



by the pupils, for the pupils  
Issue 9, November 2015



Interest • Interviews • Current Affairs • Debates • Reviews • Music

# THIS ISSUE

- 4-5 Friday the 13th**
- 6 In The News**
- 7 Students: over-assessed?**
- 8 The Masochism of Music Exams**
- 9 The Battlefields trip 2015**
- 10 Ask Prab**
- 11 The Prep's PGL Experience**
- 12 Teenage Socialist**
- 13 Diverse Issues**
- 14 Surviving Halloween**
- 15 Street Art**
- 16 Debate of the Issue**
- 18 Taylor's Travels**

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**With thanks to Mr Kidd, Mr Hunt and Mrs Kendall, and all of our guest writers.  
Also massive thanks to Mrs Hunt for letting us use her office and her computer to  
edit.**

# Editors' Notes



Unfortunately, this issue revolves around moroser issues than usual. If you weren't already aware, Friday the 13th left a scar on the face of the world in the shape of terror attacks across the globe, and so in remembrance, we dedicate this issue to every single person who was affected by the atrocious happenings. We stand in solidarity with every nation, whether covered by the press or not, which was the victim of heinous activies.

“Terrorism has  
no nationality  
or religion.”

Vladmir Putin

Cover Photo: Kaneeka Kapur

# Friday the 13th

Before this last week, Friday the 13th meant nothing to me. It was the day, as 'The Da Vinci Code' described it, that the Pope ordered the execution of the Knights of Templar, but beyond this, it held no great meaning to me, or to most people.

It seems to be a regular occurrence that I am forced to write about such events, an occurrence that shouldn't exist if this were a perfect world.

Nine o'clock in the evening, CET, a series of coordinated attacks took place across France's capital city.

Gunmen stormed five locations: La Belle Equipe, Le Carillon bar, Le Petit Cambodge restaurant and the Bataclan concert venue. They shot one hundred and twenty people, and took dozens upon dozens of people hostage.

Suicide bombers also targeted the Stade de France, where eighty thousand spectators, including the French President, Hollande, were watching a friendly game between their home country and Germany. There were three explosions.

For the first time since 2005, President Hollande announced France to be in a State of Emergency, and enabled authorities to impose curfews and restrictions on the movement of people. Fifteen hundred military personnel were deployed across the city as Parisians were asked to stay indoors.

Hours after the attack, the extremist group IS took responsibility and declared it as an act

of war against France's intervention in Syria. France has since said that it will continue with its airstrikes against the militant group in Syria and Iraq, even after having incurred the largest loss of French lives during peacetime. Currently, the death toll is at one hundred and thirty two, but three hundred and fifty people were wounded in the attack, many critically.

Since news of the attacks spread, people from all over the world have taken to social media to show their solidarity with France, by using the hashtag 'PrayforParis' or using Facebook's new feature to temporarily change your profile picture to a French flag.

Cities across the globe have also shown their respect, lighting up monuments with the Tricolour, and on Monday the 16th, a one-minute silence

was held at eleven o'clock, GMT, across Europe to remember all those who were lost. Hollande declared three days of mourning in France and, on Sunday the 15th, a memorial service was held at the Notre Dame cathedral.

There is still tension in the air in Paris as panic broke out at the Place de la Republique where mourners mistook the sound of firecrackers as gunfire.

Up until recently, the police had been chasing the man they had thought to have 'masterminded' the attacks, but after an armed shootout and raid, his body had been found, riddled with shrapnel.

## “Pray For Paris”

Kaneeka Kapur

# of November

Friday 13th November 2015 was a tragic day across the globe; you could say that the superstitions of the date became a horrifying reality. As well as the 7 coordinated terror attacks in Paris, ISIS also claimed responsibility for a bombing in Baghdad.

Two suicide bombings also took place in Beirut, Lebanon, on the 12th. Japan was hit with a magnitude 7.0 earthquake; a magnitude 4.3 earthquake hit Mexico also.

The majority of the media coverage has been of Paris, the common theme being about innocent people were killed whilst enjoying leisure activities; this was the same case in Beirut. These 43 people were killed in a bustling urban area while going about their normal evening routines; 239 people were also wounded.

Elie Fares, a Lebanese doctor, wrote on his blog, "When my people died, no country bothered to light up its landmarks in the colors of their flag. When my people died, they did not send the world into mourning. Their death was but an irrelevant fleck along the international news cycle, something that happens in THOSE parts of the world."

In Baghdad, at least 19 people were killed and 33 injured in a suicide bombing at a funeral, taking place in a mosque. ISIS have bombed and attacked mosques in the past; this proves how they do not represent the Islamic faith. When IS

terrorists make it to the headlines, Islamophobia becomes widely talked about and innocent Muslims are attacked.

The earthquake in Japan had no immediate reports of injury or damage, however, there is now warning of a small tsunami being triggered because of this. The earthquake in Mexico also had no immediate reports of injury or damage. We are able to analyse the earthquakes, and investigate the thoughts and behaviors that lead to people committing horrific acts.

“When my  
people died,  
no country  
bothered to light  
up its landmarks  
in the colors of  
their flag.”

We can discuss if there is a God when natural disasters happen or who is the God that ISIS are murdering people in the name of; that's what I feel we should do as a society when something like this happens. However, I'm currently at a point of simply having a powerful emotional response; I try to grasp the fact of the pain all these events have caused, but it is something so disturbing I cannot comprehend it. My thoughts are with every individual affected on the 12th and 13th of November.

Serene Dholakia



# In the news...

A simple line drawing of a hand holding a newspaper. The newspaper has a large image on the front page and some text columns.

The Russian plane crash of Airbus A321 has been a focal news story recently. The flight from Sharm el-Sheikh to St Petersburg had 224 people on board, all of which were killed. Images of the wreck show that the plane was almost completely destroyed; there are indications this was caused by a bomb. Islamic State claimed to be responsible for this a few days after the crash; however, Russian authorities have dismissed their being responsible.

In UK news, women across the country were engaged by Stella Creasy's recent argument in Parliament about the 5% VAT on sanitary items; she explained it is solely there because of the 'design of an unequal society'. The nation was shocked to hear that sanitary products are considered 'luxury' and 'non-essential' items because, obviously, women, once a month, like to relax and treat themselves to a lovely box of tampons to go with a box of chocolate and other luxury products! Creasy made comparisons to some of the 'essential items' that have 0% VAT, e.g. Jaffa Cakes. This truly demonstrates how absurd it is that sanitary products are counted as a 'luxury' item. Unfortunately, this was defeated in parliament as, when we joined the EU, they already had tax on these items and therefore we cannot change this.

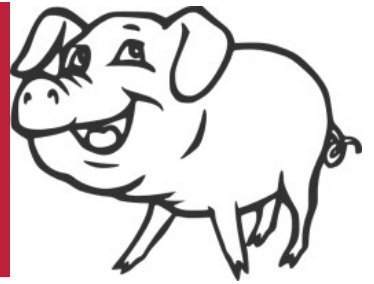
On a more positive note, a one-year-old girl has become the first person to receive successful treatment for an 'incurable cancer'. Layla Richards suffered from leukemia; doctors told her family there were no options left. However, scientists used a gene-editing technique: they manipulated the immune cells and this helped fight the disease. After this treatment took place Layla had to spend time in isolation, but now she does not have cancer and is recovering well.

Locally, MP Keith Vaz has stated he does not want the Coca-Cola truck, which tours the country at Christmas, to come to Leicester. The MP has type 2 diabetes, so he is raising awareness of the health hazards it promotes in a city where type 2 diabetes is rising and one third of children have tooth decay. Despite this, Vaz has been accused of hypocrisy as he opened a sweet shop on Melton Road in 2013.

Serene Dholakia



# Does weighing a pig make it heavier: are students over-assessed?



Are students over-assessed? I don't think so. In fact the majority of schools approve of testing their students. The majority of schools test their students because there are two benefits of carrying out regular assessments. There are benefits for pupils and benefits for teachers. The benefits for the pupils would be to show how well they've understood their work, what are their strong points, what are their weak points and the satisfaction they get if they do well in class. Then there are benefits for teachers: this would be knowing that they have fulfilled their teaching responsibility, helped the pupils to get good grades and reflected the efficacy of their teaching.

Another good point about being frequently assessed is that when a pupil's weaknesses and strong points have been identified that individual's teacher can encourage the pupil's strengths and eliminate his or her weaknesses. Assessment also helps to show how pupils have taken in information; whether in the future they should spend more time going through a particular topic or perhaps just practise and revise some more. If students are doing continuously well in a particular subject test, they can be encouraged to continue to expand their natural gift.

In the United States there is legislation called 'The No child left behind Act', which makes it mandatory for all schools to have tests to make sure their pupils are progressing well. This helps to reduce the 'achievement gap' across the whole range of pupils. This also puts a responsibility on the school to help each child turn out the best they can.

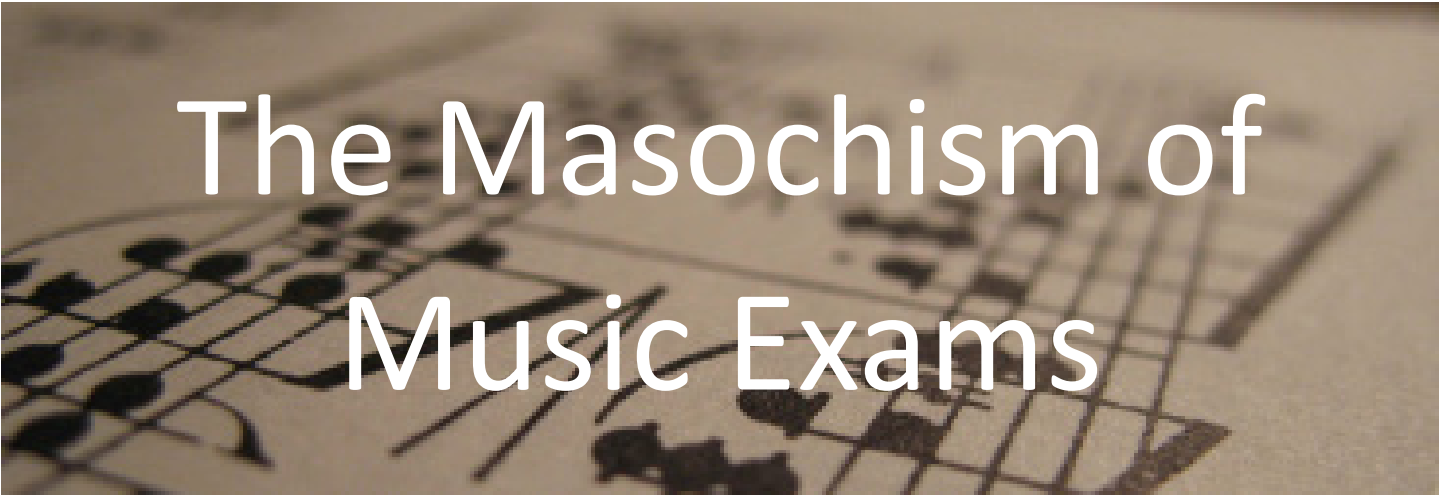
I think tests are good for individuals who take them. They force you to revise and apply what you have learnt and test you on your knowledge. The results can certainly expose any areas of need! Although this can certainly sting a little if you receive results that you weren't expecting, this might not be such a bad thing. You can only target your efforts if you know where your weaknesses actually are.

For example, in a mathematics test a person manages to get almost everything correct by showing a thorough understanding of each individual method. But if one answer is wrong, this would help the teacher *and* the pupil to target their efforts as to where further work may be needed in order to avoid making the same mistake in the future. This might mean that the pupil needs to practise or relearn the work in order to address the issue. For example, in algebra, if the individual got all of the substitution questions wrong, this would be a key focus point for the future. This is an important thing to do because it can help the individual in their future career or job. Tests can also be a way for parents to check how their child is doing. For example, if their child is struggling, parents can help with homework or get some extra tuition.

Tests have shown that lots of revision can increase the capacity of your memory. This is because, if you keep filling up your long term memory with useful facts, and keep revising while learning new things, your brain develops to make room for this new-found knowledge.

So, while weighing a pig will not make it heavier, it tells you whether the pig is putting on weight or not. In the same way, regular assessments help to focus teachers, parents and pupils on the best way to develop the pupil.

Gabriel Samanta



# The Masochism of Music Exams

Why do we play music? Why do we push ourselves to spend hours practising? I think many of us, when practising for exams, think of the impressiveness of having a grade in our chosen instrument. But is that all music is now; exams, grades, tests and certificates? In my opinion, music has become less of a social skill and more of an academic skill, made to make people look better in, say, a job interview rather than to entertain others or for your own pleasure.

It was once common for someone to start playing an instrument at a party or gathering. However, now it is a rare treat to have someone who can remember and play songs without needing sheet music or weeks of practice.

Is this a sign of how society is evolving, and more importantly is it a good sign?

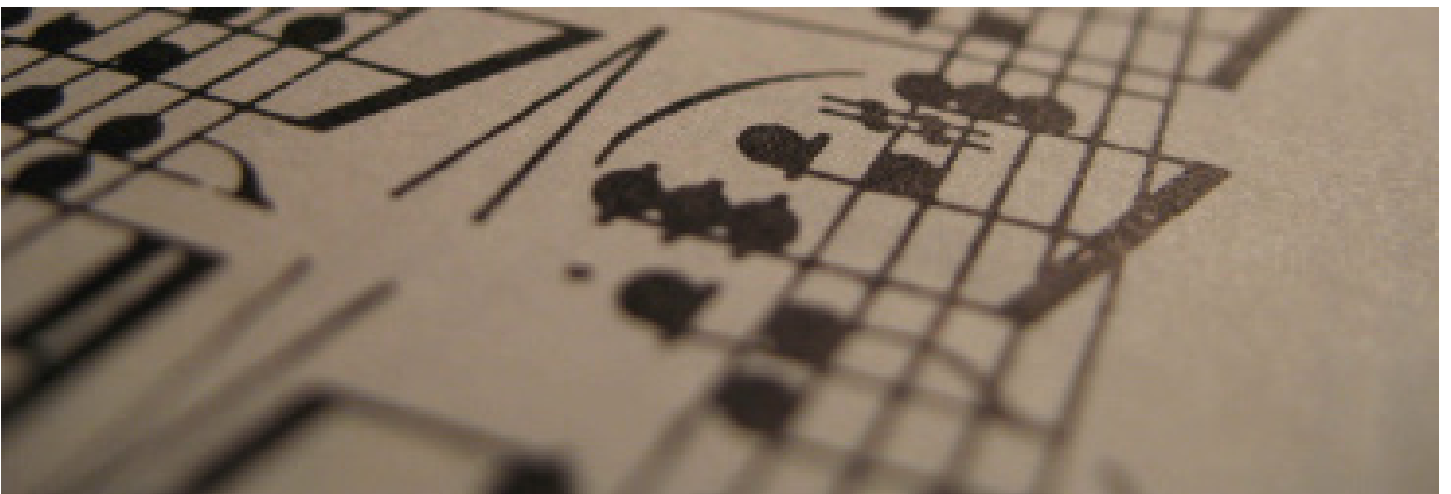
Music exams mark a way of learning music that is set in stone. To be considered proficient at any instrument, we must now know a set number of things, most of which we will arguably never use after exams. My own experience has taught me that learning scales and arpeggios, sight-reading and so on doesn't always make playing the instrument more enjoyable.

I played the guitar for a few years without ever learning a single one of the things above and, honestly, I found that it was much more fun to be able to play the Star Wars theme tune than to say that I was grade one or two.

I totally understand the will to want to achieve grades, and I find, myself, that the satisfaction of passing can often outweigh the struggle to reach that point.

But I also believe that the music world should be less fixated on exams and more on the spirit of the music, the culture, the history and the enjoyment as it once was. People should not only play exam pieces but also play pieces they know and enjoy playing.

Ellen Blaine





# Battlefields 2015

Before going on this trip, I had been surrounded with tales from my friends about how amazing and life-changing the experience would be, to the extent where one of my friends, who went on the trip twelve years ago, was still gushing about it. So understandably, I was incredibly excited and this feeling was shared amongst all thirty-eight history students attending.

Upon arrival in France we went to two locations: the Wellington Caves in Arras and the 'Ring of Remembrance,' a new memorial commemorating over five hundred thousand soldiers of varying nationalities. This was a favourite of many as the soldiers were not segregated into 'Us' and 'The Enemy,' but instead listed in alphabetical order, where Germans were next to British, Americans and Indians, and there was no differentiation between them.

Over the course of the trip, we visited numerous memorials and cemeteries, all of which were harrowing, yet eye-opening experiences. The visits were complemented with debates in the evening that got us genuinely engaged with our surroundings and utilised our knowledge.

An added feature to this year's trip was the group videos, which were displayed on Open Day. Each group (roughly ten students) were tasked with creating a film at a given location, answering a given question. Although some people may say that this caused us to take attention away from the history and focus on cameras, I would disagree.



Having to create these short projects pushed us to find a little bit more about the area, and to think from different perspectives. Often, the location was a place we had never studied before and it gave us a chance to widen our knowledge and learn a few more facts that may help us when it comes to examinations.

There was not one site that stood out for me more than another. No matter how many numbers you read in textbooks, or stories you listen to, nothing can prepare you for the rows upon rows of white grave stones and names, reaching further than the eye can see. Nothing can prepare you to find out that the one-acre plot of land you are standing on is now home to over forty-five thousand unknown German soldiers. Nothing.

If nothing else, going on this trip makes you start to comprehend the sheer scale of the wars, something you can never be taught in a classroom.

If you are history student, I would recommend this trip to you innumerable times as, thanks to Mr Allen, it really is an amazing and life-changing trip.

Kaneeka Kapur

# Ask Prab



## Hacking: The Future of Crime?

This topic has come back into the debate with the recent TalkTalk hack, affecting almost 157,000 customers. In the current day and age, hacking is resulting in millions of dollars having to be funnelled into defence systems, as more and more sensitive information is being stored online.

This incident cost TalkTalk upwards of £35 million and so far police have arrested two teenagers and searched properties in Liverpool and Antrim: all of which have seemed to yield no results. In reality, this attack could have been staged anywhere in the world, as modern technology allows people to hide their IP address (a trackable location) - the only way of linking the hacker directly to the attack.

Cybercrime has undoubtedly become more dangerous to everyone: from massive worldwide companies to the average online consumer. As we are connecting more of our lives to technology, we are also running the risk of more and more of our information being stolen by hackers. For example, we can now open cars, our homes and access our bank details from a simple app on our phones. It may be argued that all important details (such as bank details) are highly encrypted, and so are rendered useless to the criminals. However, in this most recent scandal, around 15,500 bank account numbers and sort codes were stolen - all that's needed to transfer money between accounts.

Many people, when they give companies their details, are under the impression that they are stored in some sort of impregnable vaults, which are near impossible to access. Sadly, the truth is far from this.

With pieces of data, there are easily-found loopholes and techniques which hackers can use to bypass security measures. The most popular of these is called 'DDOS-ing', which is worryingly easily to replicate. It is the equivalent of distracting the security in a bank with a fake diversion, and walking in behind and stealing anything you please. As of now, companies are beginning to become resistant to such attacks, but they are not completely effective as the attacks exploit the fundamental basis of any online server. Furthermore, even some basic information can be used maliciously to steal email addresses and eventually even steal someone's identity. A scary example of this was a couple of years back when a WIRED reporter lost several social media accounts, his email address and all of his data on his devices. All of this was done in the space of an hour with one simple piece of information: his email address. Here is the entire article, a 'must-read' for anyone active online:  
<http://www.wired.com/2012/08/apple-amazon-mat-honan-hacking/>



Encryptions done by companies like TalkTalk, or messaging apps have been under much scrutiny recently. In companies they use it to hide illegal activity, which otherwise would have been detected. But more commonly, people are able to encode their messages to make them unreadable. This is exploited by illegal organisations as it allows them to communicate without being detected; this has recently been used by Islamic State to recruit people from overseas, with little to no consequences as it hides both IP addresses and the messages themselves. As a safety measure, governments in Europe and America are working to ban encrypted messaging, but this comes with several privacy concerns.

Above all, by unencrypting emails, texts and data, people with spiteful intent could easily 'intercept' information. This data could be some family pictures from holiday, tax receipts or even passport scans. Such concerns are leading to much confusion as it is imperative to find a sensible balance between data protection and legal surveillance.

This issue of hacking and data protection is one that raises different problems and arguments. Therefore, it is likely that we will see more articles focusing on similar issues. In my opinion, it is very important that we educate ourselves about the dangers of an online presence, and what the potential risks are, even in large companies.

Prab Grewal



# The Prep's PGL Experience



We went to PGL in Caythorpe Court on the 9th of October to the 12th. We had a great time at PGL, these are some of the things we did:

- We arrived at around 4pm, just in time for a site tour and tea. At night, we did some fun activities with our group leader, Becca.
- During the course of the remaining three days, we did a variety of activities. One of the activities, 'High Ropes', was like a giant obstacle course in the air and was great fun! There was a really hard obstacle, the tires! They were really annoying because our harness kept getting tangled up in the ropes suspending the tires, because the tires were twisting and turning so much. But they were really fun and everyone got past them. This was the most fun activity and my favourite!
- My least favourite activity was the Raft Building because even though the instructor was really nice he kept splashing us with water and getting us wet. Also it was very cold to be on a lake on a raft. But the boys really enjoyed it and most of them (if not all of them) jumped in and got really wet! The only girl to jump in was Freya and she also got soaked.

All-in-all the PGL trip was a great experience and everyone in the Prep loved it! Thanks to all the staff involved.

Keira Beatty

# The Teenage Socialist

## *Tampon Tax: a Result of Patriarchy?*



Right, let me say something that a number of middle-aged, greying Tory MPs were unable to: women have periods. There's this thing called the menstrual cycle which means that once a month, women shed their uterus lining and so excrete a bloody fluid from their genitals.

The complication arises when society – without wanting to sound too stereotypical, a patriarchal society – views this natural part of being female as disgusting and unwholesome, and so women are forced to hide their bleeding and keep it as discreet as possible. This means that women require products such as tampons and sanitary towels. In a typically capitalist manner, a market opens up and these products become less a normal part of life and more a way to make money.

Personally, I object to having to pay for something that is compulsory, but so be it. However, what I *really* object to is paying tax for it. Yes, that's right – sanitary products are eligible for VAT. They are classed as a "luxury item", meaning that we have to pay 5% tax on these products. Back in 2000, a Labour MP (funny that, not a Tory) campaigned to get the tax to be reduced to this; previously it was at an absolutely extortionate 17.5%.

The average woman buys, uses and throws away 11,000 tampons during her lifetime. In my local Tesco, a box of 20 regular Tampax costs £3.14. This means that someone earning minimum wage must work approximately 38 full working days to pay for her lifetime's supply.

For my part, I fail to see how having periods is a luxury, but if a load of male MPs tell me I'm wrong then I'm clearly focusing on the wrong aspects of life; currently, Jaffa cakes,

exotic meat and edible sugar flowers are classed as essentials and so are not eligible for VAT. Hear that, ladies? We can drown our sorrows over paying £34,540 on tampons by enjoying a delicious crocodile sandwich.

On 26<sup>th</sup> October, MPs debated making an amendment to the Finances Bill, which would allow them to lower the VAT. Critics of the idea claimed that EU law did not allow the VAT to be any lower, while supporters argued back that they didn't need to change the whole law, but simply remove sanitary products off the list of items. In the end, the amendment was defeated by 305 votes to 287. Every single Conservative MP voted against it, bar three – noticing a pattern here?

The tampon tax is a perfect example of a flaw in a capitalist society: something essential becomes a way of making money. If you ask me, sanitary products should be free on the NHS – condoms are, but are they essential? However, you can't just get rid of a capitalist system, but you can control it: it's very hard to see how we could make sanitary products completely free, but we could remove the tax.

This is an issue for every woman, not just the lefties among us. Our needs are being pushed to the side to make money for a government who does not give that money back to society.

Mary Osborne



# Diverse Issues



## Body Image

“Body Image” is a hot topic in real life and indeed, on the internet too. It garners a huge amount of media attention and so many people have strong opinions about it and many questions are asked – is it better to be slimmer or larger? What does the opposite gender think? Am I too thin or too fat?

Social media is often used to voice feelings about size and weight: and Reddit, Tumblr, and Instagram are the main sites. Reddit has many different sub-communities, known as “subreddits” where users can join to talk to people with a similar mind-set to themselves. Instagram is a picture uploading app that you can download onto a smartphone; users can follow other accounts and can comment on their pictures. Tumblr is a micro-blogging platform on which users can post statuses, points of view, and photographs.

Earlier this year on Reddit, a number of subreddits were banned including r/fatpeoplehate and r/hamplanethatred. These were both very popular subreddits, with r/fatpeoplehate having 151,000 readers at the time of its banning. Using your powers of deduction, I’m sure you realise that both of these subreddits were very much against the so-called “fat acceptance” movement which is shown on websites such as Tumblr. The subreddits weren’t actually banned because of their dislike of “fat” people – they bullied people on the internet and harassed strangers. As a Reddit administrator said: “We will ban subreddits that allow their communities to use the subreddit as a platform to harass individuals when moderators don’t take action.”

Instagram is also known for discrimination against overweight and obese users; in July 2014 Samm Newman posted pictures of herself posing in her underwear which saw her account become suspended. As I’m sure you are aware, Kim Kardashian posts very similar pictures but since she has an hourglass figure her account hasn’t been suspended. Samm Newman, and many others in a similar situation, argue that Instagram is prejudiced against larger people.

On the other side of the spectrum are communities on websites such as Tumblr where users are trying to create a “fat acceptance” movement. The idea started out as a body positivity movement – they wanted it to become socially acceptable to have a less than “perfect” body, and they wanted people to be able to accept their own flaws and to love themselves. The movement expanded and started to discuss the issues that larger people face and the discrimination that they face on a day-to-day basis. However, people with their own agendas soon joined the movement and they have started to do what Reddit did and harass slimmer users, telling them that it’s wrong to be that slim.

So, what’s my message? I think that moderation is key. We can’t all have perfect bodies, we can’t all have beautiful skin, and we can’t all have a thigh gap. Some of us do have hourglass figures, but some of us don’t and we shouldn’t beat ourselves up about it. It’s brilliant to work towards to a better version of our own bodies – gaining muscle, defined abs, clearer skin – but at the end of it all, we’re should appreciate the body we have been given for the rest of our lives, so there’s no point in aiming for the unrealistic. As long as you understand how healthy your body is and you’re okay with that, then it’s nobody else’s business how heavy you are.

Leanne Potter





# SURVIVING HALLOWEEN

The simple answer: lock the doors, turn the lights out and pretend you are not in. No, I'm only joking. For many children, Halloween is a source of excitement, a little fear and a lot of sugar.

They dress up in their scariest outfit, embracing monsters and ghouls instead of cowering behind the sofa, and go out in search of treats. But is it really good for our young people to celebrate this dark festival with all its after-life and deathly associations?

Halloween comes from All Hallows Eve, which is traditionally the festival which occurs the night before All Saints Day, a Christian festival dedicated to the Saints and all those who have died. All Hallows Eve was also a night to mark the end of summer and the start of winter. Celts and Pagans believed that, on All Hallows Eve, the spirits of our dead ones became disturbed in anticipation of All Saints Day, and so were more active on that night. This is where the idea of ghouls, ghosts and witches has come from, but the Pagans did not believe that these troubled souls were deliberately out to cause trouble and instead needed guidance back to the afterlife.

It is safe to say that Halloween has spiralled out of control. Following the American lead, Western countries saw the opportunity for money-making and quickly commercialised the festival with 'Trick or Treat', providing kids with an excuse to stuff themselves with sweets, and giving the shops something to distract themselves with before the run-up to Christmas. Not only this, but people have come to see Halloween as a chance to go wild, disregarding normal social behaviour and running rampant on the streets. I myself have been the victim of an 'egging', when some overly enthusiastic youths have become a little too excited and taken out their energy on some poor defenceless eggs and my house. It seems people let their 'inner-ghoul' go wild, and so it is no wonder that Halloween is now met with more than a little apprehension.

Finally, is it really right to abuse this Pagan festival in this way? When someone loses a loved one, it is often emotional. All Saints Day is a chance to remember and pray for those we have lost but, unfortunately, it is overshadowed by its more sinister brother, Halloween. If you asked a child what Halloween meant, how many would say, "Remembering and honouring the dead," and how many would say, "SWEETS AND CHOCOLATE!!"? It is true that Halloween can be a safe and fun evening as long as people respect it and act in a responsible way. But it only takes one person to get over-excited and the night is ruined for everyone. Just think how you would feel if you were the one sitting silently in your house with the lights out, praying that the ghouls howling at your door would soon move on.

Katie Tincello





# Street Art

When we returned after the half term break, some might have noticed that new artwork had been placed upstairs in the Street. The artwork belongs to three artists: Mark Shattock, Kevin Fazackerly and Paul Wright. The Private View of these paintings took place on Friday 30th of October. The whole area where the artwork stands was transformed and no longer seemed like a school; instead it seemed like an art gallery.

The three artists all paint in different styles; one focuses on landscapes, one on portraits and the other on figurative work. Mark Shattock is a landscape artist and paints using oils. He, Kevin and Paul all work at Paul's studio doing their own different things. Mark and Paul met at Falmouth University where Mark was studying illustration. After his course, he became an engineer and still is, but a few years ago he started painting again. Now he works two days a week at Paul's studio. Mainly, his paintings are of Pembrokeshire and Cornwall where he sets up and sketches the view every morning whilst on holiday. Recently he has started to work on a bigger scale, using fewer brush strokes which you can see in some of his later works to the left of the corridor. His favourite work is 'Winter Swell' as he really likes the colours he used.

The figurative artist is Kevin Fazackerly who tends to fit his painting around his job, instead of being part-time like Mark. Kevin's favourite work is 'This time we decided to walk down the beach' which shows the beach from above. He said that this one was his favourite because it took him the longest, so he is most attached to it, and also because there is so much going on.

The final artist is Paul Wright. He is probably the most well-known out of the three, having his work displayed in galleries all across the globe. He usually sells them in places such as Bath, London and Edinburgh. His paintings are also always changing and developing and, most recently, he has started painting life interiors, not only portraits. His paintings are often very splashy and bright similar in style to the other artists. One painting was added just before the Private View opened and was only finished the day before so the paint hadn't set!

Thank you to Mr Maddock for organising the event and we hope that more artists visit in the future.

Ella Davies



# Debate of the Issue

## Waste of our time?

There are many positive aspects to this scheme. Having been given at least two weeks' notice of the essay title, we are given the opportunity to go home and in our free time research the assigned topic. We do agree this is therefore broadening our general knowledge of the modern and historical aspects of the world which surrounds us. A good element is that the essay has not yet been centred around an 'academic' topic; last year's essay theme was 'My Favourite City' and this year's was 'My Idea of a Hero/Heroine'. This, we found, brought out our creative sides, also enhancing our descriptive writing skills. Another encouraging point is that the school community, on the whole, becomes closer as, in every classroom, the main topic of chatter is what our peers will be writing about on the day. We therefore learn more about our peers and their interests whilst finding ourselves too, highlighting for us the things we value and are partial to in certain areas.

Despite all of these positives, the cons still outweigh the pros. Sitting in a hot, stuffy room hours before the half term bell goes is not exactly a student's idea of 'fun'. We are sure that this is something all students can relate to! Although some members of the English Department (and other departments) may challenge this, is there really any point in sitting through an hour's worth of silence, bored out of our minds, when, inevitably, there is a very slim chance of us winning and barely anyone is commended for their work?

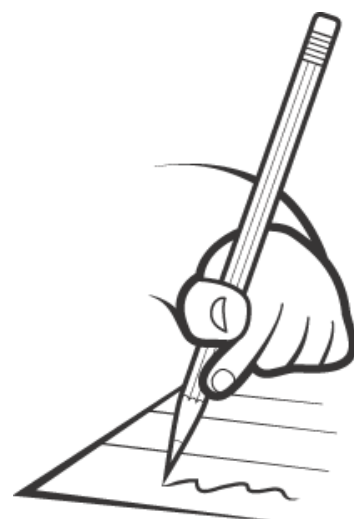
Honestly, what is the point of doing a piece of writing for an hour when only a mere 20 get recognized out of 800-plus pieces of incredible, thought-provoking work? Not only this, but, after they have been marked, we don't even get them back! How are we supposed to flourish and grow in our writing if we cannot see and learn from our mistakes?

At the very least we should be given something of worth, such as a certificate or a commendation, in order to reward us for our efforts in a formal manner. We would rather prefer this than being addressed as a whole in a morning assembly.

All who attend LGS are well aware of the 'tradition' to go out and celebrate the holidays and a good term of hard work on the last day, which is usually a half day. As a result of this, seeing as Foundation Day is the first half day of the year, are we really going to have our hearts set on producing a high-quality piece of work an hour or so before we go into Leicester for lunch and shopping? (The cinema trip remains a firm favourite too.) When asked, last year's Year 9 prize winner for the essay, Sophie Imlach, said: 'Although it was an honour to receive a prize for my essay, I don't feel like the essay should be done on the half day as I was too distracted. It is a wonderful idea but should be moved to a different day on the school calendar. That way it would be more beneficial.'

*The Peacock invites all readers to let us know what they think about the Foundation Day Essay. Email us at: [peacock@leicestergrammar.org.uk](mailto:peacock@leicestergrammar.org.uk)*

Millie Sian and Sana Sajid



# Foundation Day Essay: Time well spent?

It's good to see that the Foundation Day Essay has excited some interest - even if some of the comments are negative. Let's address the "cons". "Fun" can be had elsewhere; students are in a school, not a social club. If students are "bored out of their minds" when they have the opportunity to write about a topic that can be addressed entirely from their own point of view, interest area and/or experience, this suggests more about the writer than the task. Surely the lives of our students are not so boring that they have nothing interesting to say about a heroic subject? Certainly, from the perspective of those who read the essays produced, the creativity and engagement from the school as a whole is impressive.

Very few students fail to write something worthy in the hour allotted (in spite of what they might say to their peers). Maybe it isn't cool to confess to making an effort - if this is so, it is a sad thing to see in a school where academe is prized by pupils, parents and teachers.

The Foundation Day Essay is not a lesson or a homework; it is an opportunity to write outside of the normal bounds of schoolwork. Yes, it might seem to be a bit of a chore on a half day holiday but perhaps the free half day is the reward for an hour's hard work? Writing competitions do not return marked work; that is not the convention - the work is read and judged and this takes a great deal of time in itself. Judging the Foundation Day Essay is in addition to the considerable quantity of marking that the staff involved accrue over the Advent and Easter terms - it takes considerably more than an hour of their time. It is not a necessary part of the exam process, certainly. It is, however, fundamentally educational; it draws out true potential and it discovers talent. It is unique; I can think of no other school that provides such an opportunity for all of its students.

The actual act of writing the piece is the point, not the prize you might be lucky enough to win. You get ample opportunity to have your work assessed in the ordinary run of school life.

The Foundation Day Essays are not "marked" for accuracy of expression or for spelling and grammar although, obviously, it is difficult to reward a point or an idea that is conveyed in a confused or confusing fashion.

Maybe we should change the date and day of the essay: The Christmas Half Day Essay? The Easter Half Day Essay? The Summer Holiday Half Day Essay? Would any of these really be better? Foundation Day celebrates the founding of a school deliberately established to promote a rounded education and to provide students with the opportunity to be interesting, imaginative and scholarly. The Essay simply allows the students to show that they are of the calibre that those "founders" sought to find!

Might I tentatively suggest that the mistake being made here is a misunderstanding of the nature and purpose of the essay?

Yours sincerely,

Those with the Happy Prospect of Hours of  
Judging .....



# Taylor's Travels: Greece

As we stepped off the plane onto Mykonos island, my family and I were pleasantly surprised: where was all the evidence of a failing economy, the migrant crisis and run down shop fronts? We were all a little apprehensive as we had booked our island-hopping holiday to Greece all those months back, before things had started to spiral out of control for this beautiful country. However, after a short boat trip to Naxos, the second of our four islands we were, again, greeted with no signs of any trouble, just friendly and hospitable Greek people. Naxos is the biggest of the Cyclades, a cluster of islands in the southern Aegean Sea. Whilst on Naxos, we visited the UNESCO World Heritage site of Naxos Old Town, which was home to a maze of whitewashed walls and cobbled streets which we spent many hours wandering around. After a fabulous meal of moussaka, a Greek version of lasagne, in the Old Town one night, we watched the sun set over the rocks and sink into the perfectly still sea.

As we were now in 'low season' the beaches and island itself were beautifully quiet and we found many secluded coves in which to snorkel and sunbathe. As you may have realised from my previous 'Taylor's Travels', my family and I are crazy about the sea and would swim all day long if we could! The sea in Greece was the clearest and warmest I have ever experienced and it felt as if we were in the Caribbean. Every day we would get up early and go for a swim in the crystal clear water, before the sun had risen, and we would do the same as the sun began to set

in the evening. It was a perfect start and end to each day and I would love to do this in England if we lived nearer the sea.

On the second week of our holiday, we caught a sea ferry over to the island of Paros. A little more developed than Naxos, we fell in love with a little town called Naoussa, which was rather like the Greek equivalent to Salcombe. Beautiful jewellery shops lined every corner, but the highlight of the week was the discovery of the frozen yoghurt shop. It was unbelievable. Smooth, silky strawberry coupled with refreshing vanilla meant that Greek 'fro-yo' soon became the highlight of our holiday!

We hopped over to Antiparos island for a day, only a twenty minutes boat trip from Paros. A beautifully clean harbour, friendly Greeks and pristine beaches meant that I would definitely recommend it for a day trip. Another highlight of our holiday was trying stand up paddle-boarding; harder than it looks but was well worth the effort to glide on the surface of the sea. After probably the most relaxing week of my life, it was time to return to Mykonos. A far cry from the tranquillity and serenity of Naxos and Paros, Mykonos well and truly lived up to its name as the best Greek party island. We will definitely return in the future to this stunning and diverse country, so do not be put off by things you hear on the news; you will be missing out on experiencing a beautiful, tranquil and friendly country if you do.





“It has been said, ‘time heals all wounds.’ I do not agree. The wounds remain. In time, the mind, protecting its sanity, covers them with scar tissue and the pain lessens. But it is never gone.”

Rose Kennedy

“Mankind must put an end to war before war puts an end to mankind.”

J.F Kennedy

“Man has no right to kill his brother. It is no excuse that he does so in uniform: he only adds the infamy of servitude to the crime of murder.”

P. Shelley

“To live in hearts we leave behind is not to die.”

Thomas Campbell

“The living owe it to those who no longer can speak to tell their story for them.”

Czesław Miłosz

“Older men declare war. But it is the youth that must fight and die.”

Herbet Hoover

“No one ever said that fighting the war against terrorism and defending our homeland would be easy. So let’s support our troops, law enforcement workers, and our mission to keep our nation and our children safe in the days and years to come.”

Judy Biggert

And later that night,  
I held an atlas on my lap,  
Ran my fingers across the  
whole world,  
And whispered  
“Where does it hurt?”

It answered,  
“Everywhere,  
Everywhere,  
Everywhere”

Warsan Shire