

SPARSH NEWSLETTER



FEBRUARY | 2017

THE MAGIC OF RANG MANTHAN

Mahathi Kattamuri



Lights flashed bright against the evanescent sunlight, sending a message to all the skies above. Cameras rolled furiously in an attempt to keep up with the pace of the night. The filmy music, which had, until now, been exploding out of the speakers, slowly dwindled away, the last few strains fading away into the air above. The wind died down, the trees ceased swinging, and the chatter stopped. The spectators, seated on the chairs laid out on the grass, gripped each other in somewhat nervous anticipation, their eyes sparkling with suspense. It was as if the entire world had come to a standstill, waiting, waiting, waiting. And the action began.



THE MAGIC OF RANG MANTHAN

Scene after scene, song after song, and dialogue after dialogue, Rang Manthan studios unveiled the magic it had in store for more than seven hundred parents that had assembled there that 28 of January. It was like one long roller coaster ride for everyone, with each new act eliciting fresh waves of applause, laughter, and whistling from the audience. No one could tear their eyes away from the stage, marvelling all the while at the immense talent these children were so effortlessly displaying, and the professionalism the entire troupe exuded. Such a spell as never cast before was cast upon the audience, the enchantment becoming more and more potent with every passing second. In those two and a half hours, the students of Manthan gave it their all.

Right from the dazzling red carpet to the colourful signs strung here and there, the Bollywood theme was unmistakable and announced its presence in everything. After a grand welcome, full masala style, and a prance down the red carpet, one would be greeted by the students running the various stalls, all in accordance with the predominant theme. Here parents and teachers alike could pose like their favourite silver screen stars, imitate evergreen dialogues, sing a few of their favourite movie songs, enact movies in a game of dumb charades, or shake a leg at the signature steps stall.



THE MAGIC OF RANG MANTHAN

“The idea of dancing without music and making the audience guess the song was very cool, and the parents seemed to think so as well. I loved every minute of my time dancing on the stage and I feel that the people watching us had more fun than we ourselves did!” exclaims Sameera, one of the many members of the signature steps stall.

“We arranged for a game which we thought was unique. The parents were shy originally, but as they started enjoying the game and challenging us, it was fun to entertain them. I enjoyed it immensely,” says Soujanya, a member of the Geet Gaate Chal stall.

At around five-thirty, the stalls began clearing out, with most parents now flocking to the stage in the rush to grab the best seats. The atmosphere was no less excited than that found before the premiering of a long-awaited film, and the mysterious hustle and bustle behind the translucent screens only added to the spectators’ rising excitement.

After what seemed like an eternity, the introductory team walked on stage—and were immediately greeted with tumultuous applause, applause that also seemed to last an eternity. The anchors waited for one last moment, tantalizing the audience, before smilingly stepping up to the mike and commencing the performance with the opening script.



THE MAGIC OF RANG MANTHAN

The whole performance was a presentation by Khichdi Productions, the name the children used to describe their act. One ambitious woman, played by Revathi of grade 6, wants to make a film and sets about doing so, with the entire rest of the troupe playing the actors. She wants “English songs” and is placated by the western music club members, who open the night with “Across the Meadow”. She then wants “Bollywood-style dancing to English songs” and this request is complied with by the bright little dancers of the sixth grade dance club.

Then she decides upon a mass-hero sequence, which is done in both Hindi and Telugu (a bilingual hit!) and is followed by a Sita-Gita skit. No, no, she says, she wants “a typical drama sequence”, which is executed with mastery by the theatre club students, who enact a laughably tearful serial-pattern. Once again the music group plays a beautiful medley, “Prelude to Paradise”, and the populars, “Chandelier” and “Cheap Thrills” by Sia. Then she wants a baddie in the fray, in response to which the drama students do a sequence reminiscent of the film Sholay, with a Gabbar-style villain.

Just like any film, Khichdi Productions also had an interval, in which the dazzling trio of Kavya, Purvi, and Trina advertised several products in a manner that had just the right amount of humour in it to keep the boat afloat. They cheerfully informed the audience the benefits of Smurf Excel, which, they claimed, ‘not only cleans clothes, but whitens teeth as well!’



THE MAGIC OF RANG MANTHAN

Perhaps the act that had everyone on their feet was the one at the very end, when the producer decides that first of all she must conduct auditions for the parts in her film! Here the audience was treated to a handful of the veteran actors of the theatre club, who play the parts of a plethora of entirely unique characters (a fashionista, a madman, Chandramukhi, a cricketer, a don, and a Tamil diehard fan to name a few) all vying for the openings in the movie. This was a real display of acting expertise, and not a fault could be named in the way these actors were going about their roles.



“I felt free, I could have been anybody in that moment. Everyone’s exceptional performances propelled me to act really well so that I could leave my mark on the stage and in the minds of the audience,” clarifies a beaming Chandramukhi, played by Lahari of grade 9. Agreeing with her is the famed Babumoshai (Rishi of grade 9) who says that he felt like a cog in a clock, helping to run the whole thing smoothly.

THE MAGIC OF RANG MANTHAN

Again, like every good plot, this production also had its own plot twist, which came at the end of the show: the film gets cancelled due to the problem of demonetization. This keeping in touch with real-life events had the audience in an uproar, and nothing could have sealed the stamp on the production's success better than that last dialogue.

In the end, the age-old idiom—they all lived happily ever after---was ringing in everyone's minds as all the stars of the show, from grade 6 to grade 10, were on stage grooving to the classic “Om Shanti Om”, clapping their hands and tapping feet in time to the beat. After a brief acknowledgement session, where in the people responsible for the production's roaring success (Ms. Shalini, Mr. Reddy, Mr. Deepak, Ms. Priya, and countless others) were given a huge round of applause, the show came to a close.

Suhas, who essayed the role of the psychopath, said, “This annual day was quite a memorable one. No other annual day was conducted in this fashion with the sole purpose to entertain the audience, who have taken precious time out from their evenings. The whole experience, from the practice to the performance, was a lot of fun!”

History was created that night at Manthan school, where students had forged new identities for themselves. No longer would they be known by their names, but they would be fondly called by their roles. People would refer to them as ‘Gabbar’, or ‘Sita’, or ‘Babumoshai’, but not their actual names: these new personalities were far stronger of characters than they themselves were. And this would remain with the students the rest of their lives, such was the vigour and vitality of their performances.

It was the end of a magical night and was one that anyone isn't likely to forget anytime soon. The magic that Rang Manthan wove still remains fresh in our minds, stirring up song, dance, and merriness whenever we think of it. All the students will be forever proud to have been in such a production, one that left every member in the audience a changed person. Rang Manthan Studios and Khichdi Productions, we bid you adieu.

SPOTLIGHT

NURTURING NATURE - Anjayah Gardener



We recently interviewed the school gardener-Anjayah. After speaking to him, we realized his love for nature especially flowers and trees. He seemed to be an extremely kind and generous man who loved his job.

Interviewer: HI Anjayah! Can we just have a small talk with you for our school magazine?

Anjayah: Yes, I would love to talk to you all!

Interviewer: What do you love the most about your job?

Anjayah: I love working in open areas, around nature. My favorite part of being a gardener is looking after trees, as I have a strong affection for them. Seeing trees grow from small saplings to colourful flowers arising from branches just make life look so much better and prettier!

I: What thing motivates you to keep gardening?

Anjayah: The only thing that motivates me to keep gardening is the smile on the face of the parents when they see the beautiful garden. Every term I work hard to make Manthan look prettier than ever before, I do so to bring a smile on the parents' faces. I wish every time that the parents enjoy walking in our school premises and appreciate my hard work.

I: Are you a nature-lover? If yes then from when did you develop this passion?

Anjayah: I have always been a nature lover. In fact, I spent most of my childhood lying down in the garden and adoring nature. It has always been very close to my heart.

SPOTLIGHT

Anjayah

I: Nowadays many people are cutting down numerous trees. What is your opinion about this?

Anjayah: I disagree with the idea of cutting down trees but sometimes the government has to chop down trees for the development of our India, however I would love if they keep this practice to the most minimum level possible. I can't really do anything with the chopping of trees in our environment, but I always make sure that no tree is cut or even harmed in Manthan.

MI: What are the your most favourite trees in our school?

Anjayah: I love all the trees here but I can narrow down to four. Those would be : Sapota, Mango, Papaya, and Banana. Seeing these trees give fruits feel as good as seeing a child being brought into the world. We make sure that these fruits are organic and fresh, later the children are also served these fruits as snacks.

I: What things have you done in gardening which has made you feel very proud?

Anjayah: Well, I make sure that whenever our trees are sick or weak I take extra care of them and provide them with good pesticides and fertilizers. Seeing them grow back to normal makes me feel extremely proud and happy. Another incident was that when our football field was made, we needed stalks to surround the field. The only problem was that there was only one stalk available in the market that I went to. I was very sure that I wanted only that plant to surround the field hence I started growing several more plants from that single plant itself. And today you all can see the result!

I: If you had a choice to create another garden for Manthan, can you tell us the flowers you would select and why?

Anjayah: Well, my choice would be:

1. All of the different coloured Roses
2. Hibiscus
3. Yellow elder or more commonly known as yellow trumpet bush
4. Tulips
5. Calla lilies (these are dark-bluish/violet coloured, single-petal flowers)

I would choose these flowers as they all are very radiant and they symbolize happiness. They bring a smile on my face every day and I hope that they do the same for everyone else too!

I: Thank you so much Anjayah! It was a pleasure talking to you !

by-Soumya , Kashish and Lahari(for translating)

एक ईमानदार गुलाम महती, कक्षा ९ अ

पुराने राज्य में एक अमीर परिवार के साथ एक बूढ़ा गुलाम था। वह सहयोगी, परिश्रमी, सच्चा , और ईमानदार आदमी था और अपने पैसे के लिए बहुत काम करता था। वह निजी स्वार्थ से दूर था, और सिर्फ दूसरों के लिए जीता था। उसका नाम किसी को नहीं पता , लेकिन सभी उसे प्यार से देखते थे क्योंकि वह सभी का भला चाहता था। वह इतने अच्छा थे कि उसके प्रतिपक्ष में कोई नहीं था। जब राजा न इस गुलाम के बारे में सुना

तो उसे बहुत अच्छा लगा और उन्होंने तुरंत निश्चय किया कि वह गुलाम अपने दरबार में मंत्री की तरह रहेगा। उन्होंने गुलाम को अच्छे मेजबानी के तरह आह्वान किया और मंत्री पद दे दिया। लेकिन उस राज्य में कुछ अलगाववादी मंत्री भी थे जो इस बात को सुनकर बहुत क्रोधित हुए। ये लोग ईर्ष्या और जलन से तंग थे और चाहते थे कि यह गुलाम दिवंगत हो जाए ताकि लोग उन्हीं को पसंद करे।

इन मंत्रियों ने मिलकर गुलाम को मारने के लिए योजना बनाई और रात में गुलाम की मौत अनिवार्य था। मंत्री ने जल्दी से लाश को सागर में फेंक दिया। ये सब रात में किया गया। लेकिन जब सुबह हुई तब पता चला कि दफन में कोई नहीं था ! गुलाम ने उस रात राजा के साथ समय बिताने के लिए गया था। जब राजा ने बाहर आकर दफन को देखा तो उसे सब समाज में आया और मंत्रियों के इंसानियत न होने के कारण उन सब को सजा मिला।

बरसात का मजा शिवांक - २ डी

बरसात का इतना अच्छा मजा,
इसमें ना कोई सजा |
मैं तो पूरा भीग जाता हूँ,
गीला-गीला हो जाता हूँ |
नीली-नीली बुँदे गिरती हैं,
साथ में गीला हो जाता हूँ |
गड्ढे पानी से भर जाते हैं,
खूब उछलते खेलते हम,
मजा लेते हैं बरसात का |

HINDI

भारत

आदित्य – ३ अ

मेरा देश है सबसे प्यारा,
सब जग में न्यारा |
भारत में पर्यटक आते ,
प्रसन्न मन से जाते |
भारत होगा सबसे आगे,
यह विश्वास दिलाते |
लोग खेलते हैं कबड्डी, खो-खो ,
और कहते मनपसंद खाने |
भारत सुन्दर जगह से भरा ,
भारत में है बहुत परम्परा |
भारत में है ताज महल ,
पर्यटक देखेंगे तो बोलेंगे ,
“यह है एक कमाल”
दुनिया देती इसकी मिसाल |

पानी की जरूरत

स्वर – २ बी

पानी की जरूरत,
पानी चाहिए हमें |
क्योंकि पानी होता है ज़रूरी
सिर्फ हमारे लिए ही नहीं,
पशु-पक्षी और पेड़-पौधों
को भी चाहिए पानी |
इसलिए पानी है इतना अनमोल |

मेरा बचपन

ऋषभ जैन

मैं आज भी अपने बचपन को याद करकर हूँ मुड़ता
काश! वह लम्हा हमेशा के लिए रुकता,
परंतु वक्रत किसी की नहीं सुनता,
मैं प्रतिदिन अपने बचपन को स्मरण करता ही रहता।
हैं खेलते थे हम अनेक खेल,
छाँ जाता था हम दोस्तों का ताल-मेल,
हम सब हट्टे-खट्टे खाते थे तेल,
और पसंद था हमें क्रिस गेल!
ज़िदगी में बचपन के लम्हे थे सबसे यादगार,
तब नहीं था इस उम्र की तरह मिलता रोज़गार,
आज चलाता हूँ कार, पर तब चलाता था खिलौने की कार,
मैं बहुत खुश हूँ कि मेरा बचपन नहीं गया बेकार।
बचपन हैं सबसे अच्छा,
उसका लम्हा था सबसे अनोखा।

बचपन

हर्षिता के.

बचपन है सबसे अच्छा ,
बचपन में आज़ादी ,
बड़े होने पर गुलामी ,
बचपन है सबसे अच्छा |
बच्चों को कर्तव्य से आज़ादी ,
बड़ों को कर्तव्य से गुलामी ,
खेलना है तो सिर्फ़ बचपन ,
आज़ादी चाहिए तो सिर्फ़ बचपन |
बचपन का महत्त्व बच्चों को नहीं पता ,
बचपन का महत्त्व अब पता चलेगा ,
बच्चों को मिलनेवाली आज़ादी अब नहीं मिलेगी ,
बचपन है सबसे अच्छा |

MATH TRICKY TRICKS

Min Blowing!!

Adithya Haniyamballi,8B

$$1+2+3+4\ldots = -1/12$$

The title must have left you bewildered! One might say that this is not possible and not at all practical. Why would the sum of all the positive numbers be equal to negative $1/12$? This article will explain this to you. To start,

Let a constant C , be equal to $1+2+3+4\ldots$

$$C=1+2+3+4\ldots$$

$$4C=4(1+2+3+4\ldots)=4+8+12\ldots$$

Now, subtract the second equation from the first but here, shift the numbers in the second equation one place left (which is allowed!)

$$C=1+2+3+4\ldots$$

$$-4C=4+8\ldots$$

$$-3C=1-2+3\ldots$$

$$-3C=1-2+3-4+5\ldots$$

Actually, $(1-2+3-4\ldots) = (\text{However crazy this may seem it is true!})$

So,

$$-3C=$$

$$-3C =$$

$$-3C=$$

$$C = X - 3$$

$$C=$$

With the result $C=1+2+3+4\ldots =$ would you still not believe this?

The mathematician who discovered this was Srinivasa Ramanujan, an Indian mathematical mind. He had suggested this and many other astonishing results in his letter to the English mathematician G.H Hardy. Doesn't this prove how erratic mathematics can be?

MATH TRICKY TRICKS

Math Riddle

Saathvik Konidena 7A

Two elevators, Elevator A and Elevator B are in the fourth and tenth floors respectively. If elevator A is moving up and Elevator B is moving down at the same speed, at which floor will they meet?

(Answer on next page)

Answer to riddle: The 7th floor.

You can derive this answer by finding the average of the two floors which is 7.

Calendars: Mystery Cracked

Pranav Jatin 7A

Did you know that calendars were first invented by the Egyptians and that Maths was related to this discovery?

Around 5000 years ago, the Egyptians noticed that every year the River Nile rose at a particular time. This time marked the sowing season for them. They also

noticed that the Moon rose and set 12 times between two overflows. Therefore, they measured this intervening period as 12-months (moons). The wise men observed that the bright star Sirius rose before sunrise, just before every flooding of the Nile. They numbered the days and saw that it calculated upto 365 days. So they divided the year into 12 months of 30 days and additional five days at the end of the year.

MATH TRICKY TRICKS

Are the odds really even?

Suhas(9A)

From the vast expanses of a cricket stadium to our everyday lives, flipping a coin has remained as a trusty way of deciding between two options and as the result is completely random. But are the chances truly equal?

New researches conducted by Persi Diaconis (Professor at Stanford university and former magician) concluded that this popular trick does indeed involve bias, as the face of the coin that is up before the flip is more likely to be the face that triumphs in the end. For example, if head faces up before the flip, there is a 51% chance that it will land with heads facing up. This theory is based upon the angle that is formed between the normal on the coin and the angular momentum vector. Angular momentum is the amount of rotation of an object and is a product of moment of inertia (an object's tendency to resist angular acceleration) and angular velocity (the change in angular position of an object in rotation).

There are two scenarios in which the side of the coin facing up always remains the side which faces up in the end (that is, a hundred percent chance):

- When the normal and the angular momentum vector coincide (it occurs when the coin is hit exactly in the center when flipping it). This will cause the coin to fly up and land without spinning around vigorously.

- If the angle is less than 45 degrees. This will cause the coin to wobble in the air but not flip over, leading to the same result.

Now you may be thinking that since flipping a coin is an option that is ruled out, spinning a coin is the next best way to get an unbiased result. Well, professor Diaconis has debunked that myth too. His experiments have depicted that spinning a coin results in an even more lopsided result, due to the fact that the heads side of a coin is heavier than the tails side. This results in a whopping 81% chance of tails landing up.

So, the next time you pull out a coin to decide between two options, think again, because the odds are not really even.

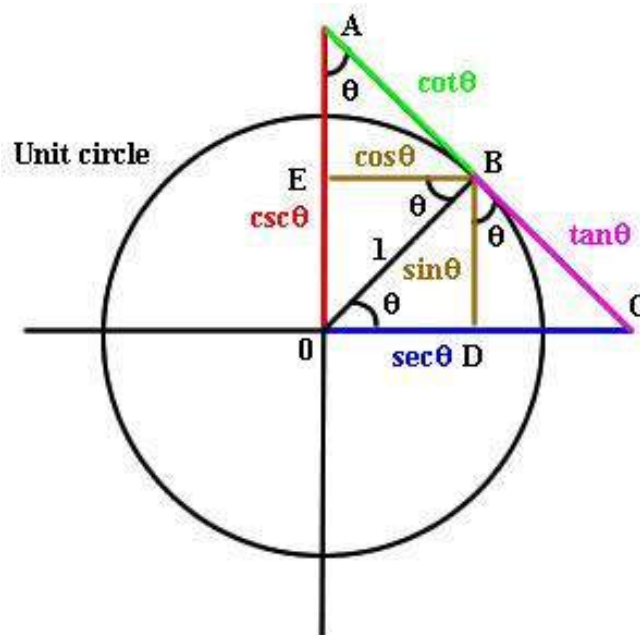
MATH TRICKY TRICKS

Trigonometry

Soumya Marri 9A)

One of the most important concepts in Mathematics, Trigonometry, derives its name from the Greek word "trigonon" and "metron" meaning triangle and measure respectively. It is the branch which deals with the sides and angles in a triangle and their relations. The field emerged in the late 3rd century B.C, its concepts being applied in astronomy and geometry.

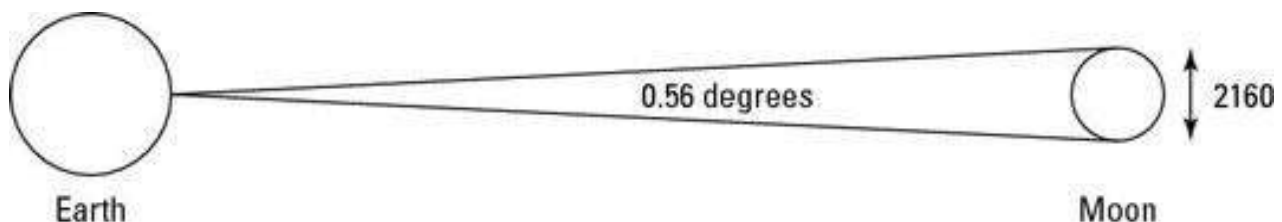
Today, Trigonometry is taught as the relations between the sides (t-ratios) and how it can be used in other concepts of math. They are often taught in school as a part of precalculus. Trigonometric functions are used to understand cyclic phenomena across subjects like physics, electrical engineering, music, astronomy, ecology and biology. The majority of the applications are associated with the right angled triangle, One exception is spherical trigonometry which is the study of triangles on spheres, and is vastly used in astronomy and navigation.



MATH TRICKY TRICKS

In 3rd century B.C, Hellenistic mathematicians such as Archimedes and Euclid studied the properties of chords and inscribed angles and proved theorems that are equivalent to modern day trigonometric formulae. In the 2nd century A.D, a Greco-Egyptian astronomer Ptolemy had detailed trigonometric tables printed in his book. He had used the chord length to define trigonometric ratios, a minor difference from what we use today.

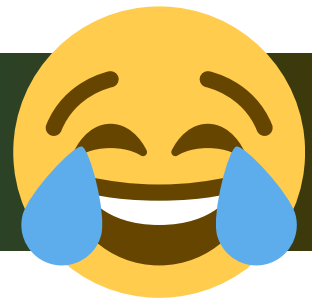
The modern sine convention was first verified by the 5th century Indian astronomer, Aryabhata. Both the Greek and Indian work were translated and expanded by the Islamic mathematicians. One of the major historical applications of trigonometry was measuring distances you could not reach, example the distance between the Earth and Moon, or the Earth and Sun.



Math topics such as Fourier series (representation of wave like functions) and Fourier transforms also rely on the basic formulae of Trigonometry. Fourier transforms' concepts are heavily used in modern day Music and Statistics.

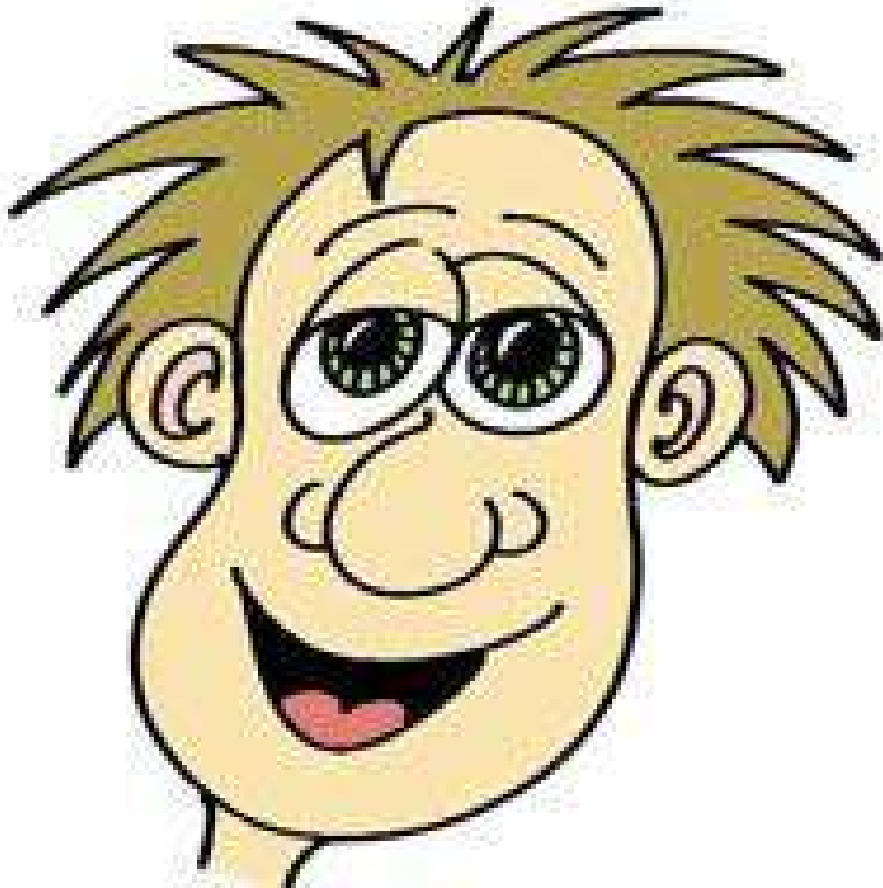
In conclusion, Trigonometry has always been an important part of our everyday lives and will always play an essential part in the future.

⁷LAUGH ALOUD



Punny Pradyumna

By-Pradyumna (Alumnus)



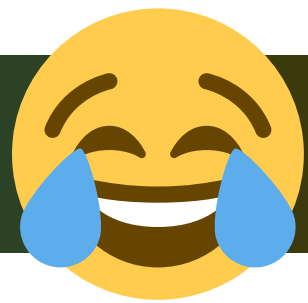
Did you ever hear that joke about raven?
It never crows old.

Never ever tell a carpenter to break a leg.

Monarchies are like geometry boxes: the ruler is the most important!

The race between the tortoise and rabbit was a close one-It was lost by a hare.

LAUGH ALOUD



MINI SAGAS

FUN PLAY TIME

Reyna, Grade 1

One day a baby squirrel named Bobby thought of a play date with his friends. Bobby lived in an acorn tree with his Mummy squirrel and Daddy squirrel.



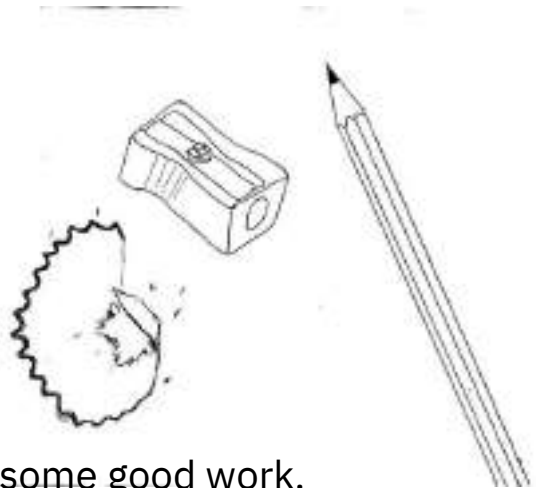
They went out to get food , milk, chocolate ice-cream and acorn then they came back home. The friends came to his house and ate food. After that, they played UNO cards and some puzzles.

After playing they went to a beach to play in the water. It rained and all the squirrels got wet.

A Pencil Sharpener

Akhilesh. 3B

I'm just a sharpener. A normal and new sharpener. I'm in the store. Ahhh! A person's buying me! Am I going to be eaten? Vroom! Ufff! I'm jiggling up and down in the bag. Ah! It's finally peaceful and quiet again. The person has a pencil in his hand. Uh-oh! Hmm, ya, keep scratching my back. Aww, he's using me up. He seems happy. Maybe I am doing some good work.



Oh! I can't see anything from here. The person has put me on a shelf. It has been a long time since he's gone. Maybe he forgot to use me. Finally, he is using me again. Ow! He's not stopping to sharpen the pencil and he is pushing it hard on me. Ahhh! I'm broken into half! That hurts. Now, I'm just useless.

MINI SAGAS

Home Alone

Parv, 2A

One day, my parents went to an office party. They were supposed to come late night. My brother and I ate food and started playing. Later, the doorbell rang. We thought it must be our parents. So, Purav opened the door. It was a burglar!

The burglar came inside our house and tied Purav up. He didn't know that I was hiding in the other room. After he tied up Purav the burglar went to do search for money. Meanwhile, I went outside and closed the door. I called all my neighbors and the police. Later, the police came and arrested the burglar.

At last, my neighbors called my parents and I untied Purav. When my mom and dad came home, they appreciated my bravery. So, this was our little adventure.

The Best Playdate Ever

Meera, Grade 1

Once upon a time, there lived three squirrels. There was a daddy squirrel, a mummy squirrel and a baby squirrel. The baby squirrel's name was Lucy. Lucy and her family lived in an acorn tree. One day, Lucy thought of having a playdate with her friends.

Lucy and her dad went to the food shop. First, they bought pasta and then, they got one acorn pizza, one samosa and some acorn noodles. Lucy and her dad went back home.

Then Lucy's friends came over to her house. The names of her friends names were Mary, Lily and Anna. Mary got small acorn earrings. Lily got small acorns and Anna got some books. Then, they played the game 'Sorry'. After playing, they ate all the food.

After playing and eating, Lucy's dad took them to the beach and then they all played and enjoyed in the water.

MINI SAGAS

The Mystery Egg Mahika 2A

One sunny afternoon, a girl named Priya was eating her lunch. Suddenly, the bell rang. When Priya looked around, there was a green egg. Then Priya thought to herself, "What could be inside it?" She walked to her parents and showed the egg to them. Then Priya called her friend Diya. Diya came to her house and asked

her what happened Priya showed Diya the egg too. She was surprised and said, "Where did you get this egg?" Priya told her the whole story of how she got the egg. After waiting for many days, the egg cracked and a small little dragon hatched out of it. Priya named the dragon 'Fiery'.

Priya took good care of Fiery. After 7 months, Fiery grew into a giant and started to destroy other people's houses. Diya said "We have to send him to the forest." But, Priya couldn't leave him. She then realized that she had to or else Fiery would go on destroying houses and may as well destroy her house.

They planned to send him to the forest by putting meat in the forest to lure him there. Priya missed Fiery very much. To make her feel better, the next day, her father bought her a dragon robot.

The Mental Stonecutter Vaidehi, 1C

One scary night, Shopa, the stonecutter saw his rough hands and felt very sad. He was poor. He didn't have much money.

While he was cutting a stone, he saw a Flying Jatt. He liked it and said " Oh, I wish I could be a Flying Jatt." Then, the Spooky Wind said, "Your wish is granted. A Flying Jatt you will be, a Flying Jatt!" Then, the stonecutter said, "I think Sultan is more powerful than the Flying Jatt." The Spooky Wind said, "Your wish is

granted. Sultan you will be!" After that, the stonecutter said, " I think Ratto is more powerful than Sultan. Oh, I wish I could be Ratto. The Spooky Wind said, "Your wish is granted. Ratto you shall be." Then, the stonecutter said, "Actually, I think Elsa is more powerful than Ratto.

I wish I could be Elsa." The Spooky Wind said, " Your wish is granted. You shall be Elsa." Even after that, Shopa said, "I think a stone is more powerful than Elsa; I wish I could be a stone." Then the Spooky Wind said, "A stone you shall be." From that day, Shopa realized that being a man was much easier and better than all of this. "I wish I could be a man again." Shopa said. The Spooky Wind said, "Your wish is granted. A man you shall be." So Shopa the stonecutter lived happily ever after.

MORAL OF THE STORY: Don't be greedy

MINI SAGAS

Spaghetti Meera Gollamudi

Hi! I am a strand of spaghetti, sitting in a bowl, waiting for someone to eat me. Hey! It's gotten dark in here! Where am I? What's this? I am being pushed down a tube. What is it called? Ohh! Maybe it's the food pipe or the oesophagus!



Anyway, that is over because now I am entering something that looks like a huge bag. Maybe this is what is called the stomach. Now, I am getting mixed with all the juices and acids that the stomach is producing. These juices are the gastric juices, the bile juice (which comes from the liver), and the pancreatic juice, which comes from the pancreas.

I think now I am entering the.....umm....the small intestine! I do not know exactly but I know that I am travelling down a long slide. Weeee! This is fun!

Now, time for the large intestine. It's time for one more ride on another slide! After all the water in me has been absorbed by the large intestine, I turn into solid waste. Well now, I guess, I am in the anus from where I'm being thrown out of the body.

Finally, I come to the end of my trip!

MINI SAGAS

The Hero of Colour City

Plaksha 1B

Near the forest, there was a house. In that house lived a boy with his mother.



The boy loved to draw and colour. His mom told him one night, “It’s time to sleep.” “I haven’t finished colouring this yet!” he said. His mom said, “You can complete it tomorrow.”

So, he slept. The magical colours woke up and the yellow crayon fell. Yellow was very scared as the colour box was the crayons’ city.

Whatever the boy drew came to life. He had drawn a monster and the monster entered Colour City. The monster took Yellow.

The President said to all the colours, “If the monster goes to play in the colourful waterfall, we will all be in trouble.”

The brave President defeated the monster and all the colours took water from the colourful waterfall and made a colourful painting.

MINI SAGAS

Monologue of a Pencil

Sharanya Nandimandalam

“Hello! I am a pencil. It is really hard to write all day. Hey guys! I have to tell you that this person applies pressure on me and writes really dark. Hey! Watch it! Oh, no! I’m going to get sharpened.



Noooooooooooo! Don’t sharpen me! Ow! Ow! That hurts very badly! I request you to please not sharpen me again, young boy! Oh, my gosh! Look at me! I’m so tiny! Ouch! Here it goes again and again! Whew! I need to drink some water. I’m getting sweaty all over! Can you give some water? Anybody pleeeease! Ouch! Not again!”

MINI SAGAS

The Magical present **Raaghav ID**

Once upon a time there lived a girl named Lisa. She lived with her mother and father. Most of the time she used to spend with her dad. Her mother was not as close as other mothers were with their child.

On the day of her birthday, Lisa jumped out of her bed .With excitement; she put on her slippers and ran downstairs. At first she picked up her first present which was from Aunt Daisy , but unlike what she had thought , it was not a rainbow hamster. It was a smelly mouse!

Lisa thought it was nice of her Aunt Daisy, that at least she had remembered her birthday. Then, she opened a few more gifts of chocolates and toys from her friends. Then she opened her last present which was a “witches kit” . With real spells inside it ! She was pretty excited joyous and thought of using this kit on her mother , so that she could spend good time with her. So after her mother returned, Lisa and both of her parents had a picnic with lots of food and fun.

Since then Lisa, lived happily with her parents who loved her very much.

The Little Red Hen **Vijaya, 1B**

Once upon a time , there lived a little red hen. The little red hen had three friends. They were a duck , a cat and a little mouse.

One day, the little red hen thought of making bread. First, the little red hen grew a plant. Every day, the little red hen used to water the plant.

One day wheat came out from the plant . The little red hen was happy. Then, the little red hen went to ask her friends if they could help. First the little red hen asked the duck if she could help. The duck said, “No, I won’t. “Then, the little red hen asked the cat if he could help. But even the cat refused. Then, at last the

little red hen asked if the little mouse could help her. But even the mouse said “No, I won’t help. “The little red hen did everything on her own. Then, her friends came to play with her . At that time the little red hen was eating her bread. Then they all asked her if they could also share her bread , but the little red hen said “No , because you did not help me.”

MINI SAGAS

The Baby Fox and the Cubs

Aadya

Once upon a time, there was a lion who lived with his lioness and cubs in a beautiful forest. Every day, the lion would go and search for food. They all lived happily.



One day, the lion was searching the forest but could not find any food. The lion had taken all the animals before this day. Suddenly, he saw a baby fox. He thought to himself ‘I have found my prey!’ but then he changed his mind since he didn’t want to hurt it.

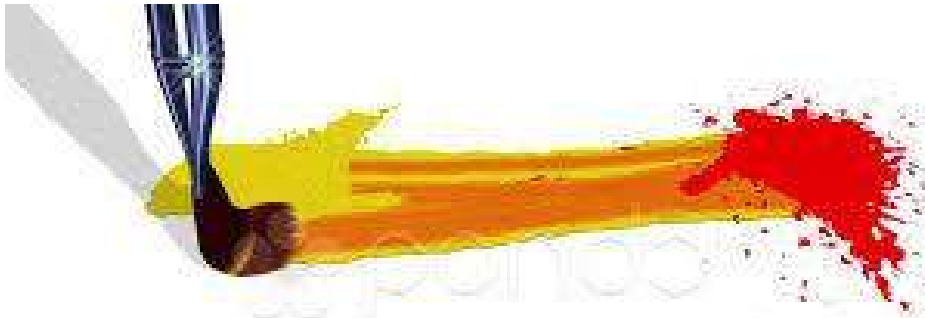
After he came home the lion told his lioness the story of how he met the baby fox. The fox grew up with the lion cubs into adults.

One day, the cubs were teasing the fox. Then the fox said, “If you tease me I will kill you.” Nevertheless, the cubs ignored him and still teased him. Then, the fox got angry and killed the lion cubs.

MINI SAGAS

Monologue of a Paintbrush

“Hello! My name is Abhiram- the paintbrush! Nice to meet you!



What colour is this? Give me some time to recall what I learnt in my colours school. Oh! It's green, but it sticks to me. I am green now and everything else too. This is what I am supposed to do. I am in the hands of a naughty kid and I am spoilt now. I am scared to go into the bin, so I asked him if I could be with him. He doesn't seem to listen! Surely, He doesn't know the golden rule: 'We listen, we do not interrupt.'"

The farm animals

Riya, 1B

Once upon a time , there was a farmer named Rapunzel. She was a very good farmer. Then one day a fox came in the farm and all the animals were scared and they ran away. Rapunzel screamed and asked all of them to come back. But they all ran away. When she went to find them , she saw her farm animal pig in bush . Rapunzel said” Come with me !” And then she saw the rabbit, sheep and the hen were hiding in a cave and she asked all of them to come back with her. The animals followed her. Then the animals played a lot in the farm



MINI SAGAS

The Hungry Caterpillar

Akshita Hegde - 1 D

Once upon a time there was an egg. One fine sunny morning a hungry caterpillar came out of the egg . He did not know where his home was.

He ate one apple, two pears, bananas, strawberries but he was still hungry. So he ate a pastry cake, cupcake, cheese, sausages, chocolate, hot dogs, burger, Frenchfries, jelly, corn, guava and many more.

One night, he got a stomach ache, so he ate a big medicinal herb leaf. Later, he felt much better. When it was morning, he left for travelling . He searched for every place for his living, but found nothing . Gradually, he became weak because he couldn't eat any food for many weeks in search of a place. So he went to the bakery and found so many baked biscuits and desserts. He ate them all. Now he went to a shop and saw so many dresses. He wore a nice dress and went back to a place where there were many caterpillars.

They could not recognize them. They identified his big deep eyes. They all laughed and lastly the caterpillar found his family and a place for living once again.



SCIENCE

Quantum Physics For the Simple-Minded

Bharathi Vaidhyathan, Grade 9A

What happens when you put a cat in a box? It'll try to kill you. Quantum mechanics has always been portrayed as one of the more difficult aspects of science. It is to science what calculus is to math. The reason it seems so baffling is because it requires one to open up to completely new concepts and, if necessary, deny everything they have learnt before. Yet this very reason is

what makes not just quantum mechanics, but science as a whole, so unbelievably interesting. What really clinches it, for me personally, is the experiments.

Schrödinger (or Schroedinger, however you choose to spell it) is a well-known name in the scientific world, especially when the conversation turns to quantum theories. To us common folk, however, he is famously known to be the innovative mind behind the thought experiment, "Schrödinger's Cat". For those of you unaware of this theory, I bring you the assistance of Google.

"a cat imagined as being enclosed in a box with a radioactive source and a poison that will be released when the source (unpredictably) emits radiation, the cat being considered (according to quantum mechanics) to be simultaneously both dead and alive until the box is opened and the cat observed."

To summarize, when you put a cat in a radioactive box that emits poison, until you open the box, the cat is both dead and alive. Ladies and gentlemen, I bring you quantum physics at it's finest.

Common sense dictates that the cat is dead. We know that the cat is dead before we open the box. At this point, I would like to remind you that "Schrödinger's Cat" is merely a thought experiment in the field of theoretical quantum physics and that no felines were harmed. This theory was, in fact, used to explain quantum superposition, which states, in simple terms, that an atom or a photon can exist in multiple states simultaneously.

SCIENCE

To understand this, all you really need to know is the basics of probability and the properties of light. Let me break it down.

Let us assume that we have a completely reflective medium in front of us. To our right we have a light source. Light is, in its essence, a stream of photons, so we have a photon emitter that will release a narrow stream of photon on the right. To our left, we have a series of detectors, that will beep when in contact with a photon.

We know that according to the reflective properties of light, the angle of incidence is equal to the angle of reflection. Through this we can accurately decipher exactly which detector will beep. Thus, the probability of specific detector beeping is one, and the probability of all the other detectors beeping is zero. Simple enough.

Now, we assume that the medium is only partially reflective and there is an equal chance of the photons passing through. With detectors placed all around the medium, once again we can pinpoint which detector will beep when the photons pass through. Since the probability of the photons passing through the medium and the photons being reflected is equal, the probability of the one of the detectors beeping is halved. So, if the emitter released a narrow stream of about 100 photons, you would expect half of them to pass through and the other half to reflect off the medium.

What if there was only one photon? This is where Schrödinger's theory comes into play. Until the photon hits medium the probability of it hitting one of the detectors is one. At this point it is travelling on both paths and will hit both detectors. Only when the photon comes in contact with the medium do we know whether it will pass through the medium or be reflected. In the same way, until the box is opened, the cat is both dead and alive. Simple enough.

And so to you, dear reader, I have explained quantum physics. Absolutely fascinating in my opinion, but apparently Schrödinger would beg to differ.

Schrödinger himself was not comfortable with what the quantum theory implied and probability interpretation of quantum mechanics and wrote,

"I don't like it, and I'm sorry I ever had anything to do with it."



WHY DO GIRAFFES HAVE LONG NECKS?

Aksharaa Barat 4C

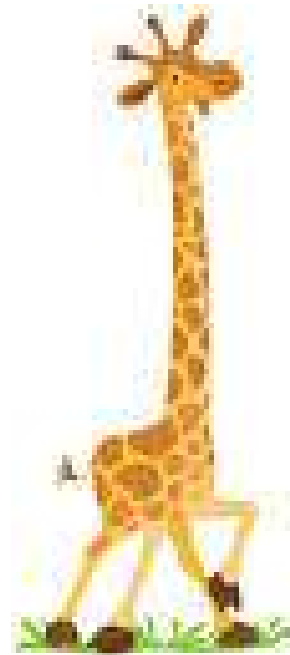
There once was a little giraffe called Tim. He liked to play and he lived in a grassland.

One day, a lion came to their town, and said, "I shall eat everybody in this town." There was silence for a few minutes. Then Tim was the first to speak. He said, "I shall do it. Tell me what to do", in a brave voice. The lion snickered and said, "You have eight days to go to that hill and pluck leaves from the bamboo trees. I shall be back on the ninth day and I want to see all the leaves lying on the ground. Or else, I will kill everyone. And of course, I shall appoint another lion to see that nobody helps you." Saying that the lion went off, grinning to himself.

Tim set out to go to the bamboo trees the next day. When the day ended, Tim reached the bamboo trees. He slept for the night and woke up the next morning. He started trying to pluck the leaves of the bamboo trees. He stretched his neck all day and long. The next day, in this process, his neck grew long as he had been stretching it for seven days and nights continuously.

As we believe that when we sleep, we grow a bit and so did Tim, the giraffe grew a long neck! The ninth day, the lion came back and was amazed to be standing in front of Tim's legs, staring at so many leaves on the ground. The lion left having accepted his defeat.

This is how giraffes got their long necks and have them even today!



The End



YOUNG AUTHORS

WATER DRAGON

Pranav, 2A

One morning Sam went to the beach. No one was there so he was lonely. Suddenly, a water dragon came out from the water. It was a male water dragon. Two thirds of its body length was made up of its tail. A water dragon's tail is designed to help it swim. Water dragons in captivity can live up to 20 years, and they dive into water to escape grave danger. They can also sleep in water with their protruding nostrils.

A few weeks later a mysterious fiery dragon attacked the city. Sam thought he should help. "A mysterious has attacked the city. Can you please help us?" he requested the water dragon. "Ok," said the dragon. Sam led him to the other dragon. The dragons fought each other and in the end, the water dragon killed the fiery dragon. Everyone was proud of it.

A few years later, the water dragon was sleeping, waiting for its babies to be born. Soon the eggs cracked, and out came the babies! The babies were just four to five inches tall. They were very tiny and cute. Sam dove into the water to see how the water babies were. He was so surprised to see them!

Sam invited his friends to have a look and a ride on them. His friends were very excited! They had a good time and took care of the babies. They watched them grow into beautiful adult dragons. From then on, they lived happily ever after!



The End



YOUNG AUTHORS

SEEKING THE TRUTH

Aarushi M 5D

It was Saturday morning, and Hermione and I were busy discussing about Sirius Black – not exactly discussing, but arguing.

She shouted, “Even though he hasn’t troubled us yet, how in the world can you say that Sirius is good?”

She went on and on until she was as tired as a slug.

“OK, let’s stop now,” she said calmly. “But still, I really want to seek the truth,” she said.

“School time,” our mother yelled, so we got ready to go.

Once we reached the school, we went to our respective classes, learnt a few new topics, therefore not having any fun. At last, Hermione and I met in the corridor. There, we saw Sirius Black. Of course, everybody was scared of him, but we still somehow dared to go close and talk to him.

“Hey, Sirius. Are you evil?” we asked him. He replied, “Of course I am not, even though I planned a case against Peter. Oh, I have to go,” he said suddenly, furtively glancing around, and drifted away.

We were very anxious about what he had said to us. So Hermione took my hand and pressed her bracelet three times. We landed in a dark horse stable full of blood marks and bullets here and there. We got frightened.

Then we saw Peter, also frightened and running around. He hid behind a barrel, very scared, so we decided that we should also hide behind the barrels.

Surprisingly, we saw a man in a black coat, pockets full of guns and one in his hand, trying to shoot, and he said, “Oh, Peter. I have a surprise. To be exact, it is very bloody and painful. Come, come. I am waiting.”

We wanted to leave but we still waited, looking at his black gloves, shoes, coat and mask. We concluded that he was totally crazy or maybe...

The End



YOUNG AUTHORS

HOW DID THE UNICORN GET A HORN ON ITS HEAD?

Ganga Ponnani Raghu, 4C

Once upon a time, there lived a little girl named Julia. She lived in a cottage, with her parents and a pet unicorn. When she grew up into a pretty young woman, she left her parents in the cottage, and went away to live by herself. But Julia often used to come to their cottage, to meet her parents and to learn something new.

One day, when Julia went to meet her parents, her mother had given her some magical dust, which was supposed to be sprinkled on her hair. Her mother had strictly warned Julia, not to sprinkle it on their unicorn's head. After some time, Julia took the magical dust and returned back to her own house.

It was around 11:15 a.m. Julia had placed the magic dust on her buffet table and she went into the kitchen to cook something for lunch. Meanwhile, the unicorn came to the buffet table to take some apples and oranges. She could not find the apples and oranges. Instead, she saw a richly decorated, small goodie bag. Her eyes went blue and she fell in love with the bag. The bag had pictures of golden apples and silver oranges.

The unicorn tried to touch the goodie bag and.....AAAA....Julia heard the noises and she came to see what was going on. She was astonished to see such a beautiful horn growing on her unicorn's head, because of the magical dust that accidentally spilled on its head. Julia had wanted for a magical horn on her pet unicorn's head from a long time. Soon she got to know that it was actually a magical horn!!!

Since then it was believed that unicorns always had a horn on their heads!



The End



ANGEL

Naisha 2A

Once upon a time, there was a girl named Angel. She loved helping others. One day, she went to go play with her friend. While she was playing with her, her friend saw an old man in trouble. At the same time, she kicked a hard football into the old man's stomach. The old man fell to the ground and shouted, "Oh, what have you done?" "S-Sorry," said her friend. Angel ran to the old man to help and asked him, "Are you ok? Should I drop you at your house?" Angel said sorry to

her friend about leaving her and went to go drop the old man at his house. When she reached his house, she opened the door for him and let him into the house. Then she said goodbye to him and went back to meet her friend at the park.

When she reached the park where her friend was, she found her near a small lake. She went to her and shouted, "Why did you hurt that old man?!"

After a while she said, "Do not ever do that again understand?" she said politely. "Ok, I won't do that ever again," said her friend.

"Good," said Angel. It was late so they told each other goodbye and went home.

Angel had a pet parrot at home. She loved it and cared for it very much. She always wanted to open its cage and let it free for a while. One day her parrot flew away and she went to go look for it. After some time, she found it.

Then they all lived happily ever after. Her name defines her: she makes sure no one is in trouble, just like an angel.



The End



YOUNG AUTHORS

AN OPTICIAN'S THOUGHT

Yashita,9A

The coconut like whites of his eyes gently carve around the ripples of the dark cinnamon iris combined by the faint mahogany streaks as if it were to show internal scratches which were so , intricately designed. Those calming lashes, stroked outwards in perfect symmetry while glued together in thick

bunches;blushing at every blink, yet sticking up at a forty five degree angle with the upmost pride. Delicately dilating, the intimidated pupil minimises against the merciless light like a vampire at sunrise!

One could quite easily mistake his eyes for tempered chocolate, as they both share the identical relation of possessing an irresistible sheen, competing equally with the feminine eyelashes he has.For the moment, when he was forcibly glaring at me , I had no choice but to feel embarrassed due to the feeling of nudity as it seemed as if this stranger , this imposter could look right through me, where then every air molecule suddenly became a frosted dagger which was stuck inside of me. Illuminating as they were , it seemed as if the sun was unworthy of casting as much brightness as the eyes sitting in front of me.....His eyes were a sin. An utter sin! The acorn brown swimming in the centre glints like a safe waiting to be opened, dangerously encasing some demon, which has been waiting to be unleashed. So I just keep glancing at the safe instead. I don't want to be entangled in any mess right now.

Ten minutes pass and my shock struck body is still yet in awe, studying these diamond orbs like a mad pervert. If it enables me to drown in the pool of ecstasy before me - then by all means call me a pervert. The flash did stop, expanding the dilated pupil, smoothly, slowly, like a black hole ready to engulf, the movement of the streaks in his brownness was in amiable sync blending deeply with that beautiful ochre colour. He left eventually, with his canine and white cane... this whole escapade filled me with pity - that poor man cannot witness what i had just seen. That poor man cannot witness those opalescent lilies gleaming in the shimmering palace of celestial maidens.



The End



INEXORABLE PLEASURES

Srikari

Extortionate wealth , yet unworthy of fare,
Resides within the unfathomable depths,
OF one's bordered mind.
Trickling down, the querulous lips,
That know no sense of euphoria and glee.
It manages to chisel generously the pavement ,

Onto the taste buds that indeed deserve
The present of ecstasy .
Heaven! Enchanting ,yet unsatiated,
Nurturing my predilection to the best.
Manifest the secret of eternal jubilation,
Promising to make a mark , unforgettable
And divine .

Yet, betraying the lovers , that grew trust and
credence ,
You, being gulped parsimoniously thus.
Renouncing the delectation of this world,
And finally abandoning the irrevocable.
Attachment of humans,
Lie conquered in fulfilling the desire ,
This anemic “ tongue”.



THE MOST MEMORABLE DAY OF MY LIFE

Mahathi Grade 4D

It is a chilly Sunday evening
and down in the clubhouse
children pop balloons and run.
Stunned, the decorations shiver
Cribbing, the balloons say 'Good Bye'
Suddenly, everyone freezes,
they come closer and
stare at a black cat
purring on the floor
as fat as an elephant.

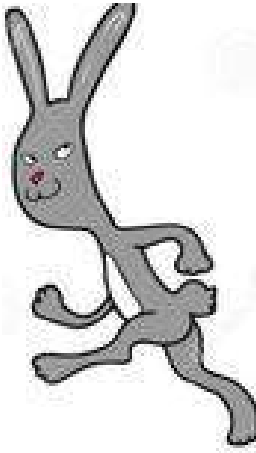


A boy bends down,
pets the cat
elegantly, and so
carefully holds the creature
out into the lawn.
Ten places him down.
Boys, girls, parents and guests
smile at the cat.
Peace is restored,
a day to remember
on my birthday in October.



WHY DO BEARS HAVE NO TAILS?

Amogh, 4D



One hot summer's day, a rabbit, a turtle and a fox were swimming in a pond. The fox had an idea. "Hey, Rabbit! Why don't we slide down this rock and into the pool?" said the Fox. "Great idea!" exclaimed the Rabbit and the Turtle.

Whilst they were sliding down the rock, a Bear came by, whistling.

"Hey, Fox! It's the Bear! Let's play a prank on him!" said the Rabbit.

"I've got a jolly good idea!" said the Fox.

"Hello, Bear! We're sliding down this slippery rock and into the Rabbit's pond!" shouted the Turtle as the Fox slid down the rock and into the pond—splashy-splashy-slash!

"That looks like a mighty lot of fun! I'll join you folks too!" and saying so, the Bear tucked his tail under his body and slid down the rock.

At first, the Bear looked as if he was enjoying it. But then he gave a terrible yell. "Aiyyyyy!!!" he yelled. The Rabbit, the Turtle and the Fox laughed fit to kill themselves.

When the Bear swam out of the Rabbit's pond, he saw that his tail had vanished- it had been scraped off when he slid down the rock. Poor Bear! Since then it was believed that bears do not have long tails.



The End



YOUNG AUTHORS

WHY DO MONKEYS HAVE RED BOTTOMS?

Hansini 4D

Once upon a time, there lived many animals in a forest. One day, a traveller came to explore in the forest. After walking for a long time, he decided to rest under the shade of some trees. He left his extra clothes beside him in a box.

A monkey spotted the clothes and stole them. When the traveller woke up, he forgot all about his clothes and proceeded with his journey.

When the monkey opened the box, containing the clothes, he was astonished. He suddenly had an idea. The monkey snapped his fingers and said, "I will dress up as a handsome man with these clothes and impress the girls in the village."

A deer heard what the monkey had said. "You should not go to the village, it can be dangerous", warned the deer. The monkey snorted, "You need not tell me what I should do." "If you don't listen to me, you will face consequences," said the deer calmly. After saying that, the deer went away.

Then the monkey was busy dressing himself. In the box, there was a beautifully woven red shirt, a white shining ring, a green cap and a blue trouser.

After dressing himself up, the monkey tucked his tail into his trousers and said to himself, "I should not let my tail come out of my trousers, or else the children will know that I'm a monkey."

Then he went to the village in the night, and spent his time dancing with the girls. One of the girls said, "He is so smart and handsome!"

The boys in the village were very jealous of the monkey as all the girls were praising him. One day, as the monkey was dancing, one of the boys saw his tail and he understood that he was not a human, but a monkey in disguise. He came up with a plan.

The boy wanted to teach the monkey a lesson. The boy burnt the rock which the monkey usually rested on. When the monkey was tired of dancing, he sat on the burnt rock. "Yeow!" the monkey screamed in pain. Alas! The rock that he sat on had burnt his bottom and he cried with pain and ran away.

Since then it is believed that monkeys have red bottoms.



The End



YOUNG AUTHORS

THE SECRET

Sanjana Grade 9A

This dark room used to be his bedroom. Everybody else was downstairs at his funeral. How could I attend it if I were a secret? His secret. I was here to mourn my world's loss, not to waste time on these stupid questions.

We were like brothers. I took care of him as though he was my blood brother. Life was so much better when he and I used to return drunk and wake up in a pool of sweat in the morning. I used to get him ready for school and learn by myself whilst helping him with his homework once he returned. He hailed from a rich family where his parents were busy, rich and confident enough to give Walsh his own house. I was an orphan thus, I lived with him and helped take care of the house and Walsh. He was a smart, sporty kid in school who had lots of friends and was popular but never hosted anyone in this damned house.

Of the near five hundred people at his funeral at the moment, four hundred and ninety nine of them were his friends. The other person was his mother, Natalie Diakrow who was standing near the coffin with a straight face. Dressed in an ink-black skirt and a blouse studded with diamonds, which made a beautiful design, she looked like she was going to a party rather than to her son's funeral. Her plain gold choker or the shimmering black high heels didn't help either but at least she had the courtesy to attend. Walsh's father Mr. Yeon Diakrow was at a meeting which was important enough to miss Walsh's funeral. When the ceremony ended, stone-faced, Mrs. Diakrow stepped into her limo which was to take her to a meeting leagues away. Nobody will ever know why he was hated and ignored by his (so called) parents.

When you first met Walsh, you'll never guess the kid was on drugs. He was on a lot of drugs ranging from ecstasy to cocaine. The first puff of smoke and sting of drugs were experienced at the naïve age of ten. The same age when he was "gifted" this damn house to live in. Our saying was "A shot a day keeps the sadness away" which worked wonders in Walsh's opinion. I have been living with him since we were both ten years old and I see to it that he doesn't smoke more than four cigars a day and takes no more than three shots a week. Even in his university he was known for his craziness during parties and during one such party in his third semester at university he fathered his first child.

The girl went for termination of the fetus that very moment. It is after that incident that I accompanied him to every party so as to keep an eye on him to make sure he didn't go too crazy due to his tequila shots. One night we were walking home through a forest after a crazy party when my eyes caught the sights of a little girl playing with what looked like a grenade. I immediately put my drunk friend against a strong tree and ran towards the little girl. She looked about eight years old, and she was dressed in a very simple floral frock accompanied by a glass bangle around her left wrist. An innocent smile spread across her face as she threw the grenade high into the air and caught it. Due to her bare feet and dirty hair, I assumed she must have wandered into the forest while playing near her house in a slum nearby. I cautiously caught the grenade out of the air and immediately dismantled the bomb inside without letting it burst. The little girl had started crying and it took me about five minutes to calm and console her. Later on, I convinced her to walk home while I looked for my drunk friend.





THE SECRET

I found Walsh after an hour of searching near the edge of the river for a while. He was mumbling something. Once I lifted him on my back (as though I was giving him piggyback ride), he spoke - "Ned, I think I just saw a horror movie," Amused, I asked, "What makes you think that?" "When I was tumbling from the edge of the road to the bank, I saw three men threatening a couple. As you know, I'm a kind person so, I tried to break my fall to help them but by the time I reached.." He started sobbing like a child who had just watched 'Nightmare on Elm Street'. "Complete your sentence Wal!" I urged. "Ned. Ned. By the time I reached...the couple was lying dead!" The sobbing continued for another half an hour until he fell asleep. Once everything was settled, we reached home and I threw him on his bed, wrapped him up in a cosy blanket with a paper bag kept next to him (just in case he needed to throw up) and headed to my room. I just thought about everything that had happened that night and decided we would just forget about murder as I didn't want Walsh to get involved in any of it.

Next morning, Walsh went to college after spending half an hour on my bed, explaining how much he loved me for carrying him back home. Once he left, I thought to myself, "He doesn't remember anything about the murder" and smiled. That evening, when I returned with fresh groceries, I found Walsh hanging from the fan in his room. The amount of pain and fierce love I felt at that moment was inexplicable and incomparable.

I called up his parents, pretending to be a neighbour, and informed them of their son's death. That day, I took everything that Walsh had a place in his heart for and left to the roads. Now I have returned after two weeks to secretly attend his grand funeral. Just as I was about to leave Walsh's old bedroom I saw something move in the mirror. When I went and stood in front of it, instead of spotting get my reflection, I saw Walsh. But he wasn't just Walsh. He had a deep imprint of a tightrope around his neck and looked as though he hadn't slept for days. A few moments later he raised a bloody finger towards me and said the three words I've been hiding from for a long time. "It was you." When I looked away, Walsh was gone and the next moment I was staring at myself being crushed under the mountain of guilt. Every sin committed by me reappeared in front of me. My father's murder, the dead couple, the poor little girl, Walsh's happy face while I gave him a shot of poison instead of ecstasy that morning, my blood brother's unconscious body as it hung from the fan. As I rushed out of the house it was all I could think of. With every blink of my eye resurfaced the memory of hanging Walsh. All I ever said after that was, "I didn't do it. I didn't want to kill you. I didn't do it. I didn't want to kill you."



The End



YOUNG AUTHORS

WHY THE SKY IS BLUE

Haasini Kellampalli 4B

Once upon a time, three gods - Seanor, Thunderous and Croel, who were siblings, ruled parts of the world. Seanor ruled the sea. Thunderous ruled thunder. Croel ruled hell.

One day, under the white sky (the sky was actually white then, not blue), on Mount Maligy, the three gods were talking about an old man; he was a nice person, but it was time for him to let go of his life. Croel said that he was supposed to go to hell, as it was really empty there. Thunderous said that the man deserved to go to heaven as he had not done anything cruel in his life. On the other hand, Seanor said, "I don't think he even has to let go of his life. I know his time of life is over, but still, I don't think he deserves to die!"

The disagreement soon turned into a debate and the debate soon turned into a fight. Soon after, the three gods decided to call the man to look at his views on the subject. The man was really thin and fragile. He had white hair and beautiful green eyes. Thunderous asked him,

"Sir, as you can see, you are very old and you have fulfilled your point of life. If you decide to die, I will personally send you to heaven, where life will be better than how it is here."

Croel interrupted, "Sir, if you die, I will personally take you to hell. I know, I know, you will not be willing to come with me, but I will make you feel at home. You will have a great time with me!"

Then Seanor said, "Dear man, I feel like you don't even need to let go of your precious life! You can stay with your family happily."

The old man was confused and scared. He thought to himself, "Heaven would be a good choice, but if I go to hell, I will be able to meet my dead father, who was cruel, but I still love him. But if I don't die, I can stay with my family. I can enjoy life with no work. Aagh! Too many options! Wait, maybe I should just run away!"

Without giving his idea a second thought, he fled from mount Maligy. The gods were amazed to see how fast he was. He was almost as fast as a cheetah! Croel and Thunderous were annoyed, but Seanor, on the other side, was full of joy and pride.

She said, "Ha! The man wanted to live his life, and not die! He took my option. I, Seanor, the goddess of the sea, have beaten Croel, the god of hell and Thunderous, the so-called strongest god EVER!"

Both Croel and Thunderous were short tempered, and after hearing what Seanor said, they were boiling with rage.

Then Thunderous shouted, "You brat! You want to have a taste of my rage?"

Then Croel said, "How dare you insult me!"

Seanor said, "You two idiots! Nobody is stronger than me!"



WHY THE SKY IS BLUE

Thunderous, who was ready to kill Seanor, said, "You think you are stronger than me? Fine then, I declare war between the three of us, and whoever wins is the strongest god ever!"

Both Croel and Seanor shouted, "I agree!"

Thunderous said that the war would start tomorrow. Seanor asked the sharks and fish in the sea to help her in the war. Thunderous asked the birds that flew in the sky to help him in the war. Croel asked the dead people in hell to help him in the war. Finally, the three teams assembled on the battlefield. They started fighting.

The war went on for hours and hours. The sky was clear and white with clouds. WHOOSH! The wind blew harder. Seanor was battling really hard, until she saw somebody familiar.

"What?" She thought to herself. "That's Steeloy, the god of war. Is he going to battle against us too?"

Well, that's what he came for. Steeloy had an extremely strong team. Steeloy shouted, "I have come to battle with you guys. I am the strongest god! If one of you beat me, that god will be declared the strongest god of all time!"

Thunderous, Seanor and Croel knew that Steeloy was really powerful. All of their powers combined would be equal to Steeloy's. The war was supposed to be between the three siblings, but it turned out to be against Steeloy. The three gods sharpened their weapons and got ready to fight. But Steeloy was relaxing, drinking wine on a huge floating throne.

When the siblings were ready, they started fighting. Steeloy was winning against them, but the three siblings did not back down. Seanor was fighting so hard that she caused a tsunami. That was the highest tsunami ever. Soon, it was touching the sky.

Thunderous was making it thunder and Croel was creating black magic. All this power made Steeloy run away.

Seantor was going to stop the tsunami when she saw something amazing. The sky was not white anymore...it was blue! She controlled the tsunami, and a few seconds later, it stopped.

Thunderous and Croel were amazed to see the new sky. When they returned to Mount Maligy, Seanor sadly said, "Sorry brothers. I guess I insulted you. There is nobody stronger or weaker in us!"

Then, both Thunderous and Croel said, "Now! That's my sister!"

Since then, whenever there was a problem, the three siblings solved it together and did their part of being good and fair gods. And as for that old man, well, the siblings went and threw him into space.

The End



THE WATERFALLS

Mahith - 1C

The waterfall is a loud speaker.
It is very noisy.
The waterfall is like a heavy rain.
It comes from up to down like a rain.
He is a boxer
He fights with rocks.
He gets stronger and stronger
And finally becomes a champion.



THE COOL WATERFALL

Shini- 1C

The waterfall is a loudspeaker,
It is very loud and noisy.
The waterfall is like heavy rain,
It is coming from the sky.
She is my friend
She is a dancer
She dances with rocks.



COMPARING WITH THE SUN

Sidharth, 1A

The sun is a sea
He sends solar flares
Just like sending waves from the sea.
The sun is light
He is round like a light and lights the Earth
The sun is a hot football
Because aliens play with it.
The sun is a statue
He never moves
And helps us by giving summer sea sun and summer holidays!



THE SUN

Vikhyaath - 1C

The Sun is a bright tube light
It gives us light
The Sun is a smiley face
It looks like a big ball
It makes me happy
The Sun is a sunflower
He is yellow in colour
He looks round
He smells good



THE BRIGHT SUN

Meera

The sun is a big yellow bright balloon.
It gives us light.
It is bright in the sky.
The sun is a big smiley face.
It makes me happy.
I love it!
She is kind.
She is helpful.
The sun makes me joyful.



YOUNG AUTHORS

A NEW LEAF TURNED

Kavya Pothapragada 8th Grade

I hopped off of the train, relieved to escape a fitful night's sleep. Immediately, the ferociously pungent odour of manure and the muddy paddy fields reached my nose. I wrinkled it and occupied myself with searching for Anne. I found her and it was all I could do to conceal my utter disgust.

She was wearing a checkered dress in a variety of browns. Her freckled pale face pulled into a smile when she noticed me. Layers and layers of filth were plastered onto her face and caked under her nails, but one could tell that a perfect beauty lay masked beneath, comparable to Aphrodite herself. Her slender nose and thin blood red lips were pulled into an enormous grin. Her auburn curls matched mine and her eyes, filled with all the possible shades of blue, fell over themselves trying to observe every part of me and cherish it forever. I lifted my only piece of luggage, a duffel bag, and braced myself for how I would look in a month.

"Hey George!" Anne greeted me, not at all let down by the fact that I hadn't replied.

"I can carry your bag for you!" she offered in a singsong voice, her eyes glistening like the ocean.

"It's okay," I replied, doubtful. I wondered if she would have been able to lift it with her petite frame and bare feet. I also didn't want to get my bag dirty because of her grime.

We walked to her farm about ten kilometers from the station, towards my room. The room was hardly fit for a human being, with its cracking walls and a bundle of hay instead of a bed. I bit my fist to keep from hurting her feelings in my disappointment.

As I watched her flit away, I wondered how a girl, who was sixteen years old like me, could act so childish and vulnerable. I walked back into my room and changed to get ready to help Anne in the farm.

I walked out and noticed Anne busy milking a cow. She beckoned for me to come join her and showed me how to do so.

"Just squeeze and pull the different parts of the udder like this," she demonstrated gracefully.

I tried to copy her but ended up getting milk all over myself and a bad day. I huffed off to my room and slammed the door, which ripped it off of its hinges. I groaned and flopped myself on to the bed of hay. I mulled to myself in self pity, thinking about how such a good looking guy like me, with auburn curls and eyes as green as emeralds, a boy who lived in the city, was stuck milking a COW!

Days passed. I finally got the hang of milking a cow, but I had to wake up at five, which really bugged me. Days soon became weeks and those weeks became a month.

The reason I came to this farm kept haunting me every night, still trying to explain to me that this was not a giant nightmare. Every night it replayed the same scene over and over. Me lying on the couch, with my legs splayed wide and listening to my favorite music. It was so vivid that I even remembered the song I was listening to. My mom walked into the room, livid. "George, how dare you ask me for water, didn't you at least check to see if I was free or not?"



A NEW LEAF TURNED

I obliged with a “Woah, calm down, mom. I didn’t do anything wrong, did I?”

“I was talking to my boss! He was just giving me a new assignment. Okay, fine, forget about that. What happened to thinking about giving your parents a break, huh! You should learn to self sufficient. When you go out into the real world nobody will be waiting at your doorstep eager to help you out, okay? You do know that you’re not the only one getting older, so are me and your dad! So quit being a couch potato and be a bit useful.”

Mom sometimes had these weird mood swings where she’d randomly just erupt into shouting and lecturing me for something that wasn’t my fault. I could see that her strings were pulled tight.

“Maybe it’s just one of your mood swings, the ones you get randomly.” I realized my mistake too late.

“Mood swings?” she bellowed, her face mottled red with rage, “Mood swings? This has been going on for too long. You are just growing into a useless sack of meat that takes up space and all your food as well. You know Anne? She works all day long without thinking about her free time and when she can take a break. For all I know she probably doesn’t even have a phone. Maybe she could teach you a thing or two.”

That night at the dinner table, my mom narrated the entire scenario to my father.

They both came to the decision that they would send me to Anne for the summer vacation and “become a man”.

The astonishing thing though, was that they had successfully managed to ignore me the entire time they were discussing their plans. Sadly, the next thing I knew was that I ended up in this unsightly garbage heap for the rest of my summer vacation.

I woke up shocked to find my face wet and Anne hovering over me with a concerned stare.

“Are you okay?” she asked placing the oil lamp aside.

“Yeah,” I answered, surprised to hear my voice so brittle, “I just missed home so much.”

“Okay fine.” She frowned and settled down next to me. “You know, sometimes I miss my parents too. I had an argument and I moved out, but I was too poor to get a job.” She kept her eyes downcast reliving the nightmare.

“Hey, hey,” I comforted her softly, “You know, you’re always welcome to come visit us, I mean, you don’t have to worry about being dirty, just look at me.”

She laughed softly, “I’d love to.”

I smiled. I had finally found happiness in a useless grimy farm that had become my new home for a month.



The End



YOUNG AUTHORS

NOTRE AND DAMIS: ADVENTURE TO DEATH

Ashwin, 5D

“Yeah, man!” yelled Notre. “Please be quiet. I got to win so stop blabbering,” Damis, Notre’s elder brother, ordered. Both of them, along with their family, lived in apartment Manual Motors, Avenue 29 in Manhattan.

Their parents were both mechanics who fixed vehicles as a job and made machines as a hobby. Because of their good work, they got a free flat in Manual Motors.

Their two kids, Notre and Damis, were playing the video game ‘Fix the Dude!’ while the parents were out. “Hey, Notre! Do you want to play the Death man level?” Damis asked. “Bet you!” replied Notre. As they played, slowly night fell. At 9 o’clock, their parents had come home but they didn’t notice.

“Hey kids. How was your time while we were gone?” asked Mr. Minstriter. “Huh? Oh. It was good despite the fact that we locked Ms. Penselvania in the refrigerator.

“Wha-?!” screamed Mrs. Minstriter. She wasn’t able to complete the sentence as the windows flew open and a gush of wind stormed inside. The wind took Mr. and Mrs. Minstriter away.

“Mom! Dad!” Notre cried. Then they heard an unknown voice. Suddenly a man appeared in front of them. “Hello kids,” he said, “Don’t whine. You will find your parents inside your computer. Here, use this.” He handed the children a hard drive, and vanished into thin air.

“Should we do it?” asked Damis. “I-I t-think s-s-so.” Notre stammered.

Suddenly, they got sucked into the hard drive with such force that even an elephant would be powerless against it.

Notre and Damis fell with a large thud. Some leaves near them withered and died for no reason. “Stay alert, okay?” Damis warned.

“I got that part. What I don’t know is what the thing running past us and killing the leaves is.” Notre answered. He was right. There was a creature around. It suddenly ran past them, faster than a heartbeat.

“Hey grab that,” Notre told Damis. Resting next to him was a sword, made out of crystal, gleaming.

As he grabbed it, two blood red eyes glared at him from the dark clearing. As it stepped forward both of them gasped. It had clear bright teeth, which could easily make people go blind. It looked like a wolf but much larger. The fur was so dark that it almost camouflaged in the dark.



NOTRE AND DAMIS: ADVENTURE TO DEATH

“We are totally doomed,” Damis said. “Agreed.” Notre whimpered with him.

Somehow, two seconds later, the sword in Damis’s hand reacted. Flish, flick, flash. The wolf got blinded and roared. He scratched Notre. Notre shrieked. “You have got to be kidding me!” yelled Notre. Then Damis and the wolf started a fight. Even though the wolf was blind it could still fight using its smell.

“Come on Wolfie!” Damis teased. He cut through the wolf’s hide with the sword and brought out its flesh. “Ahh. Free at last. Oh wait! Notre!” Damis panicked as he ran over to his little brother. The cut was not deep but Notre was shaking his head wildly.

“Aha!” said the same voice. “You’ve accomplished your mission boys.” A face appeared out of the darkness. It was so ugly Notre forgot his pain and almost threw up. Above him on a catwalk, hung on ropes, were their parents. They wore the same clothes as before but had dark faces which Damis guessed were smeared with dust and ash.

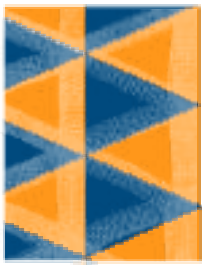
“Let them go you ugly-” Notre hesitated. He didn’t know exactly what the giant was. “Call me Hostame. If you are wondering why you are here it is because you played my old game. To free yourself you have to fight me.” said the giant. Damis wanted to refuse but he got the courage and said, “Okay, pinhead.”

“You will regret that!” Hostame said angrily.

The battle began. Damis kept slashing but couldn’t cut through Hostame’s armor. The giant kept on summoning fire so Damis kept backing away. But the giant suddenly threw a potion into Damis’s mouth. “Ha! You are going to die!” the giant said. But Damis somehow felt more powerful. He threw his sword at Hostame’s head and the giant staggered back. “No! You should have died!” he cried. Then he fell and died.

“Always pick on the right person,” Notre called out. In a heartbeat they were back home with their parents and everything went back to normal.

The End



FAR-FLUNG COORG TRAVELOGUE

The inviting little town of Coorg, situated in the Eastern part of Karnataka, seemed just the right decision as I exited the highway leading to it.

I soon reached my hotel, Mahindra. The hotel itself was a labyrinth of dizzying pathways and destinations, all of which you would definitely want to visit. Though it had everything that you could do for a holiday, it was terribly relaxing.

A major part of the vacation was a visit to the enormous coffee plantations of Coorg. From the hotel, I took a ride to one of the larger plantations in a mini bus provided by Mahindra, which arranges these trips.

The plantation has 10 acres of ground full of all sorts of plants – coffee, vanilla, pepper and even eucalyptus trees. A factory for

coffee processing is also present near the plantation. As you walk through, a guide will explain the whole coffee production process to you, before a crazy, open-jeep ride up and down the slopes of the plantation, to the owner's house, followed by a free, steaming cup of refreshing coffee.

Apart from this, there is also a booming yet peaceful waterfall, the Apps. There, you have the option of bravely plunging into the river, or watching the falls from a bridge some distance away. Though it can be highly dangerous, the locals call it the 'fluid breeze', in an English translation. They are truly grateful for their town.

There are a million other places to visit, along with perfect plans for vacation,

available at www.coorgtrips.com. Coorg is an amazing place, and I seriously urge you to plan a holiday of a few days, to Coorg.





FAR-FLUNG

SALAR JUNG MUSEUM

TRAVELOGUE

Tharun 3A

The students of grade 3 Manthan School, visited Salar Jung Museum. We witnessed many old and ancient artifacts from the time of the Salar Jungs. The Salar Jungs were Nizam prime ministers and the museum was opened by Salar Jung I. In the Salar Jung Museum we saw many attractions like the Founders Gallery, Arms and Armour



gallery and also the Scott bell which is a must -see where you visit the Salar Jung Museum.

We all also got to see many of the things based on our learning like the Bidri, fabric clothes and many other galleries. Many of us also had favourites like the Arms and Armour gallery, Bronze gallery and Veiled Rebecca.

After we visited some rooms it was time to go back to school. On the way back we had lunch and saw Chaumahal Palace and Osmania General Hospital. When we were in the bus I was already thinking of our next field trips.



FAR-FLUNG

GOA - PERFECTING MY TAN LINE

TRAVELOGUE

Shoaib 9th Grade

The Drive

Don't even ask. Not that I don't like road trips; I love them! As long as there is something worth being called a road. About 400 Km of the 700 Km long journey had speed breakers at just about every 100m, which really ticked me off. Put that with my motion sickness (which shows up only on bumpy or hilly roads), and BOOM-you've got yourself a painful, 13 hours long drive.

Day 1



After checking into Hilton the previous evening, we were too tired to go anywhere, so this morning, we visited Baga Beach, just to look around.





FAR-FLUNG

GOA - PERFECTING MY TAN LINE

TRAVELOGUE

It was slightly unexpected, so I was in jeans. Horrible idea! I'd rolled my jeans up to my knees, and it seemed to do a good job of keeping my clothes dry. Until a wave decided to just rise a little OVER my knees. Let me tell you this-changing into shorts after wearing some wet jeans for about 10 minutes felt like walking into heaven.



Next, we went over to Calungute, using Route 66 (who gets that reference?) We had lunch at a place called "Brittos," as their food was supposed to be amazing. To be honest, the food itself wasn't as expected, but the Goan cuisine is probably meant to be bland in terms of taste. This may be due to the excessive use of coconut in their food, as it is a staple along with rice and fish.

From the left: Fish Xacuti and Prawn Cafreal at Brittos

That evening, we visited Baga Beach again, and night life at the beach is awesome:





FAR-FLUNG

GOA - PERFECTING MY TAN LINE

TRAVELOGUE

Seashells that were washed ashore during high tide are visible during LOW TIDE

My mom and I got ourselves some glow bracelets



Some lighting put up by a shack to decorate the area

Surprisingly, there were no hawkers on the beach that were selling food, as there are usually on the beaches of Mumbai.



The beach looks much better in person than in any picture. There are more than 30 shacks, each serving a variety of food and drinks. Most shacks had tables and chairs placed out on the Beach, while others offered tents. In the morning, these are replaced with beach chairs with umbrellas. We had dinner at "La Shack," which means "The Shack".



FAR-FLUNG

GOA - PERFECTING MY TAN LINE

TRAVELOGUE

Day 2

We headed to the beach to take part in some water sports. My brother and I went jet skiing. That evening, we visited, or at least tried to visit Anjuna Beach. This is probably the world's most inaccessible beach by car. Even Google Maps couldn't help us get anywhere. Eventually, we parked our car and walked up to the beach. We probably got on at the wrong side (was Google Maps conspiring against us?), as it was stinky and empty, covered with weeds. In the distance, we could spot life, but walking on beach sand is tiring, particularly when you have to walk all the way back to your car, so we gave up on that idea.

I still managed to get a few pictures of the beach:





FAR-FLUNG

GOA - PERFECTING MY TAN LINE

TRAVELOGUE

At the end of the day, we visited the Saturday Night Market. The simple way to describe it is- a bunch of tents put up, all selling different things. As you get deeper into the web of stalls, there are steps, and stalls are set up on several landings.

One shop was selling dry reef rocks, crystals and corals





FAR-FLUNG

GOA - PERFECTING MY TAN LINE

TRAVELOGUE

Day 3

This morning, we visited Baga beach to just play, and do nothing else. While my parents and sister relaxed on some beach chairs, my brother and I played with the waves. We also saw some fishermen docking their boat, and it isn't as easy as it sounds. In fact, it took them several minutes to do so. I finally saw the anchor being put to its fullest use. Next, we visited Panaji (Panjim in Portuguese, from which the name originates), the capital of Goa. On the way, we had to go across a bridge over the Mandovi River. In Panaji, we briefly saw the Immaculate Conception Church.



The view from the bridge

Immaculate Conception Church

It was soon time to pack our bags, and we were already planning our next trip to Goa. Ironically, we were so tired, that we wanted to be home in a jiffy.



POETIC MINDS

FOOD

Pavitra Nannapaneni, 3C

Food, oh food, delicious food,
It is so tasty and good.
There are so many types that you might just like.
There is so much food to eat,
There are different food groups, one of them is meat.
In junk there may be fat.
Even animals eat food, such as a cat.
There are carbohydrates in rice.
Cheese is eaten by mice
Food, oh food, yummy food,
It is so tasty and good.



FOOD

Nandini, 3D

Once you eat some food
You will have a good mood :)
It will give you lots of energy
For you to do Biology.
If you don't eat, you will feel glum
And you won't be able to jump
With it you'll have a silly smile
So that you can run a mile!
You will be strong.
Then you will do nothing wrong!
So...eat your food!

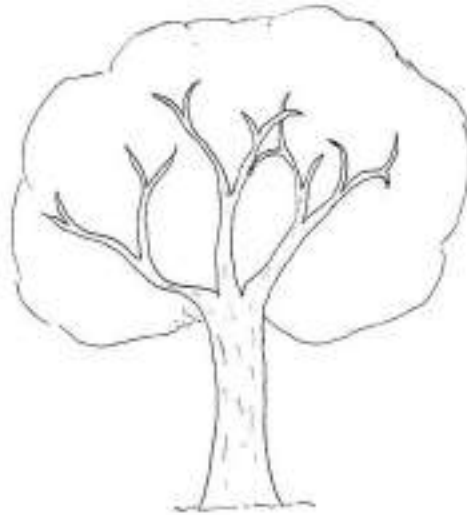


POETIC MINDS

KENNING POEM ON A TREE

Sakash Nair 3A

Oxygen Maker
Big Brancher
Life Saver
Thick Trunker
Water Sucker
Bird Houser
Nutrients Collector
Fruit Giver
Photosynthesis Performer.



SPRING

Neha - 3B

Oh, spring is blooming!
The trees and flowers are growing back,
All the winter gloom
Has thoroughly washed away.
Oh, how I enjoy it,
As the butterfly's wings flap.
As if that's not enough to pay,
The air is so fresh to smell,
That in the grass I almost fell.
The scenery is so nice,
That I have no words to tell!





FIVE SENSES

Five senses I have
Taste, smell, touch, hearing and seeing.
They help me each day
To find my way!
Do I taste ice-cream?
It is so sweet.

I hear someone scream
And a little tweet.
I see the bright blue sky,
All I can say is, “oh, my my my!”
I feel a little tickle
When my eyes open, it was a prickle
I hear someone merrily singing
About on the floor dancing.



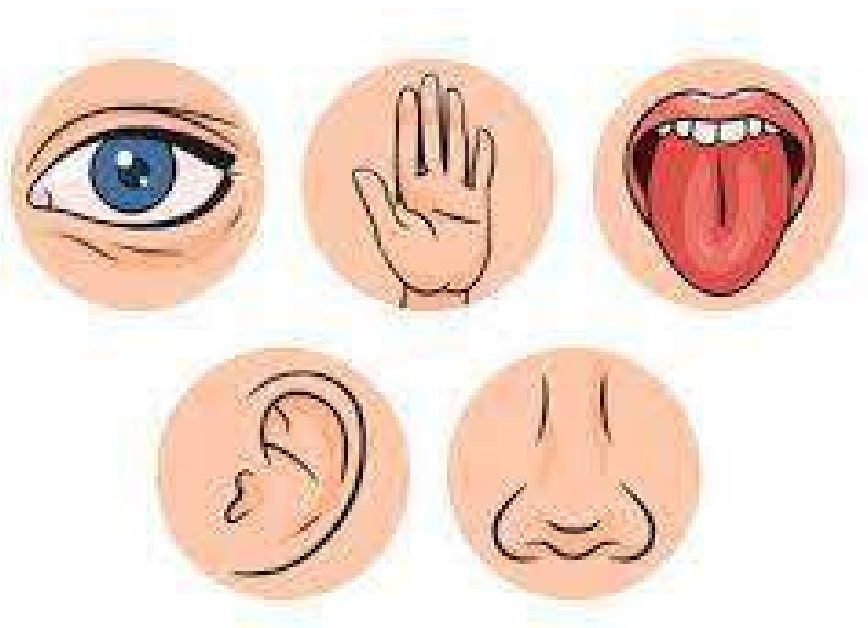


SENSES

Kriti Laasya Talupuri

I have five senses
Which are very helpful to me,
Everyone are having fun,
As you can see!
I can see the sky,

Feel the bunny,
Smell the flowers,
Taste some honey!
I can use my senses,
To explore around,
To feel very proud,
To see if some treasure
Could be found!





YOUNG AUTHORS

HOW DID GIRAFFES GET THEIR LONG NECKS?

Atreyee Halder Grade 4C

Once upon a time, there lived a family of giraffes which used to eat normal diet like humans. One day, a professor came to their house and saw some pigs in their yard telling the giraffes to be a little different from the rest of the animals.

Then the professor said to the giraffes, “The foods that you all like to eat come from trees. If you eat them, then you need not bother about the comments made by those smelly servants of yours. So what are you waiting for? Go and eat fresh fruits and vegetables from the trees.”

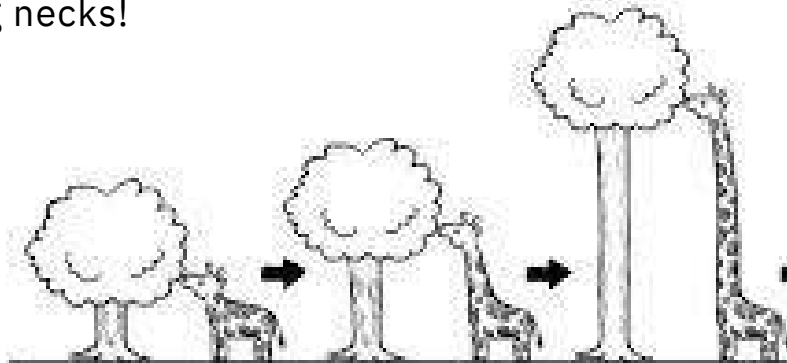
Without any further thoughts, the giraffes ran to the nearest trees and climbed on them. But the trees did not have any fruits or vegetables on them. “That professor lied to us! There aren’t any fruits or vegetables on these trees, except for some wet leaves,” a young giraffe complained.

“Well, it seems to me that these are not actually trees, but are giant broccoli plants and we love to eat them! Since it is hard for us to share the broccolis, each one of us could go to a different plant and can start eating them. I am going to eat this broccoli plant, which is on my right”, said an old giraffe, to the rest of the family, pointing towards a lush grown broccoli plant on his right.

The rest of the giraffes ran to find their own broccoli plants and started eating them. They ate them so quickly that they finished the plants in one gulp. In their hurry to eat quickly, the giraffes forgot to chew the broccolis thoroughly before swallowing them and so the broccolis choked them in their necks.

To get relief from the discomfort, the giraffes decided to rub their necks on the barks of the other trees. They stretched their necks so long to rub them on the barks thoroughly and by the time they were relieved of their choking, their necks had grown so long that they could not come back to their normal size again!

When the giraffe family went back to their farm, the pigs fainted on seeing their strange appearance. Since then, giraffes are believed to have long necks!



The End



YOUNG AUTHORS

THE BLOOD FUNGUS

Navya Kadiyala 5C

It was a cold winter morning for Neverland. All the trees had shed their leaves- all except for Pixie Hollow. Xi-shu, Julia and our youngest character- Sylvia, who had changed her name as she didn't approve of her previous name, were sitting under the Pixie Hollow, reading books.

Every fairy was minding their own business until ZOOM! A dark figure flew overhead and threw Kard powder, a dry poison made from the roots of the Kard plant found at Pixie Hollow.

The figure turned towards Sylvia, cackling. His face was covered in several demonic markings and his teeth were as sharp as daggers. He was a dark fairy. They lived in the

Darklands, which was to the south of Neverland. This was the first dark fairy sighting in 102 years! Within seconds, the dark fairy flew away, never to be seen again.

"A dark fairy..." said a frightened Sylvia.

"He threw some Kard pois-" whispered Julia.

Xi-shu interrupted her.

"Everybody look! Pixie Hollow is decaying!"

There was a sudden gasp. A blood-coloured fungus was causing Pixie Hollow to decay.

The seven sisters arrived at the scene, looking shocked.

"It's the Blood fungus and it's destroying the Pixie Hollow!" cried Magnolia.

Sylvia looked worried. "I know about the blood fungus. We have exactly three hours before it destroys Pixie Hollow. In order to kill the fungus, we need snow, a feather, a rainbow and pixie dust," she said.

Julia had an idea.

"How about this, I get the snow and rainbow. Sylvia gets the pixie dust and Xi-shu gets the feather!"

Sylvia and Xi-shu nodded their heads in agreement and ran in different directions and so did Julia. When Xi-shu reached autumn quarter of Neverland, all the animals were in hibernation, all except for an owl. She threw a stone at the owl and knocked it out cold. Xi-shu then plucked out a tail feather and ran back. Julia, Sylvia and Xi-shu met again at Pixie hollow and there were only five minutes left on the clock. Sylvia came back with a jar and ordered her friends.

"Quick! Throw everything in here now!"

Sylvia, Julia and Xi-shu threw everything into the jar. Sylvia then closed the jar and began shaking it at an amazing speed. She then poured it onto the roots of Pixie hollow.

Pixie Hollow was saved!



The End



YOUNG AUTHORS

THE GAME

Anika, 5D

It was five minutes past midnight. The wind blew as fast as a horse could run. It was a cold, windy night of 15th August, in the streets of London. The rain started tapping on every window of the house.

Knock! Knock! Came a sound that woke up Mrs. Featherfully. She wore her robe over her waist at once and sped downstairs, almost tumbling down every step. She kept a curious look on her face, wondering who it might be at such an odd time.

As soon as she opened the creaking door, there was a flash of lightning but nobody was there. Mrs. Featherfully went out and called out to see if anyone was there. Suddenly, the door closed behind her and a scream was left behind as Mrs. Featherfully disappeared into thin air.

After the incident, the following morning at Mrs. Ben's house, Fable Featherfully was pouring endless tears from her eyes and was whining about her mother's disappearance. Mr. Ben tried to calm Fable down. Just as she stopped crying, Mr. Rough entered the room, dressed in a elegant coat, as usual, and sat down next to Fable. He patiently asked her, "When was the last time you saw or heard her?"

Drying her face, Fable replied, "The last time I heard her was her scream which was slowly fading. I ran down to see what happened but she was not there." She started to weep again. "Hmm..." thought Mr. Rough. Then he asked, "Would you mind taking me to your house to investigate?"

"No, I don't mind at all. Anyways, I would like some company to keep me from crying or doing anything worse."

The very next moment, they were in Fable's house investigating. As the men were investigating, Fable asked if they would have anything to eat or drink but they said they were fine. After some time Mr. Ben decided to question Fable. He asked, "Miss would you care to tell me what you did first in the morning?"





THE GAME

Miss Featherfully sniffed and replied, "Well! First I woke up. Then I washed up, dressed up and came here to meet you all."

"Did your maid come yet?"

"Um... no."

"Okay, so do you mind if we check your room?"

"Not at all!"

One and a half hour later, Mr. Ben came out of the room and whispered something to Mr. Rough, therefore leading him back into Fable's room.

They came out a few minutes later and said, "Miss Fable, you might want to come with us." Saying this, they headed towards the door.

After they opened the door, in front of them was none other than the police themselves shouting at her.

"Miss Fable! You are under arrest for the death of your mother." Fable started stammering. "B-b-but how? How did you get to know?" With a sly smile Mr. Rough replied, "After my partner, Mr. Ben, took a look at your room he found blood marks on your bed and furniture. As soon as he opened one of your drawers, he found a secret parchment saying: 12:05 kill mother secretly and fool the police detectives by saying Ben killed mother because he is my enemy. Another thing that I have noticed is that you were acting so kind to other people except Mr. Ben."

Without much further ado, Fable Featherfully was arrested. At last Mr. Ben spoke. "As my grandfather used to say, when many coincidences pile up they are not just all coincidences." With this dialogue he and Mr. Rough had a good laugh.

This was how Mr. Rough and his partner solved a tricky mystery. A game of crime played by many.



The End



YOUNG AUTHORS

GIVE HER BACK!

Kashish 9A

Tension was filling the air. Suddenly, my study room started to feel so humid and suffocating that I got up and marched to open all the large French windows in the room. Unfortunately, the grand door-lite glass openings failed to force out the warm, tension-filled air. In an urge to escape the claustrophobic feeling, I ran for my garden-facing balcony, in three long strides.

The usually turquoise and lively sky seemed dark and dull, with the sun hiding behind the heavy, dominating clouds. I feared the rain; it felt as if tiny spears were directed towards you – to punish you for all your sins. As if the one above heard me, I noticed several droplets approach the ground with full force – as if determined to attack.

I rushed back in and drew all the navy blue corduroy curtains- making sure of blocking any sight of the rain. I then went over to my exquisite library; picked out ‘the difficulties of being good’ and perched on my leather armchair. After around twenty minutes of distracted reading, I heard a knock on the door.

“May I come in sir?” questioned George, the house helper.

“What may I suppose brought you here?” I interrogated while signaling him to enter.

“Sir, there was a mail for you,” I raised a brow, wondering why it was necessary to bring it separately . “ Um, it has an URGENT stamp on it so I thought that I should take it to you straight away.” He walked forward and placed the letter on my ebony des.

“Thank you Gregory, you may leave,” I said, while scrutinizing the cryptic envelope. George bowed and reorganized the figurines on my coffee table before exiting. Realizing what the letter could be about, small droplets of sweat started to form on my forehead and temples. Very gingerly, I detached the flap from the paper and removed the contents present inside- a letter and the picture of my daughter, Eliza. The letter read-

Dear Mr.Millon,

How do you do? I’m sure that you are aware of your daughter’s disappearance from the past forty-eight hours. Do you? I bet little Miss Millon wouldn’t be happy to know that her father doesn’t care about her life! If you want her back, get me a briefcase full of four million pounds! Definitely, you are very wealthy so it shouldn’t be much of a problem to get me all that money, should it? Meet my men at the abandoned road at Driadon street behind the lake at 8pm sharp. QUICK! or else you’ll lose her...

Yours sincerely,

Paralyzed, I stood, as fear crept over every part of my body. Hastily, I picked up the picture and hugged it to my pounding chest- wishing that, Eliza was here in my arms safe and happy. The image was slightly worn out from the edges. I could notice yellowing of the material. In the image, Eliza was shown gagged in a dark room which was eliminated just sufficiently by a suspended bulb. I hurried to the door.

“Patricia! Come here quickly!” I noted that my voice sounded more wrathful rather than concerned. Moments later, I heard the sound of brisk, high-heels click-clacking on the wooden flooring- covering the distance from the kitchen to my study.



GIVE HER BACK!

“Chris, did you call me?” Patricia asked.

“I just received a letter from-from Lizzy’s kidnapper” I noticed my wife’s perfectly shaped brows raise in a concerned manner. There were tears in her eyes; I could sense her trying to hold them back.

“Lizzy’s kidnappers!! What did the letter say? When can I see my sunshine again?”

“They have demanded for 4 million by today evening, I don’t know what to do,” I handed over the letter along with the worn-out image. My wife swiftly seized the polaroid and scrutinized it until every detail was registered in her brain. She couldn’t hold back her tears anymore. As the tears rolled down her blushed cheeks, she said, “My sunshine! God she – she must me suffering! Chris, pl- please get her back to me! Save her and do whatever they command you to do! But I want her back!”

She sobbed and exited the room, taking the picture with her. I glanced at my wrist watch- it was quarter to seven, I had to make a decision. I felt my cheek, the thoughts of Eliza kissing me everyday before going to school flashed in front of my eyes. I felt moisture on my finger tips and soon realized that I had been crying.

BEEP,BEEP! The digital clock signaled that it was already seven. I knew now that I had to leave for Driadon street as it would take another three-quarters of an hour. I had almost made up my mind when an attractive option hit me! ‘ Instead of taking the money to the kidnappers, with a fair chance of them not returning my Lizzy; I could just go and seek the police’s help’. This idea seemed quite convincing yet I was frightened that they could harm Eliza due to my impetuous actions. I was running out of time and it seemed senseless to ask for Patricia’s views as all she would possibly say was ‘ you can’t take chances and risk our daughter’s life, Christopher!’. Without analyzing much, I grabbed my car keys, a briefcase and left for the bank.

Post finishing the legal documentation and withdrawing the needed amount, I started driving towards my destination. I reached considerably quickly, possibly due to my rash driving. Soon I parked my car, switched on the headlights and boosted the volume of the FM. As soon as the clock tower struck eight, a man dressed as a cop, holding a gun, ran towards me.

“lower you window,” the cop’s voice echoed. I rolled down my window to be unpleasantly greeted by a ‘hands up’.

“Driving license please! May I ask what you are doing here at this time?” The police officer kept on inquiring even after handing in my license.

“Mr. Millon why are you here?” the cop repeated. Thousands of thoughts and possibilities crossed my mind. My heart beating at the speed of the world’s fastest car-possibly faster.

“Sir, I-I-my daughter has been kidnapped. I am here to hand over the money and take her back.”

“Eliza Millon, is she your daughter?” my eyes widened.

“Yes sir. But how do you know about her identity?”

Well I must acknowledge, that you have a very witty daughter. She managed to ring us in and ask for help.” Suddenly, a feeling of pride filled my chest while a wide smile spread across my face.



GIVE HER BACK!

““Don’t be so happy mister Million; we are yet to retrieve her from a nearby factory, as calculated by our specialists,” the cop brought me back to my senses and I stepped out of my car with the money. Suddenly, we heard muffled voices from the bushes. “Act normal Christopher, hand them the money. My team will be ready to follow them after their departure.” I nodded and walked forward, noting the officers disappear.

“Anybody there? I have the money, give Eliza back!” Two men dressed in a black attire approached and snatched the briefcase out of my hand, probably breaking two of my slender fingers. Within seconds, I saw them run- without returning Eliza! I had been tricked! “You can’t just run away! Where is my daughter? You cheaters! Give me my daughter and money back!” I screamed while chasing them; gawkily running through the dense forests, branches poking my back; limbs aching from the exhausting run. I didn’t want to stop but my selfish legs refused to carry me any forward.

“Mr. Millon, follow us,” the cop whispered in my ear, “We got this now!” he reassured while signaling the other officers to follow. After about fifteen minutes of limping, we reached what looked like an abandoned factory of ‘Millon and Co.’ – my company! While we all entered cautiously, several questions buzzed through my brain. ‘How can someone enter this factory? They need the key!’ As soon as we reached the center of the building, I brought my analysis to a halt. Within the blink of an eye, the deafening clamor of gunfire filled the room. The loud cracks and flinching noises were preventing me to understand the situation and search for Eliza. The most I could think at this point was to run and find shield – thus I ran behind a stack of large cardboard boxes. Immediately, I regretted my decision; cardboard wasn’t the best bulletproof material, how was it going to provide guard? Trying to make use of what I had, I shifted a few times to make sure I was completely hidden behind the boxes and peeked through the edge to meet the eyes of- my daughter!

She sat, exhausted, on the same chair as the one in the photograph, struggling to set free. Soon, her eyes met mine and we shared a mental comfort along with tired smiles. I gestured her to maintain clam and remain seated. The firing came to an abrupt end when a police officer walked into the range of the suspended lightbulb dragging with him the kidnapper. They stood facing Eliza asking her for reassurance which she answered with a nod. Following that, I felt waves of anger ripple through each and every cell in my body as I approached the ‘mastermind’ and rashly turned him around by his shoulders- in order to punch his nose.

Seeing who the kidnapper was brought my fist to stop in mid air. Standing in front of me was my younger brother- Augustus Millon.

‘Aug-Augustus?’ I gave him a confused yet threatening look, “officer, I’m pretty sure that he isn’t the one who abducted my daughter. I trust him; I know he can’t do anything this evil.” I denied while turning to the cop, who had an unsatisfied gaze casted towards me.



GIVE HER BACK!

The tremendous confusion was broken with Augustus voice. “Tsk-Tsk. Such a pity, I got caught. Who could even think that I would have done something like this? Happily I would have escaped with all the money.” Completely disturbed, I stared at my transformed brother.

“Why would you do this? What harm have I done to you?” I questioned completely blank about the reason behind his actions.

“Oh my! Brother you have done everything to me! You trust me but I don’t trust you! I never thought you could have done something evil either until you tricked me into stopping the partnership! You were a greedy, selfish elder brother instead of a kind and generous one! All you wanted was money. And all I want is revenge!” He shouted on the top of his voice, with wrath in every word he said. His ocean- like blue eyes darkened with anger and detest, causing the policeman’s grip on his collar to strengthen.

Guilt and fear hit me at the same time as the memory of that day came back to me. “Augustus, I know I had made a huge mistake, I even suffered because of it. Moreover to make up for them I even came back to you- asking you to legally become my partner again. I really did miss your company and realized my wrong doings. Why didn’t you come back?”

“Trust broken once can never be made again brother, remember father’s words?” With this phrase, the officers handcuffed him and dragged him away as he tried to break free. “Mr. Christopher, I believe we will need to have a word with you as well regarding your actions which Mr. Augustus just disclosed. At the police station, 8 am, tomorrow morning.” The officer apprised me and left. Completely submerged in regret, I slumped down next to the boxes when the most beautiful voice came to my ears.

“Daddy!” I looked up to see my daughter run towards me. I got up with the little energy remaining and embraced my daughter into a tight hug. I patted her back as she did the same to mine. She sobbed for a while in the crook of my neck until I tilted her head up and wiped of her tears. She did the same for me as well. Finally after gaining composure, we held hands and walked out.

“Jesus will always be with us Eliza,” I assured her as I pointed above to the sky. We look up to notice several drops fall towards us- the rain. Something had changed in me. I didn’t feel scared of the drops anymore. In fact I felt surprisingly tranquil, imagining the drops to be blessings coming from the one above us.

The End



ESSAYS - SHORT HAIR IS BETTER THAN LONG HAIR

Akhila Class: 4A

I think short hair is better than long hair because short hair is much more manageable. It's easy to wash and when you're spinning or running it doesn't flick your face. You don't have to keep tying it up after taking a bath and when you're playing games with your friends, you don't need to keep fixing it and when you're playing kabaddi, it doesn't get as dirty. You don't sweat around your neck too. Short hair is also easy to fit under shower caps. This is why I think short hair is much better than long hair.

Author description: My name is Anika Divya Jade and I study in grade 4B. I like the colours blue, black, red, violet and lilac. My hobbies are drawing, reading, running, swimming, watching anime (Japanese shows), eating cake (that my mom makes) and sleeping.

Short hair is better than long hair. I think that short hair suits me more than long hair. Even though I have long hair, I support having short hair because it doesn't fall onto my face.

Many people look stylish with short hair. Since I am a girl with long hair, it takes time to tie my hair up; short hair is easier to comb. Sometimes even friends of mine say short hair is better because you don't get much dandruff. You don't have to waste shampoo and it is easier to bathe. You don't have to waste your time by waiting for your mother to comb your hair; you can simply comb it on your own. You just need to tie it up and it doesn't come down unless you remove the clip.



ESSAYS - SHOULD CHILDREN BE GIVEN POCKET MONEY?

Nishitha Jasti 5C

Many parents think that giving pocket money to children is a good thing and can help them in the future, but others think that it is not very good and that it can spoil their children.

Giving pocket money to children can teach them great responsibility. They can learn how to keep it safe and later on save them, which can be very useful when you grow up.

Small children can learn many things from the pocket money they get. They can learn how to count, subtract, regroup and much more. They can learn how to get the exact amount of change when buying something at a store.

However, parents can also have a loss by giving money to their children. Some kids lose things very easily. If these children lose the money, it could be a big loss for the parents.

On the other hand, children can get obsessed with money after getting more money than expected a few times. They can start troubling their parents to get a bigger amount of money or ask for pocket money every day. This can cause much trouble for those busy parents.

Overall, there are parents that want to give their children pocket money and teach them responsibility, but few don't want to take the risk in giving their kids money.



ESSAYS - IS OVERWORKING THE CAUSE OF STRESS AND FORGETFULNESS?

Siddhi

Most of the world's population aspires to work in multinational companies or organisations that pay highly. Once hired, they work hard to achieve higher post and position, but one question which should be addressed is, 'Is overworking the cause of stress and forgetfulness?' Yes, I agree it is the main cause of stress and forgetfulness.

To begin with, people in big firms are fully occupied with work, and in the urge to complete the assignment they work day and night. In other words, overworking. This hazardous step taken by employees can lead to the state of forgetfulness. In extreme scenarios people begin to neglect their families which in return impacts their family life.

In addition, too much work can fatigue a person's mind. The fear of getting fired or being questioned from the employer nudges the worker to extend the work hours which again leads to stress. When a person continues to work under such pressure the outcome will surely be dangerous. Several cases of severe headache-migraine, back pain, body pains, hypertension and in worst case, depression are reported due to extended work hours. Scientists state that a person who works more than needed is vulnerable to extreme distress, mood swings, frustration and in some cases causes chronic mental diseases.

On the contrary, some say that if you overwork then there are high chances of increment in your salary or you could rise to a higher position. After all in today's world money is more desired for. The overworking you do, can be of great use in future. More money can secure you and your family an idyllic lifestyle.

It is ridiculous to secure a lavish life on the cost of health when a peaceful and non-stressful present is possible.

One simply needs to distinguish between 'wants' and 'needs'. Life is more valuable than work and money. What if the person loses his life in the pursuit of rich lifestyle.



In conclusion, overworking is hazardous to life; it causes various kinds of problems like stress, depression and forgetfulness. It snatches the happiness in your life forever and leaves you depressed and yearning for affection of your loved ones. Even though overworking is profitable for future, remember it's dangerous for present. Present is precious, as future always depends on one's present!

Earn healthy, live healthy!



ESSAYS - CAR-JUMP-PARACHUTING

Harshkrit 4B

Inventing a sport is awesome. But most sports are just not extreme enough. Let's take sports to another level and invent...Car-jump-parachuting!!!!You go in a car, drive it in November on a cargo plane. Once it's in the air, drive the car off of it and after a while jump out and deploy the parachute at the last minute. Don't worry if you fail, there's a net which is over a seven foot deep swimming pool to break your fall (the swimming pool's bottom is cushioned) . It should be added to the Olympics as it is hard,exciting and thrilling. All a good Olympics game needs is car-jump-parachuting. It is probably the most extreme sport that is not violent and so far uninvented.





ESSAYS - DEMONETISATION OF 500 AND 1000

NOTES: EXPLAINED!

Shoaib, Grade 9

Gone are the days when you could buy groceries with a couple of ₹500 and ₹1000 notes, when you could pay for anything using these notes, and when some could even use them to store black money. On the night of the 8th of November 2016, Prime Minister Narendra Modi declared that from 12 AM, 9th November 2016, the ₹1000 and ₹500 notes, would cease to be legal tender. And so they did. However, the government has a solution for all those who want to make their usual transactions using cash: the new ₹500 and ₹2000 notes.

Before we get into pros and cons, let's talk about its purpose-a report in 2015 stated that Indian banks needed an immediate infusion of large amounts of cash or they could collapse. Now that everyone is depositing money in their bank accounts due to the demonetisation, the banks got the money that they need to make up for the hundreds of bad loans. Hence, the first purpose was fulfilled. The second purpose was to get rid of black money, and in a short term, it has done that very well--a man from south east India distributed INR 400 crores, and others have burnt bags full of money. However, as declared by RBI, the new notes don't have tracking chips, so when people will gain black money, it will actually be easier to store and handle black money with the higher denomination notes.

The Effects: Pros and Cons

One of the main advantages of the demonetisation is the short term removal of black money. This also means that any illegal activity that uses black money will also be temporarily be demolished. Once the tracking chips will be put into notes, black money can be easily tracked. another advantage is people who will declare their black money will have to pay high taxes on it, meaning that the government will earn loads of revenue. Also, when people deposit money into their bank accounts, the banks will get the money that they needed to keep from going bankrupt, thus keeping the economy stable. Moreover, the demonetisation is a move towards digital India and promotes the usage of plastic money.

On the other hand, this has a darker side; the first one being inconvenience - a lot of it. Although efforts are being made to make the new notes available to everyone, there isn't much of a difference. Every single day, the death toll rises, while some people just manage to get away with fainting while waiting in queues. Not all the ATMs were calibrated to dispense the new notes, causing further inconvenience. There are also news reports mentioning that people are using Jan Dhan accounts to convert black money to white by depositing money in them and later transferring the money into their own accounts. Another disadvantage is that if people have stored their black money in the form of assets, like gold, they won't be affected. Besides, suddenly having to change the notes and reprinting them would have costed the government a lot of money, and it is also believed that it will take about seven months to reprint all the money, which leads several people to think that there was a lack of planning by the government.

However, the government has obviously taken this drastic step based on a cost-benefit analysis, and there must be more than meets the eye. Let us wait for the dust to settle, and look forward to a better India.

PS: This was written in late November, so some details may not match the current situation.



ESSAYS - CHILDREN TEND TO LEARN INSTRUMENTS BETTER THAN ADULTS'.

Dheeraj Rao Grade 5A

These days children get interested in many things and one of them is learning how to play new instruments. But the fact that great interest gives better results can be applied here. So are the beginners actually surpassing the adults?

Instruments are a great way of relieving stress by music. It makes you concentrate and slowly aids you in thinking of a fine solution for problems. It is great for adults as they experience this stressful world.

On the other hand, children just learn them for fun, to impress their friends or relatives. But their fun actually converts their learning into a new skill, a skill where they use all their knowledge to learn and master the instrument.

In contrary, adults have other jobs and responsibilities, such as taking care of the family, their job etc. So learning instruments at that stage might be too much of an effort for them, whereas kids have only a few responsibilities such as learning and having fun. So they have some time in their life for extra activities. This is why children take it a bit more seriously while adults cannot.

If somehow children get interested and take up learning instruments seriously, then there is a better chance for them to be more proficient learners than adults. Children are easily fascinated and if they get a chance to learn the fascinating things, such as instruments, the outcome of the learning can turn into interest and they can even surpass others' predictions or hopes for them.

While adults have already seen much of the world and could hardly be fascinated, the amount of interest they show is way low when compared with that of the children.

The outcome of all these points and arguments can be that with the interest and the will to learn instruments, children can surpass the experienced and possess the credit of being better learners at instruments than adults.





ESSAYS -THE APPALLING TRUTH OF THE K-POP WORLD

Following the recent release of K-Pop Idol Group BTS's full length album, Wings, and the international success of their title song Blood, Sweat and Tears, the K-Pop craze has taken hold of millions of people across the globe. K-Pop fans know everything about their favourite idol or idol group- their likes, dislikes, birthdays, personalities, and nicknames - but do they know what kind of conditions they work under? Do they know of the inhumane way in which the idols are treated by their own entertainment company? No.

Every year, the K-Pop Idol Factory produces new flawless, dancing, singing, rapping machines ready to be packaged in smiley face wrapping paper and delivered to your nearest electronic device with a disclaimer, 'No human beings have been harmed in the making of this machine'. We blindly believe this disclaimer, conveniently ignoring the smaller line at the bottom, 'Idols are not human beings.' If we are aware of the plight of numerous hungry children in Somalia, why not the plight of celebrities we quite literally worship?

We are all living under the assumption that slavery has been abolished in most parts of the world, but I'm sure it will come as a shock to know that your favourite K-Pop idols are the victims of slavery in one of its more imperceptible forms. Over the past decade, there have been numerous lawsuits filed against popular entertainment companies by the idols that work under them. A term that makes its appearance in all of these lawsuits is "slave contract". Due to these cases, some of the clauses in these highly confidential 'slave contracts' between an idol and an entertainment company, have been brought to light.

One of the more popular cases is that of Han Geng, a member of the successful idol group, Super Junior, who was working under SM Entertainment, a company known best for the number of lawsuits filed against it. Han Geng filed his lawsuit against SM, asking them to free him from his contract. An article published in 2009, stating the reasons for his departure from the company says:

'The contract had provisions in SM Entertainment's favour, the 13-year contract length was unlawful, it would take an unfair sum of money to end the contract, he was not allowed to request to revise his contract, he was forced to do things that were not in his contract, he was forced to do things against his will, he was fined if he disobeyed the company, missed any events or was late, and there was unfair profit distribution. Along with this, it was disclosed that because of SM Entertainment's refusal to give him a day off in over two years, he had developed gastritis and kidney disease.'

Furthermore, he revealed that he had only been given 4,000 yuan after his first year of performing. Imagine having to work so hard, putting your own health on the line, just to be paid such a meagre sum at the end of the year, which is barely enough to take care of your own basic necessities, let alone that of your family.

K-Pop Idols are picked up by talent scouts at the young age of 13-14. The guardians of these children are then made to sign a trainee contract with the company, that, again, is no better than any full length contract. They are placed under rigorous schedules in which the words 'rest' and 'sleep' rarely make their appearance, their hours filled with dancing, singing, and variety show training. The horrifying working conditions of trainees and full blown idols, is a violation of Articles 23, 24, and 25 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights that set out the rights of those under employment.

Trainee contracts, are, in fact, much worse than regular contracts, as trainees are unsure of whether they will ever really debut. If the company decides that they are not good enough, they are released from their trainee contract. Usually, when the trainees are abandoned, they have already wasted their formative middle and high school years, and are left with no clear future. Trainees are sometimes required to sell their bodies to influential people at clubs, just so that they may get ahead in the industry.



ESSAYS -THE APPALLING TRUTH OF THE K-POP WORLD

Perhaps the most controversial clause of the 'slave contract' is the dating ban. I say controversial, and not wrong because the reasons for this restriction, as put forward by entertainment companies, actually seem to be quite reasonable. I'm sure every single time one of your favourite Western singers is rumoured to have a girlfriend or boyfriend, you do feel a pang of jealousy no matter how supportive of a fan you are. Korean companies rightfully claim that allowing the idols to date may spoil the 'always available' image they portray to the fans, destroying their fans' fantasies, and thus, dealing a huge blow to their popularity. Another reason stated is that the other person involved in the relationship is often subjected to intense hatred from fans of the idol group.

On the other hand, however, idols we sometime forget, are also human beings and deserve the freedom to be involved in relationship like any other mature adults in their 20s. Minami Minegishi, a core member of Japanese group AKB48, had something quite similar to say in her YouTube video when she was demoted to the status of trainee after spending a night at the house of a boy group member. In her YouTube video, she sported a shaved head, pitifully crying and apologising for her 'thoughtless deed of being a normal 20 year old'.

In the western world, fans are the people who support your career and inspire you to work harder. However, in the K-Pop industry, some fans take their obsession to new heights. Sasaeng fans, as they are known in Korea, are the fans that dedicate their entire lives to stalking their preferred idol group. Some even drop out of school and sell themselves into prostitution just so that they can hire cabs to constantly follow their favourite idol. They have been known to hack into cameras, break into their idol's apartments, and check their mobiles to see if they have been in frequent contact with any girl. Some of their actions are too horrific to put in words.

As if that wasn't enough, idols deal with the antics of anti fans as well, who in some cases resort to violent methods to stop the career of their hated idol. In 1999 Gan Mi -Yeon from Baby VOX received a letter filled with razor blades and hate mail with photos of her with her eyes put out. In 2000. Yoon Kye-Sang from G.O.D. had his drink adulterated with bleach and laundry chemicals, which unfortunately, his mother consumed. The drink in question landed her in the hospital.

If the same had occurred in the western pop industry, strict actions would have been taken against the fans. Yet, entertainment companies backing these idols have turned a blind eye to all of this, refusing to sue the wrongdoers for violating Article 12 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, instead requesting idols to put up with their crazy fans, Is this fair? Why must K-Pop idols have to put up with this encroachment into their privacy?

All of these crimes are only those that have been revealed. Who knows what horrendous atrocities are yet to be discovered? Next time, when you watch a K-Pop video or live performance, remember that the idols are usually starved, sleep deprived, and exhausted every time they climb onto stage to perform the dance routine they were forced to sacrifice their sleep for to practice and perfect. Yet, they always appear to be the epitome of energy, enthusiasm, and excitement. Why? It is because they have come on stage to inspire you, their fans, with their music. They work so hard for us, so why don't we do something to improve their lives? Spread awareness about their plight and support them. Only then can you call yourself a true fan.



INSPIRATION CORNER

Ramakrishna Reddy

Head of the Institution

Teacher to Parent Positive reinforcement doesn't work in the long run

Q. My third grade son recently came home in tears saying he didn't want to go to school anymore because he was punished for talking during silent reading. The teacher kept him in from recess. I think this is horrible. It isn't a teacher's job to destroy a child's love for school. Instead of constant punishment for every little infraction, what about using positive reinforcement?

A. He was in tears for having to miss recess? Ah, sweet innocence of youth. Let's hope he never gets a really tough consequence. Or a boss. Or a job.

I don't see what the teacher did as either horrible or tear-inducing. My advice would be to have a conversation with your third-grader on the topic of "coping skills." Because if being kept out of recess has destroyed his love for school, I shudder to think what's in store when he gets to algebra.

"Positive reinforcement" is a polarizing topic among teachers. Many of my elementary school colleagues tell me it works very well. I'll take their word for it. But I'll tell you something that doesn't work in middle and high school: positive reinforcement.



INSPIRATION CORNER

I'm not saying it's all bad, of course. Compliments and certain rewards are very good for the spirit. I'm talking specifically about the widespread use of extrinsic rewards as a means of instilling good conduct.

One problem is that the rewards for good behavior can't keep pace with children's changing desires. I remember in first grade being highly motivated to get a colorful little handmade award every week. Can you imagine that kind of thing being a serious inducement for a kid who just got 48 "likes" on his latest Instagram post?

At a certain point, all of our little trinkets, tchotchkes, gewgaws, kickshaws, and surcees just can't match up to the thrill of clipping your friend in the back of the head with a stinger, socializing with the girl next to you during a history lecture, or chillin' in the hallway while everyone else is in class. The "positive reward" would need some serious bank behind it to seduce eighth graders into glorious conformity en masse.

I had an education professor who once told the story of an old man who was annoyed by some teenagers who walked home every day by cutting through his yard and stomping on his grass. They ignored his yelling, so one day he decided to try positive reinforcement in reverse. He offered the kids a dollar for every day they walked across his lawn. The kids were happy to do it, especially since they had already been doing it anyway, and for a month, the man made good on his bargain. One day he suddenly stopped paying them and called the deal off. The kids became so disgusted that they refused to walk on his lawn ever again.



INSPIRATION CORNER

That's what tends to happen to positive reinforcement when extrinsic rewards are removed. The behavior you want to maintain doesn't always stick. It was tied to a reward. Now untethered, it's free to do whatever it wants. If a kid was earning a candy hit for keeping his locker neat, it's likely that his locker will go to rot as soon as the sugar train stops rolling.

And that leads us to a second problem: Schools shouldn't prepare kids for a world that doesn't exist. In real life, citizens aren't rewarded extrinsically for being good citizens. You don't get a bonus check for paying your taxes on time. Cops don't pull you over and hand you a \$50 gift certificate for going the speed limit. Nobody throws you a pizza party for not firebombing your neighbors.

In real life there are many things we do simply because they're the right things to do. Does anyone remember the adage "Virtue is its own reward"? For our children's benefit, we should bring it back into vogue.

As for the recess thing, it's not that every school infraction deserves a punishment. It's that children should learn that actions have consequences. Your son has learned that boys who read when it's time to read have the freedom to go play at recess, and those who want to talk at the wrong time lose that freedom. That's basically how it works in the real world, right?

Are there some people who don't rob banks because they're afraid of losing their freedom? Sure, and I'm okay with that. Ideally, though, people don't rob banks because



INSPIRATION CORNER

it's the wrong thing to do. Most of us are probably in that category. Even if we knew we could "get away with it," we still wouldn't rob banks because it's morally wrong. And that's what we should be teaching our kids.

But do you know anyone who wouldn't rob a bank solely because their name would be entered in a drawing for a free set of Beats by Dre? I don't. But get ready because that may very well be the future if we don't get back to the paired basics of teaching students that virtue is its own reward and that bad actions have bad consequences.

So if it were my child who came home crying that he hated school because he lost recess for talking during reading time, I'd firmly inform him that tomorrow he should stop talking and read. And if he hates school because they took away his recess, he'd better get ready to hate home, too, because if he disobeys the teacher again, there will be consequences here as well.

Now, if you'll excuse me, I have to go pay some kids to get on my lawn.

Jody Stallings has been an award-winning teacher in Charleston since 1992. He has served as Charleston County Teacher of the Year, Walmart Teacher of the Year, and CEA runner-up for National Educator of the Year. He currently teaches English at Moultrie Middle School and is director of the Charleston Teacher Alliance.

CREDITS

Sub Editors:

Chief Editors

*Marcus
Akshaj
Srivardhan*

Editors

*Shreya, Suhaas
Pranavesh, Purvi
Trina, Anusha
Saanya, Lahari
Mahathi, Suhas
Soumya, Marcus
Akshaj, Valli
Rishita, Nikhil
Srivardhan*

Sub Editors

*Sonal, Manogana
Marcela, Ashlyn Joy
Pradyumna Holla, Somansh
Akanksha, Ritika, Mihir*

Teacher Editor:

Priya Saxena

Mentors:

*Shalini Reddy
Ramakrishna Reddy*

Sparsh

**Created and Published by the Students
of the Manthan Sparsh Club**



**Tellapur Village, Ramachandrapuram Mandal,
Sanga Reddy Dist 502 032
Ph: 08455 297919 / 81793 81535
E-mail: info@manthanschool.org
www.manthanschool.org**