



# FLOURISH

– South Hampstead High School –

Climate Crisis:  
Taking Responsibility

Interview with  
Mr Menzies-Wilson

Pride Art  
Competition:  
The Results

Partygate:  
A failure of  
leadership?



# Letter from the Editors

Dear Reader,

Well, here we are. We'd like to officially welcome you to 'Flourish', the final issue of the Penguin from this formation of the team. Between these covers, you'll find the answers to only the most important questions, such as: 'where are the aliens?', 'how can we manage inequality in the face of the climate crisis?', and 'what does Mr Menzies-Wilson really think of the school?'.

Of course, if you're looking for something short and sweet, there is always the ever-popular Overheard @ SHHS, which has been a real... joy... to research. We wish we could unhear some of the things we collected on the 7th floor, but unfortunately, we can't.

You might also spot some old favourites that we've decided to include as we look back on the past year. If you missed Vrinda's 'Lost in (Google) Translation', Ruby's exploration of the artwork of Félix Gonzáles-Torres, or Grace's deep-dive into the benefits of Hydrogen Fuel, you can find them all here.

Right before we begin, we'd like to take a moment to thank all the writers, editors, illustrators and designers who have contributed to this issue – you are truly the heart of the Penguin and make everything come together, every time. A huge shoutout goes to Ella for stepping up this issue and making it as beautiful as it is.

To the incoming team – we wish you the best of luck, and look forward to seeing what you come up with. We also must thank Ms Pearce for her sage advice throughout, as well as Sara Bell and Jo Mason for being instrumental in getting this issue into your hands. And finally, thank you to all our readers for sticking with us this year as we've transitioned to the Wingspan website and experimented with producing more Penguin content than ever before.

Happy reading!

**The Penguin Team**

*Cover design by Penelope, Y13*

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# OVERHEARD @ SHHS

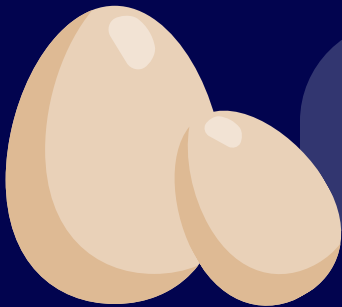
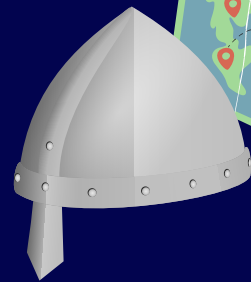
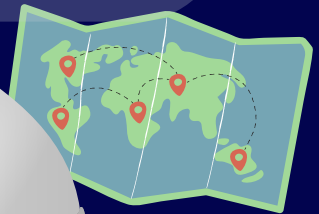
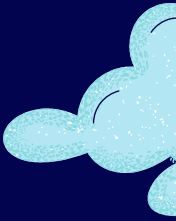
"If my husband isn't Andrew Garfield,  
I don't want him"

"Isn't Monty Python  
an explorer?"

"I'm in love with buff Jesus"

"Jeff Bezos is the human  
embodiment of an egg"

"I sound too posh for my own  
good."





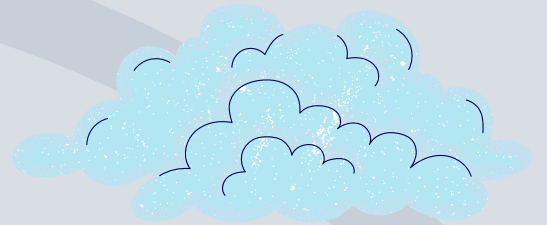
# Small Debates



## Airport Customer Service; The Trials and Tribulations of Italian Sushi

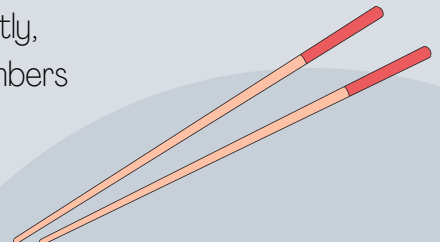
Honestly, although you will be seeing this months after Heathrow lost my luggage, I really felt like it was necessary to complain about it for a bit. After waiting seven hours in an Italian airport, with only sushi to keep me going(!), I finally boarded my plane home only to find that my luggage hadn't boarded with me. What made the situation even more outrageous was that I was forced to find out via Twitter, as British Airways had simply told all of the passengers to keep waiting for luggage that would never arrive. At risk of sounding like a Karen, I must admit that I don't think I'll be flying with British Airways for a while, unless I can see the manager...

#firstworldproblems



## Chopsticks: Do's and Don'ts

OK, OK. I am perfectly aware that I have grown up eating rice and noodles with two wooden sticks, balanced between my thumb and first two fingers. I am also perfectly aware that compared to my parent's and sister's technique when wielding said sticks, mine looks like that goofy reindeer from Frozen. You know, the one who the 'surprise' love interest pretends can speak. But I can still be surprised by the number of different methods the uninitiated attempt in order to transfer morsels of food from their plates into their mouths. At this point I think I've seen them all. There's the 'shovel' method, the 'hold the chopsticks an inch from the tip and pray', or perhaps my favourite, the 'I'll lift my plate up so it looks like I can do this, then surreptitiously just push the food straight into my mouth'. Sorry, but you're not fooling anyone, and you're probably making me cringe more. Honestly, if you reach that point – and this is simply a tip, from someone who still remembers what it's like – maybe swallow your pride and ask for a fork. Please, for everyone's sake, just let it all go.



# Year 11 & 1984 :

As part of English Literature GCSE, Year 11 has been studying Orwell's '1984'. The book is framed as the pièce de resistance of George Orwell's literary career, a shining beacon of truth in an alarmingly totalitarian post-war Europe. However, despite the novel's success and presence on every English teacher's reading list, some of Year 11 have formed a rather negative and critical view of the novel, an attitude that I will now oppose.

For those who haven't read it, '1984' is about Winston Smith, a man living in a totalitarian world, controlled by the strict dictatorship simply known as 'the Party' and its omniscient leader 'Big Brother'. The dystopian novel explores how Winston attempts to find freedom in a world where even your mind belongs to the Party and how, eventually, the Party does catch up with him. The anti-totalitarian themes of the book served as a direct criticism and warning against totalitarian – whether communist or fascist – states.

To start with, I surveyed 30 people in Year 11, asking them if they held a positive or negative opinion of the book. Unsurprisingly 35% chose negative, with some critiques being that the book was 'confusing', 'dull', and an 'annoying story about a man feeling sorry for himself'. My task of arguing against this now felt even harder.

One reason why I am so passionate about the novel is because of how beautiful the writing is. I think it is incredibly well written with a diverse and broad enough lexicon to keep the reader enthralled. Some passages are so beautifully written that I simply had to stop for a moment to take it all in. Not to sound too much like an analytical essay, but Orwell's writing is so vivid that it would be impossible not to totally immerse oneself in Winston's world. I felt the soaring peaks of Winston's rebellions and the swooping lows of his defeats. In fact, the only part of the novel that I did not enjoy was Goldstein's book.

although it certainly doesn't diminish Orwell's literary triumphs throughout the rest of the novel.

One thing that simply can't be ignored is the context of when the novel was written. Our current political climate is different to that of Europe after the Second World War. Russia was a communist and totalitarian country, and Germany was divided into two states. On top of that, the Cold War began in 1947. This conflict, although never involving any open war, threatened the security of people across the world. It is not such a surprise, then, that Orwell was able to envisage a world of 3 colossal superpowers locked in an eternal battle for supremacy. The themes of political control, loss of individuality and repressed humanity that run through '1984' so closely mirrored the political situation of 1949, when the book was published, that the message of the book would have been far more effective and more closely relatable to the feelings of the people who would have been reading the novel at this time.



# why you shouldn't hate the novel

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Besides the political context being different, reading '1984' nowadays, as teenagers in a school environment, so greatly dilutes the meaning of the book that I wonder if we absorb any political warning at all. For those of us who don't feel they have any aptitude for English Literature, the lessons seem to seep slowly by, and the focus is more on its inevitable end than on the subject matter. There is also the natural inclination, especially in school, of teenage girls to be highly judgmental and to criticise and complain about anything that doesn't meet their expectations wholly. This is not an admonishment of my peers, and even myself, but is simply a quality of any teenage generation.

work in conjunction to present and interpret meaning. The reader must shed any bias to lose oneself in the writing and the writer must communicate the message successfully to the reader. Reading the book with a condemnatory mindset or feeling that reading is simply a chore means that you lose any enjoyment and deeper meaning. I think '1984' failed to impress Year 11 mostly due to the circumstance where it was read. At heart the book simply became a means to an end, that end being a 9 in an English GCSE. It is not Orwell's or our teachers' fault that Year 11 has not formed positive opinions of the book and instead is because so many people read it against their will.

***"The most clichéd dystopian novel of all time. Students writing 1984 essays experience more pain than Winston in Room 101. Even Orwell would've felt bad for us after reading the 29th essay on how 'hope lies within the proles'"***

- a Year 11 -

It is also important to shed any belief that the only books worthwhile are books that make you feel happy. The truth is that '1984' is not a pleasant read. Orwell doesn't coddle the reader and lead them to believe that the novel will end in happiness. The book is uncomfortable and gruesome; at times you feel rage, woe and empathy at the gross humiliation inflicted on Winston.

In my opinion, the great success of the novel is that it makes you feel something. I think that if you do not leave a novel feeling anything then the novel has failed. Even if the novel makes you feel enraged due to its poor writing and clichéd plot you at least learn what makes a book better. A book that makes you feel nothing is a book that essentially contains nothing of value. '1984' teaches you that just because a book is tragic doesn't mean you can't gain anything from it.

There is also the question of how to read, to best absorb meaning; in any novel, the reader and writer

For some, there is no passion in the subject of English Literature as it is a compulsory subject, with students counting down the days when they will be able to drop it and never look back. It is understandable that many people didn't enjoy '1984' because they didn't choose to read, let alone study it themselves.

To conclude, I don't want to say no Year 11s thought well of the book, 65% did, but to those who do have extremely negative opinions of the book, I trust that if in 10 years you returned to '1984' of your own volition, you would form a much better opinion. There is nothing our generation hates more than being forced to do something, and for many people, they should have gone to '1984' not vice versa. I am pleased we study '1984' for our exams. I appreciate my exposure to the book and to those who didn't see the point of it, they should certainly reread it. It remains a powerful exploration of what can happen when a society loses its political freedom.

# Partygate: should Boris Johnson be expected to resign, or should we just get over it?

In December 2021, it came to light that during the first national lockdown in May 2020, and in the run up to Christmas that year, there had been numerous parties held at Downing Street. The plot thickened further when it was revealed that the Prime Minister himself, Boris Johnson, had attended various social events. Soon, criticism of the current Conservative government flooded the media and public pressure for Johnson to resign mounted. However, it is debatable whether he actually should. Despite the hypocritical and scandalous nature of his behaviour, Boris Johnson argues that he should be permitted to continue with the job that he was elected to do. Should events within Number Ten be separated from Johnson's role as a political leader in the House of Commons, or do the events of 'Partygate' indicate that he holds values unworthy of leadership?

Although it would be easy to simply disregard Johnson's case, it is important to consider both sides of the story when forming judgements. One must always attempt to understand the other side of the argument. Perhaps leaving this scandal in 2020 could be justified as being for the greater good. After the summary of Sue Gray's report Downing Street's investigation into the parties, had been published on the 31st of January, Boris Johnson delivered a statement to the House of Commons. He apologised for 'the way that this matter has been handled' and what the government 'did not get right'. However, he also expressed a worthy desire to 'get on with the job' that he was 'elected to do'.

At a time when the cost of living has been rising, energy prices soaring and tensions building in Ukraine, it hardly seems effective for the Commons to focus on such a minor scandal. Therefore, one could ask why the weekly Prime Minister's Questions have been

primarily focused on 'Partygate', and not the impending crises that could drastically affect the lives of ordinary people.

Multiple members of the Conservative party have come to Johnson's defence, with Jacob Rees-Mogg, the former leader of the House of Commons, declaring on BBC's Newsnight that people are simply 'quibbling' about a '25 minute' social event, and should move on because 'the Prime Minister has said that he regrets what happened.' This argument does have its merits, seeing as the Downing Street parties occurred over a year ago, and little can be done now apart from offering an apology. Furthermore, Boris Johnson has declared his intention to act upon the recommendations provided in the Sue Gray report, pledging to create 'an Office of the Prime Minister' and 'to review the Civil Service and Special Adviser codes of conduct', to ensure they are properly enforced. His promise made in the Commons to 'fix' the issue and address the root of the problem shows a productive response on the part of Johnson, and an element of remorse. While this apology took around a month to elicit from the Prime Minister, both indicate some degree of maturity and responsibility which support the argument that he should not have to resign.

Nevertheless, many would justifiably claim that Boris Johnson has misled Parliament on various occasions, something which would compel him to resign according to the Ministerial Code. On the 12th of January, the leader of the Opposition, Keir Starmer, declared that Johnson's actions had been in 'breach





of the ministerial code', and that as a result he should 'do the decent thing and resign.' Johnson has thus far been able to escape such accusations, since the Speaker, Sir Lindsay Hoyle, has repeatedly corrected MPs who say that he has purposefully misled Parliament. However, the evidence that Boris Johnson has behaved in a way that is less than honourable adds up to create a pretty damning case.

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On the 8th of December 2021, he told the House of Commons that 'all guidance was completely followed in Number 10,' yet numerous photos have since emerged of parties in the Downing Street Garden, as well as email invitations to events where attendees were instructed to 'bring your own booze.' Both suggest that guidelines were, in fact, not followed at Number Ten. Moreover, Boris Johnson's later admission that he attended a party at Downing Street on the 20th of May 2020 implies an awareness that social distancing rules were being broken. Yet Johnson was somehow allowed to clear himself of all guilt by declaring 'nobody said that this was something that was against the rules.' As the man who announced on the 23rd of March 2020 that people must 'stay at home', this seems somewhat hypocritical, if not downright alarming. Shouldn't he know and obey the rules, since they are his own?

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The issue is then raised of whether a leader who is reluctant to admit his own wrongdoings, and take accountability for them, is the leader that the British public needs or deserves. Although members of his own party have confirmed that he was only at the gathering for 25 minutes, this was 25 minutes too long, especially since the gathering was not even allowed under restrictions at the time, and so should have been stopped immediately. It is mildly concerning that Johnson could not make the same sacrifices he expected the public to make, thus failing to lead by example. The British public have demonstrated before that it does not appreciate it when politicians adopt a policy of there being one rule for them, and another for everyone else. In the 1997 general election the Conservatives lost power, partly due to a media storm in which they were branded as being full of 'sleaze' and hypocrisy.

John Major had made a speech calling for the British public to 'get back to basics', focusing on maintaining or renewing traditional family values, yet numerous accounts emerged of members of his party not doing the same. Consequently, the Labour party was voted into power with a 179-seat majority. If this example demonstrates anything, it is that a leader is expected to behave with decorum and honour. In recent months, it is unclear whether Boris Johnson has exhibited such virtues, forcing MPs to extract the truth from him like squeezing blood from a stone.

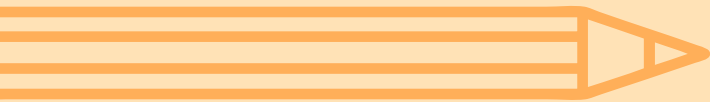
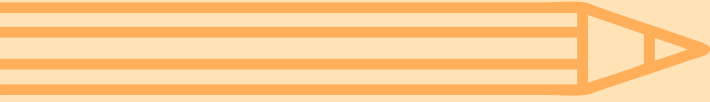
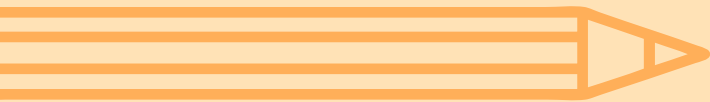
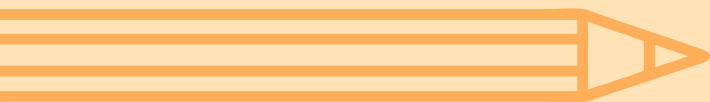
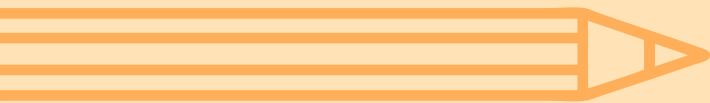
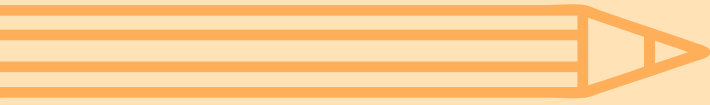
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In conclusion, as a member of the British public and not Parliament, there is very little that you or I can do, until we are able to vote and express our views in a democratic manner. Between elections, since we live in a representative democracy, the fate of the country is in the hands of our local MPs. As a result, it is only if 54 letters of no confidence are sent to the Conservative Party's 1922 Committee from Tory MPs that Boris Johnson will face a no confidence vote, which could possibly trigger his resignation. As of the 9th of February, there have only been 9, and so this seems to be unlikely. Despite this, I will say that Boris Johnson's behaviour in recent months, especially his continuous skirting around the truth, is not behaviour I would expect of a leader. British democracy is founded upon pillars of honesty, accountability, and an expectation of the governing party to maintain the unspoken 'social contract'. If a government does not act in a way that indicates a desire to serve those who have elected it, trust in the government is eroded, and British democracy is fatally undermined.

By Lola, Y13

# An Interview with



**Firstly, for anyone who doesn't know you, can you introduce yourself?**

I'm Mr Menzies-Wilson, I am the DT Technician at the school, and I also teach some physics!

**What do you like about SHHS so far?**

I really like the number of creatives that we do, I think that the fact that we have access to art, DT, and music but so much through KS3 is really cool. It's not something I had at my school, and I think it's a really exciting part of the curriculum.

**Anything you don't like?**

Tricky question, kind of thing you get asked in a job interview... being asked tricky questions that I can't answer!

**So, you're training to be a teacher, what's that like?**

It's interesting having been through the school system, looking behind the curtain at what it's like to teach, it's been fun, it's been incredibly rewarding. I really like the high energy in a classroom, it's fun when ideas are pinging around – that's really cool. We had a lesson on penguins that one of my Year 7 classrooms got really excited about – just the concept of penguins huddling about – they were so sweet.

**Do you have a favourite part about physics?**

Good question, my background is engineering, so I think medical machines are really cool, MRI scanners or X-rays. It's astonishing how much we can know about the body without cutting it open, all of its external systems that you can see the internal side of. My favourite example is you can see images using an MRI scanner of a beating heart, in a resolution detailed enough that you can see valves – it's really cool.

**Is there anything about the subject you wish was taught that isn't?**

I would love to have been hands on with cars or other mechanical machines that fuse DT and physics together. There currently isn't the space for it in the curriculum but I think learning through practical application would be amazing.

# Mr Menzies-Wilson

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**Obviously, your other subject is DT – is there a project you'd like to do in the workshop?**

I mean I love the days that I'm hands-on, helping out in the workshop, they're wonderful. When you have a class full of Year 7s chopping up pieces of wood to make joints, it's so much fun and watching the learning process through the physical – holding a saw or a piece of wood like: 'I know this, I can work it out,' it's really fun.

At home I'm building a camper van; at the moment, it's very early stages so it's currently a shell but it's in the process of becoming a camper. I've just cut the holes in the wall for the windows. That project oscillates in how much fun it is, there are points where you can't solve a problem and it's the worst, or days where you don't understand, and some when suddenly the clouds part, you fix something, and everything is wonderful again. I think that's kind of the nature of DT a bit.

**A bit random, but do you have a favourite tool in the workshop?**

Hahaha! Probably... a sharp pencil. I think from the design side it's all about using pencils to design and then when you get into the tool side of things accurate manufacturing and fabrication – without a sharp pencil it's game over. The back of my ear has a ghost pencil there, it always feels like I have one and when I don't, I can feel it!

**Either in DT or physics is there anything you really want to learn, or do you feel you've got a pretty good basis?**

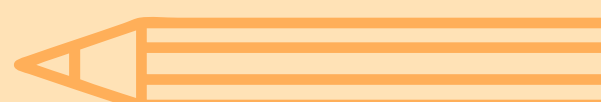
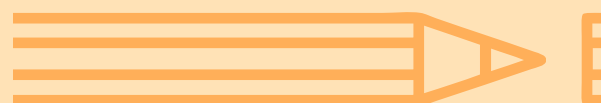
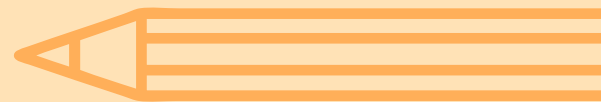
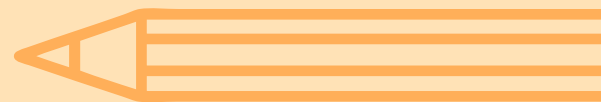
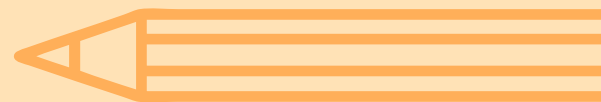
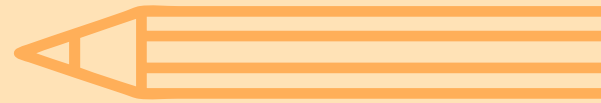
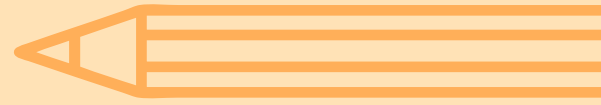
Always, yes. I think learning doesn't stop at school. I suppose I've got two goals: having as much fun as possible and learning new information. It's exciting! Expertise is so specific and narrowed, it means you're never an expert in almost everything. There's always so much to learn.

**You're doing singing in the Grade One Challenge, how's that coming along?**

Martha's a natural teacher, she's exceptional, an amazing singer. We've just about got past the stage of her playing a note and having to tell me whether to sing up or down... just...maybe. It's still progress! It's been really fun; I cannot speak more highly of her as a teacher.

**Finally, any messages for the school or favourite bits of it?**

Can't think of a message but the lunch time bread. You know, the chef gets here at 5 every morning to make that – that's pretty cool.



# A Taste of Latin America

Latin America is made up of a variety of ancestries, ethnic groups, and races, making the region one of the most diverse in the world. It is full of culture, traditions, festivals and is known for the hospitality and happiness of its people. Latinos are also famous for dancing, music, varied and flavourful food, breath-taking tropical landscapes, and beautiful beaches. I feel that Latin American culture isn't talked about enough and many people have a rather superficial view of Latin America and its unique, distinctive culture. I'm writing this article with the purpose of giving you a better idea and taste of Latin America, being Latina myself.

Latin America is loosely defined as the nations in the Americas and Caribbean whose residents predominantly speak Spanish or Portuguese - two of the many languages descended from Latin. The terms Hispanic and Latino are commonly used interchangeably, but hold different meanings: Hispanic is a term consistently used by government agencies to describe someone from a Spanish speaking country whereas Latino describes someone who is from Latin America. A good example is Brazil: people in Brazil speak Portuguese, but they are still Latino, as Brazil is in Latin America. Then there is Spain, where people do speak Spanish, but it is not a Latino country because not only is it not part of Latin America. Many people can be both Hispanic and Latino, like me, and many are just one of the two.

Latin America has an extensive history of indigenous cultures, European colonisation, African slavery, and global immigration. There is a very large indigenous population in Latin America, with more than 50 million people from Amerindian descent (someone who belongs to one of the groups of people that originally lived in the Americas before the Europeans arrived). The largest ethnic group of the indigenous people is the Quechua people, some of whom can trace their roots back to the Incan Empire.

However, the majority of people in Latin America are a mix of both European and Amerindian ancestry, known as Mestizo.

According to the Pew Research Centre, due to the Transatlantic slave trade, about 130 million people of African descent live in Latin America.

Numerous countries such as Brazil, Colombia, Venezuela, Dominican Republic, Cuba, and Panama have African roots. Afro-latins also make up a large portion of the population and the presence of African heritage is most visible in art and music. For example, Reggaeton, (a music style that first came to be in Puerto Rico, invented by black Panamanians during the 1990s) blends Jamaican reggae and dancehall with American hip hop, rap, and the Latin American beat.



It is by far the most popular style of music in the region today and is a unique mixture of many cultures. In addition to this, in the 19th and 20th century, Peru and Brazil welcomed a large number of Chinese and Japanese immigrants, with Asian Latinos now playing a big role in these countries' food, politics and much more. Lastly, after the Second World War, many Europeans fled to Latin America for safety and in order to start a new chapter.

Latin America is just such a beautifully diverse mix of so many different types of people. There are plenty of different flavours of Latinos everywhere and, with most of our nations having gone through similar historical and cultural development, we have this single cultural unification. As Latin America has a huge geographical area (almost three times that of Europe) and natural barriers like the Amazon Forest and the Andes Mountain Range, there are also many differences across Latin America countries; each country has its own feel and is unique in its own way. But there are many similarities across all these nations which unite us all as the Latino community. An important thing for me is that what makes you a Latino isn't about the way you look, it's about the way you grew up, the way you behave and the values you hold.



One of the foremost concepts is that of 'familismo', which covers the importance of family. Family is such a significant part of life for Latinos. Spending time with family, supporting and being there for each other is vital for us. Latino families are usually very large with extended families being common. We are always up for a party and celebration!

We also love being together with friends and having family around for food, with the music at full volume. Dance is also important, not only as a means of entertainment but as a part of our identity, which brings us together. Latin American dance styles are some of the most energetic styles across the world such as the samba, salsa, merengue, and tango. I'm not saying that all Latinos are professional dancers but it's something that is introduced to us from a young age and well, we got rhythm, what can I say!



In general, Latin Americans are happy people that love to enjoy life and are also very friendly and welcoming, even with strangers. It doesn't matter who you are or where you're from, there's no social barrier. In addition to this, we are proud to be hardworking people, regardless of the background. You don't expect things to be given to you and so we give everything our all, especially in order to provide for our families.



By Clarissa, Y10



lost in translation I



It's safe to say that in the first years of learning a new language, many of us have experienced the panic of frantically scribbling down the final lines of a forgotten French essay on mes loisirs, or, (an MFL department favourite), a Spanish essay on las vacaciones, just minutes before the bell rings for period three. Every hastily scrawled word grows less legible, whilst you distractedly grapple with pangs of mourning for the sacrificed canteen cookie you had promised yourself. In frenzied moments like these, we have all, at some point, conceded and turned to Google Translate for a sentence or phrase. But just how reliable is this 'multilingual neural machine', used by half a billion people every day? And, in years to come, could Google Translate make human translators obsolete?

If you have ever wondered just how Google Translate works, it does so by scouring an enormous database of translated material, whilst searching for linguistic patterns and measuring the frequency of word pairings between languages. Interestingly, three of the principal sources for the gathering of the gathering of its data are the Bible (since it has been translated into 700+ languages around the world), documents from the UN and the

EU, and surprisingly mystery novels, too. When a foreign language text is entered, the site first translates the text into English, and then switches into the requested language, using its many pairings.

It should be acknowledged that, in spite of people's qualms about it, Google Translate can be a facilitating and enabling site. It offers free, rapid and relatively accurate translations, and unlike human translators, the site is available to its users 24/7. What it lacks in accuracy, it compensates for with its speedy translation skills. When it was first launched a decade ago, Google Translate only supported translation between English and Arabic; now, the number of languages has grown considerably, including languages such as Luxembourgish, Persian and Zulu. If you were to judge solely by this seemingly diverse selection of languages I have just mentioned, you might be quick to assume that Google Translate is a very inclusive and representative site. But in truth, more than 7,000 languages exist in the world, 4,000 of which have written scripts. Google Translate, however, is only able to translate just over 100 of them (a meagre 2.5%), reflecting the lack of representation and its Eurocentric focus.

Even if Google Translate were someday equipped to translate every language, what it vitally lacks is emotional intelligence, cultural awareness and sensitivity that is situational. This can be seen in lots of foreign words which are untranslatable from their language, since there is no existing equivalent in English. For instance, if you type into Google Translate the Spanish word *sobremesa*, you are given 'desktop' or 'on table' as its literal translations. Although accurate in some contexts, these translations have robbed the word of its cultural meaning and significance. The concept of *sobremesa*, is the time spent together after finishing a meal, to relax, share stories and jokes, drink copas and enjoy each other's company. This is a beautiful part of Spanish culture, but its resonance, like that of many other such customs, is greatly diluted in online translation. Another such example is the Swedish word *gökotta*, which refers to the rather wholesome practice of waking up at dawn to listen to birdsong. In this case, Google Translate offers no translation at all, although perhaps leaving the word untouched is better than a mistranslation which alters its essence altogether.

Each language has a distinct individuality, shaped by cultural influences and the idiosyncrasies, of an every-changing society. A true understanding and feeling of immersion within a culture isn't attainable vicariously, with Google Translate as the medium. These things require human skills – whether they be hearing and interpreting the inflection of words, observing the emotion with which they are spoken, or recognising the context.

“

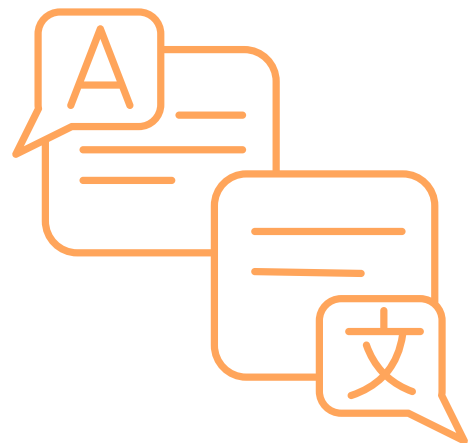
The limits of my language  
are the limits of my world

”

- **Ludwig Wittgenstein**

It is possible that one day in the future, artificial intelligence will have the capacity to seamlessly capture the nuances of culture, emotions and context in translation. But this can only occur once the 'brains' which fuel machines have developed a receptivity to feelings and have harboured experiences, in a way mimicking us and our mannerisms. For now, merely being human initiates the deconstruction of the daunting language barrier.

In an increasingly interconnected world, the ability to understand a foreign language is truly invaluable. At its core, it offers us an enriched understanding and connection with people different than us, through the words that bear the past, present and future of a culture.

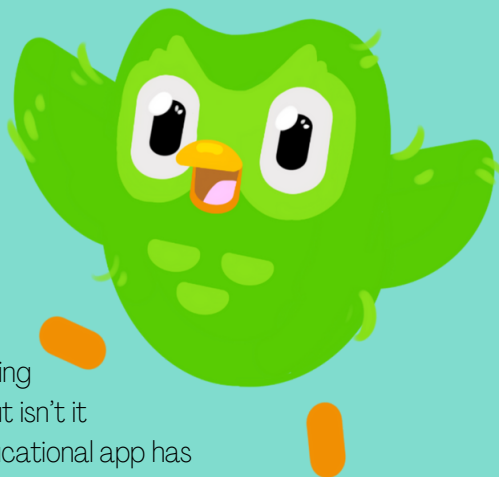


By Vrinda, Y12



# WHY YOU SHOULD GIVE DUOLINGO ANOTHER CHANCE

A disclaimer: no, I'm not sponsored by Duolingo and yes, I do accept that the slightly sinister threats of what will happen if you don't practice Spanish can leave you waking up in a cold sweat. However, putting all of that aside, isn't it actually an amazing resource? I constantly hear comments about how the ads suck, it's not a good tool and the options are limited. That's why I've come here, as Duo's representative, to tell you why I think you should give it another chance.



Firstly, let's address Duolingo plus. Ads are annoying on any platform, but isn't it fair that a free educational app has to get money from somewhere? If you're looking for a long-term commitment, I think that the plus version is worthwhile as it makes language learning far easier when you don't have the threat of running out of hearts and having to restart lessons. But the free version can also be a great solution! The main functions of the language are still there, and you won't miss out on any techniques or skills.

A common misconception about Duolingo is that it only teaches you a language on a shallow surface level and if you're looking to learn a language properly, you would be better off buying some textbooks and moving abroad. Hopefully you're not expecting the app to make you completely fluent in any language, but there's actually a lot of grammar that it has to offer.

Whenever you start a new module, a 'tips' option comes up above starting a new lesson and if you click it, you'll find loads of verb tables, language rules and information about pronunciation, all tailored to your specific language. Languages with a different character system, like Hebrew and Mandarin also have a separate tool where you can test yourself on the alphabet with only a few letters at a time.

Whenever I bring up the dreaded name of 'Duolingo' at home, my brother will rejoice in the opportunity to complain about the way it gamifies language learning. "It's forcing you into an endless addictive cycle!" he'll exclaim, repeatedly stating that "everything it does is only to keep you coming back!"

One of his frequent examples of this is the well-known 'streak', which updates every day you use the app. I have frequently reminded my Dad that I hold more language-learning weight because my streak is a few hundred days longer.

If you want to invest your life's work into mastering a language, you can do so by paying for the in-app currency of 'gems' to gain more time in the challenges, purchase streak 'freezes' which allow you to maintain a high streak without having to practice every day or even buy Duo (the bird mascot who guides each lesson) various outfits to wear!





However, having that sort of status and commitment isn't the main reason that most people use Duolingo. In the end, it's still just a language learning tool, and those people aren't going to learn the language any faster than you are, even if their Duo wears a tux!

Another way of showing status and prestige on Duolingo are the 'Leagues'. Leagues are essentially one more tool to hook people in. You start in the lowest league, the 'Bronze League', and are placed in a group of around 30 people. You will have to gain more points than the majority of your group in order to either get promoted or demoted to another league at the end of the week. Duolingo uses AI technology in most of its features so it's likely that some of these people might be bots, or are at least specifically filtered to encourage you to practise more as you're so close to overtaking one of them.

An advantage to Duolingo over other apps is that it can accept feedback. In the discussion forums mistakes in the questions can be flagged and lead to things being looked into and changed.

This also contributes to Duolingo being regularly updated and ever-growing, which is important for any business, but especially for one that is all about languages which are constantly developing and changing.

Finally, in the 'stories' function where you can follow discussions and conversations between people to practice your listening skills, many characters are shown to be LGBTQIA+. These stories then follow their romantic relationships in a way which doesn't focus on their sexuality. It may only be a small step, but hopefully in the future more apps will also include this kind of representation!

Putting the slightly-menacing green bird aside, the app naturally isn't for everyone. However, even if I've dispelled just a few misconceptions about Duolingo to you, I consider my job done.

Written and Illustrated  
by Amalie, Y10





# — A Diary of — Year 11 Mocks

Ah yes, mocks. The time I have dreaded and despised since the moment I entered this school as a Year 7. What clear memories I have, walking through the atrium and taking heed of the dangerous ‘Silent!’ signs, with letters as red as the one given to Hester Prynne. I always wondered with trepidation what went on behind those ill-omened doors, which seemed to lead to certain doom, and as Year 11 loomed ever nearer, the intrigue of the mysterious exam room grew ever larger. Well, never fear, lower-school dwellers, today is the day you find out once and for all what exam season is really like.

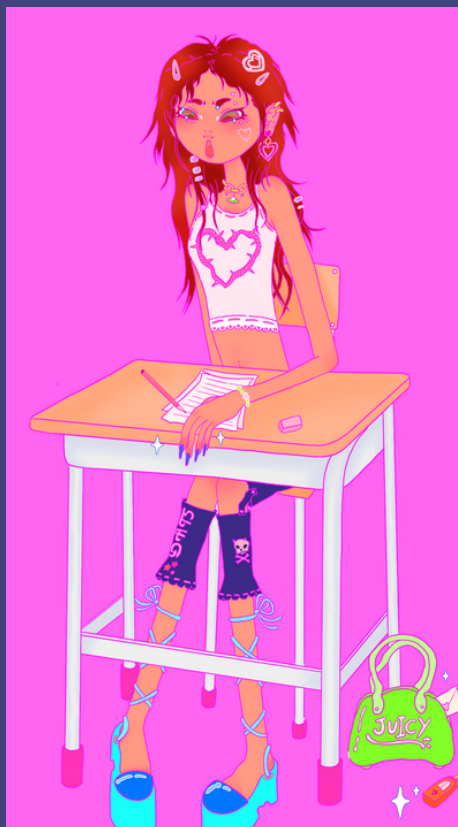
## Wednesday 5th: Day One

Cautiously, I entered the building; I had never been quite as unsure of my position in school until that moment. All of a sudden, the natural order had been flipped on its head and I was like a fish flopping on a pavement- it was like I was in Year 7. Immediately I was ushered to the Sports Hall with others from my year to do a COVID test – a sign of the times.

Downstairs there was pandemonium. Picture it: a gaggle of panicked and sweaty sixteen-year-olds, all shouting equations and parroted lines from the Physics AQA syllabus at each other. My friends quickly whisked me away for some last-minute tutoring sessions – welcome back greetings be damned.

This purgatorial state ended quickly, however, and it wasn't long before we were escorted to the atrium and queued up in a specific order: those with access arrangements (use of laptops) to the front and extra timers just behind, everyone taking separate science queued in alphabetical order with those taking combined science at the back.

We filed in and entered the hall to a jungle of desks. There were rows upon rows of them with examiners prowling down the aisles ready to stop the first glimpse of any cheating attempt. Once we were seated, the formidable Mrs Greengrass read the exam rules (rules that I would hear so many times over the next two weeks) and before we knew it the exams had begun...



## Friday 7th: Day Three

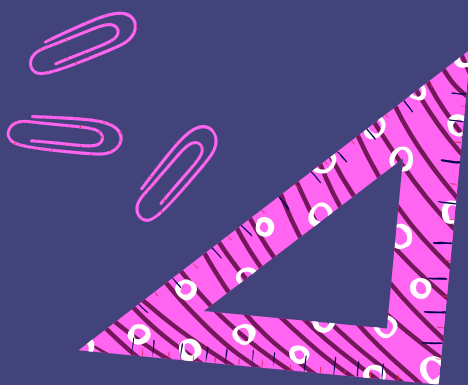
By this point we had adapted to the new schedule. We came to school at irregular times, left the building when we wanted, lived in sweatpants, one girl even ordered pizza to school. Everyone had to come into school because of the first English Language paper. This exam is one of the most gruelling: a 1 hour 45 min. paper where the only rule is: don't stop writing for a second. Almost 2 hours may seem like a long time, but the time runs out faster than my will to live on a Monday morning. When we filed out, Mrs Greengrass gave us a firm warning to not talk on the stairs and as I came down the steps towards the canteen, I held my tongue.

Then the post-exam hysteria struck; everybody recalls (yells) the entire exam to their friends. There are tears, shrieks and hysterical laughter. I feel sorry for anyone in the music corridor during exam week given the racket we made. The only thing that kept most people together that day, I imagine, was the fact that it was the weekend and we had just survived the first week of exams.

## Tuesday 11th: Day 5

The day had come, the day I had been most apprehensive about. It was my most demanding and draining day: English Literature in the morning, followed by Geography and a ninety-minute-long Drama paper to top it off. I left the English exam feeling the increasingly common paranoia that everything I had written was trash and that I was destined for mediocrity - little did I know that it would become worse.

Geography began normally and I was breezing through my Rivers and Natural Hazards paper, until a terrible pain took hold of me. Waves of nausea gripped me, and I felt intense pain in my lower abdomen. I could hardly think straight, but I gritted my teeth and got through it, only getting through my afternoon Drama paper with a cocktail of Paracetamol and Panadol. If there was one thing I learned that day, it was to be resilient and allow nothing to get in the way of my exams.



## Friday 14th: Day 8

I must be honest in saying that I attribute the absolute disaster of this day to my own stupidity. Rather optimistically, I had arranged to play squash at the Swiss Cottage Leisure Centre right after my German speaking exam and before my German written paper. However, I mixed up the time for my speaking appointment, accidentally arriving five minutes late and having to reschedule, for 11:55. Ten minutes after my squash match ended.

As it turns out, I am awful at squash and as I was running back to school in my heavy winter coat and pink and white gym outfit, I was really questioning my life choices. However, disaster struck when I reached school, when I realised that I had lost my mask and I ran from the third to seventh floor with my photograph for my speaking exam covering my face like a flimsy veil, with a picture of a family doing chores on the front.

Thankfully my exam went well and I was on time, but I still had to last through the written paper, an excruciatingly long test that everybody finished at least half an hour before the time was up. Despite the sub-Arctic temperatures outside, the classroom felt like a drowsy, mid-July hotbox; one of my friends even settled down for a nap.

## Tuesday 18th: Day 10

It was the last day of an exhausting two weeks of exams. I entered school later, since I only had an afternoon Maths exam (as Ms Aneja says, why do they always put Maths exams at the end?) and arrived to a quiet third floor common area. The atmosphere had become quite subdued, as everybody was starting to realise that the routine we had inadvertently fallen into was coming to a close.

As we all left, I could sense everyone breathing a collective sigh of relief and most of us headed straight home for a night of vegging out on the sofa. The next hurdle was, of course, getting the papers back and theorising about what everyone's scores would be, but for now, we all just focused on getting one night of complete relaxation, before it was back to the grind again.

## 1 month later:

It has been a while since the exams ended, and I feel we have collectively healed from that intensive exam experience. I was quite lucky, sitting only 16 papers, as I take creative subjects which are assessed differently. Some people had up to 22 exams and I'm sure they had a far worse time than me. The experiences of exam week differed for everyone, but I'm sure everyone can relate to the ball of anxiety, frenzy and relief that the week dropped on everyone. The only thing left to do is the real thing: GCSEs here I come!

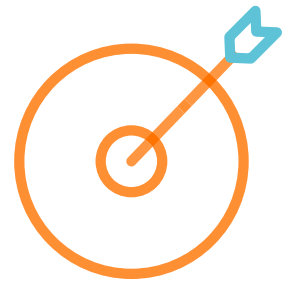
By Isabella, Y11  
Illustrated by Mila, Y8

# The Problems With Leading a Goal Orientated Life



How many times have you been interrogated by friends, families and even teachers about what you want to be when you're older? A fortunate few have long known the answer to this, but if you're anything like me, you invariably revert to a polite 'no, not yet', a restrained answer to hide the extent of our internal struggle and panic. Besides other things, it is this constant questioning that eventually compounds the unrealistic idea of having children predetermine their life goals.

Our society has come to revolve around the impression that we should always make decisions in relation to what we want to do in the future. This means that we're immersed in opportunities that over time will degrade into one narrow focus, starting from choosing our school to deciding our GCSE and A-Level options – an incredibly stressful time as I'm sure many would know. The result of this is that many teenagers, plunged into the adult world, are leading a goal-orientated life, without having yet defined that goal.

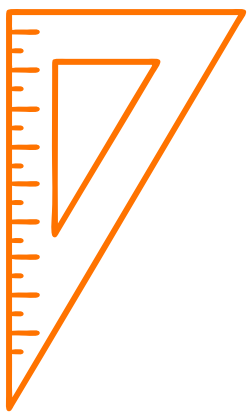


Of course, I can't disregard the fact that having goals in life is certainly a good thing. Used conscientiously, they can encourage us to pursue anything we want and grow as people. As humans, we have always been goal-orientated beings, and it was precisely this nature that allowed us to out compete other species, developing innovative solutions to satisfy simple needs, like drinking water when thirsty. This doesn't just appear in academic terms but also within the constructs of society, such as the expectation to go to university, get a job, get married and have children.

The problem with this is that there'll always be a need to fulfil the next step, thus existing in a perpetual state of failure and feeling short of that goal. The term 'arrival fallacy,' which describes the process of working towards a goal with the expectation that you will in fact reach it, encompasses this idea. By the end, the success may turn out to be less satisfying, since we get used to the micro feelings of accomplishment across the process. It's easy to believe that we are destined towards one career path and will forever be imprisoned within its boundaries based on our past decisions. This is the way we were taught, this is what we hear about and what our education is central to. In reality, there are many different paths, and changing careers is always a possibility, especially in this day and age. Through constantly having to list our goals, an illusion is created in which happiness is believed to stem from their eventual fulfilment. However, as cliché as it may sound, happiness comes from the journey, which is what most people miss out on.

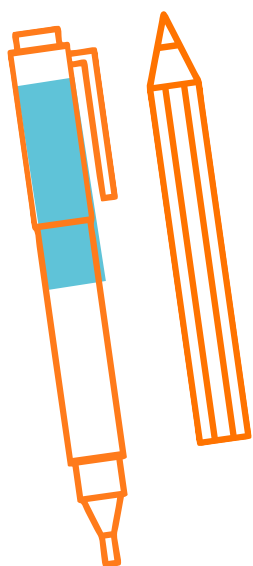
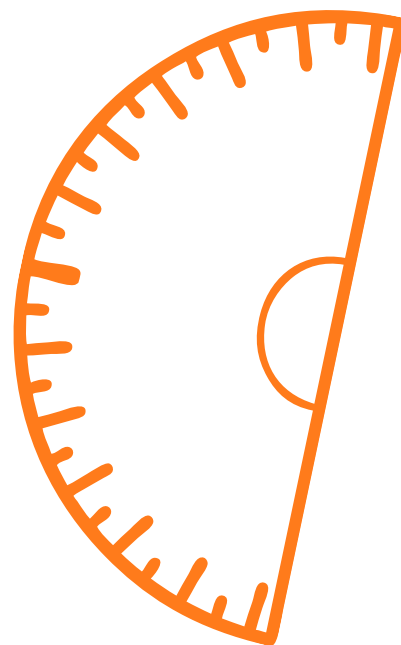






At the time of writing, I am in the process of choosing my A-Levels, and it certainly doesn't help that I have no indication as to where I want to go in the future. The process of choosing four subjects to specialise in at this stage feels too restrictive. I find myself conflicted between subjects, and also feel a need to over analyse subject combinations that would suit a particular path. Indeed, many reach university and still don't know what they want to do, yet discover their degree only targets a specific set of skills, that beautifully nestle into the hands of a certain employer or company.

Though I could be wrong, I've always said that at GCSE level, our knowledge has reached a peak, as we have a thorough understanding across a variety of different topics to grasp complex concepts. From this point onwards, it gets channelled into one field and the rest of the information becomes buried in the labyrinth of our minds. In this regard, it could be argued that the US education system surpasses that of the UK; it provides students with the ability to take courses outside their major, which could be perceived as being more valuable. Of course, our system does have merit, in that it is designed to help students find a career they're passionate about, as well as providing them with more direction after graduating. However, having to decide this from a young age, when possibilities seem endless, can introduce overwhelming pressure. There are so many aspects that need to be thoroughly considered when making these decisions, including whether you'll enjoy it, employment prospects or the skills you'll gain, on top of the ability to balance life alongside it.



An reasonable question to ask at this point would be how can this outlook be changed? Undoubtedly, this school receives my highest regard for the support offered, yet it's also the privilege encompassed within the nature of the school and people that allows everyone to access this. Our parade of results, alumni and leaver destinations however only represent a fraction of society and not everyone will be fortunate enough to have been part of the same circumstance, perhaps limited by their families, upbringing or country. For this reason, living in a goal-orientated world can seem daunting and be made even more difficult, where there is an instinctive acceptance that goals may never be reached.

Everyone should be offered equal opportunity, and this can certainly be improved through the establishment of charities, community centres, scholarships or outreach programmes. I would say overall, despite background, that one of the most important things is to not become too attached to a particular idea and open yourself to trying as many different things as possible without being afraid to move on to the next. Having a goal in mind simply closes us off to what the rest of the world has to offer.



# The Mystery of Asexual Characters

In 1939 the Archie Comics, a popular series, was first released. It focused on the attempts of two high school girls to date the world's most libidinous ginger. With a multiverse rivalling the complexities of the MCU, the series is still being produced to this day, accumulating multiple spin offs, and in 2015 a wonderful, updated version with a new perspective on the classic character, Jughead. Jughead Jones has been in the comics since the very beginning, debuting in the 22nd issue. He is Archie's sassy childhood friend and is often used as to point out the absurd nature of Archie's shenanigans. Jughead can be, like most comedic side characters, boiled down to easily digestible traits: he wears stupid hats, he's sarcastic and he doesn't like girls. It is this final trait that is so important, as Jughead is often used as the mocking voice of reason and a foil to Archie's womanising ways.



However, they accidentally created the asexual blueprint. He is incredibly vocal in his disinterest of all things cheesy, and is quick to reject any advances, saying that he is 'in no way a romantic! [He] stands by [his] ways as a lover of food only'. He finds humans completely unappealing. His implied asexuality and aromanticism are so obvious that the glorious 'Jughead' comics have him being explicitly asexual, and it is implied that he is somewhere on the aromantic spectrum.

And for two years this wonderful thing was gifted to us by the benevolent Archie gods.

And then 'Riverdale' was released.

I am convinced that this Jughead is an imposter, and with all of the poorly planned plot twists, I wouldn't be surprised if he was. There is a clear disconnect between the original and the fake. It is caused by the ridiculous misrepresentation of one of comic's core characters. I mean on a surface level they should be identical; they both wear stupid hats! As a comic from the 40s, everyone is so simple, it should be impossible to mess up. Betty's blonde, Veronica's popular, Archie's a jock and Jughead is a weirdo. He doesn't get dating. In changing this basic fact, he becomes a completely different character. His whimsical sarcasm is changed because they now need a reason for why he's an outcast, so now he's dry and brooding. Jughead wasn't some misunderstood bad boy, he was an asexual punk in a hat. And why did they make such a substantial change? For the drama.

They wanted to cast a broken bad boy to fulfil the dreams of their target teenage girl audience who don't care about Jughead. This explains the personality swap and why they would cast Cole Sprouse to play an explicitly unattractive nerd. They took the unique weirdo, ripped him from his context and removed his essence leaving him a broken shell of a character. Why? They had to give Betty another option. To a degree this makes sense. In alternate universes all the main cast have their backup partner, but Betty never really had anyone substantial beyond Archie and Veronica (I'm not kidding). But Jughead? They are close friends, but that is all they need to be. They could have given her anyone else, making this change to Jughead unnecessary.



Another example of the misrepresentation of asexual characters is in the Big Bang Theory. Sheldon is written as an aspectrum character, completely by accident. He 'find[s] the premise of coitus ridiculous and off putting', struggles to conceptualise dating beyond a practical level and is painfully oblivious to any advances. Moreover, he is written to encompass every harmful asexual stereotype to ever be conceived. Asexual stereotypes are all rooted in the idea that there is something inhuman or undeveloped about the lack of sexual or romantic attraction. So, characters are presented as immature, robotic and are often accompanied by some curable illness (as seen on the show House M.D where a character's asexuality is a symptom of a tumour) or a mental disorder commonly used to dehumanise or infantilize the individual. Every single trait is applied to Sheldon, for comedic effect.

After six seasons of Sheldon being firmly against dating, he is thrown into an inconsistently written relationship. He is constantly mocked by his 'likeable' friends, being compared to an 'emotionless robot but his girlfriend has caused him to transform into a real man'. Yikes.

But of course, over time there has been progress. During the five years that media statistics have included reoccurring aspectrum characters, there has been a total of four! One of these four characters is the illustrious Todd Chavez, loveable goof, and friend of the world's saddest horse in Bojack Horseman. Funnily enough, he too is a stupid hat sporter, so in my mind this is either an homage to Jughead or stupid hats are just the new aspectrum identifier. Todd is hysterical proof that it is possible to make jokes about asexuality without making asexuality the joke. One of my main favourite episodes includes the plot line of Todd going to increasingly absurd lengths to convince his girlfriend's parents that they are not an asexual couple, the deeper commentary being the ridiculousness of society's interest in someone else's sex life.

Something I greatly appreciated was the writers' ability to keep Todd a fully-fledged character. His sexuality



revelation doesn't come from nowhere, it's implied from the second season and at first, he is uncomfortable with the label. But his sexuality does not become his singular trait whilst remaining important. He is presented as wacky and intelligent, providing levity to an otherwise dark show.



There is a concerning lack of asexual exposure on television and in real life. And after decades of characters being bullied for traits that are completely healthy it's sad to realise that until basically three years ago there was no other point of view being shared. It's sad to know that we haven't come that far (maybe even gone back) from the first ace coded character on 'Gilligan's Island' in 1967 and that Perry the Platypus being technically confirmed as asexual was exciting news. I'm not over the moon to hear that in an era where we are making huge strides in queer representation there has been such a disappointing output of aspectrum individuals, just because it's hard for non-asexual audiences to wrap their heads around. It's not a marketable sexuality because there isn't much drama that can be produced from it. Other queer identities on television help the audience relate to them by reiterating that 'they still feel love so they are normal', something even asexual characters can be guilty of, which just makes it much harder for any aromantic representation or any identity that is even slightly outside if the norm.



However, there is still hope. Modern feminist films have been focusing more on the fulfilment found in nonsexual relationships and the disconnect between the previously fused romance and sex. This has helped crack open the door for the exploration of aspectrum identities and characters. Television needs more Todd's, and maybe, in fifty years, there will be.

By Eléa, Y10



# PRIDE Art Competition

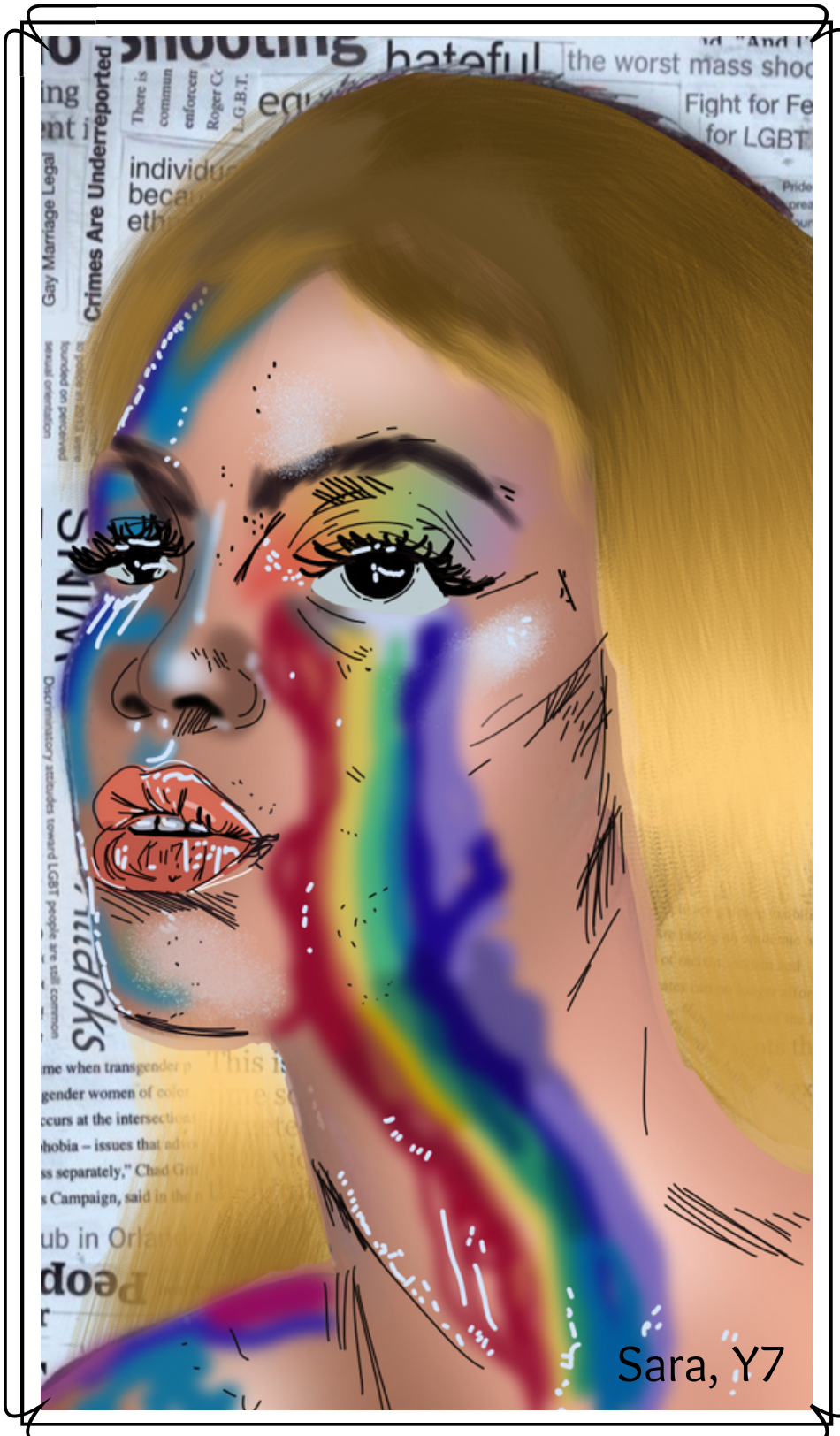
## Winner!

"I wanted to create a comforting reflection on the LGBTQ+ representation there is in the media so I tried to use softer colours and shading techniques; the characters I was inspired by are Catra and Adora from the show She-ra, which has fought for lots of queer representation with the main couple, Catra and Adora, being canonically lesbian while other characters have many other identities. This show means a lot to me as it's really pushed LGBTQ+ visibility in the media forwards and has paved the way for lots of other shows!"



Amalie, Y10

# Runner Up:



Sara, Y7

Created using  
iArtbook





# Spring Fashion Trends

Fashion is all about upcoming trends and shopping for what's new on the runway. However, this Spring the trend is forever fashion - a new idea to be more eco-friendly and bring back trends that never should have died. So, what are these trends and why should the fashion industry bring them back?



## Fringing on forever

The 1920s was an exciting decade, full of jazz music, partying and high-end fashion. But that all came to an end after the Wall Street Crash of 1929 and the beginning of the Great Depression. We then left the Roaring Twenties behind and moved onto new fashion trends. Recent articles have said that we could be repeating history as we move towards a more hedonistic lifestyle as the pandemic draws to a close. The fashion industry has latched onto this idea with designers such as Christian Dior, Fendi and Salvatore Ferragamo designing updated versions of the original 1920s fringe dresses.

## Gothic Glam

The French fashion designer Nicolas Ghesquière inspired designers to make the gothic glamorous with his masterclass that styled it in a different way. By creating a modern take on 18th and 19th century style, these dramatic outfits have been picked up by Alexander McQueen, Louis Vuitton, Givenchy, and Loewe. My personal favourites are Balenciaga's Floor Gown Shiny Black Cape and Amen's Embellished High Neck Cape. It's time to get historic!



## Black and White

Whilst these colours may seem bland and basic, the 80s defied this idea. This contrasting combination can be highlighted in stripes, polka dots and an array of different patterns that are playful and eye catching. The return of statement monochrome comes as designers have incorporated many 80s trends, creating outfits inspired by disco party outfits, corseted dresses, and shoulder pads. My personal favourite is Balmain's Maillot and Statement Shoulder Blazer, which was covered in spots and is a blast from the past I can get behind.

## Juicy Couture Tracksuits

If you were born in the early 2000s, you'll know that Juicy Couture was everything. From being featured in pretty much every 2000s TV show and movie to celebrities such as Paris Hilton and Beyoncé wearing them in the street, these tracksuits were the 'it' item that everyone wanted. For some reason, we replaced them with the 2010s twee look (a fashion disaster I hope NEVER returns) and completely forgot about the glam look of the previous decade. During lockdown, Y2K landed again in teenagers' lives, with Juicy Couture in fashion and many influencers and celebrities adopting the look. This trend hasn't died down since then and is gaining popularity, reaching major online fashion magazines such as Vogue and Tatler.



Writing this article made me see how far the fashion industry has come and how different each trend is but, even though we have entered a new decade and we should create new ideas to display in the form of fashion, it's always nice to revisit past trends.

By Keya, Y9

# Ross Laycock: the name Félix-González-Torres will never let us forget.

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A year and a half ago, I stumbled across a video that had randomly popped up on my feed about a piece of art called *Untitled* (Perfect Lovers), by Félix González-Torres. In the video, a young man spent a minute or so describing why he loved this piece and showed pictures of some of the other pieces by this artist – I stared at them, entranced, and wanting to understand their story. I blinked as the video ended and quickly took a screenshot of the title and artist before moving on with my day; and this screenshot slowly rotted in my camera roll until I came across it again, a couple of months later. I soon ended up deep in Google researching the artist's different pieces, and then went on JSTOR, consuming every review I could find, to learn about this elusive, gripping artist.



*"Untitled" (Portrait of Ross in L.A.), Félix González-Torres 1991*

The work I find most powerful and arguably one of his most famous pieces is *Untitled* (Portrait of Ross in L.A.), an installation that premiered in the Art Institute of Chicago and has since been replicated in several galleries across the world in various different styles.

González-Torres' instructions were simple, but particular: there needed to be candies in various coloured wrappers, the weight of which had to be 79kg, the overall dimensions should be allowed to vary, but usually should look like a spilled pile of candies in a corner of the room. All viewers were encouraged to take a piece of candy, which they enthusiastically did.

79kg was the weight González-Torres' long-time partner, Ross Laycock, was when he died from HIV in 1991; he had lost 20kg due to the virus by then. Laycock was the muse for this work, and for many of his other installations, (if that word can even do justice to what Laycock was in González-Torres' art, since he was his art). Each time a viewer goes in and takes a sweet, they act as the virus did, sweeping through Laycock's body, partaking in his deterioration apathetically. It brings us directly into the piece and allows us to respond emotionally to it – whether this is through guilt, grief, or understanding just how unconditional his love for Laycock was. Clearly through his act of reproach, you can feel González-Torres' anger, saying: look what you did to him. Every single time the installation is on show, the sweets are taken, until there is not a single one left – a tragic but deeply moving reflection of Ross Laycock's passing away.

The piece is political and allegorical and cleverly made in order to duck the censorship laws put in place by the powerful conservative politician, Jesse Helms, who denoted many pieces of art as "obscene" and pulled the funding. Exhibitions like Robert Mapplethorpe's, another young gay man speaking out about the HIV/AIDS crisis, also got pulled after political pressure. His pieces used topical photographs, that were abrasive and meaningful, and told the world about the illness that was affecting and killing so many people at the time.



Due to this, González-Torres' art transitioned to subtlety, since getting his work into a museum where people could see and understand it was more important than confronting people directly with the true message. His pieces often ended up as political, although he often remarked that even though it may not be his intention, his life was a source of politics, as he went against the grain of what someone "should be" by being gay.

Once the history behind the piece can be understood, it becomes poignant within the LGBTQ community and to those who may have not understood what was going on at the time, and for others, a moment of shame for those who ignored the suffering of the people around them, a spit in the face at the governments who killed them. González-Torres continually escaped the effects of this censorship by his arguments in rebuttal, since they could not argue that a piece is "destructive" or "obscene" when it is, essentially, just a pile of candy. His use of minimalism made his work timeless, forever relevant in remembrance or new meanings it could take on in future. His work will be evocative and powerful for the years to come as we can already see, as it has been 25 years since his death at age 38, (five years after his partner), also of HIV.

González-Torres' work, whilst about raising awareness of an issue the U.S. government almost exacerbated through its completely uncoordinated and insufficient response, is not solely about that; it is also about grief and loving someone as they die. His previous work was *Untitled (Lover Boys)*, which he made as Laycock was dying. The weight of the pile of candies, this time all of the same colour, was 161kg – equal to the weight of them both when together. The fact that Torres always chose to use candies to represent the body of his partner is in itself a display of the absolute sweetness of the love they had. The pile is usually placed in the middle of the room, almost mimicking a bed, as it spills across the floor. By doing this, the viewer can envision them, and is able to feel the emotion of it and grieve all those people who were dying slowly in their beds, fighting the same battle as Ross Laycock. In this piece, the museum must replace the candies after they're taken – a symbol of loss but also of the eternity of their existence through the artwork. Or, it may have just have been González-Torres, wanting someone to remember them as lying together, dying and needing to be seen.



*(Untitled) "Lover Boys", Félix González-Torres 1991*

He has forever immortalised his partner and not let his name, like so many others, become hidden in a flurry of death statistics, but instead showcasing it at the forefront of an illustration of the love that was more prominent than any condemnation or fear. The year this piece was created, 1991, was the height of the HIV/AIDS epidemic in the U.S, and it feels like a message in an age of censorship: see me, see him and look at what is happening. It is a work expressing his grieving, his admiration, a grave commemorating his partner. He said in an interview with Ross Bleckner, that:

**"The wonderful thing about life and love, is that sometimes the way things turn out is so unexpected. I would say that when [Ross] was becoming less of a person I was loving him more. Every lesion he got I loved him more. Until the last second. I told him 'I want to be there until your last breath,' and I was there to his last breath."**



# The Pre-Raphaelites

THE STYLE  
THAT NEVER  
DIES

The Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood was founded in 1848 by seven young artists including some of the painters held in highest regard today, such as Dante Gabriel Rossetti, Holman Hunt and John Everett Millais. Their aim? A return to the ideals of painting that existed before Raphael, a period prior to 1520 and the High Renaissance. They preferred the art of the Italian Quattrocento (15th century) with its bright and abundant colours, intricate details and highly complex compositions, and viewed artists of this period as the true innovators in painting. But what did the Pre-Raphaelites achieve and how far do we still feel their influence today?



Miranda from *The Tempest*, 1916  
John William Waterhouse

The Quattrocento period featured artists such as Botticelli and Donatello and concentrated on the depiction of classical subjects. This was a shift from previous art that tended to be more focused on purely Christian themes. During that century, Europe, and in particular Italy, was experiencing great change.

In 1453, Constantinople, the capital of the Roman Empire since 350AD, fell to the Turks. This caused many Greek scholars to move to Italy, leading to a sudden influx of knowledge in art, architecture and philosophy in many Italian city states such as Florence. It also brought about more access to ancient Greek texts, leading to the idea of Humanism, the belief that life can and should be enjoyed and one way to accomplish this is through the arts.

By contrast, the wider Pre-Raphaelite movement, which also embraced artists including JW Waterhouse, Edward Burne-Jones and William Morris, focused on myths, legends or stories and retold them in the rich colours and intricate details of the Quattrocento. The myth of Camelot including the Lady of Shalott, the subject of a poem by Tennyson, was a favourite, with Waterhouse choosing to depict her on multiple occasions. Likewise, Shakespearean heroines such as Miranda



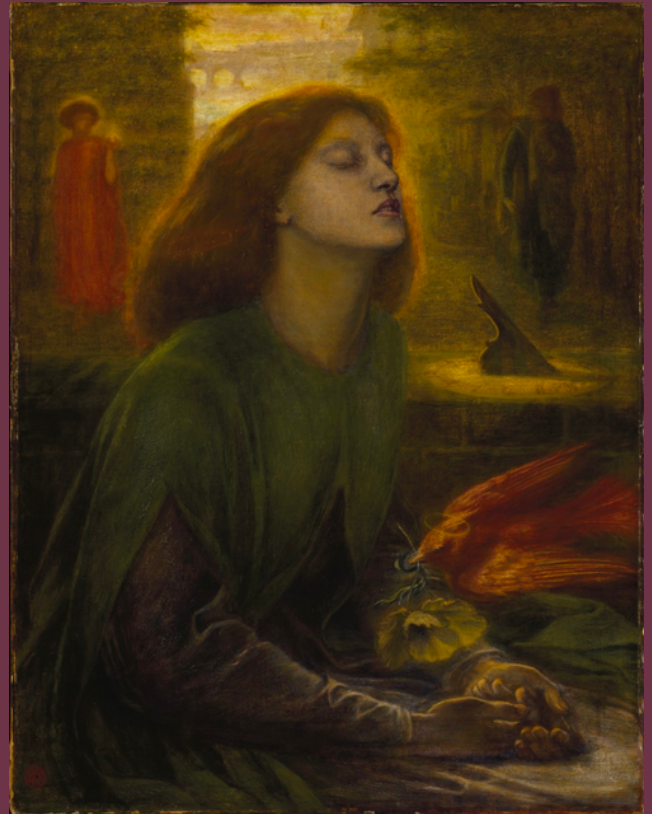
*The Lady of Shalott*, 1888  
John William Waterhouse



from *The Tempest* and Ophelia from *Hamlet* were also favourites.

This leads to the question of why the Pre-Raphaelites were drawn to tragic tales. Both the Lady of Shalott and Ophelia go to watery deaths, a far cry from the jubilant scene of 'The Birth of Venus'. The tragic nature of some Pre-Raphaelite art adds a darkness as well as a deeper meaning to the subjects, creating a contrast between the bright colours and the frequently dark subject matter. This contrast is still prevalent in modern art in pieces such as Picasso's 'Weeping Woman' (1937), which features bright reds, blues and yellows that contrast with the tearful woman in the painting.

Often, we think of the Pre-Raphaelite movement as characterised by the flowing locks, patterned dresses and peaceful faces of the women depicted. One figure that embodies this style is Elizabeth Siddal, the wife of Rosetti and an artist in her own right, who modelled for many of the Pre-Raphaelite artists. Her depiction in Rosetti's 'Beata Beatrix' as the character Beatrice from the poem *Vita Nuova*, painted shortly after her death, fulfils this idea. Rosetti shows her red hair, peaceful face and green dress all bathed in the light of the setting sun behind her, which adds an almost dreamlike quality to the painting. A strikingly similar representation of women remains an influence today for artists such as Florence Welch, of *Florence and the Machine*, and model Lily Cole.



Beata Beatrix, 1870  
Dante Gabriel Rossetti

The impact of the Pre-Raphaelites has even reached the world of film and television, with Alan Lee stating that the illustrations for *Lord of the Rings* and *The Hobbit* that won him the position as concept artist in both franchises were inspired: 'by some of the early 20th-century book illustrators — Arthur Rackham and Edmund Dulac in particular, Burne-Jones and other Pre-Raphaelites, and the Arts-&-Crafts movement they engendered.' Furthermore, JRR Tolkien was fascinated by the tales depicted in Pre-Raphaelite art and his novels were largely inspired by the Germanic myths from which the Pre-Raphaelites, particularly William Morris, also drew inspiration.

So, whilst the Pre-Raphaelites were consciously trying to emulate the 1400s, they created a style that is still alive in the 21st century.

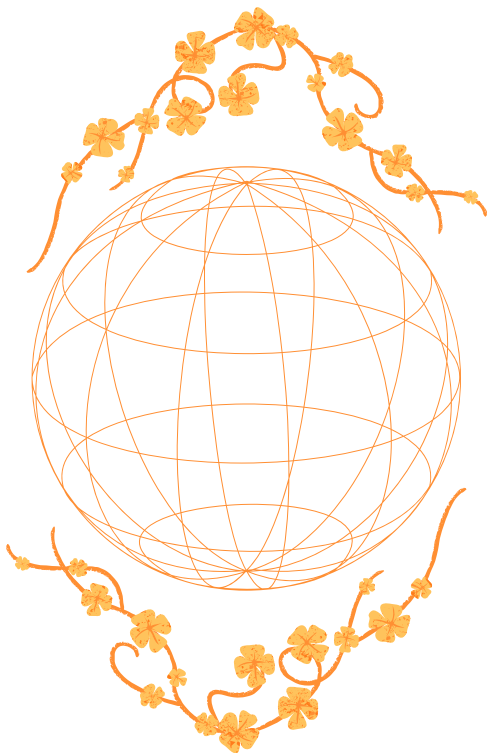


Ophelia, 1852  
John Everett Millais

By Madeleine, Y12

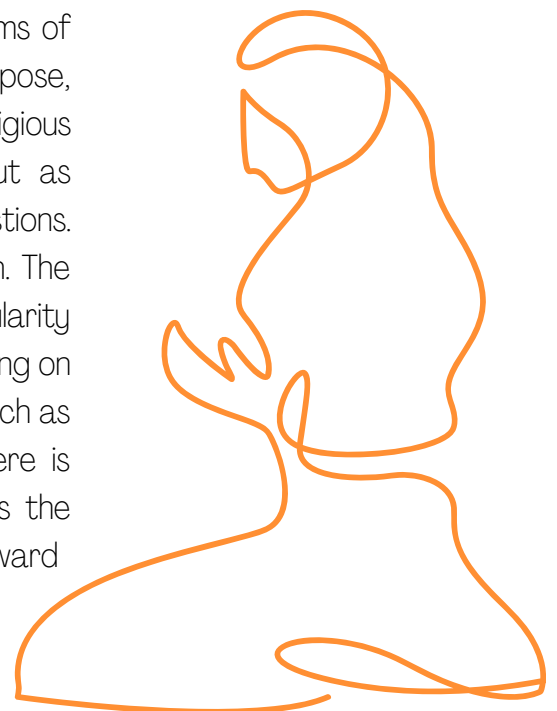
# Is Religion

Religion can be explained as a group of people that share a common set of beliefs, practices, and morals. Many religions involve a set of core beliefs and the worship of a controlling power such as a personal god or another supernatural being. There is evidence that some religions were founded over four thousand years ago, but are religions' old traditions and beliefs still applicable to today?



Firstly, it is vital to answer why people join religious groups. Religion provides a source of security to individuals by answering existential questions such as why we die and why we suffer. Religion provides personal comfort in times of uncertainty and upset, for example, when terror attacks such as 9/11 occurred many people turned to places of worship to pray and find both security and answers to the devastating event. Sociologists such as Emile Durkheim argue that religion is attractive because it allows us as social creatures to connect with like-minded people. Many people may go to churches and other places of worship in order to receive counselling, shelter and help paying taxes. The consolation that religion brings through its way to connect people, help answer difficult questions and support those suffering makes it understandable that 84% of the global population identifies with a religious group.

However, as civilisations become more complex so do their systems of belief. Explanations for the existential questions surrounding our purpose, origins and afterlife become more advanced. As we move from religious reasoning to scientific reasoning, religion will eventually die out as science clearly provides more reasonable answers to these questions. There are significant contradictions between science and religion. The Big Bang Theory demonstrates how the universe began as a singularity (a hot, dense point) and underwent rapid expansion, which is still going on today. There is lots of evidence supporting the Big Bang Theory such as Cosmic Microwave Background Radiation, which shows that there is leftover radiation in the universe from the Big Bang, as well as the Doppler Effect, which demonstrates that light has been shifted toward



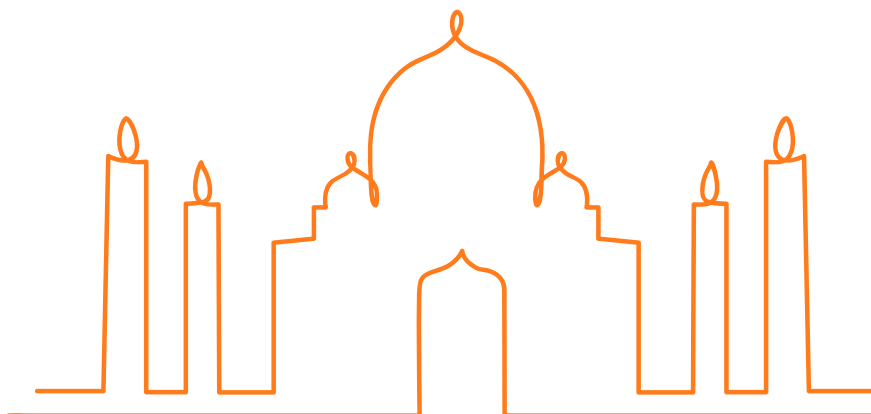
# Outdated?

lower frequencies and longer wavelengths, coming closer to the red end of the electromagnetic spectrum. This tells us that the universe is expanding and other galaxies are moving away from our galaxy, and clearly challenges the ideas common in religions such as Christianity that God created the universe.



Conversely, if we disregard these contradictions and instead focus on the core messages of faith and how they benefit us, religion can still be relevant today. Hinduism has a code of conduct called the 10 Yama which include ideas such as Ahimsa meaning nonviolence, Satya meaning truthfulness and Daya meaning compassion. Hinduism also contains practices called the 10 Niyamas which include Dana meaning Charity. Observances such as these are common among religions and teach people how to live morally and mindful lives. If we begin to discount religious history and traditions, it gives the impression that we don't agree with the important lessons one can learn from following the Ten Commandments in Judaism or the Eightfold Path in Buddhism.

Atheism is common among our population; 1.2 billion people have no religious affiliation. One of the key reasons atheism is so popular is because many don't believe in a God or think there is no evidence for God's existence. Another reason for non-belief is the problem of evil, the idea that the extent of evil in the world makes it unlikely that the God of classical theism that has properties of omnibenevolence exists. Despite the contradictions between science and religion as well as ideas such as the problem of evil, religious morals and beliefs can still be relevant to us today. Being able to surround ourselves with others is vital to us as humans, shown by the increase in loneliness during the pandemic. Uncertain times like these mean many turn to faith for a sense of security and comfort.



By Izzy, Y12

# Climate Crisis: We need to take responsibility.

## *The world is warming up.*

This should be a statement of fact to everyone by now; we are seeing global unprecedented changes in our climate year on year, leading to desperate scenes as populations around the world struggle to cope with the fallout. Remember 2021's wildfires in California, Australia, Turkey, Greece? The extreme flooding in Germany and the Netherlands? The devastating impacts of Storm Ida on the USA's eastern coast? These are just some of the climate disaster-related headlines that have hit the news during the last year alone.

There are some things, however, which are frequently go under-reported by most Western media sites. These are the disasters – often bigger in scale, more devastating in impact, harder to recover from – that are experienced by countries situated in what is often termed as the 'Global South'. Such areas (as a generalisation) are usually less well-developed, and thus lack the infrastructure to cope with the worst effects of the climate crisis.

Extreme flooding caused by heavy rain in India and Nepal last year left over 180 dead and thousands displaced. Successive dry seasons in Madagascar, amongst other countries, have left entire populations facing acute starvation and famine. Several Pacific Island Nations, on the other hand, are among some of the first to face real danger from rising sea levels. Some of the Marshall Islands, for instance, lie only 2m above sea level, meaning they are at a very real risk of disappearing. Of the people living in areas classed as being at 'high risk' due to

rising sea levels, 90% are from still-developing countries and small island states, meaning that as waters rise, they will struggle to stay afloat.

It is undeniable that all countries are beginning to notice the impacts of the climate crisis. However, the core issue lies in the fact that those who are set to face the worst impacts are, on the whole, the least capable of dealing with them. This is because those living in these lesser-developed countries are often primarily reliant on industries such as agriculture, which are more at risk from problems such as drought, rising sea levels, and changing seasons. All of these issues are being exacerbated by the climate crisis, making it even harder for these populations to continue developing economically.

Even at the other end of the spectrum in more developed nations such as the USA, UK, Australia, and China, those who are most at risk from climate change are generally counted amongst the most vulnerable in our societies – as evidenced by the ongoing impact of the current energy crisis in the UK. However, many of these countries who have historically produced the most carbon emissions have the advantage of being overall better suited, in economic terms, to facing up to the climate crisis and leading the way towards a greener future. Right?

Delegates at COP21 back in 2015 certainly thought this should be the case. One of the main resolutions in the Paris Agreement was to limit global warming to 1.5°C compared to pre-industrial levels by 2050. This is a goal we are currently projected to overshoot by some margin. Research carried out before COP26 last year suggested 85% of the carbon budget needed to keep the chance of a 1.5°C warming to 50% had already been used. Another key point from the Paris Agreement was that developed countries should lead on reducing emissions, while providing financial assistance to less developed nations. Yet so far, these nations have on the whole failed to make good on their promises.





A 2009 agreement saw developed nations pledge a collective \$100 billion per year by 2020 to a fund which could be used to help struggling nations face the worst impacts of the climate crisis. However, current projections suggest this target for contributions will only be reached in 2023. Whilst this is a massive amount of money being mobilised as 'climate finance', the delays do not help countries who are counting on this funding to safeguard their futures. Some are calling for the difference to be made up in future contributions, but this so far seems unlikely. Furthermore, much of the money is being provided in the form of loans, which will need to be paid back. Rather than guaranteeing these countries' futures, this instead leaves them open to a longer-term vulnerability by providing desperately needed funding, but with the strings still attached.

Developed nations are also largely failing to provide effective leadership on the climate crisis. While COP26 did manage to provide some direction, with various agreements reached on deforestation, phasing out methane, and emissions reporting, the COVID-19 pandemic provided some key players with an excuse to not attend. At the same time, it prevented many representatives from the most vulnerable nations from making an appearance. Lavetanalagi Seru, an activist from Fiji, said in an interview that increased prices for flights and isolation requirements meant the cost of his attending was about £7000, a prohibitive amount for someone from a country where the starting salary for a government employee is £4200 per year. He made it by relying on donations and support from NGOs. However, many others remained unable to attend, thus removing some of the most critical voices from the summit. Instead, pressure from China and India meant a key pact to 'phase-out' coal had its wording changed to 'phase-down'.

Overall, once COP26 had ended, activists around the world were left feeling pretty underwhelmed by many of the decisions made. However, their thoughts were only shared in the immediate aftermath of the

conference, and then the media moved on. The world moved on past COP26, and we are still waiting to see whether the next planned conference – due to be held in Egypt this year – will produce more of the same, or if decisive action will be taken to turn around this crisis which is already happening.

There are many things that still need to be done.

It is currently unlikely we will be able to keep warming within 1.5°C, or even 2°C. According to forecasts published by the UN after the conference ended in Glasgow, if all countries manage to uphold their current targets, we will still reach up to a 2.7°C warming by the end of the century. In order to prevent this, governments around the world need to take responsibility by phasing out fossil fuels, protecting forests and biodiversity, and investing in renewable energy generation and future research. They need to fully commit to decarbonisation, instead of just paying 'lip service to real climate action', as the chief executive of Climate Analytics put it last year. Part of the problem lies in the fact that many government's plans for decarbonisation rely on technologies that are still in their infancy, and thus will probably not be rolled out for a while. If and when they are, like any new product, it will still take time for their use to become widespread. There exists no magic wand we can wave, no *deus ex machina* that will suddenly appear to make the greenhouse gases return to pre-industrialisation levels. But there are solid actions we can take to limit global warming and its impacts, remembering all the while that those on the front lines of the crisis do not have the luxury of time or empty promises.

After all, the climate crisis is shared by all of us. It is up every government, every corporation, every individual to step up; to act in order to limit its effects, and take responsibility so the future we look towards is a brighter, greener, more secure one for everyone on this planet.

By Penelope, Y13



# **HYDROGEN**

## *The fuel of the future?*

Hydrogen fuel is a practical and sustainable fuel that has the power to revolutionise energy transition. Recently, it has been successfully trialled, with 24 buses in London working on hydrogen as an alternative to petrol. However, hydrogen has some drawbacks, such as lack of infrastructure and its high cost.

Hydrogen is the most common element in the universe, but it makes up only 0.14 percent of the Earth's weight. The vast majority of this ubiquitous element is locked in compounds such as water, which makes up at least 70 percent of Earth. Liquid hydrogen, the main hydrogen fuel, is also relatively easy to produce, as a byproduct of electrolysis or by running an electric current through water. This splits the molecules into separated hydrogen gas and oxygen gas, both of which can be easily extracted; the gas is then cooled to become liquid.

Benefits of hydrogen fuel include that it is completely green due to an absence of combustion. Hydrogen fuel cells do not produce harmful CO<sub>2</sub>, CO or even worse chlorofluorocarbons; the only byproduct of a fuel cell is water. This means that no emissions are released and thus air quality is improved. Furthermore, hydrogen is efficient since its fuel economy is twice as efficient than that of oil or gas and it has the highest energy content of any fuel by weight. Unlike an electric car, hydrogen has a very short charging time, but has the same range as that of a fossil-fuelled car. Hydrogen also does not require large areas of land to generate, unlike hydroelectricity and wind power, which can potentially ruin ecosystems and damage the natural environment. From a political perspective, hydrogen fuel would decrease reliance on fossil fuels and countries with oil-economies, which could help the economic stability of places with fewer natural resources.

Unfortunately, hydrogen is not perfect. Although theoretically better for the planet than crude oil or natural gas, hydrogen needs large amounts of electricity to produce, since the only way to separate it from oxygen is electrolysis.

Besides, electrolysis itself and fuel cells sometimes require precious metals such as platinum, which means that the cost of these appliances can be high. For hydrogen to be fully green, the electricity needed to produce it would have to be from a renewable source, which takes longer to produce than fossil fuelled electricity.

Hydrogen also requires a lot of energy in order to store it as a liquid, since it has the incredibly low melting point of - 259 C. This energy would again have to be renewable. Finally, hydrogen is expensive and there are very few vehicles and appliances adapted to use it as a fuel. Most refuelling stops are gas and petrol, and although hydrogen is twice as efficient as either of these, it is still very difficult to source.

Additionally, no infrastructure is currently in place, with hydrogen needing possibly hundreds of miles of high-pressure pipelines, hydrogen refuelling stations along roads and highways and the capacity to store hydrogen underground. Refuelling stations not connected to pipelines need to have hydrogen transported by trucks or trailers, and besides, there is a lack of power plants that can actually produce the hydrogen.

So is hydrogen fuel a sustainable alternative to fossil fuels in the future? Ultimately, it has the potential to be. Hydrogen is abundant, sustainable, and efficient to use, however, it is difficult to produce and needs new infrastructure in order to be mass-produced effectively.



# Weird Diseases

*The current Covid-19 pandemic has caused a huge disruption to the way our world works. From lockdowns to masks, the past two years have been filled with uncertainty, fear, and a fair bit of frustration for us all. But what if I told you that there are much, much worse diseases and conditions out there? From a genetic mutation which turns you to 'stone' to the laughing death, here are a few of the ones I found the most interesting:*

## - Definitions -

**Allele** - one of the alternative versions of a gene in a chromosome, 2 for each gene

**Ossification** - turning to bone

**Neurodegenerative disease** - a disease which is caused by progressive damage to cells and the nervous system.

**Prion disease** - a disease caused by misfolding proteins. Includes mad cow disease, CJD and chronic wasting disease

**Autosomal** - a gene in any of the numbered chromosomes

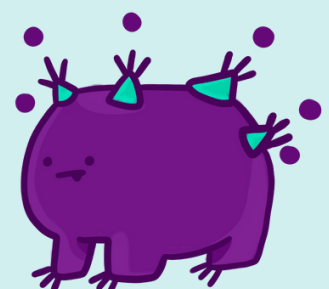
**Human papillomavirus** - mostly harmless viruses transmitted through skin-to-skin contact



**Fibrodysplasia Ossificans Progressiva (FOP)**, also known as 'stoneman syndrome' due to its symptoms, is a genetic disorder which causes slow ossification of soft tissues and cartilage, essentially turning the patient to bone over time. People with FOP are born with inward facing toes and (in 50% of cases) thumbs. It also causes soft tissue swelling, soft tissue nodules along the neck and head, skeletal deformities and restricted movement in certain joints as time goes on. It is a heterozygous mutation (when a person has two different alleles of a specific gene) occurs in the ACVR1 gene on chromosome 2, which is responsible for the process of endochondral ossification (development of the skeleton before birth.). People with FOP have an average lifespan of about 40 years, time faced with no effective treatments in existence at the moment, although some clinical trials are underway.

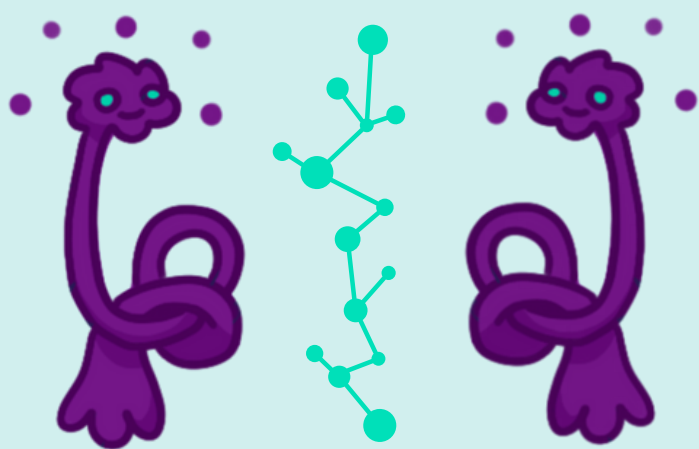


The disorder affects 1 in 2 million people and is more prevalent in females, making it one of the rarest known disorders. Currently the most effective treatments are corticosteroids for acute flare-ups in order to relieve the pain and swelling associated with FOP and non-steroidal anti-inflammatory medication in between. The disorder was first discovered by Shore et Al. in 2006, but earlier documentation from the 17th century has been found.



**Epidermodysplasia verruciformis**, also known as EV or 'treeman syndrome' is a recessive (meaning both your alleles need to have a certain variant of a gene for it to show), autosomal immune disorder which causes the patient to be extremely susceptible to human papillomavirus (HPV) infections, causing infections to become much more dangerous. Most people come into contact with HPVs at some point in their lives, as they are transmitted through skin-to-skin contact and many people don't experience symptoms. However, having EV compromises the immune system and makes a person more likely to develop the infection, which can cause bark-like growths on the hands, feet and face.

There have been over 200 reported cases noted by the Genetic and Rare Diseases Information Centre. Being infected by an HPV if you have EV can cause skin growths including viral warts and pigmented, inflamed patches. The bark-like growths mentioned previously are typically present in more severe cases. More common symptoms include small pink or brown growths called papules and scaly, raised, and inflamed patches called plaques. These growths tend to form on parts of the body exposed to the sun but can also affect the hands, feet, earlobes, face, neck, arms and legs. Studies have found that EV is often caused by a mutation in the EVER1 or EVER2 genes, although how these genes are linked to the disorder is unknown.



Although these diseases and conditions can seriously damage the affected person's lifestyle (and, in some cases, kill them), they are still incredibly rare compared to our current pandemic. COVID-19 has its own dangers and is much more widespread than any of the conditions mentioned above, meaning most of us probably have more to fear from it than anything else in this article.

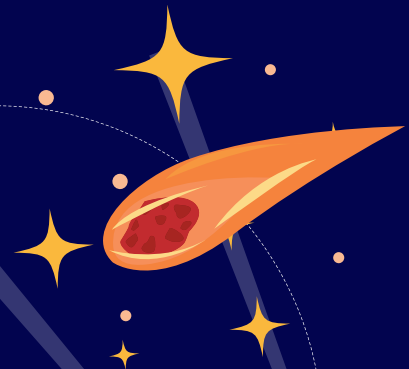


**Kuru**, or the 'Laughing Death' is a neurodegenerative disease found mainly among people from isolated tribes which practice cannibalism, with its highest prevalence occurring in the 1950s and 1960s in the Fore people of New Guinea. The disease is caused by an infectious protein (prion) found in the brain tissue of a patient. The name Kuru means 'to shiver' or 'trembling in fear'. Symptoms include muscle twitching, loss of coordination, difficulty walking, involuntary movements, mood changes, dementia, slurred speech, difficulty eating, and random bursts of compulsive crying or laughter, for which the disease earned its nickname as the Laughing Death.

It occurs in three stages, usually preceded by a headache and joint pain. As these are common symptoms shared across many diseases, they are often ignored or missed. During the first stage, a person loses some bodily control and may experience difficulty balancing and maintaining posture. The second stage causes inability to walk, body tremors and significant involuntary movements, while by the third stage the patient is usually bedridden and loses the ability to speak. They can also become affected by dementia and behaviour changes, causing them to seem unworried about their health. Difficulty swallowing and eating also cause malnutrition and starvation, which sets in during the third stage as well, so most people die within 11-14 months. There is currently no cure for Kuru except discouraging cannibalism as ingesting infected brain tissue is the most common way kuru is transmitted.

# Where are the Aliens?

One of the biggest questions of humanity, the one that plagues scientists to this day... where are the aliens? In a universe this large, with 5 billion years for aliens to develop, somehow, they are nowhere to be found. According to the Drake equation, which has been used to estimate how many civilisations exist that can communicate in the Milky Way, there should be at least 10 million civilisations out there. The Fermi paradox was the first to describe this conflict between the evidence for extra-terrestrial life and the apparent lack of communication. However, there are many theories that have developed since the Fermi paradox, and many possible reasons for this apparent silence from extraterrestrial life. .



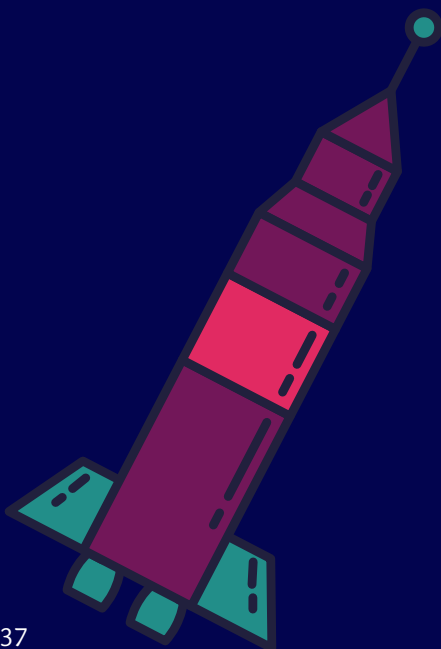
## The Great Filter

One possible reason for this is the Great Filter. This theory suggests that there is a barrier that prevents communication or travel between galaxies; it is a force, or event, that wipes out civilisations before they get to the point of interstellar travel or communication. It may be that the societies kill themselves off through wars and conflicts or, simply, that this level of travel is not possible. The more life there is in the universe, the more likely this theory is, as with more life comes more communication, and yet there is none. But with this theory comes the bleak question: how far away from this cataclysmic event are we?



## It's Impossible

It may be that space travel to the extent of interstellar communication is just not possible. The technology may not ever exist to make it possible for life to travel far enough, the journey may take too long for life to even survive. The dangers of space travel are simply too much for humanity to make it to another planet with intelligent life.



## Zoo Hypothesis

One particularly morbid theory is the Zoo Hypothesis. It describes extra-terrestrial life purposefully avoiding communicating, but instead observing and watching humanity until evolution and societal development brings us to a point of being worth communicating with. It would be similar to how humans may observe animals in a zoo. This theory would suggest that aliens would only communicate with us when we reach their ethical, social, and technological standards, at which point they may send a spacecraft, or communicate via other means. Similar to the Zoo Hypothesis is the Laboratory Hypothesis, where humanity is used to experiment upon, and Earth is, essentially, a giant laboratory.





## Rare Earth Hypothesis

Completely contradictory to the Fermi paradox is the Rare Earth Hypothesis which states that the conditions needed to create life are extremely uncommon – to the point where they are unique to Earth. This is backed up by the number of features which mean life can be easily created on Earth, for instance, that the Earth resides in the 'Goldilocks Zone', the habitable area around a star where it is not too hot and not too cold. This condition is needed to keep water liquid and in turn helps organisms grow and survive.

## Lack of Intelligence

Another possible theory is that there is life on some distant planet, it's just not intelligent. Instead of great civilisations full of conscious aliens, it may be an abundance of algae. Think of the process needed to create intelligent life on Earth: simple cells must turn into complex, multicellular organisms, and then form brains, with the ability to think and reason. On Earth, out of millions of species, only one has formed into a civilisation.

## Too much Intelligence

On the other hand, alien life may be too intelligent for our understanding, they may be so advanced that they do not deem it worthwhile to communicate or visit humans – these aliens would likely view us in the same way we view ants. Similar to this, aliens may be so vastly different that we would find it incredibly difficult to find them, let alone communicate.

## We've Missed Their Signals

The human race has only been listening for signals since 1937. 85 years is tiny compared to the whole of human history, and minuscule when compared to the time the universe has existed. It is entirely possible that aliens have tried to communicate before then but were met with silence. Furthermore, we may also have missed their communications, for example, we could've looked at the frequencies and dismissed their communication as background noise. Humans may also have not been detected by alien races, whether that be because they missed us, or because they aren't looking. Our broadcasts are only detectable from 0.3 light years away, or 1/10 of the distance to the nearest star, making it easy to not notice life on Earth. It has been estimated that the civilisations are around 1000 light years distance from each other; maybe our, or their, signals haven't been received, or perhaps communication will just take 1000 light years to arrive.



By  
Katherine,  
Y8



So where are the aliens? Well, we have no evidence to support their existence or to deny it. All we can do is to hope that sci-fi films like E.T. and Men in Black haven't been lying to us the whole time. And if they haven't, that we're not going to be invaded by Daleks or body-snatchers.

# Why do we feel like someone is watching us?

Why do we often feel like someone is watching us, like a pair of eyes is following us around? Perhaps it's on the walk to school, or even when you're alone at home, that you feel compelled to turn around and check, just in case, if someone is there. Is it a built-in defence mechanism or something society has conditioned us to assume?

There are those who believe that this remarkable feeling is down to human nature, something we have inherited from our ancestors. A professor from the University of Sydney stated that "we're hard-wired to believe that others are staring at us, especially when we're uncertain." Our brains work to be aware of any threat, and direct gaze is popularly considered to be a signal of dominance or intimidation. Therefore, when we feel watched or hear a noise too faint to consciously register, but enough to activate our fear circuits, something compels us to turn and check in an almost automatic way, like we haven't made a conscious decision. This may be part of a survival instinct we have inherited which was originally developed to keep us conscious of predators and allow us to run away.

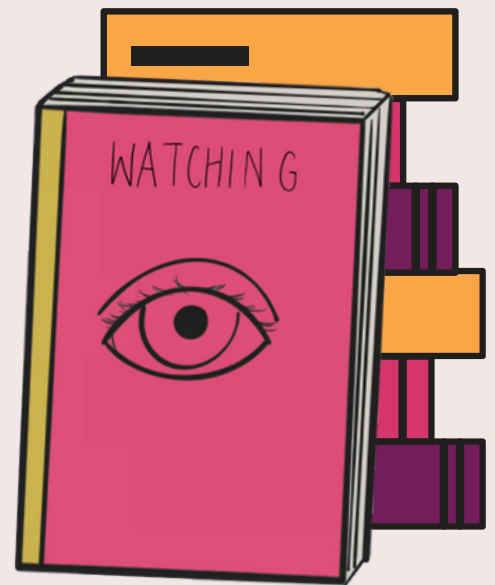
However, the suspicion that you are being watched may also stem from childhood. Surprisingly, it is common for people to feel the need to close their blinds or shift a chair, so the pile of coats doesn't look like a figure in the dark, even when they are home alone. Perhaps this could be compared to the common idea of "monsters under the bed", but it could also be due to formative childhood experiences, like intense scrutiny when growing up. While it is reasonable for a parent to ask their child "not to make too much noise or set anything on fire" if they leave a child at home, it can embed in our brains the belief that something or someone is in danger when we are alone, which has proven difficult to grow out of for many people even years later.



The nature of today's society has also had a significant impact on the way we feel both around people and alone.

Despite the saying "don't judge a book by its cover", a high emphasis has been placed on appearance, creating pressure to look and act a certain way so as to consistently appear presentable and desirable. This applies to everyone, but the importance of aesthetics is especially promoted towards women. A 14-month longitudinal study of open-plan offices found that women feel more exposed and watched than men, to the extent that it affected their performance at work. As well as this, constant exposure to popular ideas and ads as the age of social media continues to grow and develop has led to people striving for unachievable ideals. Therefore, we have become more self-conscious and aware of how others perceive us, linking to the discomfort of constantly feeling watched and judged.

Lastly, modern technology has also increased our awareness that someone, or something, could be watching us all the time. With new advanced technology constantly flooding our shops, the demand for popular AI powered devices has soared in the last few years; Amazon sold over 65 million Alexas in 2021 alone. However, most of us are aware of the fact that these listening devices can record any sound they pick up. The uses for this range from simply targeting ads on your phone to being used as evidence in murder cases. In 2017, a judge in New Hampshire, in the USA ordered Amazon to turn over two days of Amazon Echo recordings in a double murder case, as they believed it could yield further clues that could help to identify the killer. In today's world, technology has allowed this feeling of constantly being watched or overheard to infiltrate into our homes; therefore, many people have developed a hyper-awareness, almost fear, of their surroundings.



Although the core reasons behind feeling watched most likely stem from a survival instinct, society has exacerbated this "awareness" into a fear of being monitored, pressurising people even more to constantly be conscious of how they are seen by others. However, it can't be all that bad as we now have a somewhat superhuman ability to sense when we are being watched, valuable information even if invisibility remains a power we can only dream of.

# – Pancakes Two Ways –

## Kimchijeon (*Kimchi pancake*)

Servings: 4

Prep time: 10 min

Cook time: 15 min

### INGREDIENTS

900g napa cabbage kimchi,  
chopped into small pieces  
2 tbsp of the kimchi brine  
3 spring onions, chopped  
 $\frac{1}{2}$  tsp sugar  
65g all-purpose flour  
120ml water  
4tsp vegetable oil

### DIRECTIONS

- 1) Combine all the ingredients except the oil in a bowl and mix well.
- 2) Heat a 12-inch fry pan on medium heat. Add half of the oil and swirl to cover the whole pan.
- 3) Pour the batter in the pan and smooth with the back of a spoon so it fills the bottom.
- 4) Cook on one side until golden-brown. This should take roughly 3–5 minutes.
- 5) Carefully flip the pancake and drizzle the remaining oil around the edges, using a spatula to ensure it goes under the pancake as well. Fry for another 3–5 minutes.
- 6) Turn the pancake one final time to ensure it's fully cooked. Turn out onto a plate and serve hot.

## Congyoubing (*Spring onion pancake*)

Servings: 4

Prep time: 50 min

Cook time: 20 min

### INGREDIENTS

260g all-purpose flour  
1 tsp salt  
180ml hot water (just  
boiled)  
60ml canola or vegetable  
oil  
3–4 spring onions, sliced  
into rounds

### DIRECTIONS

- 1) Put the dry ingredients in a mixing bowl, and stir to combine. Add the hot water, and stir until the water has been absorbed.
- 2) Knead the dough inside the bowl using your hands for about 2 minutes. If it's too dry, add an extra splash of water. The dough should feel moist but not too sticky.
- 3) Cover the dough and let it rest for half an hour.
- 4) Divide the dough into 4 pieces and shape each into a small ball. Sprinkle flour on a work surface. Use a rolling pin to roll each sphere into a thin circle, about 20cm across.
- 5) Brush a thin layer of oil onto the dough and sprinkle the spring onions on top. Roll the dough into a log, then roll the log into a spiral. Flatten the spiral back out with the rolling pin (this creates the layers). Repeat for the remaining portions of dough.
- 6) Heat some oil in a medium fry pan, and cook the pancakes for 2–3 minutes on either side. Slice into quarters and serve straight away.



**Featuring:** A Thousand Years - Christina Perri; Eleanor Rigby - The Beatles; John Hughes Movie - Maisie Peters; Nothing New - Taylor Swift (feat. **P**hoebe Bridgers); Mauvais Rêves - Angèle; Achilles Heel - J. Maya; LDN - **L**illy Allen; Dramaturgy - Eve; My Honest Face - Inhaler; Go Away - Omar **A**pollo; Two Wuv - Tally Hall; One Summer Day - Joe Hisaishi; All **Y**ou Wanna Do - SIX, Aimie Atkinson; Red (Taylor's Version) - Taylor Swift; First **L**ove / Late Spring - Mitski; Enemy (from Arcane League of Legends) - **I**mage Dragons (feat. J.I.D); Bruxelles je t'aime - Angèle; Forever (**S**ailing) - Snail Mail; Fuyu no Hanashi - Given; Vienna - Billy Joel; Delicate - **T**aylor Swift; Sonata for Violin Solo No. 1 in G Minor, 1st mvmt: Adagio - Johann Sebastian Bach perf. by Hilary Hahn; mona lisa - mxmtoon; DARE - G.

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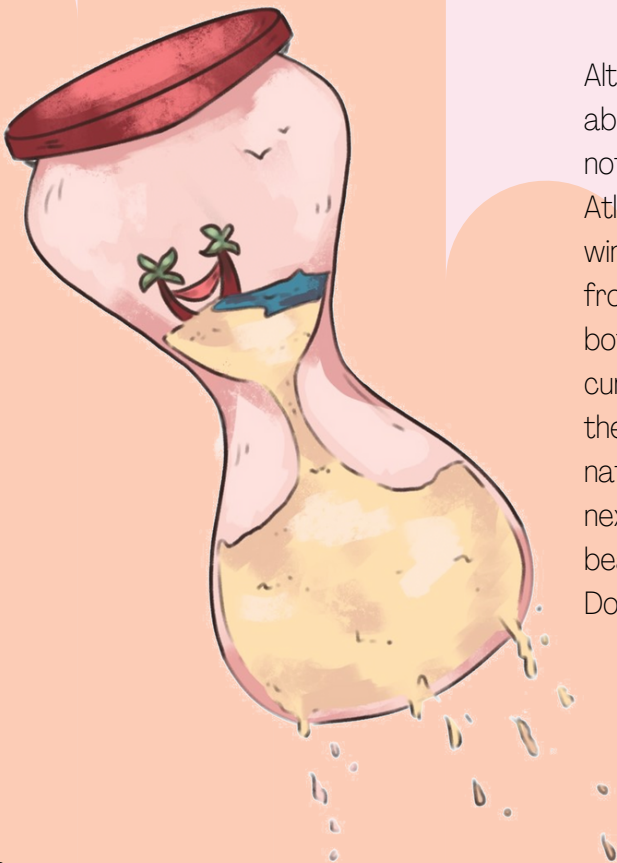
Missiles - Sam Fender; The Queen of White Lies - The Orion Experience; The Steps - HAIM; That Funny Feeling - Bo Burnham; J'adore Venise - Loredana Berté; **F**ly Out West - Yot Club; Inochi No Tabekata - Eve; Stairway to Heaven - **L**ed Zeppelin; Heart of Stone - SIX, Natalie Paris; Will I? - RENT **O**riginal Cast; 12.34 AM - Billy Lemos, Maxwell Young, Omar Apollo; Beautifully **U**nconventional - Wolf Alice; Pompeii - Bastille; Without You - Daphne **R**ubin-Vega, Adam Pascal; Balance ton quoi - Angèle; Salted Caramel **I**ce Cream - Metronomy; Apartment 402 - girl in red; Gales of **S**ong (English version) - Belle; Love Lies (with Normani) - Kahlid, Normani; **H**otel California - Eagles; Don't Delete The Kisses - Wolf Alice; Carry You - Tim Minchin; Soon You'll Get Better - Taylor Swift (feat. The Chicks) &

# The Disappearing Beach

The disappearing Dooagh Beach is situated on Achill Island in County Mayo off the west coast of Ireland. Boasting a population of 2,569 (2011), it is Ireland's biggest island with a bridge connecting it to the mainland. During the spring of 2017, residents were shocked to see sandy shores return to the area, covering the pebbles and stones that had replaced the sand for over three decades since its disappearance in 1984. Following stormy weather in January 2019, the hundreds of thousands of tonnes of sand, which had been deposited on the shoreline, disappeared again. The storm washed away the 200 metres of sand and replaced it once more with large rocks and boulders. The reappearance of the beach in 2017 caused a spike in tourism with visitor numbers 70% higher, 'busloads' of guests from China and TV crews from across the globe. With 79 extra jobs created in the surrounding area, locals and tourists alike were disheartened to find out that the beach had vanished once again.

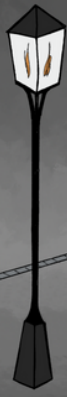


Although it may seem magical, there's nothing extraordinary about Achill's disappearing shorelines. Changing coastlines are not uncommon, especially since the island juts out into the Atlantic Ocean. Exposed to the ocean's worst south-westerly winds and giant waves, Achill's coastline is often stirred up from both below and above sea level with drifts that go in both directions, on to the shore and out into the ocean. Strong currents carry sand and pebbles far offshore especially if there happens to be a lack of seaweed to help prevent such natural movement; the sand and pebbles wait offshore for the next freak weather pattern to bring them back to their empty beach. If all these factors combine, which is what happened at Dooagh in 1984, a beach can suddenly disappear.



By Olivia, Y12  
Illustrated by Amalie, Y10

YOU WALK EMPTY - HANDED,



A SHARP-CREASED ABSENCE  
FOLLOWS YOU LIKE A SHROUD  
REMOVES YOUR DEFINITION

IT RAINS.



PEARLING DOWN WINDOWS,  
RIPPLING IN THE SHADOWS

IN THE WHISPER OF THE  
CLOUD'S EXPIRATION,  
YOU FLOAT CLUTCHING NOTHING



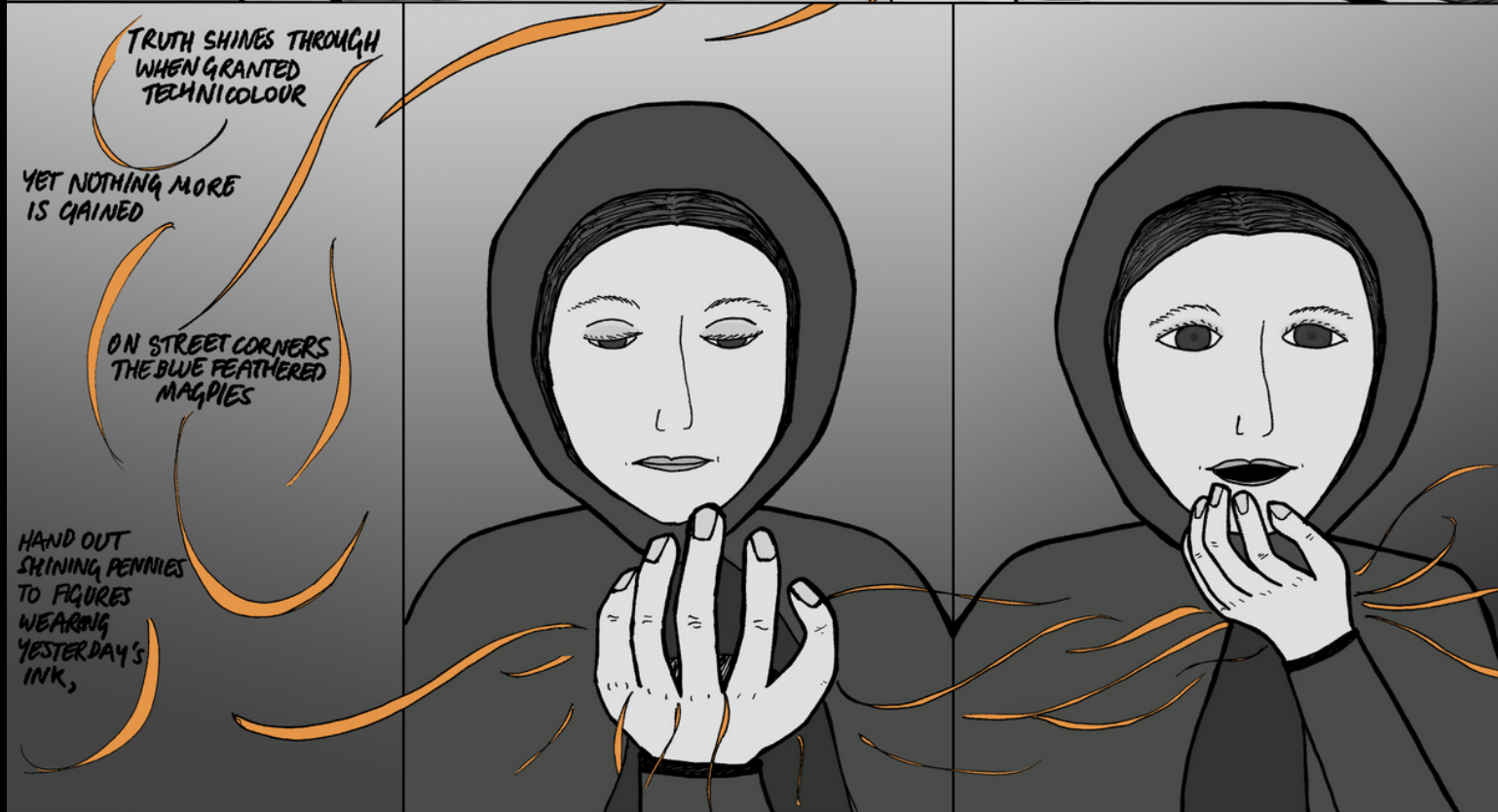
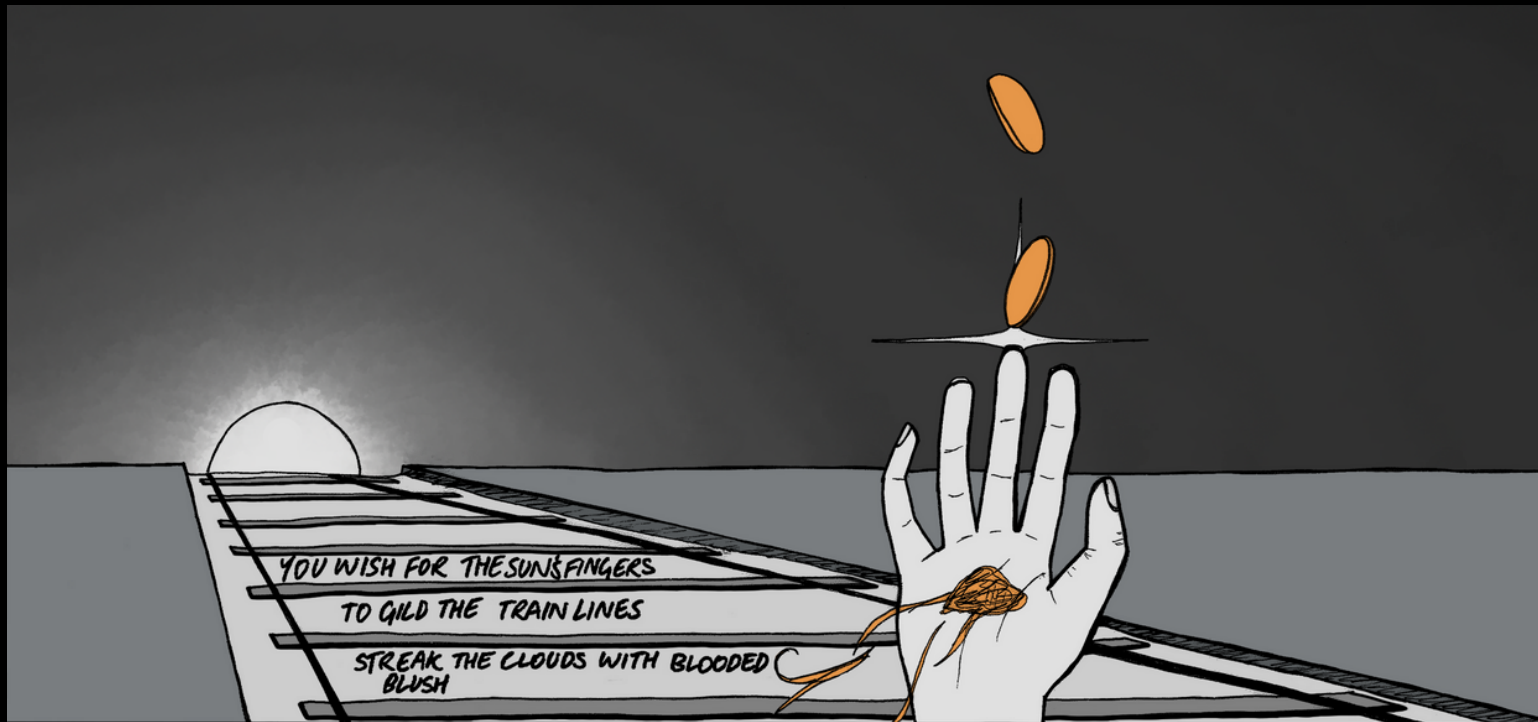
WRINKLING THE PAPER'S VEINS  
UNTIL PROUD THEY STAND  
BUT ULTIMATELY FRUSTRATED.

# AS YOU ARE

- AN ILLUSTRATED POEM -

WRITTEN , PENCILLED , INKED AND COLOURED BY PENELOPE T.







ABSENCE SOMEHOW REFLECTS  
IN THE WARM RAIN  
IN EACH SUSPENDED DROPLET

YOUR DISTENDED FINGERS  
POINTING DOWNWARDS  
AS IF SEARCHING

FOR PAVEMENT CRACKS  
WIDE AND DARK ENOUGH  
TO CONSUME YOU,

THE TORN, FIBROUS FRINGES  
WHICH ONCE LET SUNLIGHT THROUGH.

NOW FRUSTRATION SOFTENS THE INCISIONS,  
TAPES THEM DOWN FLAT,  
LEAVES GREY-BROWN SHADOWS  
IN UNCHANGED WATER.



# Anything But Books



– Editor's Recommendations –



Sasha



Vrinda



Nyika



Madeleine



Livia



Ruby





Izzy



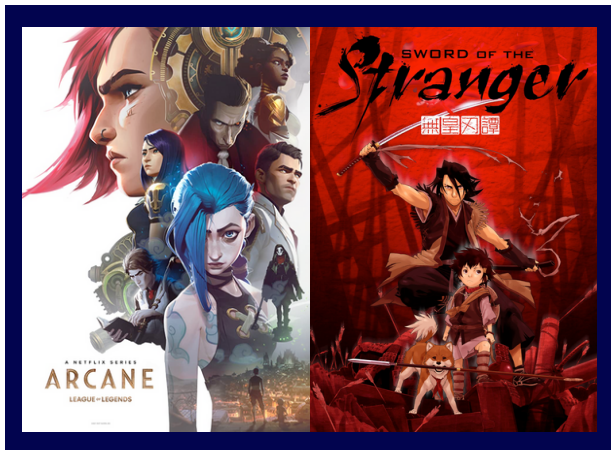
Lydia



Ella



Olivia



Penelope



Lola



Tasneem



Ahaana

An abstract graphic on the right side of the page. It features a thin yellow line that starts as a small loop at the top left and then extends downwards, ending near the center. To the right of this line are several large, overlapping, curved shapes in vibrant colors: teal, orange, purple, pink, and yellow. These shapes resemble stylized waves or flowing ribbons, creating a dynamic and colorful composition against the black background.

Dear Reader,

If you've made it this far, thank you. We hope you enjoyed reading this issue of the Penguin as much as we've enjoyed making it. The journey has not been easy; projects of this scale rarely are. But as we leave you for the final time, here on this last scrap of printable space, we would like to ask you to always look after yourselves, and be kind. We wish the Penguin Team and everyone in school the best for the future.

With thanks,  
Lola & Penelope  
*Co-Editors in Chief, 2020-2022*

