

201 POINTS



2ND WELLMAN

200 POINTS



3RD PROTHERO

194 POINTS



4TH JOHNSON

184 POINTS



5TH COLLINS

171 POINTS



6TH KIRKMAN

159 POINTS

MRS SNELLING
HOUSE LEADER

The Jack Petchey Report

JACK PETCHEY LEADER AWARD.



MISS MEACHER

EACH YEAR THE STUDENTS OF THE SCHOOL ARE GIVEN THE OPPORTUNITY TO VOTE FOR A MEMBER OF STAFF TO BE NOMINATED FOR A JACK PETCHEY LEADER AWARD. UNLIKE THE OTHER NINE AWARD WINNERS NOMINATED THROUGHOUT THE YEAR WHERE THE STUDENTS' CHOICE IS THE AUTOMATIC WINNER, THE LEADER AWARD HAS TO BE APPROVED BY THE JACK PETCHEY FOUNDATION.

THESE WERE THE REASONS SHE WAS NOMINATED:

MISS MEACHER IS ALWAYS REALLY KIND AND HELPFUL. SHE LOOKED AFTER US ALL ON OUR CLASSICS TRIP TO NAPLES. SHE HAS INSPIRED MY LOVE FOR CLASSICS AND SUPPORTED ME BOTH ACADEMICALLY AND EMOTIONALLY, WHEN I HAVE FELT OVERWHELMED.

MISS MEACHER IS ALWAYS OPEN TO QUESTIONS AND WILL GIVE ADVICE ABOUT ANYTHING. SHE IS HARDWORKING AND DEDICATED TO HER CLASSES AND THEIR LEARNING. SHE HAS TAUGHT A UNIQUE CLASSICS COURSE TO HER KEY STAGE 5 CLASSES WHICH INVOLVED HER CREATING MANY RESOURCES TO CONTINUE TO ENGAGE YOUNG PEOPLE IN THIS IMPORTANT BUT INCREASINGLY RARELY TAUGHT SUBJECT (IN STATE SCHOOLS).

MISS MEACHER IS INCREDIBLY COMMITTED TO HER ROLE. SHE BUILDS UP STRONG RELATIONSHIPS WITH THE YOUNG PEOPLE IN HER CARE, WHO RESPECT HER CONSISTENCY AND ENGAGE WITH HER WARMTH AND SUPPORT.

WE ARE VERY PROUD TO NOMINATE HER FOR THIS AWARD - SHE DESERVES ALL THE PLAUDITS FOR HER DEDICATION TO TEACHING AND WORKING WITH YOUNG PEOPLE.

*Congratulations and thank you,
Miss Meacher!*

The Jack Petchey Report

JACK PETCHEY LEADER AWARD.

The 2023-24 Jack Petchey Award Scheme started on our return to school in September, nominations for the first 3 awards September, October and November have been completed this term.

The winners:

September's winner: Prothero - Anna Hardie



Anna massively supported Prothero through the House Music competition and was so supportive of everyone who took part.

Anna has committed a lot of time through the years to Prothero House.

Anna is an incredibly positive role model for younger students whose endless enthusiasm and passion for the House systems both supports and inspires younger students. She has committed endless amounts of time, energy and passion into the creative House events in her 7 years at BGS and she fully deserves the recognition of this award.

October's winner:

Wellman - Soahasina Ramanoelina



Soahasina has participated in many house events including House drama, rounders, and 3 events on sports day. She took responsibility for creating, coordinating and leading the House Choral part of House music and is a language prefect and helps struggling students at clinic.

She is part of senior choir and big band and takes part in school plays and musicals. Outside of school she does tennis and swimming in clubs and takes piano lessons and part of a youth band at her church.

December's winner: Mabbs - Bethany Baker



Bethany Baker is a House Captain and has regularly participated in House events for the past 7 years. She is also a committed member of the BGS community. She consistently goes above and beyond within her role whilst putting in a great deal of effort in improving our school community for the benefit of all members. This is often done without seeking reward and often her hard work for others often goes unnoticed.

House competitions

Autumn 2023

Year 7 Art Curricular competition
designing a Christmas card



1st Mabbs

6 points



2nd Johnson

5 points



3rd Kirkman

4 points



4th Collins

3 points



5th Wellman
Prothero

2 points



House competitions

Autumn 2023

Comp Sci Curricular competition

Juniors



1st Mabbs - 6 points

2nd Wellman - 5 points

3rd Kirkman - 4 points

4th = Johnson & Prothero - 3 points each

6th Collins - 1 points

Intermediates



1st Prothero - 6 points

2nd Collins - 5 points

3rd Wellman - 4 points

4th - Johnson - 3 points

5th - Kirkman - 2 points

6th Mabbs - 1 points

House competitions

Autumn 2023

Intermediate Cookery Competition

All Houses were given the ingredients and the recipe for a Victoria sponge cake, 2 students, 1 each from yr 10 & 11 then produced:



1st



4th



2nd



4th



3rd



5th



House competitions

Autumn 2023

Senior Cookery Competition

All Houses had to choose a recipe, with a budget of £7 per House, given the theme of Christmas cake, biscuit or dessert and then two students from years 12 & 13 produced:



1st



4th



2nd



4th



3rd



4th





Current affairs and issues

BIGGER THAN RUGBY

AN INSIGHT INTO THE FULL PICTURE OF SPORT



MICHAEL ATO, YEAR 12

In Paris, South Africa's Springboks were crowned champions of the world in the 2023 Rugby World Cup. In a brilliant demonstration of skill, tactics and sportsmanship, the reigning champions reared in a wondrous victory and record breaking 4th Webb-Ellis Trophy win. It was a tremendous end to a very vibrant World Cup.

However, this year's World Cup was not without controversy - with French oil company TotalEnergies being one of the main sponsors of this year's tournament. Former Australia captain David Pocock claimed that fuel companies are using sport to "greenwash their image" and should not be allowed to sponsor World Cups, a notion heavily evidenced by independent global campaigning network Greenpeace. World Rugby chief executive Alan Gilpin said: "We recognise there is a challenging debate around them as a sponsor and as a fossil fuel company."



However, Gilpin confirmed that the deal was agreed by the 2023 local organising committee in France and not the sport's governing body World Rugby, before noting that there would be a "slightly different model for hosting" after this World Cup. That would enable World Rugby "full responsibilities for delivering how that tournament is managed and run and that gives us again the ability to take a different approach to the responsibilities around sustainability". In the week building up to the start of the tournament, Greenpeace released a graphic video of the Stade de France filling up with oil in protest against the TotalEnergies sponsorship deal. The animated 60-second film, 'TotalPollution: A Dirty Game', digitally fills up the Stade De France with the amount of crude oil that the global fossil fuel industry collectively produces in three hours and 37 minutes.

That's more than six and a half stadiums worth of oil every 24 hours. In response to the video, a World Rugby spokesperson said: "Tournament delivery supports World Rugby's Environmental Sustainability Plan 2030, centring on low-carbon mobility such as trains, and the use of existing infrastructure for competition and training venues to reduce the event's carbon footprint." In France, the government has banned short-haul domestic flights that are possible in less than two and a half hours on trains, and teams at the World Cup will be predominantly using coaches and trains as a result. No new stadiums have been built for the tournament and existing buildings that are fit for purpose are being utilised. The example for this is the Roland Garros tennis complex being used as World Rugby's main media centre in Paris. There will also be a reduction in single use plastics at stadiums with fans encouraged to use public transport to matches. While Pocock praised many initiatives by World Rugby, including it not relying on off-setting, he concluded that removing fossil fuel sponsorship was key.

In brighter news, following the theme of many in the past, The World Cup was bigger than just Rugby. There were many notable points of interest off of the playing field, which should resonate deeply with us all as human beings. In 1996 when South Africa hosted the RWC, Nelson Mandela claimed that 'Sport has the power to change the world' citing that "It has the power to inspire," and "It has the power to unite people in a way that little else does. Sport can create hope where once there was only despair. It is more powerful than the government in breaking down racial barriers." That last sentence was the closest Mandela came to referencing his own role in using sport to unify South Africa, a country that had been separated by skin colour and the warped political ideology of apartheid for nearly half a century by the time he became its first black president in 1994. This year we were captivated by many instances bigger than just the final score.

For example, prolific Fijian centre, Josua Tuisova suffered the death of his 7-year old son - a tragic death following prolonged illness. Tuisova made the ultimate sacrifice for his team by staying in France, showing his dedication to his nation and evidencing the unity formed by sport as the island of only 900,000 residents rallied behind him and the Flying Fijians in their historic World Cup campaign. It often goes under the radar how important sport, especially rugby, is to smaller nations. With so many cultures clustered on such small islands, there is bound to be tensions between some cultures, often the result of a few miscommunication and misconceptions. The vastness of diversity also allows for cultures to pertain to the boundaries of their own cultures, and for Fiji, this has been true throughout its colonial history. Yet, there have been a few ideals and subjects that have managed to bring the country together as much as rugby.



.In similar fashion, Rugby holds compelling cultural significance in New Zealand. Before European settlers even arrived in New Zealand, the local population, Māori have already been playing a game similar to rugby. The game was called kī-o-rahi and it resembled Australian Rules Football and rugby football. Rugby football was first introduced to New Zealand back in 1870 by Charles John Monro who encountered the game during his studies in London. However, the game played by the indigenous people of New Zealand have greatly influenced how the game was played and it is played today. Ever since the late 1800s, rugby became very popular in New Zealand, especially among the Māori. The locals loved the game because it fitted them so perfectly. The main reason is that rugby is a full-contact sport and Māori were strong, agile and fast people. They were better than the European settlers because they already had tons of practice and previous experience with a similar game. Therefore, a bond between arrivals and locals was ultimately forged and remained to this day. Before every game New Zealand's All Blacks perform the Haka as a nod to their cultural ties with the Māori peoples. Notably, they performed a rendition of the Haka - the Ka Mate - before their group stage clash against Italy to honour their Māori battalion who fought in Monte Cassino.



The Rugby World Cup is a historic event, not only for the achievements of this year's winners, but for continual development and consideration of worldly events that surround the sport - a clear indicator of international unity within subdivisions of cultures and origins. It goes to show how life is bigger than sport and the RWC being bigger than rugby.



CLEARING THE AIR:

EXAMINING THE IMPACT A POSSIBLE SMOKING BAN IN THE UK.



EMMA MURATI, YEAR 12

During Rishi Sunaks first Tory conference speech as leader - on Wednesday the fourth of October - he proposed introducing some of the UK's harshest anti-smoking measures, that aim to completely eradicate smoking from the next generation. This would be achieved by bringing forward legislation stating a child born on or after 1 January 2009 will never legally be sold tobacco products and by 'Raising the smoking age by one year, every year'.

It is thought the Prime Minister took inspiration from similar measures taken in New Zealand (the first country in the world to implement the annually rising smoking age), which was announced in December 2022, aiming to create a smoke free society.

However, after only a year of the smoking ban being implemented, in early 2023, New Zealand's newly appointed Prime minister Chris Luxon announced the reversal of the Anti-Smoking policy. In which it was argued that smoking rates were already declining and a ban would result in a black market-boom. This was followed by New Zealand's new finance minister Nicola Willis stating that measures would be withdrawn before March 2024, with all revenue from cigarette sales going towards tax cuts. Despite a spokeswoman expressing that Rishi Sunaks position has remained unchanged following the reversal of New Zealand's ban this may suggest that there is a chance the UK government may also withdraw the smoking ban in the near future after experiencing the economic effects that will follow.

Currently around 7.5 million people smoke in the UK, however It is estimated that each year around 207,000 children start smoking. About two-thirds of adult smokers report that they took up smoking before the age of 18 and over 80% before the age of 20. Despite the slow decline since 1974, with smoking rates being at an all time low of 14.1% in 2019, it is still the leading cause of cancer and premature death.

In conjunction with the current cost of living crisis, smoking is only seen to amplify its effects as £6.6 billion is lost a year to smoking related unemployment and £6.1 billion to smoking related lost earnings.

But what does this mean for the NHS? A decrease in smoking could significantly reduce the amount of stress on the NHS and its resources. Studies in 2020 showed that there were 2 million hospital admissions that were smoking related, which is estimated to cost roughly £2.5 billion every year, and is only predicted to rise. The suggested legislation will slowly relieve the NHS of the increasing cost of treatment and surplus of patients in need of appointments, meaning receiving medical care via the NHS will possibly be much quicker and more efficient.

It also is predicted that cases of asthma in children and young people will significantly decrease as currently around 22,000 cases of wheeze and asthma in a year are direct results of passive smoking, the act of breathing in other people's tobacco smoke, ranging from the smoke drifting from a lit cigarette to smoke that is breathed out by a smoker.

However, this can also lead to a dip in the economy. Smoking is a massive market in the UK, generating £20.6 billion in gross cost in 2022 alone, and it is shown to contribute to 1.8% of the world's GDP. British-American-Tobacco, the world's second largest tobacco company, is based in Britain. Despite almost all products being manufactured outside of the UK, it is clear that they will struggle immensely as millions of people a year in their target market will, as a result, no longer legally be allowed to purchase their tobacco products.



The ban may also temporarily increase the use of vapes and e-cigarettes among youths; however to tackle this it is proposed that both the flavouring and packaging of vapes will be more harshly regulated. This will ensure they are not targeting children, along with retail outlets being advised to keep such products away from the sight of children.

Around 75% of the public in England support the government's new smoke-free legislation, with 73% of conservative party voters, 79% of Labour voters, 84% of Liberal-Democrat voters and 83% of Green Party voters in the 2019 election.

This almost overwhelming support may be due to financial factors. Interviews carried out in focus groups suggest that the main factor for giving up smoking is finances, with the awareness of health issues ignored, justified or rationalised, the main justification of which being that smoking supports their mental health. Without the financial stress smoking puts on individuals, it is likely many would continue, disregarding the health issues it is likely to cause in the long term. The upcoming smoke-free society laws may encourage people to never start smoking and therefore not degrade the health of the general population in the UK.

THE SILENT GENOCIDE

WHAT IS GOING ON IN CONGO AND HOW YOU CAN HELP



MALAK REZK, YEAR 12

Violence escalated in Congo in March 2022 between government-led forces and non-state armed groups. As a result, an estimated 7 million people have been displaced. The eastern provinces of North Kivu and Ituri have been particularly affected, with ongoing violent clashes leading to prolonged displacement. Informal displacement sites have emerged around Goma, the capital of North Kivu, in eastern DRC. Many others have sought refuge in South Kivu Province. Additionally, areas such as Beni in North Kivu and Bunia in Ituri are experiencing escalating violence and human rights violations caused by armed groups. Violence, displacement, and food insecurity persist in the country as the fighting continues to cause casualties. Families are now sheltering wherever they can, in buildings like churches and schools or in large camps. The DRC currently also has over 100 armed groups operating within its territory.

Alongside the escalating violence, extreme weather events are compounding the crisis by devastating lives and livelihoods. In early May 2023, communities in South Kivu experienced catastrophic flooding, resulting in the deaths of hundreds of people and the destruction of over 3,000 homes, further worsening the already dire situation in the DRC.

The lack of attention to the unprecedented suffering in eastern Congo is unforgivable. It is the largest hunger crisis in the world. 25 million people are left largely on their own to face starvation, disease, and attacks. One third of children are out of school. The situation in Ituri is a neglected emergency within an already neglected crisis. The scale of the violence against civilians has led to an exponential growth in the number of people forced to flee. "Protection of civilians is almost nonexistent, with armed groups attacking people with total impunity. The vulnerable are left with nowhere to turn.

The ongoing fighting has also had a severe impact on the health and disease response, with the DRC reporting the highest number of suspected cholera cases and deaths in the West and Central Africa region. The country alone accounts for almost 80% of disease transmissions and approximately 60% of all deaths, as per a report released by UNICEF last month. Armed clashes have further deteriorated other aspects of the humanitarian conditions in affected areas. In Masisi for instance, there has been a "worrying increase" in the cases of severe acute malnutrition, according to Doctors Without Borders (MSF). As well as this, over the past several years, the DRC has experienced multiple Ebola outbreaks, a critical measles situation, and an increase in suspected cholera cases, according to UNICEF.

Additionally, Congo is the world's main source of cobalt, a key component of the lithium-ion batteries used in mobile phones, electric vehicles and many models of e-cigarette. In September, a report from Amnesty International found multinational companies mining for copper and cobalt in DR Congo had forcefully evicted entire communities. Amnesty also found human rights abuses - for instance numerous villagers who refused to leave their homes said they were beaten by Congolese soldiers. And last year, the US Department of Labor added lithium-ion batteries to its list of goods produced by child labour or forced labour, based on its evidence of children mining cobalt in DR Congo. "Thousands of children miss school and work in terrible conditions to produce cobalt for lithium-ion batteries," the department reported. It said entire families might work in Congolese cobalt mines: "When parents are killed by landslides or collapsing mine shafts, children are orphaned with no option but to continue working."

It is not acceptable that aid agencies are forced to make impossible choices around who can and cannot be helped. And it is not acceptable that so many wealthy nations, corporations, and individuals refuse to make a fair contribution to the suffering millions.

What can you do?

Donate: One way to help out of course is to donate! There are many different charities that work specifically in Congo and help displaced people. For example, Save the Children, Doctors Without Borders and UNHCR to name just a few.

If you don't have money however:

Boycott: Don't purchase products that are produced with cobalt, e.g. smartphones and vapes.

Get educated! Educate yourself on the situation going on in Congo right now and educate others as well. Spreading the knowledge and understanding what's going on is the first step to being able to make a difference.



Displaced people in Congo



DONALD TRUMP'S TAX FRAUD TRIAL



BY YU XIN ZHAO, YEAR 12

Who is involved:

Donald Trump, who was the 45th president of the US from 2017-2021, his two adult sons (Donald Trump Jr, Eric Trump) and the wider Trump Organisation been accused of massively inflating the value of their properties of over \$2bn (£1.65bn) when in actuality they were only worth \$750m. They did this to secure favourable loans from banks and this deceived banks, insurers and others.

Donald Trump and Co are going against New York Attorney General Letitia James, who brought the fraud charges forward and is seeking a fine of \$250m (£207m). This trial will be overseen by Judge Arthur Engoron, who had already ruled that Donald Trump and Business committed fraud. However as this trial is a civil trial there will be no consequence of jail time as this is not a criminal trial but there being a hefty fine that Donald Trump may have to pay as a consequence. In this trial, Trump is being represented by attorneys Christopher Kise and Alina Habba. Habba has represented Trump in previous cases as well.

In this trial there is no jury so the final decision on whether the defendant is liable rests on Judge Engoron alone.

What is the purpose of this trial?

Donald Trump and his co-defendants are accused of “massively inflating the value of their properties by over \$2bn in order to secure favourable loans”. This trial will determine if Donald Trump and associates will pay \$250 million fines and potentially other penalties regarding whether he and his two sons will ever be able to do business in New York again. The upcoming trial focuses on additional charges, which are six other claims including falsification of business records, insurance fraud and conspiracy, as Donald Trump has already been found guilty of fraud.

What will happen to Donald Trump's properties if he is found guilty?

There have been many questions regarding the alleged over inflated properties belonging to Donald Trump and what will happen to them if Donald Trump is found guilty. They will likely be dissolved and sold or be transferred to a new company with a board of directors that Donald Trump does not control and this will have a severe impact on Trump as this can be a corporal death sentence for parts of the real estate empire that Trump had built his whole brand around, meaning that losing this trial Donald Trump's real estate empire will experience a blow which made him hugely recognised before running for presidency, including Trump Tower, which is the most recognisable property that bears Donald Trump's name and is also the headquarters to Trump Organisation and home to Trump and his family.

Donald Trump's past accusations

This is not Trump's first time in a courtroom, the former US president currently faces 91 felony charges, including 44 federal charges and 47 state charges. Some of them include Trump's alleged efforts to overturn the 2020 presidential election and false accounting over hush. Trump faces 40 criminal charges over alleged mishandling of classified materials after his presidency. While Trump has denied all charges he was fined \$10,000 for breaching a gag order twice over comments made about a court clerk, which was issued on the 26th October 2023.

How were Trump-owned properties over-valued?

Trump's current trial is based on the accusation that Trump's properties are massively over-inflated and to name a few being the triplex at Trump tower, the Mar-a-Lago Club, Trump International Hotel and Tower Chicago.

Trump Tower was claimed to be more than 30,000 square feet and it has been confirmed that it was in fact less than 11,000 square feet. Plaintiffs in the New York lawsuit wrote, 'Tripling the size of the apartment for purposes of the valuation was intentional and deliberate fraud, not an honest mistake'. The apartment was valued at \$327m in 2015 when the record sale at that time was only \$16.5m.

Trump's 17-acre Mar-a-Lago estate was converted into a members-only social club in 1994 and had valuations of the property value peaking at \$739m when it should have been valued closer to \$75m.

Trump declared Trump International Hotel and Tower Chicago as "worthless", which would help offset taxes as it was qualified as a substantial loss under the federal tax code, however Trump was allegedly obtaining loans against the Tower from Deutsche Bank obtaining more than \$100m in loans on the building in 2011.

What will happen to Trump's presidential bid?

As the trial progresses there has been a legal bid to try and bar Donald Trump from the 2024 US presidential ballot and the strategy involves trying to block Mr Trump from the primary ballot by invoking a rarely used provision of the US constitution - section 3 of the 14th Amendment- that bars those who have "engaged in insurrection or rebellion" against the country from holding federal office. This bid has taken place in multiple states but has failed in Michigan and Minnesota. Free Speech For People, an advocacy group, is also separately petitioning the top election officials in at least 18 states to remove Mr Trump from the primary ballot. However, despite the legal troubles that Mr Trump is facing he remains a competitive front runner for the republican nomination and is currently polling neck-and-neck with President Joe Biden.

On the 18th November a judge in Colorado had rejected an attempt to bar Donald Trump from the state's 2024 Republican Presidential primary as the judge in charge of this case, being District Judge Sarah Wallace argued that the 14th Amendment insurrection ban does not apply to presidents as section 3 does not explicitly name them. However Ms Wallace did find that Mr Trump engaged in an insurrection on January 6, 2021 through incitement, and that the first amendment does not protect Trump's speech



What will happen in the trial in the future?

As this is an ongoing trial many questions and answers will be asked. As of the 1st November 2023 Donald Trump Jr is currently testifying on the behalf of Donald Trump Sr . Donald Trump's other children are also expected to take part in this unclear three month trial with other witnesses and testimonies from the prosecution and defence side of this trial with a verdict predicted to be given at the end three months after 28th September 2023 by Judge Engoron.



PROTESTS IN IRAN, A YEAR ON

WILL JUSTICE PREVAIL?



BY POPPY WHITE, YEAR 11

On 16th September 2022, Mahsa Amini, 22, died in hospital after sustaining fatal injuries conceivably inside a 'morality police van' while travelling to a detention centre; this was the result of her not complying with the country's Hijab regulations (women and girls over the age of nine are obliged to wear a head covering in public due to the 1979 Islamic Revolution). Eye-witness accounts of this were disputed by the Tehran Police Department, claiming she had, "suddenly suffered a heart problem." Days later, thousands of protests ensued as people across the country expressed their dissent for the strict, tyrannical regime, the first demonstration occurring at Amini's funeral, at which women removed their headscarves in solidarity. Ever since, similar movements have taken not only the Middle East, but the world by storm, as they call for increased freedom of speech and expression, despite their Supreme Leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, who has arguably reacted to them with unyielding ferocity.

Last year, reports of sexual violence upon protestors as young as 12 were divulged, the perpetrators supposedly being Iranian security forces. A report by, 'Amnesty International' was facilitated by the testimonies of 12 women, 26 men, one girl and six boys. 16 of the 45 accusers were raped brutally, resulting in harrowing physical and psychological damage. Despite this, authorities have chosen to dispute the integrity of these claims, as a leaked official document – dated back to 13th October 2022 – suggests that they suppressed the accusations of rape made by two women against two Revolutionary guards; the Deputy Prosecutor of Tehran advocated that the case should be kept, "completely secret" and encouraged them to, "close [the case] gradually over time." The implications of the violence have been debilitating for the victims, as Sahar, a victim of the exploitation, reported that, "I used to be a fighter in life. Even when the Islamic Republic tried to break me down, I carried on. However, recently, I think about suicide a lot...I am like a person who waits all day for night-time so I can sleep."

And Zahra, a woman subjected to rape at the hands of Special Forces police described, "I don't think I will ever be the same person again. You will not find anything that will bring me back to myself, to return my soul to me... I hope that my testimony will result in justice and not just for me." These accounts pose the question: will justice prevail?

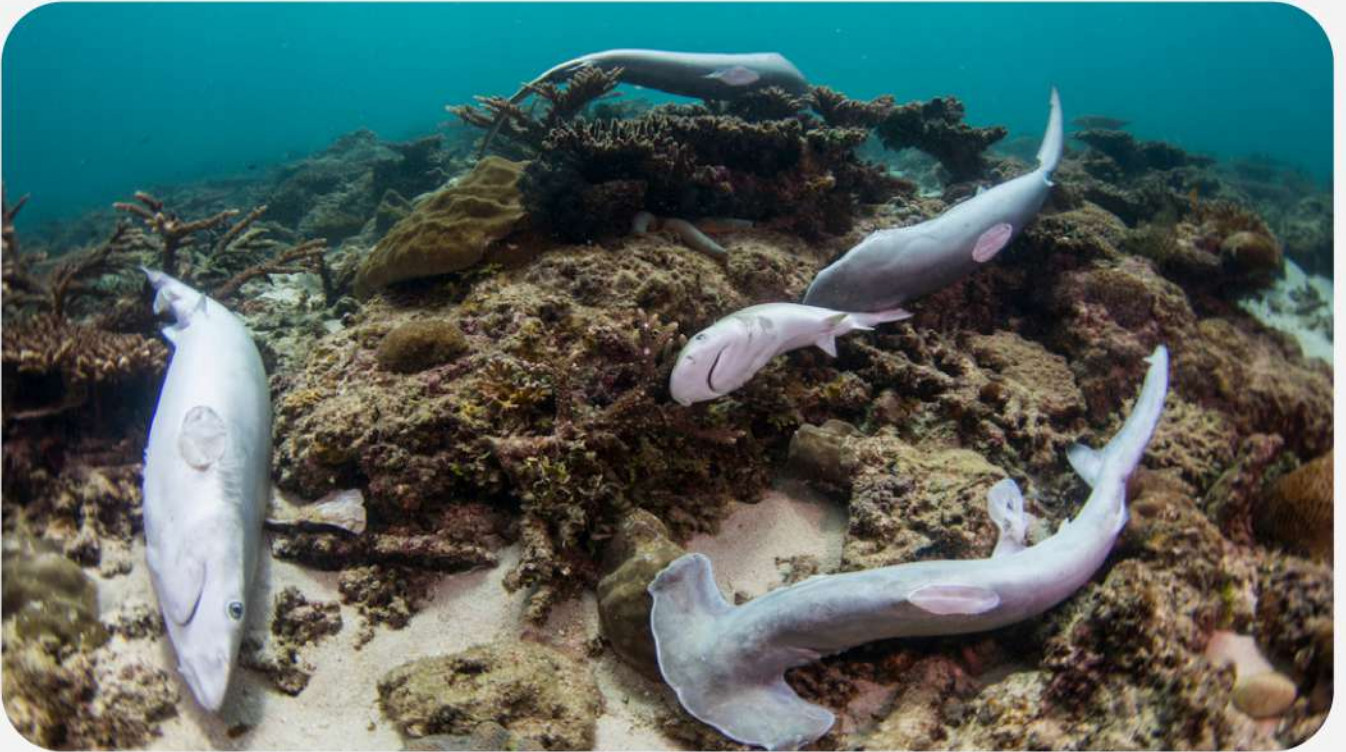
'Amnesty International' further exposed how security and paramilitary forces within the state inflicted ghastly punishments on children – detained throughout and after the protests – to, "punish and humiliate them and to extract forced 'confessions.'" It is conceivable that brutality towards youths is a method of quashing any future demands for liberation, instilling a sense of fear and securing a sense of adherence to potential human rights violations. The investigation's findings suggest that children were arrested, usually blindfolded, and taken to detention centres run by varying special forces – at which they experienced poor sanitation, received electric shocks and were forced to take unidentified medication. The innocent were also victims of barbarity as undercover agents abducted young people from the streets – usually in times of chaos – and would take them to sites such as 'warehouses', where they were tortured and then ditched in remote locations – ultimately left for dead. This was another format of generating consternation in the younger generation, encouraging them to submit without question to an abhorrent regime.

A year after the initial protests, demonstrations have circulated on a reduced scale and have lacked great potency, consequently, the potentially oppressive regime that is operating is under scarce opposition. To make matters worse, organisations such as the 'Human Rights Activists in Iran' have reported a substantial rise in executions (127) since the Hamas attacks on 7th October; they even disclosed that on Wednesday 29th, seven people were executed within 24 hours. Activists and the families of the victims have criticised the regime for exploiting the global focus on the war in Gaza as a guise: the lack of media attention has allowed the regime to effectuate executions without any judicial proceedings. The victims of the grave injustices include a 17-year-old who was subjected to a 'forced confession' when on trial for murder leading to his death, and a 22-year-old protestor, linked to the 'Women, Life, Freedom Movement' facing the penalty in relation to the anti-regime demonstrations. The death toll has increased by 30% in comparison to the same period last year, conveying that the lack of strong remonstrance is abetting the jurisdiction in their inhumane punishment of potentially innocent people. The theme of injustice is further amplified as a human rights lawyer, Moein Khazaeli, conveys, "In the majority of these cases, at least 95%, the defendants lacked legal representation and didn't have a lawyer to support them." The perturbing influx in atrocities evokes the opinion that there is far more suffering ahead, augmented by the fact that the world is fixated on other conflicts, presenting the question: when will justice reign victorious?

During the Geneva Summit – July 5th 2023 – the UN concluded that, "Iran must end its continuing crackdown on peaceful protestors and halt the wave of executions, mass arrests and detentions." In response, the Iranian Government has reported that 22,000 individuals detained in connection to the protests have been pardoned – despite this, it has been insinuated that the emancipated detainees had been obliged to, "express remorse", in essence admitting wrongdoing and then had to pledge to not perpetrate, "similar crimes", in the future. Although this is arguably an auspicious decision regarding human rights, it also opposes them as it violates the right to freedom of association. Furthermore, regardless of the governmental declarations, reports have surfaced regarding at least 26 individuals receiving the death penalty and others experiencing similar equivalent charges. Likewise, as of November 15th 2023, Iranian Authorities have refused to permit the UN Special Rapporteur access to the country to assess the human rights status, reinstating a sense of discomfiture in the UN, and invertedly in the rest of the world, as an alarming crisis consumes the country.

THE SHARK FIN TRADE

APEX PREDATOR TURNED PREY TO SAVAGE HUMANS



SCARLETT BASQUIL, YEAR 12

Shark finning is the callous practice of cutting off living shark's fins before throwing them back into the ocean to die, for use in shark fin soup and traditional Chinese medicine. Approximately, 167 species of shark and 220 rays are threatened with extinction due to overfishing and human exploitation. A particularly vulnerable shark is the Oceanic Whitetips because they are prized for their large fins which can fetch around \$1,300 a pound. Their numbers have declined by 93% between 1995 and 2010, but are slow to increase again due to reaching maturity at 7 years old and only having two to three pups per litter. Other shark species that are threatened are the Blue shark, which is among the most common shark to be traded with around 10 million killed per year for their fins, the Hammerhead shark and even the notorious Great White shark.

China has been practising shark finning since the middle ages but has become a major problem in the 80s due to the popularisation of long line fishing. Fishermen realised they could make a lot of money from the trade and this caused a huge explosion in the rate sharks were being finned.

Shark finning happens all over the world but China is historically the biggest customer of the shark fin trade, and there is also a big market in southeast Asia due to the cultural aspect of it. Even western countries like the USA have imports of shark fins due to the Asian communities living there.

The way that fishermen carry out the practice is very saddening. The sharks are caught by long line nets then dragged onto the boat. While still alive, the shark's fins are brutally cut off for use. Tragically, the sharks are then thrown back into the ocean, left to die slowly and in agony. Usually, it isn't the finning itself that kills the shark, they die from suffocation, blood loss or even predation. It is cruel, inhumane and heartbreaking.





The fins are taken back to the mainland and are most commonly used in traditional Chinese medicine or shark fin soup. Shark fin soup has cultural significance and is associated with wealth, prosperity and festivity, it is often served at special occasions such as weddings. However, the fins are only used for texture in the dish and flavour is added through other ingredients: some restaurants now use alternatives like noodles or konjac gel but others prefer real shark fins due to tradition. Furthermore, there is no scientific evidence that shark fins have any medicinal properties and in fact may raise the risk of dementia and mercury poison due to toxins in the shark meat.

So why is it a problem? Increased rates of the trade has caused a huge decline in shark populations. It is estimated that 73 million sharks are finned each year, possibly even closer to 100 million according to scientists. This is detrimental to shark populations as most species have very low reproductive rates due to long gestation periods and few pups born at one time. Furthermore, it takes a long time for sharks to reach full maturity and start reproducing. This means that they are vulnerable to the excessive finning practice, being killed faster than they can spring back. But, it's not just the sharks that are affected by this, the whole marine ecosystem will experience consequences. Sharks are the apex predator in the ocean, keeping populations of fish, crustaceans and seals at normal levels. Without them, the number of some marine animals has gone above normal levels, causing implications on the delicate food chain of the ocean. For example, in the Caribbean, carnivorous fish usually eaten by sharks have become overpopulated and are preying on parrot fish which keep coral reefs clean, so has led to a decrease in parrot fish and damage to coral.

There have been a few attempts by governments to quell shark fin trade, not all successful. In 1999, the UN created the International Plan of Action for the Conservation and Management of Sharks which sets out to make their long term use sustainable, but countries are not required to participate so progress has been slow. There is huge variation in different countries' stances on the issue and their laws concerning it, for example Hong Kong has zero laws about it due to the cultural importance of the dish whereas the Bahamas has full protection for sharks. The US Shark Conservation Act 2010 sets out that all sharks have to be brought onto land with their fins intact before being cut off, many people believe this is the best way to control shark finning, whilst also allowing data collection to do with it. The Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES) controls the trade of the fins of a number of shark species. As of June 29th 2023, the UK has passed The Shark Fin Act which bans the import and export of shark fins, which is a huge step in shark conservation. But there is still work to be done.

Organisations in China have begun to encourage a decrease in consumption of shark fin soup, with big hotel chains and airlines taking it off the menu and even the Chinese government banning it at official functions.

The worldwide attitude to sharks and the shark fin trade needs to have a major change. It seems as though this issue has little awareness even though the extinction of shark species would have detrimental consequences for ecosystems and humans.

This is due to a fear and prejudice against sharks as they are popularly portrayed as dangerous and bloodthirsty creatures, like Jaws, so there is a mindset of not caring if they die or not. This needs to change. By educating yourself on sharks and realising they are amazing creatures can help change this attitude and bring sharks back from the brink.



THE WAR IN UKRAINE

AN UPDATE AFTER ALMOST 2 YEARS



Invasion map of Ukraine

BY KHUSHKARAN SINGH IRVINE, YEAR 12

In the early morning hours of Thursday 24th of February 2022 Russia launched a full scale invasion of Ukraine with Russia's main goal to take Kiev quickly and force a Ukrainian surrender and was likely influenced by decreasing military presence from NATO and the Russian annexation of Crimea in 2014. This was the largest invasion of a European country since World War II.

The invasion was condemned by most of the International community and resulted in a heightened military build up from NATO and weapons, supplies and volunteers being sent to Ukraine from around the world. Russia was also embargoed and saw the Russian Ruble crash with 1 Ruble being worth £0.0057 when war broke out.

The First Offensives

Russia launched a simultaneous ground and air campaign, commencing air and missile strikes across Ukraine.

On February 24, 2022, Russian troops from Crimea invaded Henichesk and Skadovsk Raions. During the first days of the offensive, the Russians surrounded most of the cities and towns in the Oblast, blocking the entrances to them with roadblocks, but not entering the cities themselves. Significant battles were fought for the Antonovsky Bridge, which crosses the Dnipro River between Russian positions on the South bank and the Ukrainian city of Kherson on the North bank. The Russian military's overwhelming firepower forced the Ukrainian forces to retreat, and the city fell to Russian control on March 2. It has since been recaptured after Ukrainian counter offensives

A similar situation happened in the Kharkiv region with initial captures in February. In early September 2022, Ukrainian forces began a major counteroffensive and by 11 September 2022, Russia had retreated from most of the settlements it previously occupied in the Oblast.

Both Offensives indicated that the Russian army was not nearly as effective as they were made out to be. Nevertheless, President Volodymyr Zelensky of Ukraine declared martial and mass mobilisation for any man between the ages of 18-60 and it wasn't long before Russia suffered its first major loss.

The sinking of the Moskva

The Russian warship Moskva was commissioned in 1983 under the name Slava and had a reputation as being one of the most powerful and feared cruisers of the Russian navy and headed its black sea fleet. It would undergo multiple refits (upgrades to old systems) and participate in the Russian invasion of Ukraine in 2022 boasting powerful missile systems and offensive capabilities.

However, only 20 days into the war 65 miles south of Odessa the Ship was Hit by 2 R-360 Neptune Anti-Ship missiles causing damage and a fire. While the ship did have adequate self defence systems to destroy such missiles a combination of stormy weather , complacency and incompetence caused the missiles to hit. The fire eventually reached the ship's magazine and exploded. This was then confirmed by the US intelligence agencies

Moskvas damage after the Strikes

Out of the 485 men aboard the ship between 18 and 300 were killed. A grand Victory for Ukraine and a devastating loss for Russia would soon become commonplace in the war as more and more supplies arrived from the Western powers

Moskva on fire after being hit by anti-ship missiles



Numerous losses such as the battle of Hostomel airfield resulted in heavy losses for the VDV Russian paratrooper force and the failure to capture Kiev quickly forced Russia to consolidate its lines and stagnate the offensive. Since then Ukraine forces were of the offensive recapturing positions held by the Russians culminating in the Bakhmut offensive and the death of Wagner PMC leader Yevgeny Prigozhin.

Hostomel airfield from above during the fighting



Bakhmut

The Bakhmut offensive was launched by the Russian forces On 20 May 2023, Bakhmut had been mostly captured by Russian forces, with the Ukrainian military claiming control of a small strip of the city proper along the T0504 highway. In September 2023, President Zelensky said Ukraine will continue to fight to retake Bakhmut. Nonetheless, Ukraine started counterattacks on Russia's flanks, seeking to encircle the city. Around the same time on 25 May, Wagner began withdrawing from the city to be replaced by regular Russian troops, amidst heavy internal squabbles between Wagner leadership and Russian high command.

Although initially a target with lesser tactical importance, Bakhmut became one of the central battles of the Russo-Ukrainian War due to the heavy investment of manpower and resources both sides used to control the city. The battle of Bakhmut has been described as a "meat grinder" and a "vortex" for both the Ukrainian and Russian militaries.

Both sides suffered tens of thousands of casualties with Ukrainians estimated at 20,000 and Russias at 60,000 to 100,000 many of these losses were to the Wagner PMC and leader Yevgeny Prigozhin. He said that Ukrainian forces had retaken part of the village of Berkhivka, north of Bakhmut during a counterattack. He called its capture a "disgrace"



No mans Land: Bakhmut, November 2023



Western part of Bakhmut, July 2023

On 23 June 2023, the Wagner Group, a Russian government-funded paramilitary and private military company, staged a rebellion after a period of increasing tensions between the Russian Ministry of Defence and the then-leader of Wagner, Yevgeny Prigozhin. An agreement to settle this conflict was reached between the two sides the next day, 24 June 2023. This "agreement" was a complete farce and merely weeks later Prigozhin's private plane was shot down by Russian SAM anti air missile systems and was killed.

For now the war still rages on with no end in site. Donations come in from around the world giving the Ukrainian people some hope during this cold Christmas.

Only one thing is certain, there are no winners in war.



*Awesome current
and past students*

BGS HOMEGROWN TALENT



w/ Engineers!

Meeting with Ex-BGS Engineering Students

On the 28th of November, we got to talk to some BGS alumni about their paths in engineering.

We talked to **Dan, Godwin and Sam**, three mechanical engineers who are nothing short of inspiring, about various challenges they faced, advice they could give us as students about choosing our sixth-form options, and how they enjoyed life at BGS!

What inspired you to go down the Engineering route?

Choosing engineering was like picking from a STEM buffet. It's so diverse—renewables, IT, design—you name it. I got to work on projects in Sweden and now, at Ceres, we're making technology and fuel cells at a more affordable price. The excitement? Every day is different; I'm jumping between labs, sites, and meetings, and that's what makes it thrilling. - **GODWIN**

For me, I knew I always loved maths and the natural sciences since year 7. I decided to read a prospectus on engineering in Year 11 and it made me realise that is what I wanted to do in the future. I also had a keen passion for problem-solving, it was very satisfying. - **DAN**

Making the jump from school to work was a real challenge. Uni is independent, and the transition hits you hard. Going from a range of subjects to just a few was tough, especially in math and physics. My advice to aspiring engineers? Get comfy with engineering maths early on. The excitement in my job now? Every decision I make has a big impact. It's not just about me; it affects everyone relying on my work. That responsibility is both daunting and exhilarating. - **SAM**



Have you gone through any memorable experiences that have impacted your growth as an engineer?

During my placement, I encountered a project with tight deadlines. The pressure was intense, but it taught me the importance of time management and working efficiently. This experience significantly enhanced my ability to handle high-stress situations. - **GODWIN**

In my placement, I had to collaborate with a diverse team. This exposed me to different working styles and communication challenges. It was a learning curve in understanding the importance of effective teamwork and clear communication in a professional setting. - **DAN**

My placement involved troubleshooting complex technical issues. One particular challenge tested my problem-solving skills. It was a steep learning curve, but overcoming it boosted my confidence in tackling intricate engineering problems and strengthened my analytical abilities. - **SAM**

How do you stay updated on the latest advancements in engineering and technology? Any favourite resources or communities you rely on?

I'm an avid reader and regularly follow industry blogs and forums. I also attend conferences and participate in online communities. Keeping up with the latest trends is essential in our rapidly evolving field. - **GODWIN**

How do you approach time management and prioritize tasks when working on complex engineering projects with tight deadlines?

Time management is key. I break down tasks into manageable chunks, prioritize based on deadlines and project milestones, and regularly reassess progress. Flexibility is crucial when dealing with unexpected challenges. - **DAN**



How do you handle situations where there's a difference of opinion within the engineering team regarding the best approach to a problem?

Open dialogue is key. I encourage team members to voice their opinions, and we work collaboratively to evaluate different approaches. It's important to find common ground and make decisions that align with the project goals. - **SAM**

How has the IB prepared you for your roles as an engineer, and do you consider it a valuable foundation for your career?

While I pursued A-levels instead of the IB, many of my peers who did the IB developed strong critical thinking and time-management skills. So even if you thought “I'm going to run away from English”, it's not something you can escape in the future. So the IB is definitely useful. - **GODWIN**

I still possibly say like, when people ask, I kind of still think that. Parts of the IB, like the hardest I've ever worked, probably the most productive I've ever been. They all got your most consistently productive at some point. - **DAN**

I definitely don't regret doing it and I would recommend it to pretty much anyone regardless of what you enjoy. It's just unmatched in terms of what A-Levels offer. - **SAM**

***Thank you to our EX-Students for
coming back to talk to us! We hope
your careers prosper in the future,
and good luck!***

By: Jesse Oshogwe & Matilda Jackson



The background of the image features a close-up, soft-focus photograph of thin, dark branches heavily laden with white frost or snow. The branches are scattered across the frame, with some in sharp focus and others blurred. Interspersed throughout the image are several small, solid-colored circles in white and a muted gold or tan color, creating a decorative, bokeh-like effect.

News from departments

BGS Drama Department presents:



Alice



*This show will always occupy a special
place in our hearts*

Alice



Alice
Beautiful show!
The acting was
so great and
so funny!

*So fabulous we saw
it twice!*



*What an emotional performance, it made me smile like
a Cheshire Cat and cry like a Mock Turtle*



You took us all to Wonderland, loved it!!

One of the best BGS plays





Totally
brilliant, words
cannot describe
Alice

It was worth
coming all the
way from
France!

Alice

Amazing
performance with
an incredible cast.
Such Talent and
enthusiasm-
funny/ sad/
brilliant acting







BGS MUSIC DEPARTMENT

Christmas Concert 2023

On Monday 4 December, the music department put on their annual Christmas concert. Featuring ensembles from across the music spectrum, the audience were in for a treat!

Two of our music prefects have written a short review of the concert:

Mrs Goddard

The Christmas concerts that the music department hold every year are always some of my favourite events to go to. This year was no exception. The concert was opened by the wonderful Symphony Orchestra. Performing the songs "Dreams of Fireflies on a Christmas Night", as well as "Let the Bells Ring" and was closed by a brilliant massed item. Where everyone performed the song "It's the most wonderful time of the year". My favourite performance was the chamber choir with their song of "Keeping the Dream Alive". I really enjoyed the harmonies in this piece. Overall, it was a lovely concert and I'm excited for the next one.

Caitlyn Osei-Tutu, Y10



The Christmas Concert (last Monday) was great fun! Many different ensembles including Symphony Orchestra, Senior Choir and KS3 orchestra played many Christmas songs with a variety of instruments. These christmas songs included: Let the Bells Ring (Symphony Orchestra), Ring those Christmas Bells (Senior Choir) and Walking in the Air (KS3 orchestra). All the performances were enjoyable and sounded amazing with all the different instruments and voices. The Christmas Concert was amazing with very distinct, recognisable tunes being performed by everyone across the year groups. Simplicity are important. That's why simplicity is now a trend. By using simple clothes, the aura of natural beauty will be more visible.

Hattie Pigott-Denyer, Y10



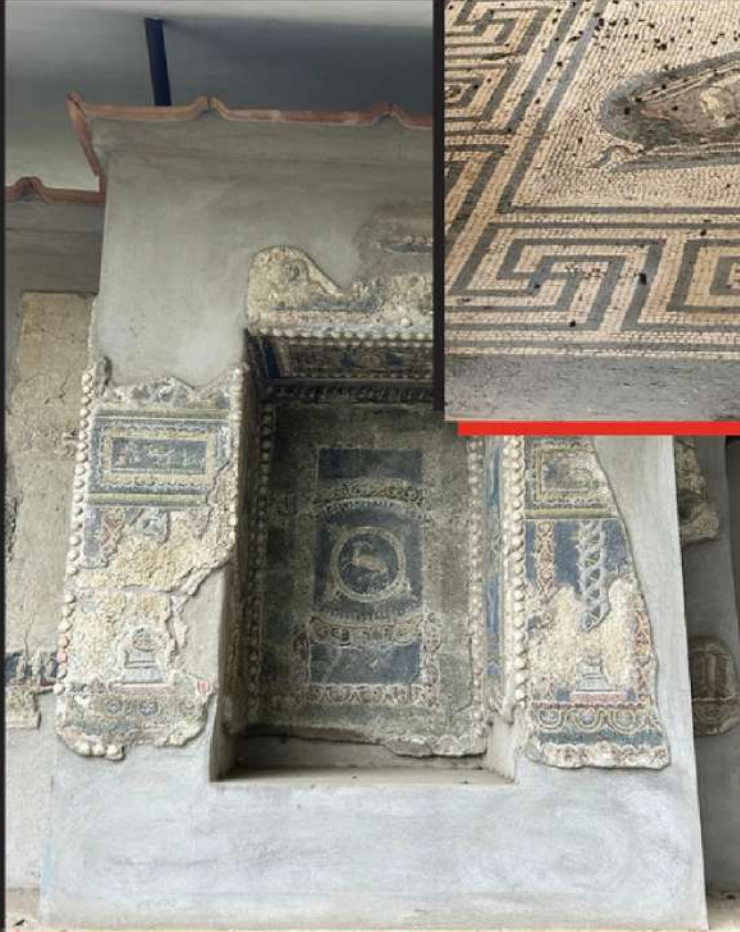
THE CLASSICS DEPARTMENT TRIP TO THE BAY OF NAPLES

Last term between the 20th and 24th of October, the classics department ran a school trip to the bay of Naples which is located on the west coast of Italy.



The trip centred around the possibility of visiting the infamous site of Pompeii and seeing Mount Vesuvius. The eruption in 79AD was a very informative event and helped to inform historians of much of what we know now about ancient Roman life. The eruption of Vesuvius covered Pompeii in the ash and debris from the eruption, causing the city to be preserved in time. On the trip we were able to spend the whole day walking through the old streets and houses, seeing how much further underground we were due to the amount of debris dropped on Pompeii was fascinating. The whole experience of that day was surreal.

We were able to split into groups and wander around on our own, viewing the town and any bits however we liked. There were mosaics preserved, temples preserved and even bread was preserved. One of the best parts about walking through Pompeii was seeing the thermopolia, which were places where a Roman might go for food. These were particularly excellent as they were set up much like a modern bar might be and you could go behind the thermopolium and immerse yourself in the ancient ruins. You could see the mosaics that were carefully hand placed and thought out by someone thousands of years ago. You could see a weights and measures table that they would use to check they would be using the right amount of something.



We also visited many other historic sites such as Herculaneum which was also preserved by the volcano but this time it was better preserved as it was covered in ash not pumice and debris like Pompeii, meaning the second floor of many houses was preserved. I found Herculaneum more special than Pompeii because it felt more frozen: the frescoes and mosaics were so incredibly well preserved. There was even some burnt wood from ancient Rome there too.

We were also able to visit a so called entrance to the underworld which Ms Fisher was educating us all about on the way there [the coach journeys were some of the best bits, not only because we would be getting our own personal tour from Ms Fisher but



We saw old temples and the Sybil's cave. The Sybil was a prophetess for the Romans. We visited many amphitheatres and we even were able to go under one, under which we saw many corinthian columns just strewn across the muddy ground where the fights and shows for the amphitheatre would have been prepared. We were able to sit in the amphitheatres and wander around them freely to explore them. Another site that was visited was the Villa of Oplontis, who was a wife of Emperor Nero and she had this incredible villa with many amazing fresco paintings and mosaics and statues in it. The way all these sights had been preserved by the ancient eruption was astonishing to see in real life after hearing, reading and learning about it for years. It was a very surreal experience.

also because of the views of the volcano and other mountains as we drove around the bay].



Aside from the ancient sites we also had a lot of fun on the trip with bowling on the first night which was a lot of fun to all hang out together, we would also go out for ice cream either by the sea or more in the town square which was incredible. There was a talent show where some excellent talents were presented, such as Joe Turner being able to place his foot behind his head. There was a quiz night one night with some very excellent rounds such as "fruit or vegetable".



Finally, on one of the days we hiked up to the top of Mount Vesuvius, not all the way of course. The view from the top of the volcano was breathtaking, you could see the whole bay of Naples from the top and naturally into the volcano which was also incredible. One thing pointed out to us, by I believe Mr Risdon, was the amount of rock you could tell had been lost by the volcano in its eruptions as it flattens out a lot earlier than you would expect it to following the shape of the mountain. On the way up we learnt about the only eye witness account of the eruption which was from Pliny the younger whose uncle was Pliny the elder.

The Classics conference at Harrodian School.

The classics department also recently organised a trip on the 17th of November for its sixth form students to hear some lectures from some classicists at the Harrodian school. This trip was really good as there was a wide variety of talks given to us, one of them was even mostly Latin. There was a talk on heroism in Homer and Virgil which discussed how Achilles was an unusual epic hero since he was also a poet and a musician. Another talk discussed Oedipus and the meaning of tragedy which offered interesting viewpoints on the naturally very tragic play. Another excellent lecture was on Cicero and "His guide to toppling a dictator" where we got taught that Cicero was the funniest man to ever exist. My personal favourite talk was the one on "Love, Sexuality and gender in Greece and Rome", this was particularly good since it offered new perspectives I had not yet considered. Finally, the talk that had most interested me and the other classics students after receiving the timetable: "Vivat latinitas: learning with active Latin" aka a talk almost entirely in Latin: this exceeded my expectations since despite not having studied Latin since year 9 I was able to follow the talk, partly from my friends but also from the way it was given.

English Department

Dr. Kesewa John Lecture:
Black (her) Stories

Visit at Goldsmiths
University

Recommended Reads



Dr. Kesewa John's Lecture: Black (her) Stories

by Chizara Ofoezie, Year 12 English Prefect

Literature enthusiasts between Years 10s -13s, alongside prefects, ACS members, and teachers had the amazing opportunity to be visited by Dr. Kesewa John, a historian of the liberation movement, intellectual history, and gender, who shared the highlighted black history within fiction and how black history has been marginalised especially in the cases of key contributions of black women.

Here's what some of the attendees had to say:

"She was very informative and sharp in her delivery and was engaging in the way that she frequently asked questions and spoke in different languages. She opened my mind up to many things I hadn't previously thought about and made room for discussions and questions."

-Felicity Bram

"It was very engaging and enlightening to discover the various ways in which history has marginalised Black women within history in order to push forward the narrative of revolutionists and those who made waves in history as males. She also encouraged us to look into the history of various countries rather than learning only the history we are taught."

- C.

Dr Kesewa John's suggested reading:

A selection of Caribbean historical fiction by Caribbean authors offers a different - frequently more intimate - route to engaging with some of the major themes and specific events in Caribbean history, as understood and recounted by Caribbean people.

Peter Abrahams, *A Wreath for Udomo*, 1956

Lisa Allen-Agostini, *The Bread the Devil Knead*, 2021*

Isabel Allende, *Island Beneath the Sea*, 2011

Alejo Carpentier, *The Kingdom of this World*, 1949

Alejo Carpentier, *Explosion in a Cathedral*, 1962

Patrick Chamoiseau, *Texaco*, 1994.

Miriam JA Chancy, *What Storm What Thunder*, 2021

Merle Collins, *Angel*, [1988], 2003

Maryse Conde, *Segu*, 1984

Maryse Conde, *I, Tituba, Black Witch of Salem/Moi, Tituba, Sorcière*, 1986

Edwidge Danticat, *The Farming of Bones*, 1999

Esi Edugyan, *Half-Blood Blues*, 2011

Buchi Emecheta, *The Joys of Motherhood*, 1979

Lauren Francis-Sharma, *Book of the Little Axe*, 2020

Yaa Gyasi, *Homegoing*, 2016

Saidiya Hartman, *Wayward Lives, Beautiful Experiments*, 2019

Merle Hodge, *Crick Crack Monkey*, [1970]

Nalo Hopkinson, *The Salt Roads*, 2003

Nalo Hopkinson, *The New Moon's Arms*, 2012*

Marlon James, *The Book of Night Women*, 2010

Marlon James, *A Brief History of Seven Killings*, 2015.

Marie-Elena John, *Unburnable*, 2006

Cherie Jones, *How the One-Armed Sister Sweeps Her House*, 2021

Suzanne Lacascade, *Claire-Solange, Ame-Africaine*, 1915

George Lamming, *In the Castle of My Skin*, 1953

Andrea Levy, *The Long Song*, 2010

Andrea Levy, *Small Island*, 2004

Dahlma Llanos-Figueroa, *A Woman of Endurance*, 2022

Ayanna Lloyd Banwo, *When We Were Birds*, 2021

Jacob Ross, *The Bone Readers*, 2016*

Leone Ross, *This One Sky Day/Popisho*, 2021*

Jasmine Sealy, *The Island of Forgetting*, 2022

Andre Schwartz-Bart, *A Woman Named Solitude/La Mulâtresse Solitude*, 2001

Lyonel Trouillot, *Antoine of Gommiers*, 2023

Evelyn Trouillot, *The Infamous Rosalie/l'Infâme Rosalie*, 2013

Michel-Rolph Trouillot, *Silencing the Past*, 1995

Mario Vargas Llosa, *The Feast of the Goat/La Fiesta del Chivo*, 2001

Alex Wheatle, *Cane Warriors*, 2020

Alex Wheatle, *Island Songs*, 2006

Anthony Winkler, *The Duppy*, 1987

Anthony Winkler, *The Lunatic*, 1996

Sylvia Wynter, *The Hills of Hebron*, 1962

Tiffany Yanique, *Land of Love and Drowning*, 2014

Kerry Young, *Pao*, 2011

Kerry Young, *Gloria*, 2013

Joseph Zobel, *Black Shack Alley/La Rue Cases-Nègres*, [1950]

Joseph Zobel, *Diabl'a*, 2001

Paule Marshall, *Praise Song for the Widow*, 1983

Pauline Melville, *The Ventriloquist's Tale*, 1997

Kei Miller, *Augustown*, 2016

VS Naipaul, *The Mystic Masseur*, 1957

Ingrid Persaud, *Love After Love*, 2020*

Monique Roffrey, *The Mermaid of Black Conch*, 2020

Jacques Roumain, *Masters of the Dew/Les Gouverneurs de la Rosée*, 1949

Earl Lovelace, *Salt*, 1997

Earl Lovelace, *The Dragon Can't Dance*, 1979

Paule Marshall, *The Chosen Place, The Timeless People*, 1992

* These novels are not historical fiction. They are set in the contemporary Caribbean.



CELEBRATING
BLACK
HISTORY

Visit to Goldsmiths University

The year 13s went on a trip to Goldsmith University on the 21st of September. Let's hear about that experience from one of the attendees:

"On 21st September 2023, my film class and I were invited down to Goldsmiths University. The experience introduced us to the nature of a film course, if studied at university. We were also given the opportunity to witness an ex-student's 5 minute film, highlighting the importance of a simple premise in preparation for our 7 minute collaboration project. When walking around the university, we were made aware of the power of lighting and framing through exploring the equipment. Most importantly, the trip was insightful but also valuable.

The information given by Mr Smith has been incorporated into my film projects and I'm very sure of the projects of my classmates too!"

-Lano

Creative Writing Club

The English Department has been running a Junior Creative Writing club for the younger years 7-10, where every Wednesday the English Prefects pick a chosen theme/topic for them to write about. This is a great club as it gives a gateway and opportunity for creativity as well as individuality amongst themselves. This is also an excellent way for team building as you're sharing your interests with other people who also have a shared interest in Literature. This is also a perfect way to develop confidence in not only your writing but yourself and ideas. Here is what a few members have to say about it:

"I attend a creative writing club because it's fun and that's why you should join too! Writing is nice in your free time because you can do a lot with your imagination. It's fun to let out what's in your mind and create different dimensions. If you are someone who likes writing you should come." - Talhar Kayani, 7JR

"I think that if it is a policy that we have to read a book each library lesson then we might as well obtain the knowledge from the books and splash it out onto a fresh page in our own words." - Kendra Kukunda, 7NMG

"The reason I come to the Creative Writing Club is because sometimes after you've finished a good book, e.g Lord of the Rings you feel a desire for more, for the adventure to continue, but far too often that hunger is not satisfied. This is why I go to the Creative Writing Club: So I can write my own endings and create my own stories so the adventure can continue!" - Alexander Antonio-Barker, 7NMG

"I have been going to Creative Writing Club for nearly a year now and it has been one of the best decisions I made (club-wise). You are allowed to express yourself and have an outlet for your emotions in the form of a poem or a story. Some of my best English assessments have been inspired by some of the language and plot lines used in my writing here. The club has also made me want to read more books and to branch out with different genres. Overall, I recommend giving Creative Writing Club a go!" - Caitlin Gorman, 9CED

Example work:

(set after wartime Germany) originally written in German

German Translation:

Jedoch

Tod

Ist da noch jemand?

Alleine

Mama, Papa, wo bist du?

Zerstörung

Lasst mich nicht allein!

Verwirklichung

NEIN!

Anyone

Death

Is there anyone left?

Alone

Mama, papa, where are you?

Destruction

Don't leave me alone!

Realisation

NOOO!

KENDRA Kukunda, 7NMG

As he was watching TV, his phone rang and there was a man whispering to him "I'm in your house..." Nathan ran to the basement and there he was: BANG! His gun went. He missed. Nathan had a chance to strike back...

Talhar Kayani, 7JR

Winter Wonderland

Snow crunches under padded feet,

Children hop down and made snow angels.

Their faces, laughing, cold, red beacons against the twinkling white.

Fires burn brightly in their hearts,

Their embers writing and and curving into ashes,

A fascinating sight to see.

The tree stands imposingly amidst the comforting atmosphere

Adorned with presents, waiting patiently to be opened.

I calmly breathe in the polar air as I walk,

Walk through this Winter Wonderland.

Caitlin Gorman, 9CED



Senior Creative Writing Club

As well as the long-standing Junior Creative Writing Club run every week by us English Prefects, for the first time in BGS history the English department has also seen and supported the student-led emergence of the Senior Creative Writing Club. Welcoming experienced and newly invested writers alike, this club seeks to further develop confidence and writing skills for those interested in writing novels, for the big screen, for plays or for poetry.

For our first few sessions we've been tackling the Goldsmiths University of London's Young Writers Competition. Confined to just 1000 words, a title and an object in question, we gather to share ideas and advice. It's very laid back, there's no pressure to share your work or to write more than anyone else, it's simply a time and a place for us to meet up and talk about our writing endeavours.

Senior Creative Writing Club is on every Thursday at 1:00pm, and it's also a great opportunity for your CAS. Please email Sophie (jahncke_s@bexleygs.co.uk) if you're interested and would like to join!

Anh Nguyen (Club Attendee)

Poetry Live

On Friday 24th November, a group of 50 Year 11 students went to the GCSE English Poetry Live Conference at the Dominion Theatre. In attendance were approximately two thousand students from various schools. There were a variety of poets from the GCSE poetry anthology, including John Agard, Simon Armitage and Carol Ann Duffy. Here's what some of our lucky Year 11s thought of the experience:

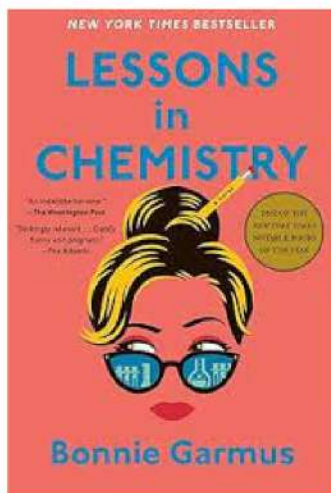
"Agard's poems are enlightening and eye opening"

"One of the poets that struck me the most was Imtiaz Dharker... they vividly depicted the need for empathy and understanding"

"[John Agard] is known for his unique and distinctive style that combines wit, humour, political and social awareness, whilst still retaining his celebratory attitude towards his cultural identity."

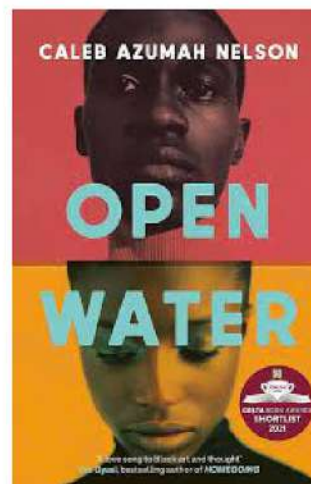


This year's Book Club:



'Lessons in Chemistry' by Bonnie Garmus remains my favourite book so far as it portrays the struggles of women in the 1900s. Elizabeth Zott refuses to compromise to the society's expectations from women and instead she works harder even when it seems like all hope is lost to find her own place as a qualified female scientist. If asked to recommend a book, this is definitely going to be included in my list.

Joy Salau - Y12



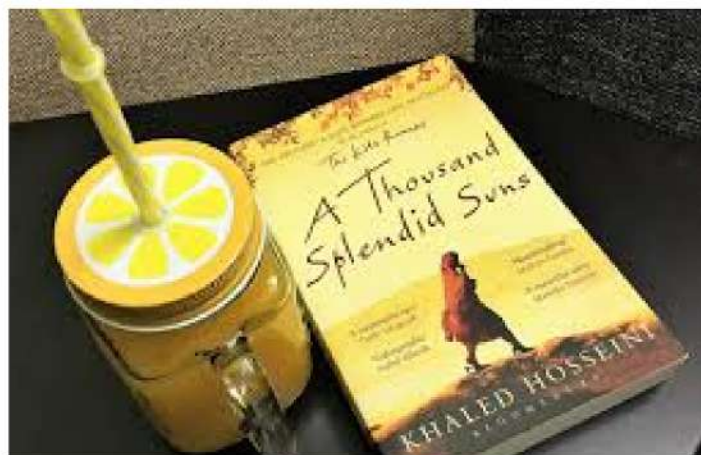
'Open Water' by Caleb Azumah Nelson depicts the romantic relationship between an unnamed photographer and unnamed dancer whilst also displaying black zest in an artistic writing style. Azumah's expressive presentation of the narrative is very unique as he writes in the second person pov and although this was effective in portraying the characters intimacy and vulnerability, this style of writing does not resonate well with me. The level of enjoyment for this poetic book is based on personal preferences.

Book recommendations:

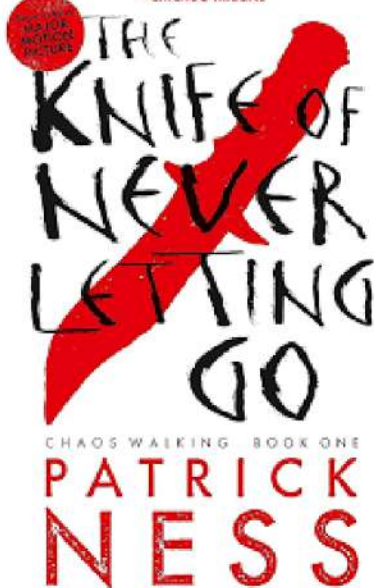
A Thousand Splendid Suns, By Khalid Hosseini, is currently being studied by Year 12s and is definitely a favourite.

It's a quick captivating read, guaranteed to give you insight to a country we only hear about in the media.

About: Mariam is only fifteen when she is sent to Kabul to marry Rasheed. Nearly two decades later, a friendship grows between Mariam and a local teenager, Laila, as strong as the ties between mother and daughter. When the Taliban take over, life becomes a desperate struggle against starvation, brutality and fear.



"A READ-ALONE, STAY-UP-WAY-TOO-LATE BOOK."
—CHICAGO TRIBUNE



'The Knife Of Never Letting Go', by Patrick Ness

is the first book in the 'chaos walking' series.

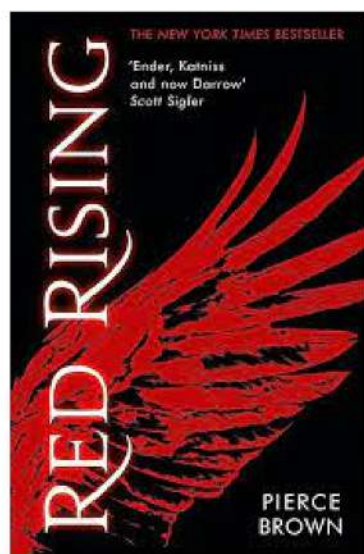
Todd Hewitt is the only boy in a town of men. Ever since the settlers were infected with the Noise germ, Todd can hear everything the men think, and they hear everything he thinks. Todd is just a month away from becoming a man, but in the midst of the cacophony, he knows that the town is hiding something from him -- something so awful Todd is forced to flee with only his dog, whose simple, loyal voice he hears too. With hostile men from the town in pursuit, the two stumble upon a strange and eerily silent creature: a girl. Who is she? Why wasn't she killed by the germ like all the females on New World? Propelled by Todd's gritty narration, readers are in for a white-knuckle journey in which a boy on the cusp of manhood must unlearn everything he knows in order to figure out who he truly is.

'Red Rising', by Pierce Brown

An enthralling sci-fi epic with cyberpunk and roman themings, which depicts a hierarchical society in which humanity is divided on the basis of genetic engineering, with different 'Colours' modified to better occupy a different societal niche, all to the benefit of the Reds who lead and oppress humanity.

The novel surrounds main character Darrow, one of the Reds who toil beneath Mars to mine a precious ore called Helium-3, fed propaganda of how their sacrifice is necessary in order to terraform Mars to make it safe for the rest of humanity who inhabit a dying Earth. When Darrow discovers the truth of his world, that Mars (and much of the solar system) is already terraformed and inhabited, that the sacrifice of his people is solely to pad Gold pockets, he must infiltrate Gold society with the aim of reforming his oppressive society from the inside.

The book is chock full of complex, intriguing characters, with political intrigue and thrilling fight scenes, all within the backdrop of the deadly competition that characterises the first book. A must-read for anyone who enjoys sci-fi, dystopia or space opera.



'The Giver', by Lois Lowry

"At the age of twelve, Jonas, a young boy from a seemingly utopian, futuristic world, is singled out to receive special training from The Giver, who alone holds the memories of the true joys and pain of life."



Christmas Word Scramble



ERET

LENGA

NAŞAT

HYOLL

KOGIŞCTN

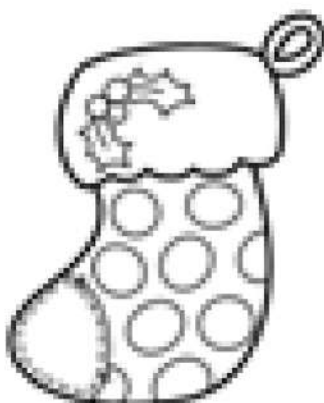
KÜTERY

NTPERŞŞE

HLIEŞG

VLEEŞ

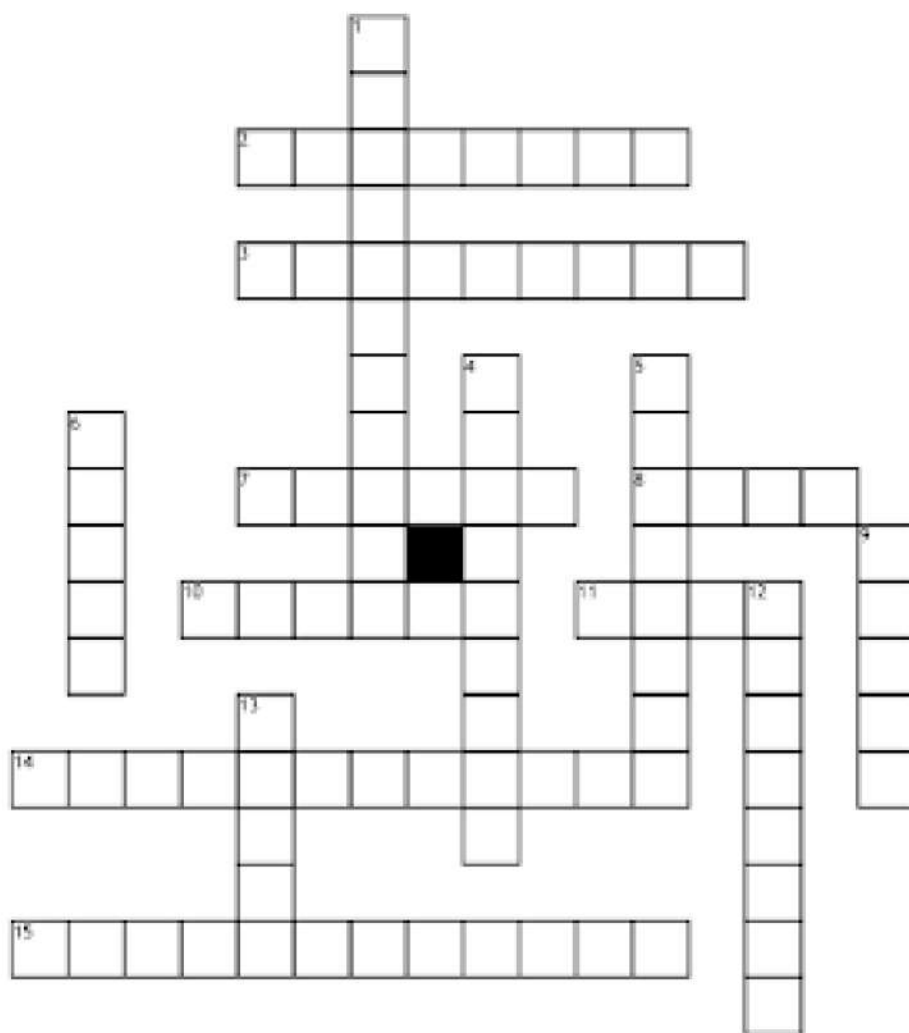
LOŞRCA



www.kidspuzzlesandgames.co.uk



A Christmas Crossword



Across

- 2. The month of this holiday
- 3. Where Santa lives
- 7. A famous character made of snow
- 8. Naughty children get this in their stockings
- 10. We decorate the tree with these shiny strips

- 11. The wise men followed this to find Jesus

- 14. They visited the baby Jesus

- 15. The night before

Down

- 1. We put these on the tree

- 4. The place of Jesus' birth

- 5. A time of no school

- 6. This reindeer's name starts with a 'V'

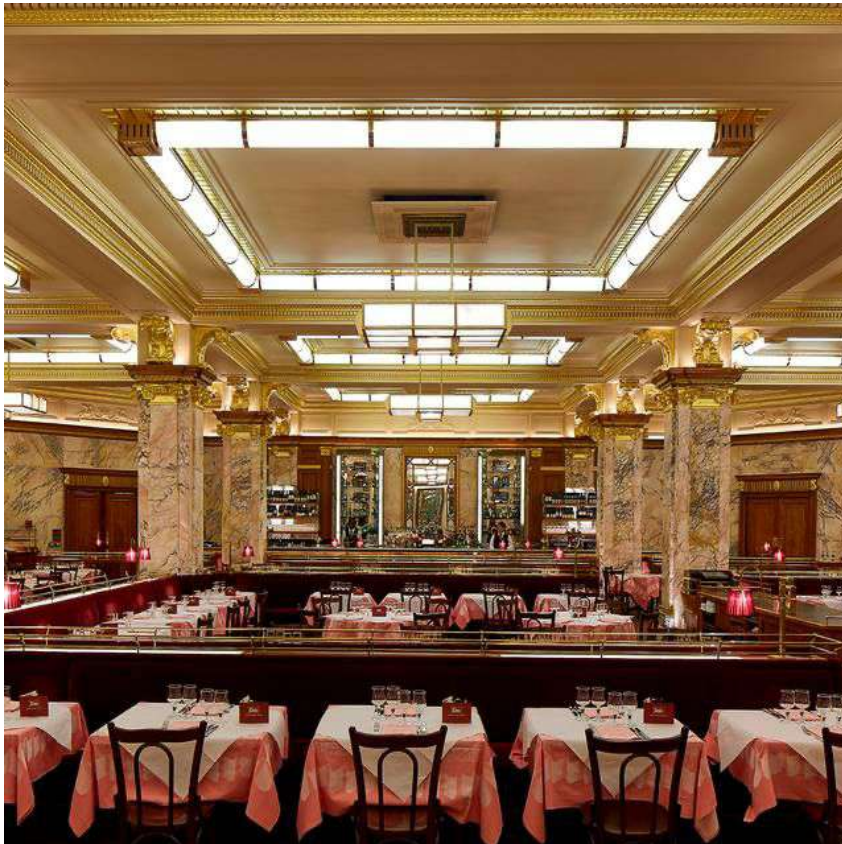
- 9. Mr Claus' first name

- 12. Eight of these animals pull Santa's sleigh

- 13. This holiday celebrates the birth of...

design and technology news

POWER DAY 2023



P O W E R D A Y 2 0 2 3



On the 28th of November we were fortunate enough to have 4 professional chefs come into our school from the renowned French Brasserie Zedel in London. We spent all day with the chefs learning new skills from their expertise. On the day we made three classic dishes which involve lots of different skills to make. The first thing we did was butcher a whole chicken down into the separate parts. This is a key skill which takes a lot of control and precision, which the chefs had taught us. Using the chicken breast we made Chicken Schnitzel (which is chicken breast that is coated in egg, flour and breadcrumbs and then deep fried). With the remaining chicken parts we made Coq au Vin which is a traditional French dish from Alsace which involves deep frying the chicken with herbs while making a sauce using pancetta, mushrooms, cooking wine, our own chicken broth and double cream which is all reduced to make the delicious sauce. After this we began working on a light and aerated chocolate mousse. To make the mousse we had to separate 3 eggs into whites and yolk and we had to melt the chocolate in a bain-marie. The egg white was mixed into a fluffy meringue with sugar and the egg yolk was whisked and then the melted chocolate was added to it. The Italian meringue, egg yolk and chocolate were then mixed together to make the chocolate mousse topped with flaked chocolate. At the end all the food came out delicious and overall the whole experience was fantastic!

Marco Year 10





Happy Manuel



Aliza



Head Chef David



Toby and Leroy



Maxim



Year 11 Prepping for their final exam....



During this week, we were very privileged to have Chef Adam who currently works at Zedel Piccadilly in London to offer his time to come into our school to teach us Year 11 GCSE students the method and skills required to precisely debone a chicken and a fish.

While Chef Adam was in school, he first went through how to debone a chicken. Through each stage of deboning a chicken, he carefully showed us and explained in detail how to do it precisely and properly so that we would not waste any meat that could be stuck on the carcass. After showing us a particular stage such as cutting off the legs, we would then try it ourselves and this allowed us to really focus on what we know how to do and how to do it properly so that the cuts on the chicken were precise.



Following on from deboning the chicken, we then worked on filleting a whole sea bream. Chef Adam first taught us how to clean the fish as the fish was brought from Billingsgate market in the morning and did not go through the fishmonger. It was fairly easy to remove all the organs and stomach. Overall, I personally found the method of cutting the fillets of the fish off was similar to the chicken when you remove the breasts except the fish is on the side.

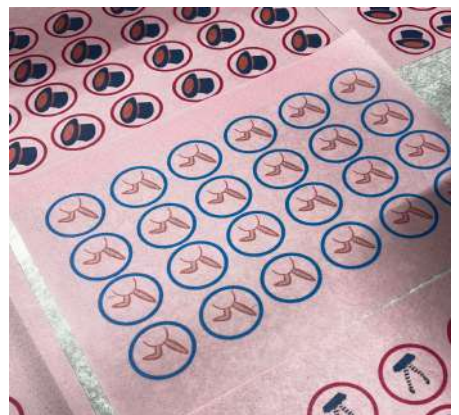
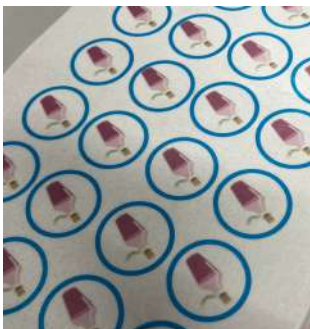
In conclusion, I found this lesson with Chef Adam very fundamental to my cooking knowledge as he was very attentive to when you needed help. This was a very useful experience as it enables me to be able to debone a chicken and fillet a fish fairly quickly and precisely with clear, confident cuts so I am not just slicing away at the meat.

Jessica Year 11

Billingsgate 3.30am



drama and design



We had lots of fun creating the refreshments for Alice from branded mineral water, sweets and chocolate, branded cakes and biscuits. Watch this space as we start to work with other departments and promote our school in the wider community.

Crochet Club with Mrs Soyinka Star Crochet Award goes to....



Shiwen Dui and Chloe Wong

Crochet Club with Mrs Soyinka



This term, year 7 to 10s have been learning the art of crochet. This club is designed to teach new skills, boost confidence and create an opportunity to make social connections. Let's not forget that it is a pretty cool skill and students have quickly figured it out. The result.....some awesome finished work.

The Young Chef's Society with Mrs. Papp
Chef of the term goes to:



Radleigh Pompei

Cooking club with Mrs Papp





From mastering the art of using hobs to crafting intricate gingerbread cookies, the pupils in year 7, 8 and 9 have embarked on a flavorful journey.

Year 7: Exploring the Basics of Cooking

In Year 7, our chefs delved into the fundamentals of cooking. The focus was on understanding how to safely use hobs, a crucial skill for any aspiring cook. Additionally, they embraced creativity by preparing delectable chicken and yogurt flatbreads, showcasing their newfound culinary skills.

Year 8&9: Gingerbread Delight

The older students in year 8&9 embarked on a festive adventure with gingerbread cookies. They learned the intricacies of creating the perfect gingerbread dough and then transformed it into an array of delightful cookies. Adding an artistic touch, the students took on the challenge of decorating their gingerbread creations using royal icing. The results were not only visually stunning but also a testament to the students' attention to detail and creativity.

Cooking Club isn't just about preparing delicious dishes; it's also a platform for students to develop essential life skills. From teamwork and time management to precision and creativity, these young chefs are gaining valuable experiences that extend far beyond the kitchen.

This term cooking Club was a truly enriching experience for all involved. We look forward to more exciting culinary adventures in the weeks to come!



P.E. *news*

AUTUMN TERM 2023

Girls Charlton Academy Football



We've been fortunate to receive support from Charlton Football to inspire girls to participate in football as a part of their drive following on from the Barclays Game Changer. Unfortunately losing in the first round of the Kent Cup against last year's runners up, was by no means a defeat but a learning curve and a step up to 11 aside. All great experiences! More to look forward to in 2024.



Year 7&8 Netball

This term has seen netball grow numbers with 3 Year 7 teams and 4 Year 8 teams. The commitment to training has been excellent with the want to learn and improve. Unfortunately the weather hasn't always been our friend! Plenty of fixtures arranged for the new year with the hope to report some successes.

Well done to Sophia Lewis who has been accepted into the London Pulse Netball academy. Huge achievement!

Thank you to our Year 9&10 volunteers who are working towards their DofE and CAS programme.



Forthcoming tournaments for Year 7 and 8 the week beginning Monday 15th January.



Year 9, 10 & 11 Netball



Our fabulous group of year 9,10 &11 netballers have been a joy to watch this term. We regularly have over 30 students at training, working hard to improve their play. They are a super bunch of students who are motivated and dedicated to Netball.

With lots of wins under our belt, we will be going into the new year preparing for the Bexley Tournaments happening in February!

KS3 Badminton Club

Key Stage 3 Badminton club has seen over 30 students from across year 7&8 attend every other week. The students have been working hard on their badminton skills through game play with their friends. Alex Wong in Year 12 and his wonderful assistants, have been creating fun drills and games to really get the students thinking. Thank you to the sixth form coaches.



James Ng, in year 8, was selected to represent Kent this year- a fantastic achievement. Well done James- we are very proud of you!

In the new year our Key Stage 3 boys squad will be playing in a county competition, aiming to make it through to the next regional round- good luck guys!

Key Stage 4 Badminton

Friday mornings have given the opportunity for Year 9 and above to experience both friendly and competitive play led by our sixth formers. A good end to the week! This will continue after Christmas. Feel free to come along.



PE Lessons

Well done to all students this half term for an excellent term of work in your PE lessons. PE teachers have been looking out for students who have shown a fantastic approach to their PE lessons. A huge well done to:

Isla Egan
Sadie Gardiner
Freya Younis- Jordan
Ruby Hoang
Isabella Mribiha-Ely
Kimran Wariabharaj
Rishi Dahiya
Josh Harris
Rupert Slack
Alice Colaiacomo
Layla Evans
Ayaka Machida
Anna Barnard
Jeeya Viridi
George Bono
Edwin Salyga
Millie Laming
Latika Chandran
Harvey Pang
Yashwin Verma
Harry Weatherley
Ryan Aziza
Misha Krot
Oscar Vivian
Daniel Whitaker
Adam Howard
Zac Linane
Teniola Adeosun
Anthony Brooks
Samraat Neupane



Key Stage 3 & 4 Table Tennis

Every Friday Table Tennis Club has been well attended and the competitive levels have been through the roof! Pupils arrive at school nice and early and are keen to enjoy some relaxed and friendly competitive matches before they shoot off to Registration. This is great fun for all, but also a really useful way of building up their performance levels for those who are considering PE at GCSE. Well done to all those who have made the effort to get out of bed in these cold mornings!

Boys Football

Well done to the Year 7 and 8 football squads. Year 7 have been attending training in huge numbers (despite the fading light) and training under moonlight at times. They are always in good spirits and would keep going until it was pitch black if we let them! We started the year with some of the most challenging fixtures and it was a tough experience for all involved, but they have shown great resilience and team spirit throughout. We have now seen results improve and the highlight was a superb performance against Cleeve Park where we won 4-2.

George Bono (Captain of the Year 7 football team) commented “Our year 7 football team has been a great success, however it took us some time to get used to each other's style of play, but I guarantee there will be many more wins.”



The Year 8 squad have started off the season in fantastic fashion and should be proud of their achievements. Winning games and scoring plenty of goals seems to be the theme. Keep up the amazing work!

Seb Matthews (Captain of the Year 8 squad) commented “So far Year 8 football has been going brilliantly. We have played three games winning every game we have played. Our first game we played Bonus Pastor away and came out with an emphatic 8-2 win. Then in our next game we played Harris Beckenham at home in the cup, we won this game 7-2. We also played Beths Grammar School and won 7-1. We are unbeaten and have had an unbelievable start to the season. Next in the last 16 of the Under 13 Kent Messenger Shield we are playing a strong Thomas Tallis side, which will be a tough test for us.”



The Year 9 squad are currently undefeated this season in both the Kent Cup and the North Kent League. With 2 league games and a Cup match left to play before Christmas it will be interesting to see if the boys can continue this rich run of form. Congratulations to all involved this season so far but particularly Austin who was selected to play for Kent County and to Valentino, Marius, Luke M and George for being selected to play for North Kent District.

Running Club

Week A Wednesday morning running club.....a fantastic way to start your day and it's been a superb turnout for each session this term! At 7.45am we're leaving school and heading for a loop in beautiful Danson Park. Different paced groups ensure that there is a speed to suit all. Thank you to those early birds who have made the running club such a great success and fun this term. All welcome and new participants are encouraged to come along.



Rugby

The rugby teams have been busy this term and, at the time of going to press, there are still quite a few fixtures to complete before the end of term. Highlights for each side have been:

- A brilliant debut win for the year 7 team vs Beths.
- A dramatic 30-25 win for year 8 vs Hurstmere
- The year 9 team romping to a 45-19 win over Bexleyheath Academy
- The year 10 side dropping a fantastic 67 points vs Wilmington GS



After Christmas we will be moving on to lots of new activities, with Year 7 starting their diploma task in Health Related Fitness, Year 8 taking on some creative work in Gymnastics, Dance and Cheerleading. Whilst Year 10 & 11 will continue to rotate through a wide range of different sports.

Have a very Merry Christmas
The PE Department

Christmas Sports Facts from Our BGS Sports Prefects - Sophie Pooley and Jacob Jeffery

Football as a British Christmas tradition

Every year, premier league teams are able to play additional matches over the Christmas period due to the public favourite match days of Boxing Day and New Year's Day alongside their traditional Saturday afternoon fixtures. Throughout Europe, top teams are typically given a two week break during Christmas, however it is a deeply rooted tradition in Britain that the sport be played at this time. It stems back to mediaeval times when early versions of the game were played, particularly on public holidays such as Christmas. Football was even played on Christmas Day during the Victorian era to provide entertainment on people's "day off". Sometimes teams would have to play on Boxing Day as well, meaning that they played two games across the two days, which at the time was extremely popular since it was the only opportunity that many of the working class had to see games.

However, since 1871 these games have been played on Boxing Day, due to Christmas being deemed as a designated day of rest and worship, and from then on teams were welcome to abstain from playing games on bank holidays such as Christmas Day. Nowadays, many teams take advantage of the opportunity to increase their revenue due to the increase in the ability for fans to attend these games, and also for families to watch at home.





Sports Advent Calendar 2023

Memorable events and fun facts



1.

In 2023, Emerging tennis star Carlos Alcaraz won his 1st Wimbledon title as men's champion after defeating Defending champion Novak Djokovic.

2.

In 1888, Everton played (and won) 2 games on Christmas Day! Then, they played another game on Boxing Day, which ended with a draw.

3.

Can you believe that 3 billion Christmas cards are sent in the US every year!

4.

South Africa lifted the Rugby World Cup trophy for the 4th time, after breaking the hearts of all England fans who narrowly missed out on a place in the final.

5.

On Christmas Day 1940, Brighton and Hove Albion FC arrived at Norwich with only 5 players! They asked for volunteers from the crowd to make up their 11, but unfortunately lost 18-0.

6.

Over the festive period, around 6,000 online transactions happen every second as shoppers scramble to buy gifts.

7.

Norway has been gifting England a Christmas tree for over 7 decades to say thank you for the British assistance in WW2. You can find it located in Trafalgar square in London.

8.

All-Blacks player Will Jordan topped the list of try-scorers at the 2023 rugby World Cup with a total of 8!

9.

Santa has a total of 9 reindeer pulling his sleigh. Can you name them all?

10.

Until 1976, no gymnast in Olympic competition had ever scored a perfect 10.0 for any routine. This was done by Nadia Comaneci in the Summer games in Montreal.

11.

In Football, the number 11 shirt is often associated with skilled and agile players who excel in attacking positions.

12.
On the **12th** November 2023, The New England Patriots played the Indianapolis Colts in Frankfurt, Germany.

In a nail-biting semi final match, the England rugby team lost **15-16** to South Africa.

18.
Jack Nicklaus, has had **18** major golf championships. Tiger Woods is still chasing this goal with 15 of his own!

21.
Before 2011, **21** was the amount of points required to win a game of table tennis!

24.
Margaret Smith Court has won **24** grand slam singles titles in tennis!

13.
The **13th** Cricket World Cup took place this year, hosted by India. 10 national teams took part and Australia won!

16.
On the **16th** July 2023, one of the most anticipated events of the year, the Wimbledon men's singles final was played.

19.
The world record for the 200m race is **19.19** seconds, set by Usain Bolt in the 2009 World Championships.

22.
Stuart Broad was the leading wicket taker for England in the 2023 Ashes series with **22** wickets.

25.
Perhaps the most famous Christmas Day sporting event of them all! In 1914, during WWII, German and English troops met in no man's land where they exchanged gifts and played football.

14.
In a game of golf, there are **14** clubs that players are allowed to carry in their bag. The rule is intended to promote fairness among players.

17.
The Los Angeles Lakers and The Celtics are the two NBA teams with the most titles with **17** championships each!

20.
20 years ago this year, England won the rugby World Cup final in Australia! Unfortunately we did not have the same luck in this year's World Cup!

23.
Tennis star Djokovic has won **23** grand slam titles over his 20 year professional career.

**MERRY
CHRISTMAS**

How to keep fit over Christmas- scan the QR code for some home workout ideas!

Fitness workouts

Try these workouts in the garden or in the house for a whole body workout!



Dance workouts

With four different styles of dance workout, there is something for everyone to try here.



Yoga , Stretching and Pilates workouts

If you want a gentle workout to relax your mind as well as your body, these are for you.



Sports specific workouts

Try the below workouts for Football, Netball, Rugby and Basketball. You can do these in your garden- all you need is a ball, a wall and some markers.



Walking & Running workouts

Here are some simple jogging and walking ideas that you can do in the garden or even in the house!

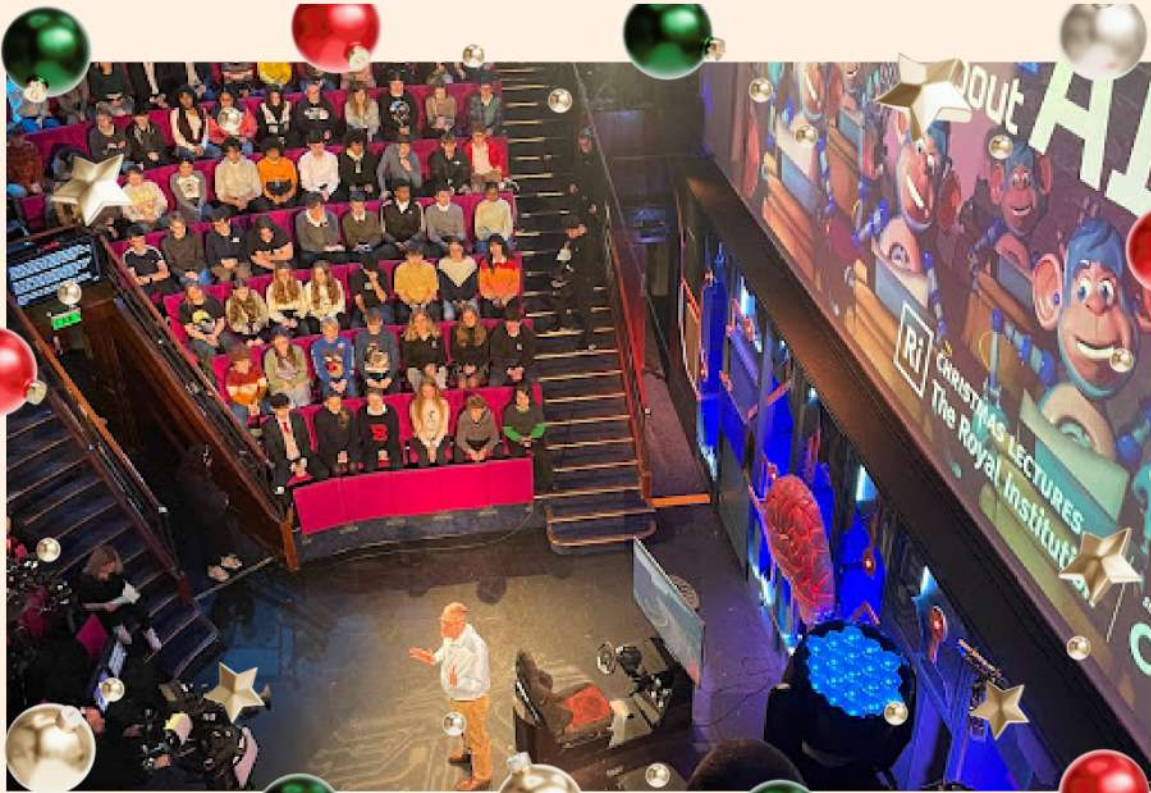


Family workouts

Here are some workouts you can do in pairs or as a family. Remember social exercise can be great fun!



STEM NEWS



HIGHLIGHTS

THE ROYAL INSTITUTE CHRISTMAS LECTURES

DR BEAVAN'S LECTURES

The Royal Institution Christmas Lectures

We were very lucky to win four student tickets to the Royal Institution's Christmas lectures and four students were selected as a treat for their hard work and enthusiasm for science. We had a fantastic time and may even appear on the TV!! Look out for us on BBC 4 over the Christmas Period.

Ms Lusted

The Royal Institution Christmas Lectures this year revolve around AI, specifically how it works, where it's used and where it could lead to in the future. On Thursday 14th December, we attended lecture 2 of 3, which, led by Mike Wooldridge, explored the many ways in which AI is used today and how these mind-blowing technologies can actually teach themselves how to perform a wide range of tasks. By bringing in many different expert speakers and engaging demonstrations, we learnt just how artificial intelligence can quickly learn and improve until it refines itself towards perfection. From looking at how AI in gaming can beat professional drivers, all the way to how it can model the structure of proteins with unprecedented accuracy, this lecture exhibited the versatility of artificial intelligence. As a whole, it provided an interesting and enjoyable experience which ought to be perfect for the family to sit down and watch around Christmas time.

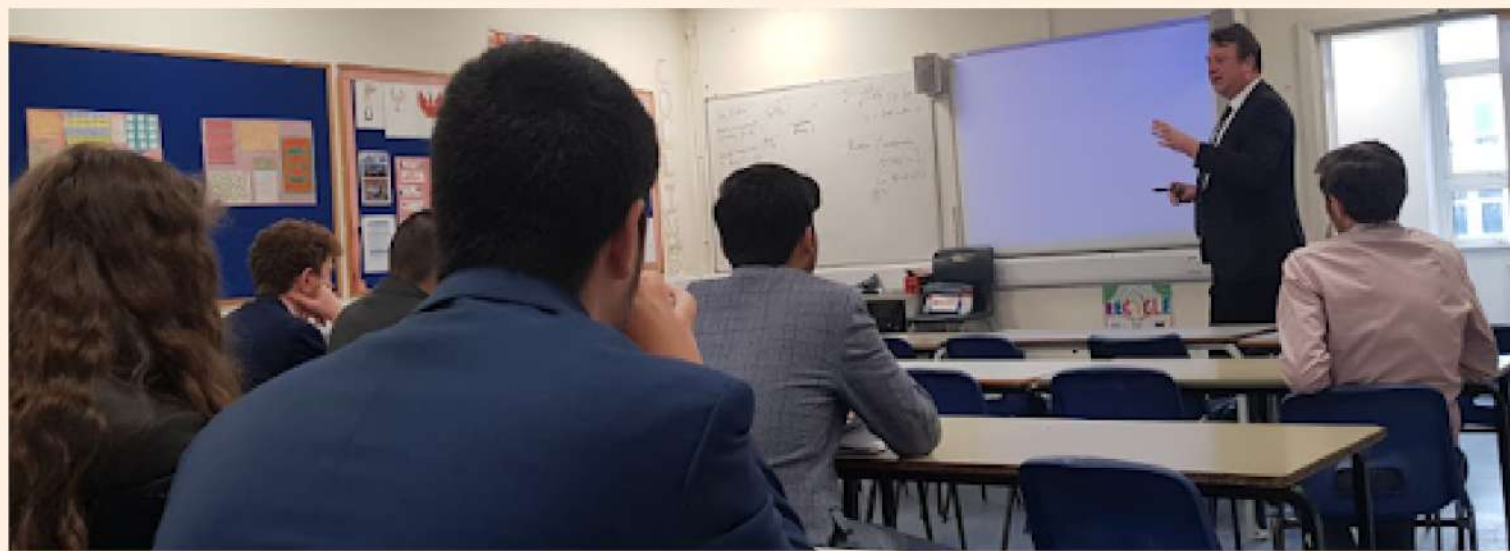
Edward Bourlet 12JJ



Dr Beavan's Physics lectures

Over the past four weeks, Dr Beavan, a maths teacher with a PhD in physics, hosted a series of lectures for year 12 students about Einstein's theory of relativity, which included deriving $E=mc^2$. Across the different sessions, Dr Beavan demonstrated: how speed through time is relative; time dilation; deriving $E=mc^2$; and finally proving $E=mc^2$. In the first lecture, Dr Beavan began by introducing us to a scenario with Albert Einstein and his best friend Emily. Emily was on a train going 25 m/s into a station where Albert was standing on the platform. He also introduced us to the gamma factor ($=\frac{1}{\sqrt{1-v^2/c^2}}$) where v is speed and c is the speed of light; the gamma factor gives the relation between Albert's time(t) and Emily's proper time (τ) with the equation $t=\gamma\tau$ and other high level functions which he then used to prove that speed through time is relative.

In the second lecture, Dr Beavan explained radar coordinates to us and used them to show the positions of Albert and Emily through space and time. He then used this to form equations that related Emily's time to Albert's time.



In the third lecture, Dr Beavan began by using the equation $t=\gamma\tau$ as well as constants (i and j) to then find the relationship between Albert's position in space and Emily's position in space. After several minutes of substituting equations, Dr Beavan came to the conclusion, using momentum ($P=mV$), that $E=mc^2$.

For the final lecture in the series, Dr Beavan used integration and the maclaurin series to form the equation $mc^2=mc^2+\frac{1}{2}mv^2$, which then simplifies to $E=mc^2$.

To summarise, the concept of time relativity is that the faster you move through space, the slower you move through time. The two extremes are moving through space at speed c and not moving through time or not moving through space and moving through time at speed c . The magnitude of space-time velocity is always c (c = the speed of light).

If you would like to find out more about Einstein's theory of relativity, a great book that Dr Beavan suggested is *Relativity A to B* by Robert Geroch or visit the Feynman Lectures website.





For millions of people around the world, this won't be a happy and joyful Christmas. Let us spend some time thinking about the victims of war, particularly children, as we reflect on how privileged we are to live in safety.