



Byron College

THE BRITISH INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL

Byron



VOICE

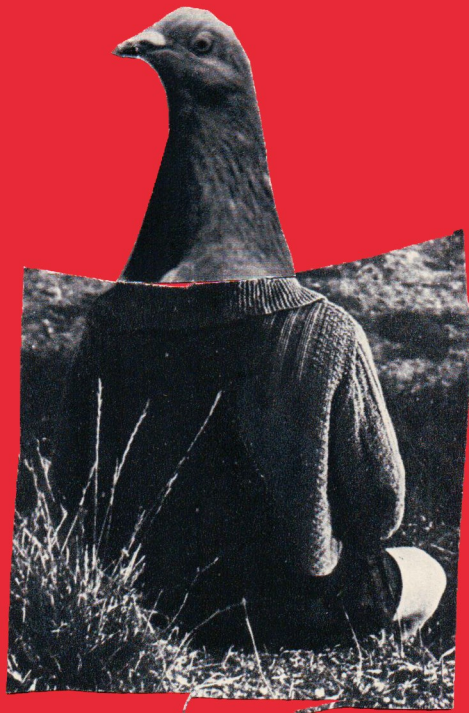
ISSUE 6 ⇒ KEY STAGE 3 ⇐ JUNE 2022

fantastic

break

Show

Come Now



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Byron Community

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MESSAGE FROM THE HEADTEACHER





**“Coming together is a beginning.
Keeping together is progress.
Working together is success.”**

Henry Ford

I hope that you enjoy the third and final edition of ‘Byron Voice’ for this academic year. Again, I am very proud of this publication as it is for our students, by our students and this version has been put together by the talents of Key Stage 3. A fervent thank you to all the students who have contributed and as always, my appreciation to Ms Vekinis, along with the English Department, for overseeing this wonderful student magazine.

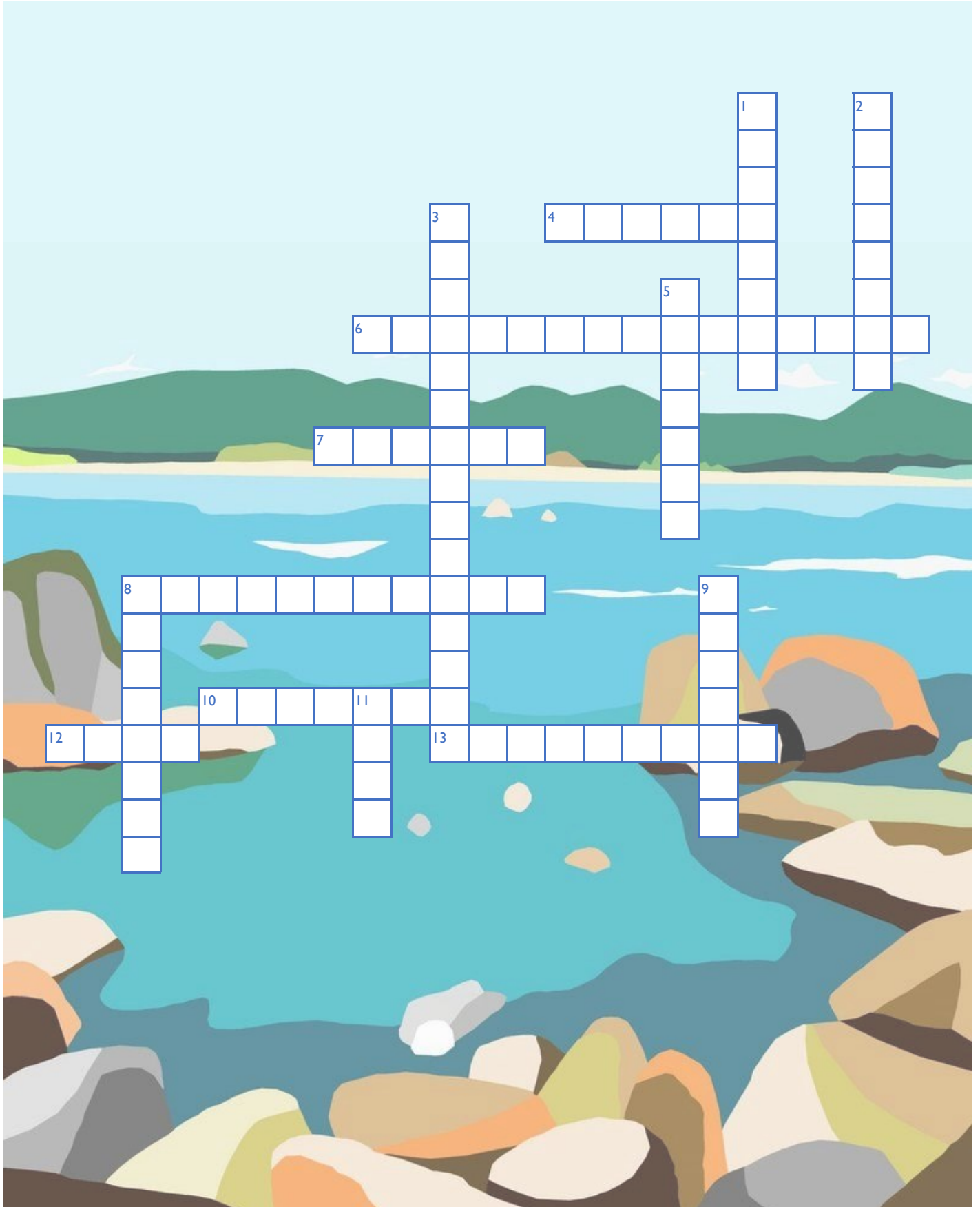
HAPPY READING!

CRYPTIC CROSSWORD CLUES

- | | | |
|---------------------------|---|---|
| Vicky Pappa (7B) |  | DOWN 1 the king of the ocean
ACROSS 7 what paddles in the ocean? |
| Valentina Kiliorides (9A) |  | DOWN 8 ocean lovers need this equipment
ACROSS 8 Indonesia is one |
| Dionysis Markidis (9B) |  | ACROSS 10 we can appreciate wonders beneath us but the sun can hit our back
ACROSS 4 we eat it but not those ones; mythical beast of the ocean |
| Alexandra Tertipis (7A) |  | ACROSS 12 large, brown trees that live underwater; most useful plant in Minecraft
DOWN 2 put these on your feet and you'll go far |
| Philip Marantinis (9A) |  | DOWN 5 water cat
ACROSS 13 the rainforest is a rapidly shrinking |
| Alex Manolios (8A) |  | DOWN 3 only the bravest planes dare venture here
ACROSS 6 the most useful fish in your tool shed |
| George Koritsides (8B) |  | DOWN 9 go with the flow, make waves - but don't get swept away
DOWN 11 not what you think |

KEY STAGE 3 STUDENT LEADERS' SUMMER CROSSWORD

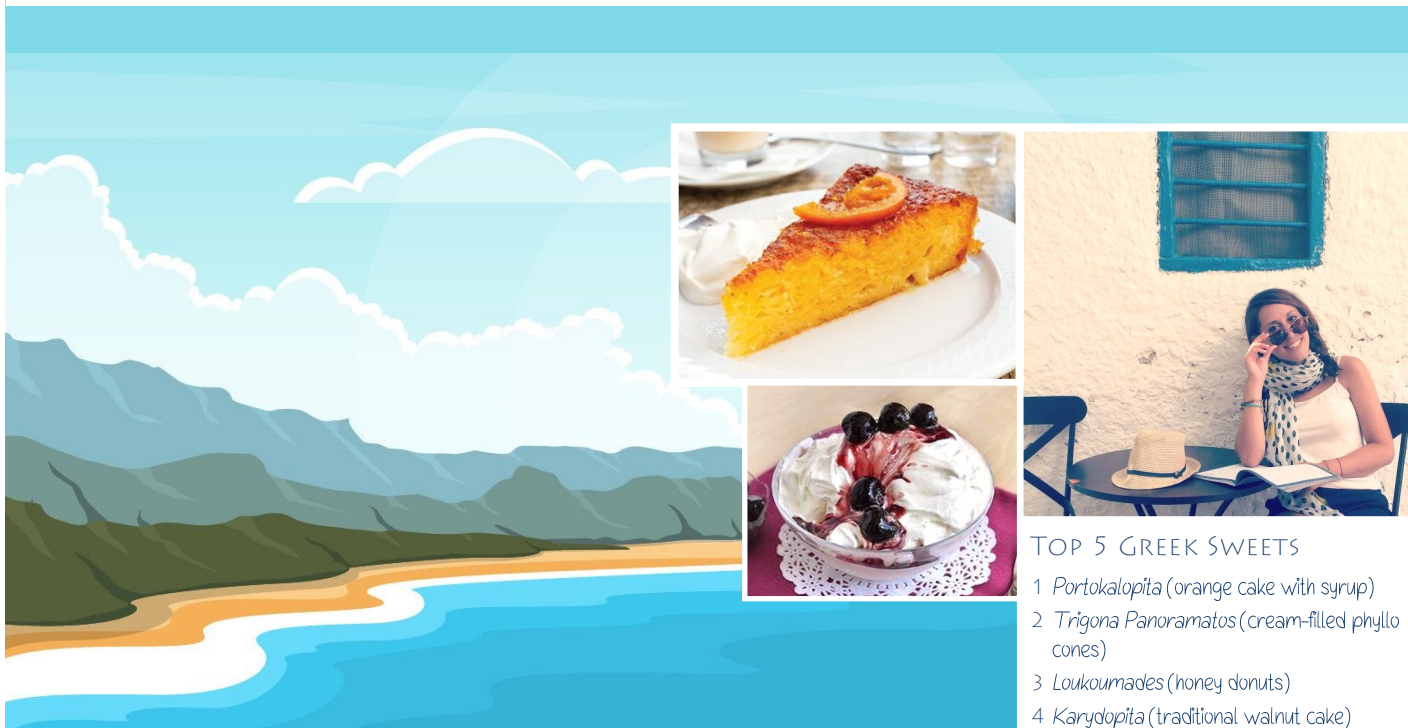
CAN YOU SOLVE IT?



KEY STAGE 3 FORM TUTORS' GUIDE TO THE GREEK SUMMER



46 THINGS TO EAT, SEE & DO



TOP 5 GREEK SWEETS

- 1 *Portokalopita* (orange cake with syrup)
- 2 *Trigona Panoramatos* (cream-filled phyllo cones)
- 3 *Loukoumades* (honey donuts)
- 4 *Karyopita* (traditional walnut cake)
- 5 *Glyko tou koutaliou* with Greek yogurt (spoon sweet)

MS TSELIU (FORM TUTOR FOR YEAR 7A)



TOP 5 PLACES TO VISIT

- 1 The Acropolis
- 2 Monemvasia
- 3 Nafplio
- 4 Vergina
- 5 Crete

MS PROKOPIOU (FORM LINK)



TOP 6 THINGS TO DO DURING SUMMER IN GREECE

- 1 Visit the island of Milos which has been voted Best Island in the World in 2021
- 2 Discover the Acropolis Museum
- 3 Visit the monasteries at Meteora
- 4 Go spelunking at Melissani Cave
- 5 Explore the Samaria Gorge
- 6 Discover Lake Plastira

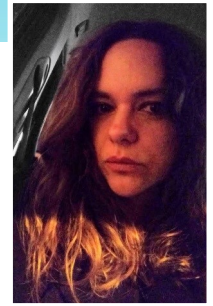
MS WASILEWSKA (FORM LINK)





TOP 5 GREEK WORDS

- 1 Ήλιος - Ilios - Sun
- 2 Θάλασσα - Thalassa - Sea
- 3 Παραλία - Paralia - Beach
- 4 Ξεγνοισιά - Ksegniasia - Not having a care in the world
- 5 Παρέες - Parees - Friends

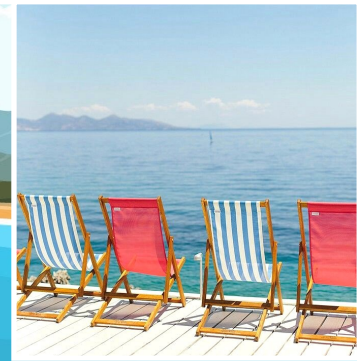


MS KAFETZI (FORM TUTOR FOR YEAR 8B)

TOP 5 THINGS TO EAT DURING SUMMER IN GREECE

- 1 Souvlaki
- 2 Greek salad (Horiatiki)
- 3 Moussaka
- 4 Gemista (stuffed vegetables)
- 5 Grilled octopus

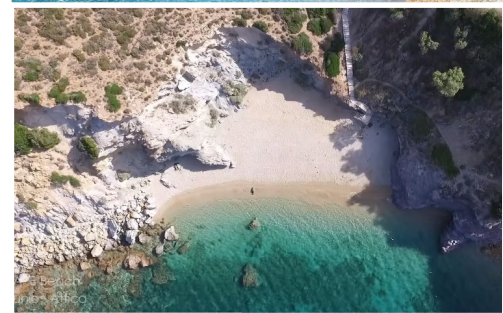
MS PAPADOPOULOU (FORM TUTOR FOR YEAR 9A)



TOP 11 BEACHES IN ATTICA

- 1 Skinias
- 2 Megalo Kavouri
- 3 Vouliagmeni
- 4 Yabanaki
- 5 Limanakia
- 6 Legrena-Kape
- 7 Sounio
- 8 Marathonas
- 9 Kokkino Limanaki & Mati
- 10 Avlaki
- 11 Psatha

MR KOSTOPOULOS (FORM TUTOR FOR YEAR 9B)



TOP 5 ANCIENT RUINS IN ATHENS

1 THE ACROPOLIS OF ATHENS



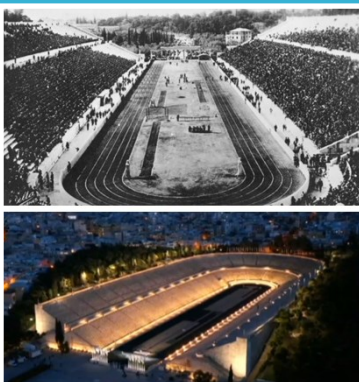
A reminder of the glory of ancient Athens, the Acropolis was the center of the ancient city and functioned as a citadel in its protected hilltop location. The most emblematic building is the Parthenon, the largest temple of the classical antiquity period dating from 447 BCE to 338 BCE.

2 THE ANCIENT AGORA RUINS OF THE MARKETPLACE

The ancient Agora was the marketplace and the centre of everyday life in ancient Athens. The Greek word "Agora" means to "gather and orate," indicating that this site was a location of public speaking. The Agora was a place of administration and commerce as well as the meeting place of the "Assembly", a civic decision-making group. Athletic events and theatre performances were also held here.



3 OLYMPIEION TEMPLE OF OLYMPIAN ZEUS



Dedicated to Zeus, the Temple of Olympian Zeus, also called the Olympieion, was the largest temple in ancient Greece. Though the Parthenon is better preserved, the Temple of Olympian Zeus was an even more monumental structure in its day. In front of the Olympieion, not far from the entrance, stands Hadrian's Arch at the end of Dionysiou Areopagitou.

4 PANATHENEAIC STADIUM

Ancient Athens's largest building, the Panathenaic Stadium, has a capacity for 60,000 spectators. Constructed around 335 BCE during the era of Herodes Atticus, the venue hosted the Panathenaic Games where runners competed in races around the track. The 204-meter-long track was designed with four double herms, where runners would turn in the races.



MR LAIOS,
FORM TUTOR FOR YEAR 7B

5 THE ODEON OF HERODES ATTICUS

Built by Athenian benefactor and Roman senator Herodes Atticus in around 161 CE as a memorial to his late wife, Regilla, the Herodeon (as it's commonly called) is one of the most striking Athens monuments and one of the world's oldest functioning theatres. The ancient Odeon of Herodes Atticus theatre is one of the must-see attractions in Athens and considered one of the best open-air theatres in the world.



TOP 5 WALKS & HIKES IN & AROUND ATHENS



1 DRAFI WATERFALL, MOUNT PENTELI

Athens's second-highest mountain, which we can see every day from Byron College, is full of paths, hikes, and a panoramic view of all of Attica from the peak. It also hides some spots of stunning natural beauty, such as this one.



 Google coordinates: 38.037187, 23.906136

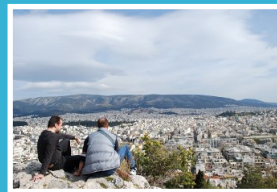
2 KAISARIANI MONASTERY, MOUNT HYMETTUS

This medieval monastery, just above Athens's Eastern suburbs on the slope of Mount Hymettus, is beautiful in its own right but is also the starting point for many hikes up the mountain. Stop off at Kalopoula's cafe for a refreshment in the forest, not even 15 minutes up the road!

 Google coordinates: 37.961112, 23.797971



3 FILOPAPPOU HILL



The best views of the Acropolis are surely from the neighbouring Filopappou hill. Don't forget to visit Socrates' cell on the way up!

 Google coordinates: 37.968850, 23.719863

4 HALANDRI STREAM

A quiet, peaceful stream in a strip of preserved forest, complete with a theatre amidst the trees. Well worth a leisurely stroll.

 Google coordinates: 38.027664, 23.809163



DR PAPA VASSILIOU,
FORM TUTOR FOR YEAR 8A



5 TATOI FOREST & MANSION

A little further out of Athens on the slopes of Parnitha is the former Greek Royal Family's estate. It's now open to hikers for exploration and you can visit the mansion where they stayed in the summer months – just make sure to bring water or, even better, a picnic!



 Google coordinates: 38.163813, 23.794219



PRINT, CUT, FOLD & STICK TO MAKE YOUR OWN
GREEK SUMMER CHECKLIST BOOKMARK.

CAN YOU CHECK OFF EVERY ONE?



GREEK SUMMER CHECKLIST

EAT

- 1 Souvlaki
- 2 Horiatiki
- 3 Moussaka
- 4 Gemista
- 5 Grilled octopus
- 6 Portokalopita
- 7 Trigona Panoramatos
- 8 Loukoumades
- 9 Karydopita
- 10 Glyko tou koutaliou with Greek yoghurt

VISIT

- 11 The Acropolis
- 12 Acropolis Museum
- 13 Ancient Agora
- 14 Olympeion
- 15 Panathenaic Stadium
- 16 Herodeon
- 17 Monemvassia
- 18 Nafplio
- 19 Milos
- 20 Crete
- 21 Vergina
- 22 Meteora
- 23 Melissani Cave
- 24 Samaria Gorge
- 25 Lake Plastira

HIKE

- 26 Drafi Waterfall
- 27 Kaisariani Monastery
- 28 Filopappou Hill
- 29 Halandri Stream
- 30 Tatoi

SWIM

- 31 Skinias
- 32 Megalo Kavouri
- 33 Vouliagmeni
- 34 Yabanaki
- 35 Limanaki
- 36 Legrena-Kape
- 37 Sounio
- 38 Marathonas
- 39 Kokkino Limanaki & Mati
- 40 Avlaki
- 41 Psatha

SAY

- 42 Ηλιος-Hlios-Sun
- 43 Θάλασσα-Thalassa-Sea
- 44 Παραλία-Paralia-Beach
- 45 Ξενοιασιά-Ksegniasia-Not having a care in the world
- 46 Παρέες-Parees-Friends

HELLO... FROM THE OTHER SIDE OF IGCSE

A TWO-YEAR MARATHON: HOW TO WORK WELL DURING IGCSE



Although the IGCSE course may seem a bit daunting at first, it is a great opportunity to expand your knowledge in subjects that you are already interested in, as well as assist in developing your skills

further. As I am due to finish my last few IGCSE exams in the coming weeks, I have had time to reflect on the past two years and have compiled a list of things that have helped me in dealing with feeling overwhelmed while preparing for my final exams.

- 1 My first and most important tip is consistency!

Recalling information for two years is quite a challenge if you have not already learnt the work, this is why I suggest using each class test as a check-point to thoroughly learn each topic. This process is definitely made easier if you are attentive in class and are proactive in the lesson as it will ensure that there are no gaps in your knowledge. This will save you a lot of time when you reach the final stages of preparation for your exams. It will also alleviate your workload as you would have already worked through and committed most of your work to long-term memory.

- 2 Secondly, when studying for class tests, use past papers to apply your knowledge. In this way you'll become more comfortable with the way that questions are phrased and how to tackle each one. However, do not get trapped in the cycle of solely studying from past papers, as I did, as this makes it easier for crucial parts of information to slip away and you won't realise until the last moment that a whole chunk is missing from your knowledge.

- 3 Thirdly, keep your final goal in mind and study for the long-term. In other words, avoid cramming.

- 4 Finally, manage your stress effectively and don't be scared to ask for help. Looking back once you are finally done, you realise that the constant worrying and stress was not worth it, necessary or productive. Make sure you're getting enough sleep and exercise, even if it's just a ten-minute walk, and don't feel guilty about taking a break once in a while.

ISABELLA TZITZIVACOS (11A)

THE EXAMS ARE HERE! HOW TO ACE YOUR IGCSES

It's finally time: after two years of residing within the towering walls of the IGCSEs, the ball is now in your court. You can either choose to stay on the ball or miss your shot completely. It goes without saying that these times are some of the most arduous and unnerving ones – yet exhilarating too. Having gone through (and still continuing to endure the exam season), I have discovered some tips and tricks which made things exceedingly more pleasing.



Through personal experience, I am well aware that some teachers might have intimidated you a tad too much; however (insider tip), it's not as ominous as it seems! Like anything in life, you must strive to reach an equilibrium within your studies. This means allowing yourself to breathe and not overburden yourself with weighty textbooks and unending past papers.

Easter Break during Year 11 will prove itself pivotal in how the remainder of your exam season will unfold: setting a solid foundation, allowing you to germinate and flourish into a prosperous flower, is of the utmost consequence. This is the time you take all the preparation you have amassed and put it to good use.

Let me break it down for you: a suitable and well-tailored study timetable must be made early on. It is imperative that you make one that suits you and your needs. Identify your strengths and weaknesses (I would suggest using the syllabus outline provided by the exam boards) and prioritise them in order to ensure efficient revision and a proliferation in your knowledge. Create a clean and systematic place in which you can study, AWAY from your bed! (Trust me, once you lay on your comfy sheets, it will be hard to concentrate.) Furthermore, I suggest you identify the most suitable method of revision for you; for some it may be making notes, using flashcards, completing past papers, or all of the above!

I remember promising myself that I would NOT be seen leaving my house, seeing my friends or anything that I classified as fun. Thank God I broke that promise! I am beyond guilty of shedding a few too many tears and over-stressing about things which now seem insignificant. Socialising, breaks and taking walks in the spring/summer warmth come hand in hand with studying. In my eyes, these must be seen as equal because no matter the outcome, making sure that your mental and physical well-being is prioritised is vital.

By way of conclusion, stay well rested, have fun, and do the best you can, and your desired outcome will be achieved. There's a limited amount I can set down here, so I urge you, as I did, to come to talk to someone who has already undergone these 'scary' times. Get your pencils sharpened, pens in hand and get ready to ACE your exams. I wish you all the best of luck!

JOHN ROY AMURAO (11A)

ARTICLES

THE BURNING ISSUE

MELICE DAYEKH
(YEAR 9A)



OF GLOBAL WARMING

If you were told that your house was on fire and eventually your own life was at risk, would you be sitting around doing nothing? There is no rose-tinted way to see this. Scientists have been warning us about global warming since 1966 and yet, here we are still talking about it... while it's all getting worse by the day.

#EMERGENCYMODE

“ [...] We are like water molecules in a wave: we simultaneously transmit the wave and are moved by it. No one water molecule causes the wave, but together an enormous number of water molecules carry the wave. [...]”

WHAT IS GLOBAL WARMING?

I am sure we are all aware of a general definition of global warming; however, what is it exactly? Well, global warming is the severe increase in the temperatures and heating on Earth which has been drastically accelerating since the industrial period due to human activities.

CAUSES

Fossil fuel burning, greenhouse gas emissions, and more. Now, many around the world are aware of how serious this issue is and that immediate action must be taken. Sadly, not many contribute to any means of action to improve the issue for all future generations and ourselves.

EFFECTS

Global warming already has massive effects on our world: glaciers have shrunk, the ice is melting, more and more animals are going extinct, natural disasters such as wildfires and floods have increased, amongst other environmental damages. Temperatures around the world are changing abnormally; in fact, scientists – specialists committed to tackling global warming predict that global temperatures will continue to rise for many more decades. The IPCC (Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change) in which more than 1,300 scientists are involved, believes that in the next century there will be an increase in global temperatures of more than 1-3 degrees Celsius. According to NASA climate scientists, if we do not put in the effort and the actions required, human civilisation is at huge risk.

If we allow this problem to continue, it will cause significant harm to all organisms' health; we are all at risk of not seeing ourselves grow old as there will be demand for more survival necessities (like food and water), a rise in sea levels, and extreme weather conditions. We will all be struggling due to our lack of effort and determination to create the light we need to make our dark future a brighter one. If we do not start to make a change now, no one will! If we do not start to make changes today, we can all say goodbye to our future dream plans... Scientists are playing their part in trying to find solutions and tracking global warming, so it is obligatory that we also do our part by taking action!



[...] It's all of us together, carried by a resonance that will affect great change."

PETER KALMUS
NASA CLIMATE SCIENTIST

WALK MORE!

Try to keep your use of fossil-fuel burning means of transportation to an absolute minimum: if we use cars, buses, motorcycles etc. less, there will be a decrease in the use of fossil fuels. That way you can also improve your health by cycling or going on foot!

USE RECYCLABLES!

Use recyclable materials as much as you can: by using more recyclable materials there will be less energy produced as less fossil fuels are burned in their manufacture. The stuff we throw away without second thought also just ends up in huge landfills which are terrible for the environment.

SHOP MINDFULLY!

Make sure that whatever you buy in the store does not use palm oil, harmful chemicals and that these products are not made in factories that abuse the environment.

TURN THE LIGHTS OFF!

Use as little electricity as you can; minimise the use of artificial lighting during daytime and always turn the lights off when you exit a room.

WHAT
CAN I DO

TO
HELP?



**TAKE ACTION NOW SO THAT WE CAN SAVE OUR
PLANET AND YOUNGER GENERATIONS CAN GROW
UP IN A SAFER AND HAPPIER WORLD!**

WHAT IS

ELODIE VALEGEAS
(YEAR 9B)

OCEAN POLLUTION

AND WHAT CAN YOU DO ABOUT IT?

WHAT IS OCEAN POLLUTION?

Ocean pollution occurs when substances used or spread by humans — such as industrial, agricultural, and residential waste, particles, noise, excess carbon dioxide or invasive organisms — enter the ocean and cause harmful effects. It is a huge problem in the current and oncoming years that can affect human health, due to increased chemical concentration such as nitrogen which causes algal blooms and can be toxic to wildlife.

WHY AND HOW DO OCEANS GET POLLUTED?**SEWAGE DUMPING**

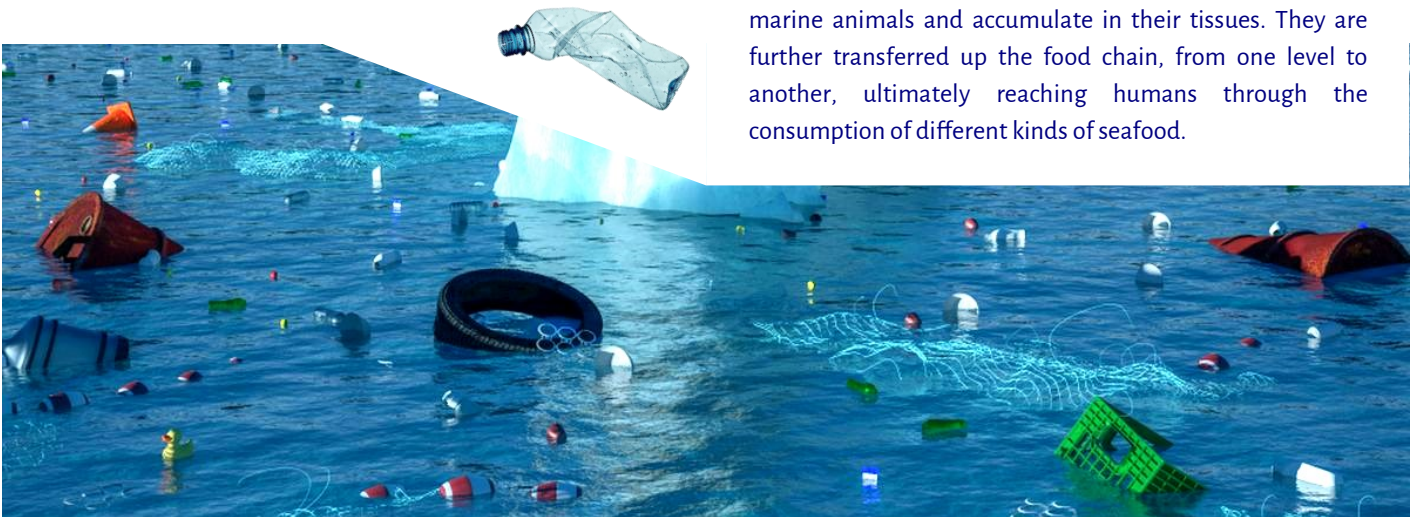
The dumping of sewage in the ocean is often regarded as the cheapest and easiest method of sewage disposal. Most untreated sewage contains lethal substances which find their way into the ocean waters through the sewer systems. This has detrimental effects on the health of marine flora and fauna. Referred to as 'non-point pollution', runoff is caused when the soil is infiltrated with water to its maximum extent and the excess water then flows from the land into the ocean via drainage systems like rivers and streams. This runoff water carries with it harmful toxins from the litter dumped in towns and cities, fertilisers, pesticides, and other soil contaminants. All these toxins are then dumped into the ocean along with the runoff.

PLASTIC NOT-SO FANTASTIC

A large quantity of single-use plastic has been mercilessly dumped in the marine environment and found on beaches, in polar regions, and even on the shorelines of the world's most remote uninhabited islands. Plastic debris has transformed some marine areas into a plastic soup, choking marine life and causing a potential large-scale impact on the marine environment.

GARBAGE & TOXINS

Garbage along with harmful chemicals is also released into water bodies from several industries. The waste from industries — like fossil fuel and plastic manufacturing — contains harmful toxins like mercury, and other chemical substances. These pollute the oceans by altering the pH level of the water, which contributes to the death of most aquatic flora and fauna. Such toxins also enter the bodies of marine animals and accumulate in their tissues. They are further transferred up the food chain, from one level to another, ultimately reaching humans through the consumption of different kinds of seafood.



1 ▣

The harmful toxins and industrial chemicals that enter the oceans accumulate in the fatty tissues of aquatic fauna and lead to severe **damage to their reproductive systems**. The sea birds that depend on fish for their food are also subsequently affected. When humans consume fish as seafood, they are also contaminated by these harmful chemicals.

3 ▣

The fertilisers and pesticides that reach the oceans also contribute greatly to the **global decline in fish populations** as well as affect the reproductive fertility of human beings that consume them.



2 ▣

Oil spills prevent sunlight from reaching aquatic flora and lead to a **disruption of oxygen supply**.

Toxic chemicals and oil spills cause severe bleaching of coral reefs, resulting in the destruction of these fragile habitats and the life cycle of the coral ecosystems.

4 ▣

Oil spills also result in the change of chemical composition of marine ecosystems and kill beneficial marine micro-organisms that generate oxygen. Such **ecological imbalances** lead to the **smothering of the ocean's biodiversity** and result in reduced reproduction and migration, and the death of fish.

WHAT CAN YOU DO TO HELP?

CONSERVE WATER

Take shorter showers and turn off the tap while brushing your teeth.

SAY NO TO SINGLE-USE PLASTIC

Use paper or metal straws, plates, cutlery, carry reusable bags and a refillable water bottle with you!

REDUCE, REUSE, RECYCLE (properly!)

PARTICIPATE IN BEACH CLEAN-UPS

You can volunteer at local organisations, or organise a beach-clean up at your school. Check out www.helmeпа.gr for Greece!

STOP USING GLITTER

Glitter is a source of microplastics in the environment and a hazard to various organisms.

SUPPORT ORGANISATIONS WORKING TO PROTECT THE OCEAN

USEFUL LINKS



oceana.org ▣ Protecting the world's oceans

plasticsoupfoundation.org ▣ Dealing with plastic pollution

saveourseas.com ▣ Protecting life in oceans, especially sharks and rays

medasset.org ▣ Mediterranean Association to save the sea turtles

savegreekseas.com ▣ Online petition against oil/gas drilling plans in Greece

archipelago.gr ▣ Active contribution to the conservation of the unique biodiversity hotspot of the Aegean Sea and the eastern Mediterranean

isea.com.gr ▣ a watchful eye for the protection of aquatic ecosystems

archelon.gr ▣ Sea Turtle Protection Society of Greece

allforblue.org ▣ Keep Aegean Blue

WELCOME TO PRIPYAT

10 FACTS ABOUT CHERNOBYL

WHAT HAPPENED AT CHERNOBYL?

On 26 April 1986, at 1:23 am, the No. 4 reactor at the Chernobyl Nuclear Power Plant in Ukraine went out of control during a safety test of the backup cooling system. This led to a core meltdown and explosions which ruptured the core and demolished the reactor building, followed by fire on site.

WHO SENT THE FIRST ALERT AFTER THE ACCIDENT?

Workers in the Forsmark Nuclear Power Plant in Sweden, were the first to notice something unusual. Two days after the explosion, radiation detectors at the plant started ringing. Further tests showed that there was no problem at the plant and that radioactive particles found in the grass nearby were only used by Soviet plants.

HOW SERIOUS WAS THE ACCIDENT?

This was the most serious nuclear disaster in history: 8 tonnes of radioactive debris got released into the atmosphere. 115,000 people were evacuated in 1986 and another 220,000 in the aftermath. It took 15 days to put out the fire. 500,000 personnel dealt with the accident and its aftermath. The radioactive material released was equivalent to 400 times the Hiroshima and Nagasaki bombs.

WHAT RADIOACTIVE SUBSTANCES WERE RELEASED?

The explosions threw into the air radioactive particles: Iodine-131, Caesium-137 and Strontium-90. About 100,000 km² of land were contaminated. Worst off were Ukraine, Russia and Belarus. Lower contamination was found across Europe; the radioactive cloud travelled even to Ireland.

HOW CAN THESE SUBSTANCES AFFECT HUMAN HEALTH?

Iodine-131 has a half-life of 8 days but is highly volatile and can easily enter the food chain. If ingested, it affects the thyroid gland, causing cancer and death. Strontium-90 has a half-life of 28 years, and Caesium-137 of 30 years. If ingested, both cause serious health problems and death. Caesium-137 enters the blood and accumulates in vital organs such as the heart. Strontium-90 accumulates in the bones and teeth. When suffering from acute radiation sickness, the most common symptoms are hair-loss and vomiting.





WHAT SAFETY MEASURES WERE TAKEN IMMEDIATELY AFTER THE ACCIDENT?

By December 1986, a cement sarcophagus was built around the reactor to minimise damage if the core exploded, to stop further contamination and to protect the staff working on Reactors 1-3 which finally ceased operations in 2000.

WHAT SAFETY MEASURES ARE IN PLACE NOW?

Because the first sarcophagus deteriorated, a larger metal cover was built by 2016. It was built on rails close to reactor No. 4 and slid over the existing sarcophagus, thus containing the contamination while allowing the dismantling of the reactor.

WHO LIVES NOW IN CHERNOBYL AND THE SURROUNDING AREA?

The original Exclusion Zone of 30 km radius covers an area of approximately 2,600 km² called the Alienation Zone. Since no humans live in this zone, it has turned wild. Some older locals—in 2016 these were around 180-200—have returned. Around 5,000 people work in the Zone: guards, firemen, decontamination workers and service staff. They work 15 days and stay away 15 days to manage their radiation levels.

CAN SOMEONE VISIT CHERNOBYL?

After the accident, only scientists and reporters were allowed to visit. Recently, tourists can also visit the area after obtaining a special permit. Tourist tours are strictly controlled because the area remains very dangerous and those working or visiting need to be very careful and monitor their radiation levels all the time.

WHAT HAVE WE LEARNED FROM THE ACCIDENT?

People think that the accident was due to human error by the operators and mistakes in the design of the reactor. In the future, we need to be more careful when designing, building, and operating nuclear power plants. •



NIKOLAS KOULOURIS-GILBERT
(ΥΕΑΥ ΓΑ)

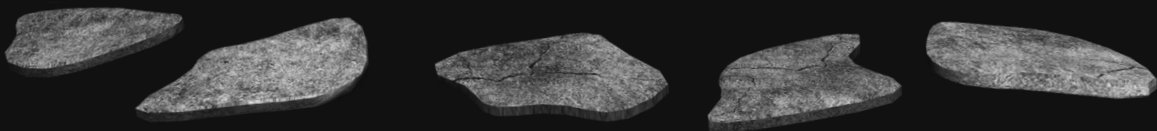
Hello Grief. My New Friend

'G'ran, do you remember the nights when you used to tell me stories from your childhood till I fell asleep? Do you remember the summers you helped me make sandcastles until we got sunburnt? Well, I do...

It was a normal school Wednesday, when I got a sudden phone call during break. Mom's name appeared on the screen, and I thought I'd better answer; mom never called during school times – this seemed important. The moment I picked up the phone I heard my mother in a voice of sorrow: she was coming to pick me up from school right now. We had to travel to Ioannina where my grandma was unconscious in the emergency room... She had been found lying in the middle of the street and according to the doctors there were only a few hours left... I was in Year 6 at the time and I remember that my instant reaction was to run upstairs, rush to the bathroom and start crying. I vaguely remember people coming after me, my close friends asking questions, me trying to explain... But what I do remember, what I have a very clear memory of, is that

from that exact moment onwards, it started to hurt. I wasn't quite sure what this 'it' was at the time, but all I can tell you is that I went into an emotional turmoil which would stay with me for quite a while... Now I know: hello Grief, my new friend.

Grief is an unavoidable, foundational part of the human experience and yet it is so hard to talk about it. When one thinks of grief, they usually link it with death. However, we grieve over multiple things. It could be the loss of your beloved grandmother, or the loss of your pet dog. But you might also grieve when you fall out with a friend, and you might grieve when you change school environment or even country. Grief is defined as 'deep sorrow'; in other words, misery, or anything that causes a human to feel a *deep sense of sadness*, can take them through the grieving process. Because this is what grief is: a process. According to research conducted by Polish psychiatrist Emily Gutheil in 2003, grief is a process that consists of five stages. I will take you through them via my story.



The Positive Side of Grief

Believe it or not, there is a positive side of grief: growth. One can grow in multiple ways out of loss and grief, months and years after that painful experience. Once an individual has recovered from the emotional damage created in their souls, and has passed through all five stages, they can then start to see traces of growth... These traces might not be visible to others, but we can all tell when someone has left the past behind, realising that their loved ones won't come back, and is, steadily and gracefully, moving on.

That said, quite some time needs to pass after the fifth stage for our souls to be healed and to regain the energy

and the courage to see life from a positive perspective again.

There is this quote I always keep in my heart, 'You need to live every minute of your life because you don't know what will happen to you in one, five, ten years' time... Why spend your life in misery, one day we will all die, and we will eventually all be forgotten?' These words belong to my grandmother, and I will keep on repeating them to my friends and to the generations to come: you only have one life so you might as well enjoy it, starting from this very moment! •

Anna Maria Denaxa (Year 9A)

The Process of Grief: Five Stages

Stage 1 - Denial

The first is denial, where one is surprised and shocked to the point of disbelief. For me this was when I answered the phone, and I heard the tragic news from my parents; I was shocked to the extent that I could not even answer back, so I just hung up to their face.



Stage 2 - Anger

The second stage is anger, where one feels wronged. 'Why me?' they might ask. This might cause random small fights in the family as everyone is looking for someone to blame. It is followed by a series of symptoms such as a dry mouth, feeling pressure around the lower part of your core, having

dry lips and puffy red eyes from crying or even blurry vision. I can still see myself sobbing in the girls' bathroom, trying to explain to my friends what had just happened whilst ripping pages out of my English notebook...



Stage 3 -

Depression

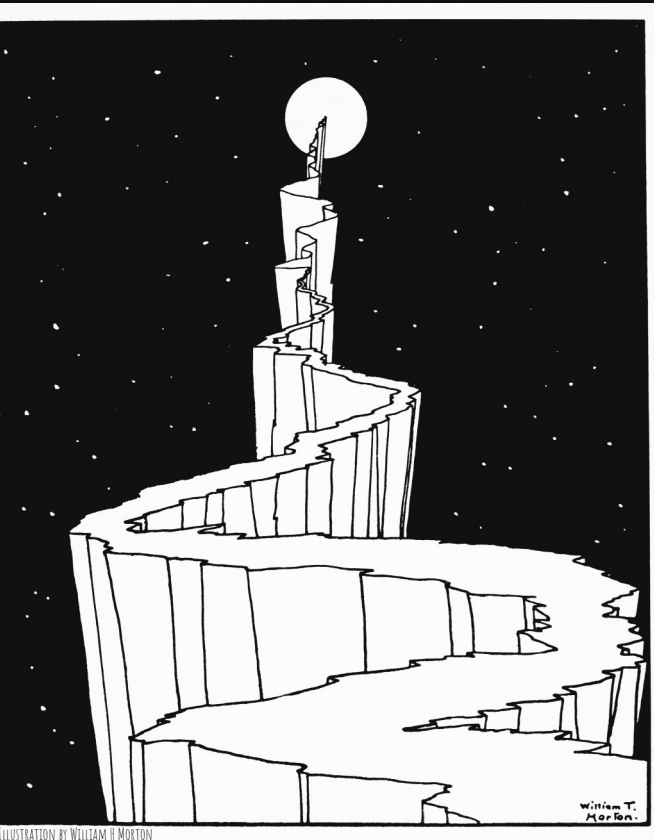
Then they enter the third stage of depression. This is when you are through with anger but instead are incredibly sad and having a hard time even

functioning with what has happened. When someone goes through this stage, it is likely to see symptoms such as overthinking, losing sleep, oversleeping, not having the right nutrition / diet or even not eating at all. At this point, things might get severe, so it would be best to seek counselling by visiting the right therapist. In my case, this stage took quite a bit of time as I was terribly sad and not in the mood for anything for two weeks following the event. My friends always tried to cheer me up, but nothing seemed to be working. It felt as if I were lost in a parallel universe, thinking that my life will be miserable and monotonous forever.

Stage 5 -

Acceptance

Finally, they then reach the fifth and final stage which is acceptance, where one can think back on the event and have happy thoughts and recall all the good times they have shared together and the memories they have created. Studies have shown that when people go through this stage, they tend to look at old photos, keep things that belonged to the lost one close to them, visit the places they used to go to together and speak a lot about them. This was the stage that required the most thinking from me. To tell you the truth, I try not to overthink in life; I go with the flow. Therefore I found this last stage extra challenging. I remember this like today: I was sitting in bed listening to music when I thought that everything happens for a reason and there is no turning back.



Stage 4 - Bargaining

The fourth stage is bargaining, where one grieves their own life and begins to bargain with whichever higher power they believe in, questioning what they could have done differently. This was the most crucial stage for me. I descended into a spiral of negative thinking that all the bad things in life were happening to me and that I was under some kind of evil spell...



NEURAL NETWORKS AND HOW COMPUTERS CAN BECOME HUMAN



WHAT ARE NEURAL NETWORKS?

In simple terms, a neural network is a programme modeled on the human brain and nervous system, emulating how the human brain functions and solves problems. Let's dig a little deeper into this. According to IBM, the largest leader in the field, neural networks "reflect the behaviour of the human brain, allowing computer programs to recognise patterns and solve common problems in the fields of AI." In other words, they make computers work like humans do, and make computers capable of doing things that they normally couldn't. Neural Networks can handle common problems faced by humans that an ordinary programme couldn't, or would find hard, to do.

HOW DO NEURAL NETWORKS WORK?

In a nutshell they work like our brain, putting various nodes together and collecting the output. Nodes are the computer equivalent of our brain's neurons. For example, if you need to figure out whether you can go to a party or not, your brain uses the neurons to calculate if it can or not. Now we get into the deep stuff: neural networks take a layer of nodes and apply them. These are known as the 'starting values', and can be set to different values. Then the computer applies another layer of nodes, each of which is connected to one node on the previous layer (or sometimes multiple). Another thing to account for is the different value thresholds. These tell the computer when to turn a node on or off. Adding more layers with different thresholds makes the neural networks work eerily closely to our own brains. While this may seem a bit confusing, it isn't really. These thresholds take the output of the previous nodes and add them up. In this way, if neuron 1

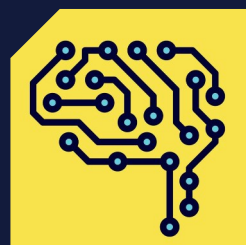
has the value of 1, and neuron 2 has the value of 0, neuron 3 – that has a threshold of 2 – will not turn on.

WHO INVENTED NEURAL NETWORKS AND HOW?

A man named Frank Rosenblatt created the first and simplest form of a neural network in 1958, called the Perceptron. It was composed of a single node and couldn't do much other than prove the concept. As for how it was made, there isn't much to it. As a psychologist, Rosenblatt aimed to simulate the brain in order to conduct psychological investigations. Other than paving the way for modern Artificial Intelligence, Rosenblatt also conducted experiments on the brains of rats.

WHY DO WE USE NEURAL NETWORKS?

We use neural networks to solve problems that computers haven't been able to before; neural networks enable us to make computers vastly more efficient in solving such problems. They also make the use of AI much easier on computers, as they use both less power and fewer resources. The main uses are for AI development and testing, as well as developing quantum computers. Quantum computers harness the laws of quantum mechanics to solve problems too complex for normal computers. All in all, it's an exciting future when we finally might be able to talk about truly 'smart' computers, more like our own brains than ever before. •



FIND OUT MORE AT:

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PHILIPPOS VOULTSOS
(YEAR 7B)



CREATIVE EXPRESSION



FREAK SHOW

SIREN

The dark — most people are afraid of it — at least what lurks in it; but it has accepted me when no one would. I am what you fear in the dark: the shadow that you catch a glimpse of in the corner of your room when you are alone. But I am not alone; I am on a mission, sent out by darkness itself. When the world feels tainted and unbalanced, we rise up to make it right, crawling out from the shadows to cleanse the world from its sins, and know the Time has come, to rise once more, and, by the end, peace will be restored.

I suppose I should introduce myself; I am a Siren. I've never really had a name or, at least, one that I can remember; the longer you stay in here, the more you forget about the outside world. To be honest, I can't quite remember what my life looked like outside of this place. The most I can remember are little flashes — like small specks of my past — too smudged to see clearly. As for why I am here in the first place... Well, my name should tell you everything. Though I guess I can't be called 'Siren' anymore. Not since I was eight years old, when a group of drunken men pulled me out of my tank after a show — apparently they thought I was a false one — one took out a pocket knife and sliced through the center of my fin. I couldn't perform for months, and the pain was, well, the only comparison I can draw would be if someone sliced a dirty blade straight through your legs — though, I guess, if it wasn't for them, I wouldn't have legs to walk with, albeit very mangled legs, but legs nonetheless. Even if I don't really have fins anymore, I can still swim and trick as I did before! And just like a siren I can sing — though I don't like to do it when people are around — I don't know how to control it fully just yet; I have gills to breathe underwater if I wish and, of course, I am covered in scales. So it's safe to say I am a crowd favourite, even if I hate performing with a burning passion. All those starving eyes staring at me, waiting for me to make a mistake — not to mention the water in the tank is disgusting.

The tank itself is old and rusty, with the — once gold — paint almost peeled off completely; as for the water, it's usually fetched from the nearby stream, meaning that it is almost always tinted a gross brown or green colour. At first I would refuse to perform in the water, but after the first few beatings, I felt confused and sad; after a while, I began to feel numb in the pain in a way. I guess I learned to keep my mouth shut and to scrub myself thoroughly after every performance with soap and then use herbs, like for example lavender and rosemary, to smell nice.

I believe this is everything you need to know. And now, let me tell you my story. The story of Siren.

I sighed heavily before picking myself up and towards the caravan, dragging my feet — or well trying to anyway... By the time I reached the door I was immediately pulled into the caravan by my friend, Lindsay. Lindsay: I don't think I can remember a time in the circus when I wasn't with her.



Our caravan is split in the middle; Lindsay's side is black and purple and has a magical, mystical aesthetic, while mine is blue and green and has an underwater theme. Lindsay isn't really considered a freak by most 'human' standards for she is quite a beautiful girl with long ginger hair that reaches to her lower back, but is known for her gift in fortune-telling. She carries around with her a large woven bag where she keeps her tarot cards, little bottles with different kinds of herbs (this is where I get my rosemary and lavender essential oils), a tiny purple notebook and a small sewing kit. She wears long flowy dresses with sandals and bangle bracelets and ever since her mother — the owner of the circus — had passed, presumably from lead poisoning from all that make-up, her sister had taken the role of ring-master, and she just happened to act like Lindsay's mother even though she was much younger — and absolutely evil if you ask me.

'Ugh! Why can't you stay focused for one minute, honestly?' I simply chuckled at her which in turn made her small, crooked smile appear on her face. 'Just put on your dress before you miss your cue,' she dictated. I groaned loudly. If there was one thing I hated most about this place, it would be the dress I had to wear... I mean, sure, it's about as beautiful as the ocean itself, with its swirling colours... Emerald, Persian green, jade green, turquoise, azure, midnight blue, cobalt blue, ultramarine. The top of the dress is sleeveless with an ombre scale pattern with a loose, flowy bottom that is also ombré. Lindsay had made me this dress for performing with her small sewing kit and even though it is incredibly uncomfortable and so itchy it makes me want to tear my skin off, I never said anything because I didn't want to hurt her feelings.

Once more my thoughts are interrupted. 'Oh, heavens! Siren, quick! That's your cue!' Before I could respond I was shoved out the door waiting for my cue behind the dark red curtain. 'And, now, Ladies and Gentlemen, the moment you have ALL been waiting for! Sparrow Circus' ONE and ONLY...'

I like to think that the longer you stay in the circus the more you forget about the outside world, and that you slowly forget what it feels like to be normal, if you were normal to begin with. But then again, even if it was normal, I don't think it would really change much in my life. Because when you think about it, we are all pieces on a chess board; some are simply destined to be the pawns on another person's sick game... I must say that, in my own opinion, the mere concept of normality is abnormal in itself; like having snow on an April day, almost unnatural. But I guess I can't quite comment on what exactly normal is.

Tonight would be my final night performing in London; this alone made me extremely sad, fully knowing I'll never get to come back till next year. That was just the way of the Freak Show, and before long it all becomes that of a routine. But London always felt special to me... According to Lindsay, I was found in London so maybe that was the reason; it was me just subconsciously feeling a sense of home, something most of us gave up hope for.

Once my name got called, I walked steadily into the ring and towards the diving board, I could hear people saying the usual 'uhs' and 'ahs' with the occasional 'WOAH!' that I've heard a million times. When I reached the highest part of the diving board I hesitantly looked down, despite doing this almost every day of my life. It never failed to make me nervous; the mere sight of the dropdown made my stomach sink. My vision went in and out but, despite my fear, I hurled myself into the air with no hesitation and landed gracefully into the water. And for my final act I planted myself on the edge of the tank... and sang. I never liked singing; not because I was bad at it but because I cannot control it. The way my voice works is exactly that of a siren you see: it has the ability to control people's physical and emotional reactions. So, as you can imagine, it causes a lot of problems. But tonight I had practised so much, nothing could possibly go wrong. I had decided I would sing from the bottom of my heart to celebrate my last day in London. Little did I know how big a mistake that would be...

Blood. Screams. Panic. It all happened so fast that no one in the big tent had time to react. I missed one note, but that was enough for one or the elderly men in the audience to drop dead in less than a minute! The people in the audience began to panic and run

out of the tent, children were crying, dogs were barking. A doctor was trying to get the man to wake up, only to give up when he realised it was too late. Before I had a moment to realise what I had done, someone had scooped me up and began running at full speed. At first I got terrified, only to calm down ever so slightly when I saw a strand of ginger hair flashing underneath; it was Lindsay. And, then, darkness.

As the sun hastily set, leaving the bright, yet calming, moon in its place, the whole world — in that moment — seemed still. Calming, yet slightly eerie, like a smile with too many teeth... But if you looked out over the sea high upon a jagged cliff-edge, it would look as if the world in that split second was splitting itself. The deep waves continue to roll back — in and out, back and forth — as if the ocean would never truly decide where it wanted to stay or leave, and the dark sandy tides bring back the familiar scent of salt. If you were lucky you might find the heron — perched in its nest — as it, too, surrenders its consciousness and moves into the world of dreams.

It seemed that the only ones awake were the stars themselves, always watching over the world, like the Earth's personal angels. If you are ever lucky enough to witness such a moment, enjoy it and consider it a gift from some unknown being.



MARIA KRULL
(YEAR 8B)



ECHOES

I t's up to you if you trust me or not.

I'm running, my feet weaving the ground. Fast movements, impulsive yet precise. Breath steady and strong. The blistering heat of the city makes my eyes sting, sweat is trickling down my skin and my cheeks are on fire. I must keep running.

You can never trust someone, not really. Everyone conceals macabre secrets. Very few people are honest enough to utter the raw, vulnerable truth. Few will persevere, few will be their true, pure selves. So many are willing to let their imagination wander too far to fake their lives, to be someone else.

Perhaps a little while ago I would have balked at idea of running so far and fast, now I relish the prospect. Running allows my mind to think. People run away; they run to escape. They run because of guilt, fear, woe, jealousy. Honestly, we're all cowards. However, we aren't cowards because we are afraid. Fear is natural and it keeps us alive, it ignites our thoughts. We are cowards when we allow fear to overcome us, when it owns us. Fear is a knife in our gut that is slowly twisted, fear is a constant hammer on our heads. Yet fear also evaporates like water under an early summer sun. Fear is an illusion. We must face it with courage, understand it, and then let it go or else it will quench flames. Under fear and stress, we get inaccurate, and our weak points are cracked. We make the world our enemy, reading calm faces as angry, spreading hate. We mustn't let fear fool us.

Why am I running? I run because I feel power in a life where I have none. But am I running away or towards? Am I running away from pain and sorrow or towards it? Am I a coward? I don't know. I'm lying. I told you not to trust me for I'm full of deception, I would tell infinite lies and never flinch. I know why I am running; I've always known but perhaps don't want to admit.

For a moment there is a deafening silence and then I hear a distant yet sonorous echo; a spine-chilling sensation runs down my back. My emotions splutter, fade, then surge again like a fire of burning coal. I tilt my head upwards; the empty blue sky gives me strength to bottle my feelings inside my chest. Panic is painful. I'm not a runner but now I'm converting emotional pain into kilometres of running. I try not to feel, I try to crunch all my emotions up, but creases remain. There are times though when I feel numb, I feel nothing at all. It's as if I'm looking at a mirror but I can't see myself. The mirror has cracks and is distorted. It's as if I'm a ghost, running through time and space, looking, always looking in the blackness for a sacred spark, something to guide me towards the intermittent light, a source of life. But I feel empty, like I will never feel anything ever again. And then the mirror shatters, my soul is in splinters.

I'm approaching a city; it looks mundane and ordinary. People flow like rivers. Each person moves as if unseeing hands drags and pulls them one way and another. Each step is predictable, my steps are random yet thrilling. Humanity is wedded to one another and yet people don't see that. They ignore each other, pushing and shoving. They make you feel like a withered rose, you feel invisible. But nobody wants to be invisible. People often judged and criticised me. Their words touch me like a feather: they may stay – maybe sting or tickle – but they've become so light and soft as if they're not there.

The sky is shrouded with clouds; I feel a sense of relief as they block the

scorching sun. They cover the sky as a blanket, protecting me but also blinding my way. You can look at clouds from different perspectives, they can take any form. When you are running, everything and everyone is a mere blur. We don't see the verdant landscape, the mist that dances upon the lake. We don't listen to the landscape singing her melody in nostalgic hues. It's all quite vague, we don't see the whole picture or read closely between the lines.

The city has a steady beat, it's like a pulsing heart. My soles feel the earth and gain their own rhythm. Even though the road is rough and muddy, I must travel onwards. I yearn for the countryside with the virescent grass and the smooth soil. Run further, that's all I have to do.

As soon as I hear the echo again, there comes the hush of deepening blue to the evening city. The full moon rises and looms over the iridescent night. For how long have I been running? I must have lost track of time. Time has its own unique flow, can neither changed nor altered. Time is a spindly, calloused hand on my shoulder; its jagged, bony fingers thrust me forward, it's always victorious as everyone can nothing but follow it. Time is like fire; both have a perpetual motion; they cannot be controlled. What is burned can never be restored, you can't turn back time. However, water quenches fire, it can be put out. Time never stops but always hides itself in a black-hooded silhouette.

While the city lamps turn on gradually as each vivid hue of the sunset is enveloped with blackness and gloom, the thrums and hums of the restless city overwhelm me; the din of millions of sorrowful souls; the cacophony of a million others bickering; the howling of yet millions more crying over their miserable existence and perhaps a few millions laughing. The leaves below are rustling to the melody of the gale; the city wildlife add to the beat while the night sky conducts them all. My feet are silent compared to the hubbub of city.

The echo rings in my ears again, it feels closer. Is someone watching me? The darkness presses on me as I fight the urge to turn around. With my pulse now racing, I check over my shoulder to see if I am really alone. I feel as if I was running in course and gritty sand, and I'm sinking in it. My feet feel stuck, yet they keep moving on their own account. Everything feels heavy, my feet ache, I feel drowsy but there is no option to sleep, no chance to rest anew. My strength and energy are dwindling, I can't clear my mind. I must keep running though.

I hear the echo, this time closer than ever before. The deep booming sound reverberates in my ear, it's ear-splitting. I try to block my ears, but it's not use, I keep on hearing it. The echo of my guilt, of my remorse. The echo reminds me of my flaws and fears. I force myself to laugh out loud, a laugh full of terror and horror. Nevertheless, I won't stop, I can't stop; my pride and dignity won't allow it. I must keep running. Whatever happens, I must keep running, must keep going. I can't look back.

But it seems like the ground is opening and I'm falling into a hole, my feet still running. I must keep running. I'm falling into a toxic, chaotic, eternal abyss but I never quite touch the bottom. Everything is dizzy and foggy, it feels smothering. I'm falling further, yet still I'm running.

As I am falling, I look at my hands, they're smeared with blood. I'll never be able to wash them for now I finally realise that guilt is a permanent stain.



**VALENTINA
KILIORIDES
(YEAR 9A)**



I woke up in a dark room. I didn't recognise it. The walls were dark grey with wallpaper peeling off them but other than that there wasn't much to the room; there was, though, a table with a big black key on it. I hesitated, before grabbing it. I probably shouldn't have because the moment I grabbed the key a door appeared. It was a huge, rusty, cold door and it looked like it had claw marks all over it. If I were being honest, I probably should have stopped there, maybe I should have tried doing something else, but I didn't. I grabbed hold of the handle and open the door with a loud creak. What I saw then made my blood run cold. Standing there was a man, but not just any ordinary man. He had scars all over his face including one right over his left eyebrow all the way down to the bottom of his bright red eye. His skin was pale and he was wearing a black suit. But the scariest thing about him was his crooked smile.

He extended one of his arms towards me, about to open his mouth to say something when, without thinking, I pushed past him and run through the door in hopes of being able to escape. Little did I know this was not the end of things because next thing I knew I was falling, falling into an endless darkness...

THE WAY

A disgusting smell punched its way into my brain. A high-pitched constant beeping noise came in a bundle with a piercing headache. My eyes were fumed up from the fall. I then realised. I was in the sewers. Disgusting green light flowed next to me into a seemingly endless tunnel while small mushrooms and mould decorated the dull brick walls. The ceiling had small dents in it and was dripping with water. The whole atmosphere was damp and blurry. There was a small tint of rotting food in the atmosphere fused with the deadly aroma of skunk spray.

A huge blast sounded next to me. A mountain of liquid collapsed onto me. I didn't bother cleaning myself and took a closer look. A purple, slimy tentacle leaped out of the water. Then another, and another! A huge creature, perfectly matching the color palette of the tentacles, propelled itself from the water. Its gargantuan mouth opened, a snot-like substance still connected the top of its lips, which extended all the way to the water. It released a deafening screech, blasting the snot onto me. I started searching for a weapon. About fifty meters away, I spotted a metal beam on the ground. My feet immediately sprang into action as I dashed across the damp, soggy sewer ground. Tentacles launched towards me; miraculously, I managed to duck and weave in just the right way for all the tentacles to miss me. I was almost in reach of the metal beam when the ground exploded, flinging me several metres up into the air. I was concerned about my fall, but I was more concerned about what lay beneath me.

A colossal pitch-black portal replaced the crater of the explosion. I could not see where it went, or how it was created, but I could ask myself that later as I descended into the endless abyss, or so I thought, as I bumped into hard black rock. I gave myself a few minutes to readjust my vision, and then I understood exactly where I was. I was in Dragonspine. I had heard tales of this place: a dimension underneath the Overworld, full of slimy crumbling red rock, with rivers and seas of molten hot glowing lava. I had never really believed the stories; however, it turns out I was wrong. This place was terrible, with towering mountains of red rock, smouldering hot lava all around me, and an atmosphere so full of ash I could barely see in front of me. I decided to explore my surroundings a bit. I walked for an hour or so, yet I could not spot anything other than mountains and oceans of that dreaded liquid. Just when I was about to give up, I spotted something fading into my view on the horizon. A broken

HOME

fortress made of dark red bricks. Was this it? Was this Dragonspine's famous crimson temple?



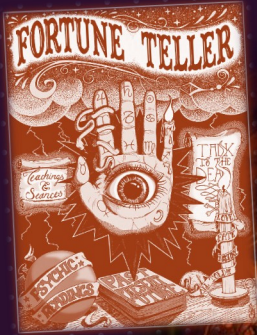
This temple was built in one thousand years by the seven Gods of Dragonspine ten thousand years ago. Very few people in the Overworld believe they exist, simply because of the scale of their actions. They don't think it was possible to perform such powerful actions. I had the truth right before my eyes. I climbed onto the temple and started to explore it. I was fascinated by the sight. There were black chests with green eyes on them scattered all across its surface. My instinct told me not to open them. On top of one of the chests, there was a carving of something. It looked like nonsense. I proceeded to take the chest next to a lava pool and throw it in. I had read about this. The chest then levitated over the glowing liquid. For about half an hour, the chest didn't do anything. I thought I had done something. Disappointed, I walked away thinking of another course of action. I saw a flash from behind me. Then another, and another! It was working! The chest was now floating far above the pool of liquid. It had doubled in size and was spinning at supersonic speeds. It started glowing brighter than a thousand suns and it exploded into a marvellous show of white smoke and glowing sparks. I knew immediately how to get home. I grabbed another of the chests and threw it into the lava. A repeat of the first chest happened; however, this time, the explosion was slightly bigger. The pattern repeated until I was at the seventh chest. I threw it into the lava, and it immediately sprang up into the air, exploding with so much force the lava leaped away from the blast, and I was blown off my feet and launched several metres backward. The explosion left white smoke, but this one was different from previously. It did not fade away. I guessed it was my way home. I jumped into the cloud of smoke, and everything went blank.



I woke to a blank space. Everything was plain white, except for my sweat-drenched body. Suddenly, I heard an explosion in the distance. The plain white area instantaneously exploded into a dark purple dreamy abyss of stars and planets. Was I in space? I could breathe normally, and I could swim through whatever this place was quite easily. I shouted at the top of my voice 'Take me to Earth!'. The space I was in collapsed into the plain white area again. Then I heard a deep voice: 'Your wish is my command'. Before I knew it, I was in the soggy sewers again. This time, though, the rope ladder extended down to the damp floor of the sewers. I was exhilarated – but what I saw above ground – terrified me.

Anthony Sorotos (Year 8B)

THE MYSTERIOUS



FORTUNE TELLER

Lewis lived in a little cottage in a small town far, far away from here and anywhere near. He was an extremely patient boy and treated everyone with kindness. He loved comic books with superheroes, because – guess what? He really wanted to become a superhero himself!

Lewis had a lot of friends; most of his friends were troublemakers. A lot of students said that Lewis had a really big gang, which he did not have. As, dear reader, you might have already imagined, Lewis was a big troublemaker himself! He was such a troublemaker that he had to change schools all the time. In fact, this was his seventh school. His only good student friend was his next-door neighbour, a tall boy named Jacob Hills. Jacob was a great student. In his tests he always got straight As. He spent his evenings revising. And he had never in his life got a single detention. (They were in Year 7.) He was also very tall and, in the summer, he always wore a yellow straw hat.

One day, as Jacob and Lewis were walking home together, they saw a circus in town! The circus looked massive even from the distance! It had striped black and white tents, and string lights

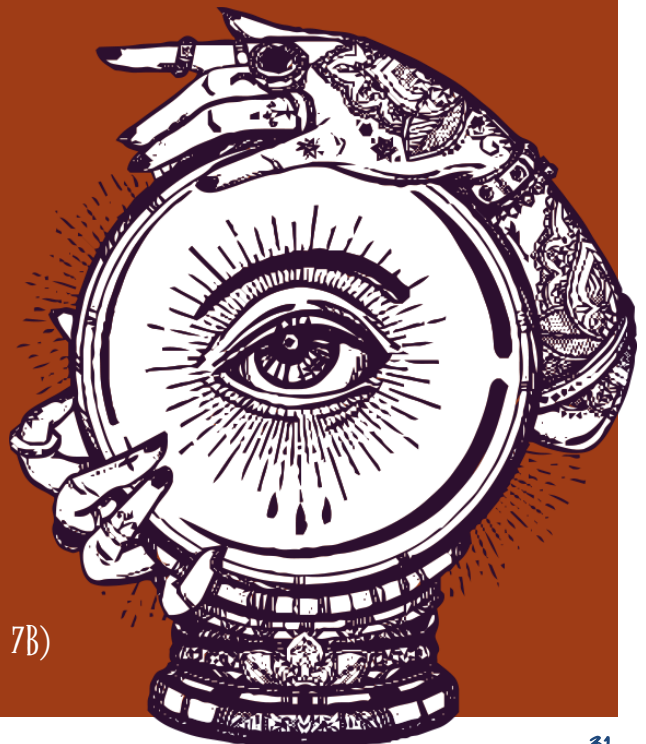
decorating the outside area. When the boys went closer it smelled of caramel popcorn and cotton candy! They wandered around the circus until they saw a big queue outside the fortune-teller's tent. Lewis had some pocket money on him and decided he wanted to learn about his fate. But Jacob stopped him and said 'These things are fake! Why not go home and do our homework, instead?' Lewis listened to Jacob, so they went home where Jacob revised and Lewis played video games for the rest of the evening.

The next morning Lewis had not forgotten about the fortune-teller at all. In fact, he kept thinking about him for the whole week. When the weekend came, Lewis decided to pay a visit to the circus on his own. So, he made a plan. On Friday evening, when his parents left for their weekly visit to the dentist, at five o'clock exactly, Lewis sneaked out of the house and went straight to the circus. He found the fortune-teller's tent and waited patiently in the queue. Twenty minutes later, his turn had finally arrived. The fortune-teller greeted him with a crooked smile; he looked mysterious. He was wearing a long black coat, big brown pirate leather boots and a huge light brown fedora hat. Lewis got a bit scared, but he thought that fortune-tellers were meant to look a bit weird anyway.

The room was dark (but not that dark) and it smelled like burning wood. 'Hello Sir, can you see my future, please?' Lewis asked, trying not to look around, although it was hard as the room looked like nothing he had ever seen before. Theatrical brown curtains, torn at parts, were hanging behind the fortune-teller and in the corner, there was a chest of shelves full of potion bottles with labels written in an incomprehensible alphabet, like hieroglyphics. The fortune-teller stared at him and then replied, 'Let's see...' and he started moving his fingers around a crystal ball, which had a black base and inside it showed a circle with a stand. The fortune teller had long black disgusting nails and he was wearing many different old rings. On the desk next to the crystal ball there was a slimy snail and a swift spider trapped in a small transparent glass box. Lewis felt really disgusted. The fortune-teller started to whisper some weird spells... He gave the boy a strange-looking red-coloured potion to drink, which tasted like a mixture of rotten onions cooked in someone's old socks. Lewis felt really dizzy and fell asleep on the tent's hard and cold concrete floor.

When Lewis woke up, he found himself at the fortune-teller's tent. He was not alone; the mysterious man was waiting for him to wake up. More slimy snails were climbing up the walls and the floor was packed with spiders. The mysterious man was next to him. Suddenly the man exclaimed: "YOU ARE OUR KING! FROSTYKING!" Before Lewis had time to react, the man disappeared, and Lewis fell into a deep sleep again. We don't know what happened in the circus, but Lewis was never seen in his small town again...

LABIŞ SORKAR (YEAR 7B)



THE

MYS

TERY

OF

NO

THING

IN THE BEGINNING THERE WAS SILENCE, then nothing. Nothing. NO THING.

Tom opened his eyes; he saw nothing; he smelled nothing. Where was his spaceship, his home, his planet? He felt bad, very bad because he felt like he couldn't feel. A dark shadow; this was what he remembered. A dark shadow, then he felt cold, and then it got black. Now nothing. What was going on?

This is year 3650 and people are living in small cities floating into space. A city called 'New York' is in danger. No one knows about it. It will just happen!

Tom woke up after a short nap. He had to get ready for school. He wore his spacesuit, his antenna—so he could be connected with the 100G Internet—and his tablet with all the online books. After that, he took his spaceship—his mum's spaceship—and started flying over New York. At school everybody was talking about the strange kidnappings that had been taking place for a while now; one hundred and fifty-eight people had vanished the night before! The government didn't let anybody exit the city, and those who disobeyed the rule never returned. Some said that aliens were responsible for the kidnappings; others believed that a team of disoriented time-travelling creepy monsters were responsible for them. A group of police astronauts who went out on a mission to collect clues never returned. Another group of people who went on a five-day holiday on Mars also hadn't returned, who knows why. No one could solve this mystery. Only one person, the famous detective Jacques Clouseau! But he was also missing..



'BOOM! BANG! BOOM!' I heard a strange noise coming from outside. I went to my parents' bedroom. They weren't there. I got outside the house; there was a cacophony, kids were crying, people were screaming, dogs were barking. There was a storm and a house burning. It was my house! 'HELP!' I screamed, but no one heard me. I tried to find my parents but I couldn't. I was so scared, I started screaming and crying. I fell to the ground. I felt so confused and dizzy I looked at the sky and then I felt cold..

Tom opened his eyes and looked around. There was nothing. He opened his eyes but he couldn't see, he couldn't feel, he couldn't smell, he couldn't hear. What was going on? He tried to remember; he remembered the sky, he remembered a moment he will never forget. The sky became black, then



purple, then he heard a scream—he was sure it was his mother’s scream—then he saw nothing; absolutely nothing, no thing.

He started walking around for hours until something unexpected happened. He saw a silhouette far away from him; standing in the nothingness! ‘Is anybody there?’

Tom asked. The silhouette started walking, he could see a man walking toward him. Tom wanted to run but he didn’t, for some reason he stayed still. Tom now could see the man very clearly; he was an old man with a brown hat and a pipe. Tom looked at him ‘Monsieur Clouseau! Is that you?’ he exclaimed.

‘You’re right,’ the man said, ‘I am the famous detective!’ There was a moment of silence and then Tom looked at the man again. ‘You look like you have a question, Tom,’ Clouseau said. Tom looked at him again. ‘Are you, like ...real?’ Tom asked. ‘Of course I am,’ Jack answered in a strange way. ‘Well then, where am I? What is going on? Why is there nothing? Where are my parents? What is the meaning of life? Do chicken nuggets cost €50 on Mars?’

‘We are in a black hole...’ Tom didn’t understand; he looked around but there was nothing. ‘Look, young man, some hours ago your whole world was trapped in a black hole. There are no aliens or monsters; everyone that went out of the city was trapped in the hole. That’s why people have gone missing,’ Clouseau said. ‘What about ...my parents?’ Tom insisted. They are probably somewhere here...’



‘Well let’s go and find them!’ Tom’s face brightened up. ‘I’m sorry but I am afraid we, erm, can’t,’ Clouseau said in a sad voice. Tom’s smile faded. ‘This black hole is so big, we cannot look for anyone, I am afraid. I am so sorry Tom...’

Tom looked at him and a tear ran out of his eye. He heard the scream; he heard his mom scream, and he faded out... ‘I love you, my son,’ said a voice while his mum leaned over him and hugged him. They were cheek to cheek and he could feel the tears running down her face, and as she spoke the movement of her jaw spread the tears on his face. ‘I will always love you.’

Tom woke up but Clouseau wasn’t there, no one was there. He felt so lonely, so lonely. He looked around. He wanted to scream but he let his anger go. He sat down and his heart skipped a beat. He closed his eyes...

IN THE

BEGIN
NING
THERE

WAS
SILE
NCE

THEN
NO
THING

ORFEAS
GIANNAKIS

(YEAR 8B)

*Photography by Ashtyn Gulley *

*Text by Valentina Kalliorides (Year 9A)



Be like a ladybird *

Life never really goes as planned; it rarely follows the path you desire. There is a myriad of possibilities between what's possible and impossible. There are chances based on numbers and calculations; there are risks. But there's never a right or wrong answer; nothing's true or false. We're living in uncertainty. Therefore, enjoy your surroundings, even the simplest things. Cherish life's treasures and don't yearn for things you can't possess. See nature without the haze of discontent; nature has a sacred beauty. Yet in truth it's strange; it's part of the river of uncertainty. Breathe it all in and don't take things for granted for soon they'll be mere memories; nothing lasts forever. Things change suddenly and abruptly. Nothing's constant; the moon has a different shape each night. Life is unpredictable. We're a ladybird in this vast universe, not knowing if we will fall off the branch; we don't know what will happen. But then again if life was predictable, it would be monotonous and tedious; at least now it raises our level of adrenaline. Be like a ladybird, be happy. Live. So many of us exist: few of us live.

WRITING A POEM I

Write a poem?
 Not what's important,
 Let the poets do it.
 Just peep at your bucket list,
 — Our top priority —
 And worry about that.

WRITING A
POEM II

Why bold?
 Let your heart grow.
 Why egalitarian?
 Allow yourself to feel
 every single blade of grass.
 Why boundary-challenging?
 Let yourself touch the
 truth.
 Why adventurous?
 Prepare for the glorious.

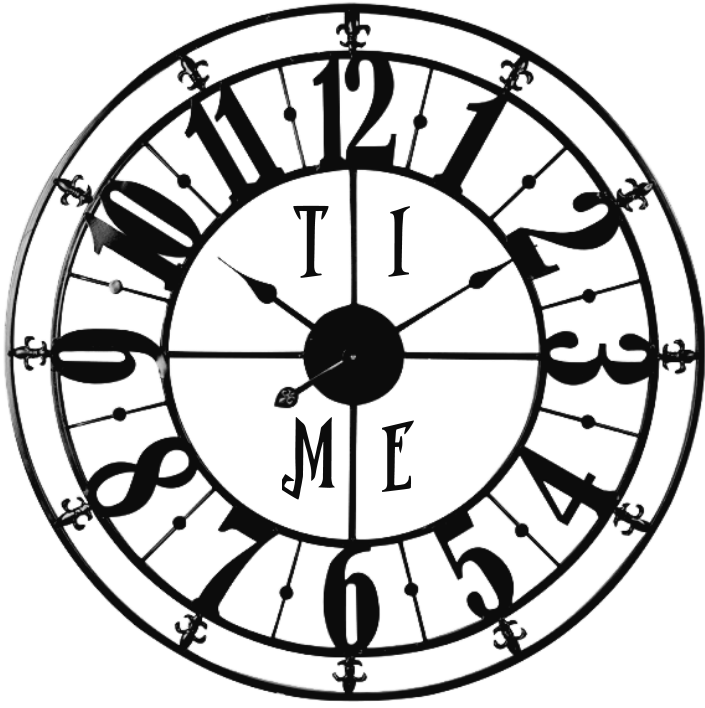
CHOOSING A PATHWAY

As the old saying goes:
*Fish and bears can't be caught
 at the same time*
 Either dive into the ocean;
 Or climb a mountain...
 Choose the one that brings you
 the most joy!
 Though if the decision rested
 with me,
 I would use my entire power to
 dig a hole that connected one
 to the other.
 Why not a combination of
 Picasso and Newton?
 A poet was born whilst thinking
 this question.

THE INEDIBLE PIE

Read this piece!
 First,
 You might be confused.
 Why?
 It makes no sense.
 Nothing to do with literature.
 A hint:
 Syllables and title.

ELENA ZHENG (YEAR 9B)



It is the ticking
of the clocks that I welcome
for it is never hesitant
in its honesty of reality;
in its showing of what
I have spent and
what is yet to come.

Maria Krull (Year 8B)

ILLUSTRATION BY EDWARD GOREY



The Valley

Admiring the darkness,
From far away,
Two steps behind, one step ahead.
The lights lit
Once you said your name,
The memories left
as soon as you came.
The cup was full,
half-empty in our case.
The door said pull
But you'd rather stay.
Why not just walk?
We'd run a mile.
No words could explain,
the empty isle.
The call was clear,
you'd rather disappear.
No roses in the valley,
dead tulips for décor.
You could come back
but swallow it all.

Konstantina Strogilou (Year 9B)

Silence reigns over the area
Only the sound of the crippling waves
can be heard

Sky almost clearer than the water beneath

Sand jumping in the air

Brackish water flooding your eyes,

And sooner than you could imagine,

Your vision becomes blurry almost blind,

You start paddling,

Praying for the wave behind you,

So big it could devour you.

With all your might you gather the courage to stand,

Cold water tickling you as it makes its way down your spine,

Purple lips demanding a break,

A determination which cannot be negotiated,

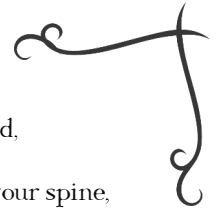
With the wind on your side and the sun on your shoulder,

You feel the board getting a lift all the way down to shore by a wave,

Adrenaline pumping its way through every inch of your body,

You look at the horizon in awe,

Dreaming about the next wave.



Inés Rodriguez (Year 8B)

A Word of Thanks

Well done to our student contributors for this second Key Stage 3 issue: creative, fun, and chock-full of variety and hard work.

Thank you to...

our Key Stage 3 Tutor Team, colleagues in the English Faculty, and the whole school community for your support and encouragement;

our very own creative writing and ice lolly guru, Ms Miliaresi, as the main collaborator for this issue;



and, last but not least, our readers!



Featured Artwork

Front cover:
Linda Wang (9A)

Inner front cover: Kyveli Feurtado (8A)

Page 38:
Valentina Kiliorides (9A)

Back cover:
Ioanna Arvanitaki (9A)

Editor's Note

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Three issues are published each year: the Key Stage 5 December Issue, just in time for Christmas; the Key Stage 4 April Issue; and the Key Stage 3 June Issue to welcome in the summer holidays.

It is written by our students for the Byron family and it is offered in a spirit of intellectual curiosity, creativity, generosity, and fun.

**PRODUCED BY THE FACULTY OF ENGLISH,
BYRON COLLEGE, ATHENS, GREECE**

KEY STAGE 3 STUDENT LEADERS' SUMMER CROSSWORD - ANSWERS

8	archipelago	10	snorkel	1	lionfish	8	aqualung
7	pedalo	12	kelp	2	flippers	9	current
6	hammerhead shark	13	ecosystem	3	Bermuda Triangle	11	knot
5		5	catfish				

ACROSS

DOWN

Byron Bards proudly presents...

Little Women

"I know they will remember all I said to them ... and conquer themselves so beautifully that when I come back, I may be fonder and prouder than ever of my little women."

Thursday 09.06.22

7:00 pm

Gerakas Cultural Center

Adults: €5

Children: €3





Byron College

THE BRITISH INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL

