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DISTINCT

ISSUE #23/May 2025

Breaking Free from Constant Notifications
Fast Fashion: Latest Trends
The Butterfly Effect: How Small Actions
Create Big Changes





The early history of the school is closely connected with the name of its two great founders Lazaro-Otetelișanu and it was the first boarding school for young ladies in the Romanian Principalities at that time. It was a flourishing historical period for the Romanian education in the capital of Oltenia after the endorsement of the Organic Regulations. The Foundation of this school for "the best education of the noblemen's daughters" was the initiative of the boyard lordache Otetelișanu, "a great patriot who was very fond of the national culture."

In 1833 he built this school not only with his own funds but also with the financial support of the boyard Constantin Lazaro, who donated the private houses inherited from his wife Zoia Pârscoveanca. The school was called "Lazaro-Otetelișanu" Boarding School for Young Ladies.

It was meant to be a typically Western boarding school for young ladies and the students who passed the school entrance exam were supposed to be able to "read and write" in a foreign language. The first headmistresses of the school were mostly foreigners (French, Italian, German): Wilhemina Dahlen, Groulier Gros, Marieta Mazenta.

Along its history, the school changed its names several times:

- ★ According to the Law of Education issued in 1860, the old boarding school became a secondary school with five grades and it was called The Head School for Young Ladies, the first pedagogical school for young ladies from Oltenia.

- ★ The name of the school was changed again in 1883 when it became The Pedagogical Institute for Young Ladies because it aimed to train students to become school teachers.

- ★ Due to Smaranda Celarianu's contribution and intervention, the school was called "Elena Cuza", in honour of the wife of the first ruler who united the Romanian Principalities. After this transformation the school had all the qualities of a high-school with superior grades.

- ★ In September 1928 the school started to function as "Elena Cuza" High-School for Young Ladies. From 1959 until 1966 the public institute was given the name of Secondary School No. 3 and for the first time it became a mixed type of school for girls and boys. Between 1966-1976 the school was called High School No. 3, and between 1977-1989 it was named The Philology-History High School.

- ★ In 1990, it was called "Elena Cuza" High School and from 1998 "Elena Cuza" National College. During its existence, the school has brought its contribution to the education of a great number of citizens, active participants in the social, cultural and economic life of the country. Our school trains students endowed with a real talent for learning foreign languages and it has become a real partner involved in different national and international projects. Taking into account the history of this school, we, today's people, must continue the struggle for the flourishing of this institution to preserve its fame and tradition.

This issue was co-ordinated by teacher CARMEN MALAET, English teacher at "Elena Cuza" National College, Craiova, Dolj, with the real support of our school management: Liviu Cotfasa - school principal, Adina Ursu - assistant principal, Bertoni-Silviu Dragomir - assistant principal, Monica Mitrut - educational counsellor.



Teo Says



Hello, readers!! I'm ecstatic to welcome you once again and present another disteenct edition of our magazine. As I step into my third year as editor-in-chief, I've come to appreciate more deeply just how rewarding this role is. It allows me not only to discover the unity within the diversity of our contributors since each of us dive into different fields of interest based on our personal preferences, but it also reinforces a powerful truth: life, as beautiful and challenging as it is, holds countless layers that we may never fully understand.

Yet, this role has helped me recognize some of those subtle shifts in personal perspectives by reading various pieces about diverse worldviews and experiences while also strengthening my empathy and critical thinking skills as well. Lastly, thank you all for the incredible articles you've submitted. It's truly a joy to be the first to read through the thoughtful and engaging work you've created. I wish you all a DISTEENCT read!

Catalina-Teodora Tecu
Editor-in-Chief



As Deputy Editor of DISTEENCT, I have discovered how powerful student voices can be when given a platform. The role has pushed me to balance creativity with organization and support for others in expressing their ideas. It has been a meaningful experience that has helped me grow both personally and professionally.

Beatrice Constantin
Deputy Editor



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Opinions

DISTEENCT

ISSUE # 23



My High School Experience: A Journey Full of Growth, Challenges and Memories

High school is often described as one of the most transformative periods in a person's life. It's a time of self-discovery, academic challenges, lifelong friendships, and unforgettable memories. For many, it's a rollercoaster ride filled with highs and lows, but ultimately, it shapes who we become later. As we reflect on our high school experience, it's clear that these four years are more than just a stepping stone to adulthood—they're a solid foundation for the future.

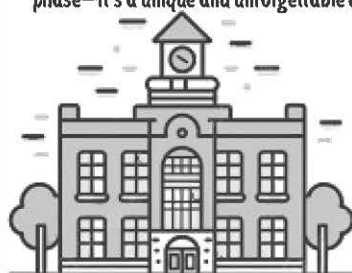
High school is, first and foremost, a place of learning. The academic rigor pushes students to expand their minds and develop critical thinking skills. While the work volume can sometimes feel overwhelming, it also teaches us the importance of time management and perseverance. Whether it's nailing a test, completing a challenging project, or simply surviving an important exam, these small victories remind us of our true potential and prepare us for the demands of college and later life.



Beyond the classroom, high school is a social hub where friendships are consolidated and golden memories are made. It's where we meet people from diverse backgrounds, learn to manage relationships, and discover the value of teamwork. From group projects to sports teams, drama clubs to debate tournaments, extracurricular activities provide a sense of belonging and help us explore our passions and aptitudes. Of course, social dynamics aren't always easy—misunderstandings, disagreements and the occasional drama are part of the experience. But these challenges teach us empathy, communication, and the importance of staying true to ourselves.

High school is a time of immense personal growth. It's during these years that we begin to form our identities, discover our interests, and set goals for the future. We learn to balance academics, extracurriculars, and social lives, all while figuring out who we are and who we want to be. Mistakes are inevitable, but they're also valuable lessons. Whether it's overcoming a fear of public speaking, bouncing back from a failed test, or finding the courage to try something new, high school teaches us to embrace failure as a way to success.

As we prepare to leave high school behind and embark on new adventures, it's important to reflect on how far we've come. The lessons we've learned, the friendships we've built, and the challenges we've overcome have all prepared us for the next chapter of our lives. While the future may seem uncertain, one thing is clear: the high school experience has given us the tools to face it with confidence and courage. So, whether you're a freshman just starting your journey or a senior counting down the days to graduation, remember to embrace every moment. High school is more than just a phase—it's a unique and unforgettable chapter in the story of your life.



Riana Badea,
Co-ordinating teacher: IX G
Ana-Maria Stefanescu

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Bogdan Pirvu and his guitar greet us again

1. How would you describe yourself?

I would describe myself as a warm-hearted and friendly individual who enjoys connecting with others. I have a deep appreciation for music and I am truly passionate about exploring and sharing its beauty with those around me.

2. What motivated you to take up a bilingual English class?

I've always loved English, ever since I was a child. I started out learning English by playing video games and watching videos and movies dubbed in English or using English subtitles.

3. What teacher has motivated you to continue your passion?

I can't choose only one teacher that has helped me pursue my passion! The three teachers who motivated me the most were my Romanian teacher, Cristiana Lungu, my music teacher, Pavel Luminita, and last, but certainly not least, my English teacher, Carmen Malaet. Each of these wonderful people helped me in different but equally important ways in pursuing my dream of becoming a musician!

4. What have been your biggest achievements in the music industry?

My biggest achievements in the music industry are the three concerts I played alongside my band "Eclectic". We played two shows at Promenada Mall and one at Ace Of Spades bar. All of these shows were and still are very special to me and my bandmates. We will never forget them and will be always grateful for the opportunities we were given!

5. What advice would you give to a pupil who wants to be a part of the bilingual class?

The best advice I could give is to pay close attention to what their foreign language teacher communicates. Whether it is strictly about the lessons they are teaching or about day to day life and how to mature and become a better person, it is never a waste of time to communicate and form bonds with your teachers.

6. Do you consider "Elena Cuza" a high school where you can freely express yourself?

Yes, I consider it to be one of the best, if not the best, high school in my hometown of Craiova. I had the opportunity to perform on the school's stage during various festivities, as well as play music for my teachers and classmates. I also had many conversations with my teachers about my passions, no matter what subject they were teaching. Overall, I look back on my time as a student at "Elena Cuza" with great joy, as it was a school that not only allowed me to express myself freely but also actively supported and encouraged me to do so.



An interview taken by Cristiana Mirea and Patricia Prodan

Co-ordinating teacher: Carmen Malaet

Vladimir Brezniceanu greets us from the world of debate



1. How would you describe yourself?

I would describe myself as a rather ambitious person and I do believe I have been persevering in everything I have pursued so far. I would also describe myself as a passionate person. I am truly passionate about some subjects and I devote myself to them.

2. You have been one of the most dedicated members of our school's debate club. How did this activity impact your youth and high-school life?

I think debate has really impacted my life in a positive manner. Ever since I was in high school it has been a great passion of mine and dedicated myself to it. I believe debate has helped me with everything connected to my life: whether I had to take a decision or I had to decide how to balance certain things in my life, I would always go back to debate. The way I would do it in a debate is the way I would do it in my day-to-day life. Debate has helped me a lot in making tough decisions.

3. You have also participated in international competitions. What is it like to communicate with people from so many different places in the world? It's a wonderful experience. I could see a lot of people debating at a national-level competition, but there's something missing there. They don't recognize the true potential of debate and what it looks like on an international scale. For example, when I went to European competitions I had the opportunity to meet people from across Europe and learn how they think and conduct debates in their respective countries. It is mesmerizing to see how different cultures treat the same sport.

4. Did these experiences influence your choice of what you would like to do later in life?

Absolutely! Debate is a sport that involves logic and the art of finding arguments. I believe the most connected field to it is law. It was an obvious choice for me to pursue a career in law. I also believe the people I met throughout my debate journey helped me decide what to do later in life. A lot of people who like debating choose to go to law school. Knowing many law students would facilitate my path through the law faculty and benefit my future career. This was another factor that helped me decide what I wanted to do.

5. What is a piece of advice you would give to today's high-school students?

Achieve greatness! That is the essence of my advice. Find something you really care about and pursue that passion. Do things that make you happy. Something you do just for the sake of it, not for validation, high marks, or any other reason. It's all about the pure pleasure of doing what you truly enjoy!

That would be all. Thank you for your time!
Thank you for inviting me!



An interview taken by Alexandra Danciu

Co-ordinating teacher: Carmen Malaet





RaSky Robotics

"Drivers, pick up your controllers! 3, 2, 1, go!"—wait a second, the matches are over. Even though our 2024 season wrapped up weeks ago, our passion for competition hasn't faded. This year was a major transition for us; our seasoned teammates moved on to new journeys, leaving us to navigate this adventure on our own. As newbies, we stepped up, putting into practice everything they taught us, determined to build the best robot we possibly could.

For those who haven't heard of us yet, allow us to introduce ourselves. While many recognize us from the posters and activities we've organized at school, we go by different names. Some know us as "Team RaSky," while others simply call us "the kids who build robots." But at our core, we're students from "Elena Cuza" National College in Craiova—driven, ambitious, and eager to make a difference in the world through this incredible journey we signed up for without hesitation!



This year was a whirlwind of challenges. Our team, our daily routines, and even the competition itself went through significant changes. We started from scratch, rebuilding our group and welcoming new members into the exciting world of STEM. It wasn't always easy—there were struggles, moments of doubt, and times when it all felt overwhelming. But together, we pushed through, ultimately earning our place in the Timisoara Regional Championship.

One of our greatest achievements this season was passing on the spirit of FTC to a new generation of teammates, strengthening our bonds, and creating unforgettable memories. The countless hours spent in our lab, the experiments, the setbacks, and the triumphs all led to the creation of a robot that truly represents our dedication. Everything we worked for came together beautifully at the Regional Championship in Timisoara. After three thrilling days filled with excitement and one-of-a-kind experiences, our efforts paid off—we won the Motivate 1st Place Award, securing our spot at the National Championship, which is going to be held in Pitesti.



We eagerly anticipate that our new recruits—who demonstrated remarkable dedication and perseverance in earning their place on this team—will uphold the same level of diligence and commitment that defined our season. This journey was anything but a leisurely stroll; it was riddled with formidable challenges that tested our resilience at every turn. Yet, with unwavering determination and a dash of stubborn optimism, we powered through, shaping ourselves into the team we are today. In short, our sights are now firmly set on conquering the National Championship, not just for the glory, but to give everyone a well-deserved reason to be proud of us (and maybe even justify all those late nights spent in the lab)!

Stefan Alexandru Gresita
Co-ordinating teacher:
Carmen Malaet



Breaking Free from Constant Notifications



In today's digital world, constant notifications from emails, social media, and work messages can create hidden stress, negatively impacting mental well-being, productivity, and overall quality of life. These notifications are designed to capture our attention, triggering a dopamine release in the brain, similar to the pleasure we get from eating chocolate or receiving praise. This reward response encourages us to check notifications frequently, but the constant interruptions can be more harmful than helpful.

The phenomenon of "attention residue" explains how these digital distractions affect us. Each time we switch focus to check a notification, part of our attention remains on the previous task, making it harder to concentrate fully on the task at hand. This fragmented attention leads to mental fatigue and a decrease in productivity. Furthermore, frequent interruptions can increase anxiety and stress, especially when the notifications are work-related or urgent. The pressure to respond quickly can make us feel "always on," preventing relaxation and disconnection from our devices.

Research shows that people who frequently check their devices are more likely to experience anxiety, depression, and loneliness. The brain associates notifications with stress, and responding to them reinforces this anxiety. This constant low-level stress builds over time, contributing to emotional distress. Additionally, the expectation of instant responses can create feelings of inadequacy or guilt when we fail to meet these demands, intensifying stress.

Notifications also disrupt productivity. Studies show that it can take up to 25 minutes to regain full focus after an interruption. In the workplace, constant distractions prevent deep work, which requires focused attention for high-quality results. Instead, people often switch between shallow tasks, leaving them feeling mentally drained and unproductive by day's end.

To regain control, individuals can reduce unnecessary notifications by adjusting app settings and using "Do Not Disturb" mode. Setting boundaries for work notifications and scheduling regular digital detoxes can help reduce stress and foster a healthier relationship with technology, allowing us to take control of our digital lives.



Andrei Diaconu
Co-ordinating teacher: Carmen Malaet



A healthy lifestyle



Nowadays, with life going so fast and time running out so quickly, many people forget that it is important to take care of one's health. Rather, we get lost in the routine that we forget about nutrition, exercising, or even sleeping. Choosing the right habits can improve both our physical and mental well-being, giving us energy and a more balanced life.



Nutrition is a key attribute to our health. Many times, quick and unhealthy temptations entice us, but their action on our body can be terrible. A balanced diet based on natural foods provides us with the energy needed to face daily challenges. One should not miss fresh fruits and vegetables, quality proteins, and healthy fats in their nutrition. Hydration also plays an important role in the correct working of the body.

Besides nutrition, another very important pillar of healthy living is exercise. The gym, daily walks, light running, dancing, or any form of exercise contributes to better health. An active lifestyle improves physical condition and makes us feel well.



Another very important, but usually overlooked, aspect is sleep. People believe that the night rest might be covered just for a couple of hours, but actually, the deficiency in sleep lowers one's ability both physically and mentally. The regular patterns of at least 7-9 hour sleeping every night would help the individual maintain himself/herself energetic, more focused, and better balanced.

And of course, a healthy lifestyle is incomplete without taking care of one's mental health. All the stress, worries, and hustle-bustle of daily life weaken our body. One needs to find time for relaxation, hobbies, and spending time with loved ones. A serene and placid mind begets a healthy body.

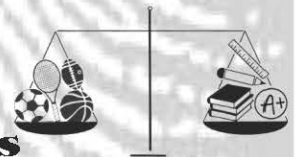


Health is not a destination, but it is a way to live. The balance and care of our own body will provide us with an active, energetic, and more fulfilling life.



Denis Robert Tone
Co-ordinating teacher:
Carmen Malaet

Sports and Education: A Vital Balance for Success



The connection between sports and education has long been a topic of discussion. While some see them as separate aspects of life, experts increasingly highlight the benefits of combining physical strength with academic learning. Sports not only improve physical health but also play a significant role in enhancing cognitive abilities, discipline, and overall well-being.

The human brain thrives on movement. Studies show that regular physical activity stimulates blood circulation, ensuring a better supply of oxygen and nutrients to the brain. This process enhances concentration, memory, and problem-solving skills. Students who engage in sports tend to have better time management skills, as balancing training sessions with schoolwork teaches them discipline and responsibility. Additionally, physical exercise reduces stress and anxiety, helping students remain focused and motivated.



There are different perspectives on the role of sports in education. Some believe sports should remain a secondary activity, practiced only for recreation. Others argue that sports are an essential component of a well-rounded education. Team sports such as football, basketball, and volleyball help develop communication skills, leadership, and teamwork. Individual sports like swimming, athletics, or martial arts strengthen perseverance, self-motivation, and resilience—qualities that also contribute to academic success.

Scientific research supports the idea that physical activity improves academic performance. Countries with strong school sports programs often report higher student engagement and success rates. This is because sports teach valuable life skills: goal-setting, strategic thinking, and the ability to cope with failure—lessons that apply both on the field and in the classroom.



In conclusion, sports and education complement each other, shaping individuals who are not only intelligent but also physically and mentally strong. Encouraging students to participate in sports while focusing on their studies leads to a healthier, more balanced, and successful life. By recognizing the importance of this balance, we can create an educational system that fosters both intellectual and physical excellence.

Daria Gabriela Iovanescu
Co-ordinating teacher: **Carmen Malaet**





Technology Ruined Our Childhood

Childhood is one of the most beautiful stages of life, a magical time when everything seems possible and every day is an adventure. For generations who grew up before the explosion of technology, childhood meant playing outside until nightfall, street friendships, falling from trees, and scraped knees. Today, children are growing up in a completely different world, where tablets, phones, and video games have replaced much of real-life interaction. But how did we get here? How has childhood changed so radically? And, more importantly, what effects does this change have on new generations?

Childhood of the Past: A Universe Full of Adventure

If we think about childhood in the '80s, '90s, or even the early 2000s, vivid images come to mind: children playing "Red Rover" in front of the block, riding their bikes until exhaustion, building blanket forts, or exploring forests and rivers.

Childhood games didn't need technology. A jump rope, a deck of playing cards, a ball, or just some chalk to draw hopscotch on the pavement were enough to keep us entertained for hours. Television was a luxury limited to a few hours of cartoons per day, and access to a computer was, for many, almost nonexistent. Instead, social relationships were stronger—children learned to share, argue and make up, work as a team, and resolve conflicts face-to-face.

The Introduction of Technology in Children's Lives

Technology didn't appear suddenly but gradually. The first signs of change came with the arrival of color television and scheduled cartoon broadcasts. Then came computers and video games, which, at first, were just an occasional pastime. By the late '90s and early 2000s, the internet started gaining traction, but children still spent most of their time outside.

The turning point was the rise of smartphones and social media. Today's children no longer need to go outside to interact with friends—everything happens online. From TikTok to YouTube and Instagram, the digital world has become their new playground. In English, this shift is often described as "the digitalization of childhood."



The Effects of Digitalizing Childhood

This transformation of childhood has both advantages and disadvantages. On the one hand, access to technology provides children with enormous opportunities for learning, creativity, and global connection. They can discover information in seconds, learn new languages, explore fascinating virtual worlds, and instantly communicate with friends from all over the world.

On the other hand, there are evident negative effects. Sedentary lifestyles are becoming increasingly common, and outdoor play has become rare. Many children develop screen addiction, and real-life social interactions are replaced by messages and emojis. Issues like anxiety, depression, and lack of concentration are becoming more frequent among new generations.



Giulia Bulai

Co-ordinating teacher: Carmen Malaet



How Can We Overcome the Generation Gap?



I think all of us have, at some point, encountered a tense conversation with someone younger or older. Whether we are talking about parents, grandparents, more experienced colleagues or even our own children, differences of opinion are inevitable. Generations have grown up in completely different worlds, and this is reflected in the way we think, work and relate to life. Many times, we hear parents say something like: "Back in my days, things were different!" and we think to answer them "And?" and here that chasm is created and it is difficult to cross. But where do these differences come from and how can we overcome them?

I believe that each generation has been shaped by the major events it has gone through. Our grandparents lived in times when financial security and stability were all that mattered. Our parents caught the technological revolutions and social changes, and we, the younger generations, were born into an age of speed, the Internet and endless opportunities. This makes us see the world differently. For parents and grandparents, the mobile phone is just a means of communication, for us it is an extension of ourselves. More than once we had tense discussions about "being on the phone" and how "back in the day people talked face to face." But did we create the technology? Didn't our parents create it as a manifestation of their own evolution?

In addition, they valued stability - a job for life was the ultimate ideal. We, on the other hand, want flexibility, diverse opportunities and jobs that make us happy, not just to pay our bills. In addition, today's young people want to express themselves freely, fight for social causes and have an impact in society while older generations were used to focusing on family.

All these differences can lead to quite serious conflicts, and if we do not try to understand them, we will move away from each other.

From my own experience, I've realized that the solutions would be listening and that requires a little effort from everyone. If I take the time to listen without judgment, I can better understand why my parents and grandparents think the way they do. And, many times, I discover that they are right and at the same time they start to see my world with different eyes.

Instead of dwelling on what separates us, we can find things that bring us closer. In addition, we must learn to respect those from previous generations because without them we would not be what we are and to understand that all they are trying to do is protect us.

The world evolves, and as I said, each generation is the product of the previous one, therefore we and they must learn to adapt. Besides, sometimes the best way to handle differences is to treat them with a smile.

Finally, generational differences are not necessarily a bad thing and something that cannot be overcome. They give us the chance to learn from each other, to combine the wisdom of the past with the excitement of the present. It's important to listen to and respect each other - that's the only way we can "grow" together.



Viviana Stefania Marin

Coordinating teacher : Carmen Malaet





Parents are too permissive with their children nowadays

It's no surprise that we live in a consumerism-oriented world. The incredibly large number of magazines, websites and adverts greatly influence our beliefs and conduct at every step of the way. With so much to choose from, it is not rarely that we find ourselves in a pickle because of the confusion generated by the multitude of information we are presented with. Although this affects all fields, one of the biggest social demographics that fall victim to those false gurus are parents. The media often talks about the patient, calm manner in which a child has to be approached so as not to inflict traumas that would seriously affect their worldview in the future. This leads to parents feeling constrained and pressured to go through with falling in line with the child's wishes no matter what, even at the cost of their peace of mind and happiness.



Hence, taking into account the stressful lifestyle and the deteriorating world, it's expected that most people struggle to make ends meet. Add to that the new spikes in Internet addiction when it comes to toddlers and you got yourself a worrisome situation. Ever since the pandemic, younger and younger children are joining social media. This wouldn't necessarily be a bad thing as the Internet provides a whole variety of features that could be beneficial to their development such as entertaining games or simple lessons for them to comprehend concepts more easily. However, once the stress from the job appears, the need to wind down kicks in so parents hand their little one an iPad and let them roam free on the Internet for as long as they need a break. It's no wonder kids are so dependent on their little mobiles since they spend almost all their days glued to the screens. This is particularly troubling for psychologists who warn that children are no longer able to read social clues, play outside or make friends as well as for teacher, who are desperately trying to shed light upon the fact that children are experiencing academic challenges due to parental neglect and lack of awareness.



Moreover, the new generation of parents, Millennials, are known to be the spokespeople of treating their offspring with love and care as their belief is that they weren't allowed to decide their own fate back in their youth. Therefore, since parents didn't have freedom, the decision to provide the youth with a countless amount of it appears to even out this balance. However, whereas on paper, this so-called gentle parenting works, many fail to enforce it accordingly in their lives. Even if it this seems like a healthy mindset, respecting your children's boundaries without consider that your sole responsibility is to educate and love that child, not validate every little request they make is simply outrageous. In today's reality, children are misbehaving in stores, schools, parks, throwing tantrums over the littlest things and parents can do little to no damage control. For instance, in the US, young girls are invading Sephora shops, buying all sorts of goods they do not need while also running products worth tens of thousands of dollars and being disrespectful toward both staff and other clients. This just goes to show how this constant validation is actually irresponsible, lax parenting that does not make up for the lack of discipline these kids desperately need.



To rear a child means taking on a whole lot of responsibilities. Food, clothes, toys and school supplies are some of the first things you'd think about/of when talking about bringing up a child. But, despite the need to ensure them a clean and comfortable environment, as a parent, your responsibility is to prepare that child for the real world, where having a meltdown over something won't mean you mother comes to clean up after you and satisfy your needs; your job is to teach them how to be able to handle themselves and the trials and tribulations they will face. Whereas you should take into account your child's feelings and experiences, you must remember that, as the adult, the burden falls on you to distinguish the truth from the lies, the good from the bad. Love and care are not the same as permissiveness and negligence.



Catalina-Teodora Tecu
Co-ordinating teacher: Carmen Malaet





Coldplay in Bucharest: A Night of Music, Magic, and Unforgettable Memories

The Coldplay concert in Bucharest, held at the National Arena in June, was an unforgettable experience. Frontman Chris Martin delivered an incredible performance, captivating fans of all ages—from young children to retirees.

The evening kicked off with an electrifying performance of one of their most popular songs, setting the perfect tone for the night. The setlist was a masterful blend of old and new, with timeless classics like "Fix You" and "Viva La Vida" bringing waves of nostalgia, while unreleased tracks from their latest album brought fresh excitement into the atmosphere. Each song felt like a journey, with the band's passion and artistry shining through every note.

What truly set this concert apart was the breathtaking visual production. The stage design was innovative, featuring synchronized LED wristbands, dazzling lasers, and massive screens displaying animations that complemented each song. The audience was fully engaged, with interactive moments and personalized messages in Romanian adding a special touch to the experience.

Of course, no event is without its challenges. Navigating the traffic and long queues to enter the venue tested the patience of even the most dedicated fans, and the overcrowding at times made movement difficult. However, these minor inconveniences were quickly forgotten the moment Coldplay took the stage. Their energy, enthusiasm, and genuine connection with the audience more than made up for any logistical hiccups.

In a nutshell, the Coldplay concert in Bucharest was one of the best I've ever attended. It was a nearly perfect blend of heartfelt music, breathtaking visuals, and an outstanding performance by the band, all amplified by an enthusiastic crowd. This was truly a once-in-a-lifetime experience, and I highly recommend it to anyone who has the opportunity to see Coldplay live.



Alexandru Chiva Roibu
Co-ordinating teacher:
Carmen Malaet



Interstellar- A Mind-Bending Journey Through Space and Time

'Interstellar' is a brilliant, critically acclaimed masterpiece, set in a near future where the human race is facing extinction. The film stars Matthew McConaughey, Anne Hathaway, Jessica Chastain and Matt Damon, whose outstanding acting, along with Hans Zimmer's astonishing soundtrack and director Christopher Nolan's genius mind, create a breathtaking atmosphere, never before seen in a movie.

Released in 2014, the film follows Cooper, a farmer and retired NASA pilot, and his crew on the journey through a newly discovered wormhole to various planets in the hopes of finding a new habitable one. Besides the physical challenges he faces with each planet they land on, Cooper deals with the loss of his children, especially his daughter Murph, who he had left behind on Earth despite the girl's many protests, promising her he will return. The crew however faces complications with the physics of time and space, making Cooper's promise more and more unlikely but after an unexpected reveal, he reunites with his daughter after time had kept them apart for so long.

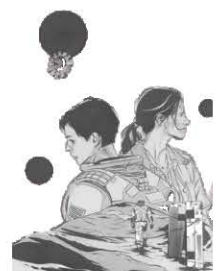
Even with all of the carefully curated special effects and visuals, Matthew McConaughey's acting still remains the star of the show. He flawlessly delivers impactful scenes with so much emotion you can practically feel it through the screen. Even if 'Interstellar' is a sci-fi movie, it portrays human relationships and emotions like no other.

If you are a fan of thought-provoking movies, 'Interstellar' is a must watch. The three-hour-long masterpiece, although slow and a bit boring in the beginning, definitely deserves all of the praise it has gotten and it is, in my opinion, one of the best sci-fi movies ever made and on its way to become a classic in the near future.



Mara Lungu

Co-ordinating teacher: Carmen Malaet





The Genius of Alfred Hitchcock: a teen's perspective

Alfred Hitchcock isn't just any director—he's the master of suspense. His ability to create tension, fear and excitement through camera angles, music and storytelling is what makes his films so legendary. Even today, his influence is everywhere in movies.

I first watched "Psycho" late at night and I was hooked. It wasn't just the shower scene that scared me—it was the slow build-up, the eerie quiet and the feeling that something awful was coming. That's Hitchcock's genius—he makes you feel the fear before anything even happens.



What makes his films stand out is how he tells stories visually. In "The Birds," he builds suspense by showing birds slowly gathering, turning an everyday sight into something terrifying. "Vertigo" plays with colour and camera tricks to show obsession and confusion. He knew exactly how to make us feel what the characters felt.

Hitchcock was also great at making us root for complicated characters. In "Psycho," you almost feel bad for Norman Bates, even though he's terrifying. In "The Birds," the growing tension and unexplained chaos make the characters' fear feel real. His movies make us think about our own fears and actions.

Of course, Hitchcock wasn't perfect. He was known for being controlling, especially toward his actresses. That part of his legacy is troubling but it doesn't erase his impact on film. Directors like Christopher Nolan and David Fincher still take inspiration from him today.

I keep coming back to Hitchcock's movies because they don't just tell stories—they pull you in and make you feel part of them. His work proves that suspense and emotion never go out of style. That's why he's still a legend.



Lucian-Cristian Dobre

Co-ordinating teacher: Gabriela Militaru

Why are we fascinated by apocalyptic scenarios ?

It's strange, isn't it? Every time a new apocalyptic movie comes out, we can't look away. Cities in flames, civilization collapsing, people fighting to survive—and yet, we watch in fascination. But why do we love the idea of the world ending, as long as it's not happening to us?

The truth is, apocalyptic scenarios give us a kind of safe adrenaline. We experience the chaos, but from a distance. It's like watching a massive storm from the safety of our window—we know it's dangerous, but as long as we're not in it, the spectacle is mesmerizing.



Movies and books about the apocalypse do the same thing. They let us imagine what would happen if everything fell apart, without actually putting us at risk.

On top of that, chaos is hypnotic. In everyday life, everything is structured, predictable, full of rules. But in a post-apocalyptic world, none of that matters anymore. It doesn't matter who you were before—only who can survive. And that idea sparks our imagination.

But maybe the most fascinating part is the question we all secretly ask ourselves: Would I survive? Would I be a leader or just another survivor? We put ourselves in the characters' shoes, analyze their choices, and criticize their mistakes—because deep down, we like to believe we would do better.

And yet, in the end, we get up from the couch, turn off the TV, and go back to our peaceful reality. Maybe that's the real pleasure of the apocalypse: living it intensely, but only as spectators.



Laura Elena Virban
Co-ordinating teacher:
Carmen Malaet





Dorian Gray: Oscar Wilde's Pawn for Morality



Can influence so thoroughly reshape an individual that it consumes their very soul, leaving them nothing more than a vessel for the desires and philosophies of those around them? In *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, Oscar Wilde plunges into this philosophical quandary, tracing the tragic journey of Dorian Gray, a young man whose external beauty becomes both his greatest asset and his most destructive curse.

At the start of the novel, the eponymous character is a pristine soul, seemingly unharmed by the world's complexities. It is through Basil Hallward, the artist fascinated by Dorian's flawless beauty, that his journey begins. Basil sees in Dorian not only the tangible materialization of youth, but also the emblem of an idealized and transcendent purity, and he immortalizes this perfection in a portrait, hoping to preserve Dorian's beauty forever. However, it is Lord Henry Wotton, with his bewitching philosophy of hedonism, who ignites Dorian's descent into moral decay. Henry convinces Dorian to embrace a life of aestheticism, arguing that beauty and pleasure are the only virtues worth pursuing, and persuades him to wish that the portrait, rather than his own body, bear the marks of time and sin. As the years pass, Dorian's outward appearance remains untainted by time, while his portrait becomes a grotesque reflection of the corruption eating away at his rotting soul.

Objectively speaking, both Basil Hallward and Lord Henry Wotton vie for control over Dorian Gray, each seeking to shape both his body and his soul. Basil, in his obsession with capturing beauty, reduces the boy to a mere object, an aesthetic marvel. By focusing solely on Dorian's physical appearance, Basil inadvertently robs him of his soul, in this sense being appropriated by art, leaving him a shell with no guiding moral compass. Because of that, Lord Henry, also referred to as Harry, finds him to be the perfect prey for his boundless intellect. Through his carefully constructed rhetoric and bravado, he manipulates "their muse" to prioritize indulgence over integrity, and superficiality over virtue. This is where Dorian transforms into more than a passive recipient of Henry's thoughts and actively becomes a vessel for Henry's soul. Thus, it is arguable that the young adult doesn't have the liberty of agency in the novel, both his outer aspect and his inner morality being dictated by the two main forces of his life.



The artist and the lord can be seen as a physical representation of two classic figures from moral allegories—the angel and the devil on one's shoulders. While Lord Henry relentlessly poisons Dorian with his greedy philosophies, encouraging him to indulge in every fleeting desire and discard any notion of moral restraint, Basil stands as a voice of reason and innocence. Harry delights in the dominance he holds over Dorian's righteous heart, coaxing him into a life of self-indulgence and vanity, often watching with amusement as Dorian succumbs to his teachings. To counterbalance this, Basil acts as the moral anchor, consistently warning Dorian against Henry's corrupting influence and pleading for him to remain true to himself. He represents the voice of purity and idealism, urging the man to embrace a life rooted in goodness, away from Harry's mentorship.

Dorian Gray's sudden murder of Basil Hallward marks the final, irreversible point in his moral decay, a violent repudiation of the last remnants of his humanity as he yields into absolute corruption. This pivotal moment solidifies Basil's role as the ultimate, though failed, saviour of Dorian's virtue, underlining the symbolism of his death at the hands of his own friend. By killing the only person who sought to guide him towards redemption, Dorian not only reveals his utter cruelty, but he also destroys any possibility of salvation.

Time and again, Wilde reminds us through this truly remarkable character that once fallen into spiritual degradation, you can spiral uncontrollably into complete moral disorientation.





Teenkeen on Ink

DISTEENCT

ISSUE # 23

PEOPLE ARE JUST CHAPTERS. NOT THE WHOLE BOOK



In life, people come and go, and every encounter leaves a mark on us. Sometimes, I sit and wonder why certain people enter my life only to leave later, leaving me with the questions that keep echoing in my mind: WHY?, WHY is the person I laughed with the most, the one I felt so comfortable around, now a stranger without me even knowing. Why?

When I was younger, I could hardly grasp this concept, or not at all, yet I still felt the pain. However, at the age I am now, I have realized that "People are just chapters, not the whole book." **THEY ARE JUST CHAPTERS, NOT THE WHOLE BOOK.** Thinking about this has made me see life and people from a different perspective. Some come to teach us how to love ourselves, how to accept who we are, while others come to teach us how to suffer, how to lose. It hurts, I know, but at same time, we all need to become aware of this. No matter how much we try to change something- perhaps if we have done things differently, we still reach the conclusion that this is how it was meant to be and that we all have different paths to follow. With time, we start to understand that no one enters our life without a reason. Every stage of our journey, every person we have met, is a step forward that has shaped who we are today.

Even though, most of the time, many of us ask ourselves these questions: Why? Did I do something wrong?; etc.., perhaps we should ask instead: What was I meant to learn from this person? Whether they treated us well or badly, there was always a lesson.

Over time, we come to realize that not everyone is meant to stay, so we should stop seeing people's departures as losses and start seeing them as lessons. **REMEMBER: A closed chapter does not mean the end of the book, it is a simple story that has ended, making way for a new beginning.**

Izabel Bulai

Co-ordinating teacher: Carmen Malaet

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the next
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The Paradox of Life

*Lost in dreams that light the way,
Invested through each night and day.
Veil of hope and love so bright,
Endless sparks that chase the night.*

*Lasting joy in hearts so free,
Amidst the waves of destiny.
Unfolding stories, soft and true,
Glowing skies in golden hue.
Holding moments, pure and right.*

*Love that whispers, love that stays,
Overcoming darker days.
Vivid echoes, sweet and wild,
Everlasting, soft and mild.*

live
laugh
LOVE

ENJOY
YOUR
LIFE

*Life's a path both steep and wide,
In its twists, we laugh, we cry.
Finding meaning, strong and bright,
Embracing all—our souls take flight*



Adina-Gabriela Mihai
Co-ordinating teacher:
Carmen Malaet

A whisper in the heart



*Beneath the stars, where silence hums,
A melody of love becomes,
A whisper in the heart takes flight,
And fills the dark with tender light.*

*Your voice, a song that lights the air,
A beacon bright beyond compare.
Each word you speak, a tender hue,
That paints my world in shades of you.*



*Your eyes, two realms of earthy brown,
Where golden flecks like stars look down.
In their gaze, I feel the start,
Of boundless love that warms the heart.*

*With every touch, the earth stands still,
A universe bends to our will.
The moments bloom, like petals wide,
And time dissolves when you're beside.*



*You are my dream, not just the one at night,
The one I long to make come true and right.
You are my star, that lights the endless skies,
Even when you're still not in my sight.*

*You are the water, without which I can't
survive,
The stream of hope that keeps my heart
alive.
You are the air, that lifts me when I fall,
The breath of life, my reason for it all.*

*Thank you for soothing a restless mind,
For showing love both true and kind.
Through your embrace, I've been made new,
I found my heart by finding you.*



Elena- Carina Mare
Co-ordinating teacher:
Carmen Malaet





Christmas - a core memory



Christmas is a celebration of joy and faith in divinity, when the freshly baked aroma of gingerbread and the rich flavor of hot chocolate with marshmallows on top and colorful sprinkles fill the houses with warmth and sweetness.

This magical holiday has always been my favorite. Every single Christmas I've spent so far has given me even more reasons to love it, but there is one memory of it from my childhood that I'll cherish my whole life.

I was 6 years old and I was having a Disney Princess phase. I wanted a Rapunzel doll so badly that I started to call my 50 lbs. dog Pascal, which was the name of the chameleon in the movie. Every time I went to sleep, I prayed with my little hands that Santa would offer me the princess doll that I had been craving for weeks on end. I was so determined, that I even wrote my letter to Santa in purple ink.



My parents had a difficult time during that year and they couldn't afford to buy the doll for me. They tried to tell me that Santa might not have the power to bring me the doll and that he had to offer me a cheaper one so he could have enough magic to give presents to all the children in the world, but I couldn't believe that Santa had to compromise the gift only for me. I thought that maybe I wasn't as special as the other kids were and I couldn't understand why I didn't deserve the beloved doll.



On Christmas Eve I was so disappointed in myself that I couldn't even prepare milk and cookies for Santa because I thought he wouldn't like them. I went to bed with a heavy heart, praying to God for one last time that Santa would change his mind. The next morning, I didn't even run to the Christmas tree, thinking that nothing would be waiting for me, but then I saw it. A beautifully wrapped present was sitting under the bright Christmas tree adorned with colorful ornaments and twinkling lights. I tore apart the wrapping paper and there it was, a wonderful Rapunzel doll. Tears of joy were streaming down my rosy cheeks. My mother stood next to the crackling fireplace, watching me peacefully. It was a true Christmas miracle.

Only years later did I realize why she didn't have her black leather winter boots nor her long wool scarf to keep her warm for that season anymore.

Now that I am old enough to appreciate her sacrifice to make me happy, I remember that Christmas from a completely different perspective. This holiday is not only about receiving gifts, but mostly about achieving selfless kindness. The importance of kindness during this time of the year extends beyond material offerings. It infuses our lives with meaning, restoring faith in humanity.

In essence, the magic of Christmas lies in the collective spirit of kindness that unites us all. It is a reminder of the power we hold to make the world a better place.

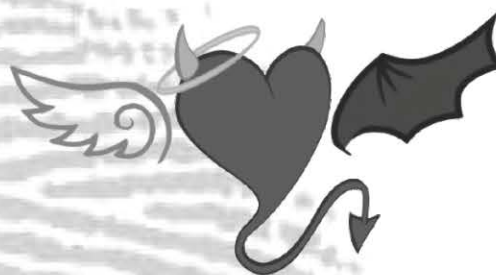


Elena Beatrice Constantina
Co-ordinating teacher: Carmen Malaet





Silent hearts



"She, a praying angel, he a dreaming demon"

Once upon a time, there was a love story that was never told, but that was felt in every corner of the world. A story that began with shy glances and that grew like a wild flower, sprouting in unexpected places. Not many words were said, but their eyes spoke more than anything else. It all started with a joke, a gesture, a glance thrown perhaps by mistake which initiated in each of them a desire to get to know each other more. It was about young people, each with their own story, with their own fears and desires. They met by chance, without knowing that those events were actually signs of a destiny that would consume them every day.

He, with his deep eyes and discreet smile, seemed to carry with him a secret that no one could have understood. She, with an open heart and a contagious smile, seemed to bring light wherever she went, but still she carried a shadow in her soul, a void that she didn't know how to fill. And, even in the middle of a crowded city, in the middle of a crowd of people, when they met by chance, everything seemed to disappear, the whole world became non-existent and only the two of them were the ones who still existed. The whole world faded away, and the only thing that mattered was that look, that brief meeting of their eyes, the connection between the two of them.

They didn't talk much, but they felt something. Maybe it was just a play of words, a coincidence... or a crumb of love, a breeze of hope that touched their hearts in a way that they didn't fully understand. Because love is not always loud or obvious; sometimes, it hides in small things – in comfortable silence, in fleeting smiles, in moments when only the presence of the other brings you peace.

Time passed, and they grew apart. Their paths separated, each continuing their lives at their own pace. The hope of seeing each other at least for a few seconds, to charge their souls with those moments that seemed magical, but yet so impossible was left behind. But neither of them forgot those looks. Each, in their own way, kept that silent love in their souls, a feeling that never faded. It was a love that had not needed promises, big words, dramatic gestures. It was just a sincere, pure love that remained there, in a silent place, in the corner of their hearts.

Their story may never be told out loud, perhaps it will not even be recognized by themselves. But that's the beauty of love stories that remain untold – that they don't need explanations, they don't need a clear ending. They exist only as a memory in the hearts of the two, as a sign that love is not measured in words or grand gestures, but in those simple moments, in those silent looks, that stay with you for a lifetime.

Maybe they have never met again. Maybe each has gone their own way. But somewhere, deep down, they knew that their love – even if it didn't have time to turn into something greater – was real, and that was enough. It was an untold story, but, like any true love story, it was enough to last forever.

Maybe their love story will be continued in another lifetime by two souls, at least as compatible as they were.



Denisa Stoenica
Co-ordinating teacher:
Carmen Malaet





What's life about

**FIND YOUR
PURPOSE!**

To wake up at 6 A.M. every Monday to Friday
To get dressed and go to work 'till Sunday
To kill some time watching TV
And fall asleep and just repeat.

I keep thinking what'd be like
I keep trying not to find out
I want to live, I want to sing
I want to laugh and cry within.

Is that really what you'd like?
Is that what you'd want to live?
To have nothing just to breathe
And exist 'till you can't be.

A smile, a laugh can make your day
And that's enough to stay
That's enough to want to live
Living what you got to be.

Won't you like to make mistakes?
To run free and couldn't care less?
Find yourself someone to love
Find a path where you can get lost.

You can have every diamond and every penny
But nothing compares to the happy ending
The moment you take the last breath
And realize you lived to death.

Have you ever just considered
Living free in just a minute
You know what everyone tells you
Life is short so won't you live it?

I love to love and love to live
To tell my best friend everything
To kiss my lover just one bit
Not knowing if tomorrow I'm still here.

To laugh, to cry, to sing, to fight
To scream and run, to kiss, to lie
To say you lived when your time is up
To be sure you had enough.

That's the beauty of our life
Making mistakes and have a fight
Laughing all about it tomorrow
Not regretting what life has to offer.

For me, life can be tough
And most of you can say it's fair enough
But I can smile and get over it
Knowing I got a reason to live.

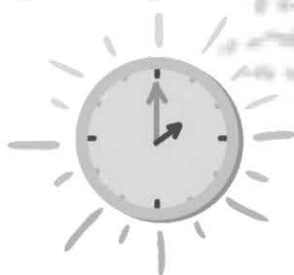
I talk and talk hours on end
And you probably won't understand
Don't expect from you to do
Since I don't understand myself, too.

Realising there was nothing new
Wishing that I'd had only a few
A few moments where I'd be disappointed
All my loved ones just to know it.

It's funny how I explain to you
What's life about since I didn't live to
Know all of there is to know
Know what I should have known.



NEXT STEPS



Don't fear death
Fear that you never start living
Don't fear death
Fear that you got no forgiving.

Daria Vava

Co-ordinating teacher: **IX B**
Eleni Constantinescu



Distorsion

he entered through a door
 he entered through a door
 that wasn't found on any land
 but his.
 he felt his insides shift and turn
 as he kept going along the corridors
 towards a destination unknown to man.
 the map can't help him,
 his screams won't be heard,
 his name will halfway be forgotten.
 whispers and shapes lured him
 and he broke mirrors
 and stumbled upon halls and halls.
it turned into him
 and he turned into an *it*
 where a name didn't belong
 to glitching limbs and nightmare smiles.
 now the door opens again
 and invites someone else inside
 he will feast upon their fears
 and cry tears of joyful lies.
who is evil
 when *he* is kind
what is lying
 when *it* is not.



THE POWER OF IMAGINATION

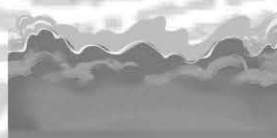


Imagination, the seed of life, the essence of our existence, the very substance of which our world was created. Many choose not to acknowledge that everything around us has once been the product of man's imagination; it is imagination that gave birth to society, language, and everything in between. Ideas are the foundation of all great things, like a tree, blossoming, growing, evolving into something remarkable. By my definition, imagination is power, a power that not enough of us unleash. It is a caged bird that most of us don't dare allow to sing. Why? Because of fear, fear, the killer of all dreams. We fear what might happen when we try to dream, tapping into the unknown and unseen. Our thoughts, once untangled, are like an untamable ocean of unlimited potential and perpetual depth. "He who has no imagination has no wings" - Muhammad Ali. It is a power that lets us soar high above what was thought possible.



Human connections of any kind require imagination; it is what we call empathy, letting us touch a part of someone else's soul, letting their pain become ours. There is no field, no part of our lives that was not touched by imagination. Art, creation in general, is the product of someone's brilliant imagination, and by utilizing this great gift, the very process becomes a reflection of the vastness of the human consciousness, like an endless and untamed ocean and sky, partially clouded, similar to the parts of our mind we have not yet discovered. The glorious potential our imagination once we let it grow and flourish can be compared to a tree, the symbol of life. Sadly, we are still trapped in a cage to which only we have the key, looking out onto a sea of possibilities but fearing what might happen once we take a step forward, letting ourselves plummet into an unknown world of possibilities.

In the vastness of the cosmos, we are but a mere speck of dust, but it is imagination that gives us purpose, a reason, a why. Imagination is what lights within us a flame, a craving for knowledge and evolution. We imagine and make it reality. Through the power of imagination, I was able to create the life I so desperately desired. I envisioned it, I dreamed of it, letting my fantasies run wild and my mind go places I had never been to. I planned for it, and finally, motivated by all but a tiny dream, I created a life I never thought possible. Dream, for it is the path to liberation; imagine, for it will be your salvation.



Ioana Drighiciu
 Co-ordinating teacher:
 Roxana Udrescu



Anna Crasovan
 Co-ordinating teacher:
 Carmen Malaet

Love beyond loss



At some point, we all lose people we love. Whether they are family members or just someone who once meant a lot to us, their absence leaves a deep wound. For me, the greatest pain was losing my grandmother.

She had been sick for years, too weak to even leave her bed. My family and I always knew there was no real treatment for her illness. We lived with the fear that one day she would be gone. And yet, when it finally happened, I couldn't believe it.

Sometimes, I like to imagine she's still home, in her room, and that I could visit her anytime. I know it's not true, but my heart refuses to accept it. Is it selfish of me to wish she were still here? Maybe. But isn't it selfish, too, that she left me behind? I miss her voice, her hugs, her advice—everything.

*Always
& forever*

She was the matchmaker of the family—she always knew who was meant for whom. Like with Roxi and Cristofer—she believed in their love from the moment they met in Vienna. And she was right. They got married in November. I wish she could have been there, but deep down, I know she couldn't have travelled so far. Maybe it would have hurt her even more to watch the wedding from a tiny phone screen, knowing she wasn't strong enough to be present.

Like I said she had this special gift—she could always see who was the right person for everyone.

If someone asks me if I have regrets, I usually say, "I wouldn't change a thing." But that's not true. I wish, more than anything, that she were still here. I wish I could talk to her one last time. I regret not visiting her more when I had the chance. I hope she never noticed how, sometimes, I hesitated to go to her house—not because I didn't want to, but because seeing her in pain was too much to bear. Watching her struggle, so weak that she couldn't even sit up, felt like a punch to the heart. It's terrifying how much an illness can change a person.

And one last thing—I wish she were here to tell me if he's the one for me. I wish I could tell her everything about him, about us. But I know that's impossible. And still, I can't say goodbye. I knew I had to for years, but when the time came, I just couldn't. I still can't. Lying to myself is easier than facing the truth. But there are moments when I can't escape reality—like on my birthday, when I realize that, for the first time, I won't see her name on my phone when it rings.

Saying goodbye is the hardest thing, but we all have to do it. We need to stop holding on to the past and blaming ourselves. Only then can we truly appreciate the present. I will never forget the people I've lost, and I know you won't either. But we must understand that letting go of the pain doesn't mean forgetting the person. Moving forward doesn't mean we stop loving them. We can love someone even when they are gone. And that's the only comforting thing—we will always love the ones we've lost, no matter what.

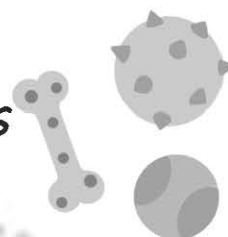


Oana Bianca Negri
Co-ordinating teacher: Carmen Malaet





The importance of house pets



One of the key reasons why individuals love dogs is that they provide companionship. Pets help to reduce loneliness, alleviate stress, and introduce joy into the household. Whether it's a dog, cat, bird, or even a hamster, pets have a unique ability to become part of the family. They offer emotional support, instill a sense of responsibility, and can even enhance our well-being. Over time, the connection between humans and their pets has intensified, transforming them into more than just animals—we consider them to be loyal friends and family members.

Pets help reduce feelings of loneliness, relieve stress, and bring joy into a household. Scientific research has indicated that engaging with pets may lower blood pressure and trigger hormones that enhance mood. Dogs, for instance, motivate their owners to be more active by encouraging walks or outdoor play. Even small pets, like cats or rabbits, offer comfort merely by their presence.



Beyond emotional advantages, pets can impart valuable life lessons, particularly to children. Caring for an animal aids young individuals in understanding responsibility, empathy, and the significance of consistency. Feeding them on time, taking them for strolls, or grooming them regularly necessitates commitment and diligence. These daily activities assist children and even adults in cultivating a sense of accountability and compassion, making them more understanding and caring people.



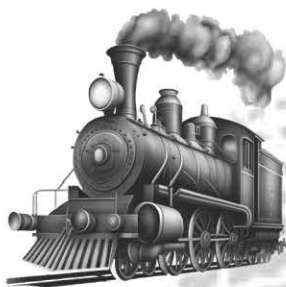
I own two dogs, and they are deeply integrated in my life. My four-year-old husky, Oskar, is beautiful and exceptionally smart. He does possess a strong will, however, which can make him stubborn at times. My second dog, Toby, a ten-year-old Bichon, is the most sociable and affectionate companion. I cherish them both, and they bring me immense joy daily. Whether I am playing fetch with Oskar or relaxing on our sofa with Toby, they always lift my mood and brighten my spirits!

In addition to companionship, pets also offer safety and support. Dogs, in particular, excel at securing homes and notifying their owners of any unusual movements. Other pets are trained to assist people with disabilities as guide dogs or therapy animals. They are intelligent and loyal, which makes them not only pets but also supportive and protective to a great extent.

To sum it all up, domestic animals hold an essential place in our lives as they provide love, companionship, and even security. They require attention and responsibility, but the happiness they bring makes everything worthwhile. Owning a pet is among the most rewarding experiences for anyone willing to invest the time and effort and under no circumstances would I imagine my life without my pets!



Alessandra Bratu
Co-ordinating teacher:
Ana-Maria Stefanescu



A Fateful Encounter

Awarded the 3rd
Prize- „Le Monde
des Langues
Contest- County
Heat



As a young traveller, I had always prided myself on my love for languages. I wasn't fluent in many, but I could hold a conversation in French, German, Russian and even a bit of Mandarin. It was a skill I had honed out of sheer curiosity, not realizing how crucial it would become one fateful evening.

I was on a crowded train heading to Prague. The journey was uneventful until an announcement blared from the loudspeakers. A distressed man stood up, gesturing frantically. His words came in rapid-fire Polish, a language I barely understood. People around him looked confused, they muttered responses, a mix of Czech, Russian, and Hungarian.

Sensing his desperation, I stood and approached him. He explained, in fragmented Polish, that his young daughter had been separated from him at the last station. My patchy understanding kicked in. I switched to Russian, which he partly understood, and calmed him down.

I relayed his plight to a Czech couple nearby, translating their advice back to him. Soon, a German tourist chimed in with information from the station announcements, which I translated into Russian for the father. Together, we formed a plan.

When we reached the next station, there she was, the girl safe and sound, thanks to a coordinated effort across languages.



Relieved, I smiled, ready to bask in gratitude. But after the man hugged his daughter, he turned to me and said—in perfect English—"Thank you. But why didn't you just ask me in English from the start?"

NICOLAE ROMANESCU



Petru Dovan
Co-ordinating teacher:
Carmen Malaet



"Nicolae Romanescu" Park in Craiova has always been a place where I felt incredibly good. I live just a few streets away from it and I have visited it frequently since my childhood for the diversity it has.

You can find in this park almost any kind of activity that may interest you. For example, it has several playgrounds for children, a theatre in open air and some restaurants. One of the restaurants is located in a truly picturesque place! It is placed next to a fairly large lake with clear water. It is surrounded by many tall trees that have been mirrored for years in the calm and soothing water. The lake is crossed by the suspension bridge, a well-known tourist attraction. As soon as you approach the lake, the smell of cotton candy that is sold at the nearby stalls grabs your attention. A beautiful sight is the "Enchanted Castle". It houses a restaurant and a terrace.

Another interesting part of this park is the Zoo. Here, visitors can see a lot of animals that do not live in our country, such as lions. Often, this area is filled with the joyous laughter of children who are eager to see these unusual animals. Bicycle paths are present throughout the park, so many athletes choose this park for training or for walks on the seemingly endless roads. The river leading to the lake also seems endless. During the summer, a walk along the edge of the river with cold and swirling water can take you out of the heated atmosphere of the city.

To cut a long story short, a day spent in this park will never be boring. I think that any person would feel relaxed and well-disposed by its diversity.



Crina- Elena Manafu
Co-ordinating teacher:
Carmen Malaet





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ISSUE # 23

Sylvia Plath and the Romanticization of Struggle: Do We Admire Pain More Than Art?



Sylvia Plath was a poet, novelist, and one of the most influential literary voices of the 20th century. Born in 1932 in Boston, she showcased extraordinary talent from a young age, publishing poetry as a child and later attending Smith College on a scholarship. On the other hand, beneath her academic success, she struggled with depression, a condition that would play a detrimental role in her life, but in her work ethic as well.

Browsing through her brilliant pieces, highlighting the books "The Bell Jar" and "Ariel", we can conclude that they are stable reflections of her personal battles with her own identity. Still, viewing her suffering as something artistic rather than deeply painful is to overlook the reality of mental illness. Struggle is not a beautiful tragedy; it is something that consumes, restrains, and destroys. When we romanticize it, we fail to acknowledge the weight that comes with it, making it seem like a brief inspiration rather than heavy turmoil that affects millions in ways that are far from poetic.

This perspective also includes the risk of overshadowing Plath's actual expertise. She wasn't brilliant because of her pain, she was brilliant despite it. Her poetry was not simply a product of suffering, but of skill, intellect, and a deep general understanding. While her struggles shaped her voice, they do not define the value of her work. Instead of idolizing pain, we should recognize the resilience it takes to create despite it, and ensure that those who suffer are seen, not just as tragic figures, but as people in need of understanding and support.



Marian Georgescu
Co-ordinating teacher:
Carmen Malaet



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Arctic Monkeys: A Journey of Innovation

Formed in Sheffield, England, in 2002, Arctic Monkeys quickly rose to prominence with their unique blend of indie rock, garage rock, and post-punk revival. The band consists of Alex Turner (vocals/guitar), Jamie Cook (guitar), Nick O'Malley (bass), and Matt Helders (drums). They gained attention with their debut album **Whatever People Say I Am, That's What I'm Not** (2006), which became the fastest-selling debut album in UK chart history. Tracks like "I Bet You Look Good on the Dancefloor" and "When the Sun Goes Down" showcased their raw, energetic sound, driven by sharp guitar riffs and witty, observational lyrics about nightlife and youth culture.



Their second album, **Favourite Worst Nightmare** (2007), expanded their sound with faster tempos, more intricate arrangements, and increasingly confident songwriting. The album retained the band's signature energy but added greater complexity and maturity, with tracks like "Brianstorm" and "Teddy Picker" pushing the boundaries of their punk-inspired roots. The album also explored darker, more reflective themes, such as in "505," blending catchy melodies with brooding undertones. This mix of raw aggression and musical depth helped cement their place in the rock scene.

IM GOING
BACK 50s



AM (2013) brought them global fame, blending rock with hip-hop rhythms and R&B grooves on tracks like "Do I Wanna Know?" and "R U Mine?" showcasing their ability to innovate and appeal to a broader audience with slick, polished production. Their 2018 album **Tranquility Base Hotel & Casino** marked another shift, embracing a more experimental, lounge-inspired sound, filled with surreal lyrics and space-age themes.

As they continue to push the boundaries of their sound and redefine what it means to be a modern rock band, their legacy is assured. Whether it's through the gritty energy of their early albums or the smooth sophistication of their more recent work, Arctic Monkeys will undoubtedly continue to shape the future of rock music for years to come.



Anamaria Iancu

Co-ordinating teacher:
Carmen Malaet

Mitski



Mitski Miyawaki, known professionally as Mitski, is a Japanese-American indie rock singer-songwriter born on September 27, 1990. She gained widespread recognition for her emotionally raw lyrics and eclectic musical style. Mitski's music often explores themes of identity, alienation, and longing, drawing from her personal experiences and emotions.

Back in 2014, Mitski released "Bury Me at Makeout Creek," and it was like a breath of fresh air in the indie scene. The raw emotion in her lyrics and the way she poured her heart out in every song just hit differently. Then, fast forward to 2018, and she hits us with "Be the Cowboy" – talk about a game-changer! This album was like a sonic journey through all sorts of emotions, from heartache to empowerment.

But it's not just her music that makes Mitski stand out; it's her live performances too. I'm talking about energy levels through the roof, and you can just feel the passion radiating off her on stage.



She's not afraid to bare her soul in front of thousands of people, and that's what makes her so wonderful. And let's not forget about her message – Mitski is all about embracing who you are and owning it. She's been a vocal advocate for diversity and inclusion in the music industry, and that's something we can all get behind. Mitski is the artist who speaks to your soul. She's a force to be reckoned with, and I can't wait to see what she does next!

Alisia-Mihaela Iorga
Co-ordinating teacher: Carmen Malaet





Small splash,
big wave



The Butterfly Effect: How Small Actions Create Big Changes

Take a moment to reflect about this: every action you have done, every step you have taken has led you to this point. It's a beautiful chaos, isn't it? This theory is what they call "The Butterfly Effect", the idea that even the small actions you do have an effect on your life in ways we can't even imagine. So close your eyes, and realize the power you hold in your hands. Every selection, every moment, adds to the storyline of your existence. Take a moment to contemplate on the beauty of it all.

The term comes from "chaos theory" and suggests that something as small as the flap of a butterfly's wings can set off a chain reaction leading to major events elsewhere, like a storm forming on the other side of the world. While this is a theoretical concept in science, it also applies to real life. Our choices, no matter how minor they seem, can create ripples that shape our future in ways we can't predict.

A small decision can have a big outcome. Think about the little choices you make every day; what to eat, which route to take, who to talk to. They might seem insignificant at the moment, but they can lead to life-changing events. For example, choosing to attend a certain

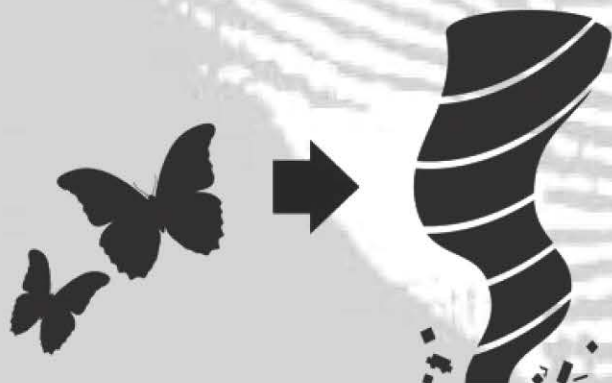
university might introduce you to the person who later becomes your business partner or spouse.

Random encounters can change everything. Many people have stories of meeting someone by pure chance who ended up having a major impact on their lives. A casual conversation at a party could lead to a job offer, or a missed flight might result in a once-in-a-lifetime adventure.

Think about the power of kindness. Even small acts of kindness can create ripple effects. Holding the door open for someone or giving a stranger a compliment might seem like nothing, but it could brighten their day and inspire them to do the same for others. These small moments can spread positivity in ways we'll never fully see.



The Butterfly Effect reminds us that every little thing we do has the potential to shape our future in unexpected ways. While we can't predict where life will take us, we can make choices that increase the chances of good things happening. So, next time before you rush into making a small decision, remember it might just change everything.



Maria Cristiana Radutoiu
Co-ordinating teacher:
Carmen Malaet





Catherine the Great



Alright, buckle up for a whirlwind adventure through history with Catherine the Great, the Tsarina of the 18th century!

Imagine a princess from a minor German principality, born as Sophie Fredericke Auguste in 1729. Little did anyone know, she'd eventually become the longest-ruling female leader of Russia. How? Let's dive into her journey!

Sophie's life took a sharp turn when she was invited to Russia at the age of 14 to marry the future Emperor, Peter III. She converted to Orthodox Christianity, taking the name Catherine. Her marriage to Peter was... well, let's just say it was more of a royal mess than a fairytale romance. When Peter became emperor, Catherine realized Russia needed someone far more competent on the throne. So, in a bold power move, she orchestrated a coup and took the throne herself in 1762.



Catherine's reign was far from boring. She was a total reformer, striving to modernize Russia by improving its administration, economy, and culture. She was an avid reader and a pen-pal to some of the greatest minds of the Enlightenment, including Voltaire and Diderot. Under her rule, Russia expanded its territory significantly, becoming a formidable European power.

But hold up, it's not all politics and war. Catherine had a flair for the arts and culture. She founded schools, supported the arts, and even corresponded with famous philosophers. Her palace, the Winter Palace, was the epitome of grandeur and sophistication, rivaling the best of Europe.



Sure, Catherine had her controversies and power struggles, but her legacy as a powerful and enlightened ruler still stands tall today. So, whether you see her as a cunning power player or a visionary leader, Catherine the Great's story is undeniably fascinating, proving that history can be as riveting as any fantasy tale!

Elena Teodora Nicolae
Co-ordinating teacher: XA
Carmen Malaet

Blondie - a Favourite of All Times



Blondie is an American rock band founded by singer Debbie Harry and guitarist Chris Stein in New York City in 1974. The band's first two albums contained strong elements of punk and new wave. Although successful in the UK and Australia, Blondie was regarded as an underground band in the US until the release of the album "Parallel Lines" in 1978. The band became noted for its eclectic mixture of musical styles, incorporating elements of disco, pop, reggae, funk and early hip hop music.

Harry and Stein first met in a band called The Stilettoes. In 1974 Harry and Stein left the group and tried out various names for their new band. They named it Blondie, after the catcall men often directed at Harry after she bleached her hair blonde.

The single entitled "Heart of Glass" granted them worldwide success in 1979. It was a reworking of a rock and reggae-influenced song that the group had performed since its formation in the mid-1970s, infused with strong elements of disco music.

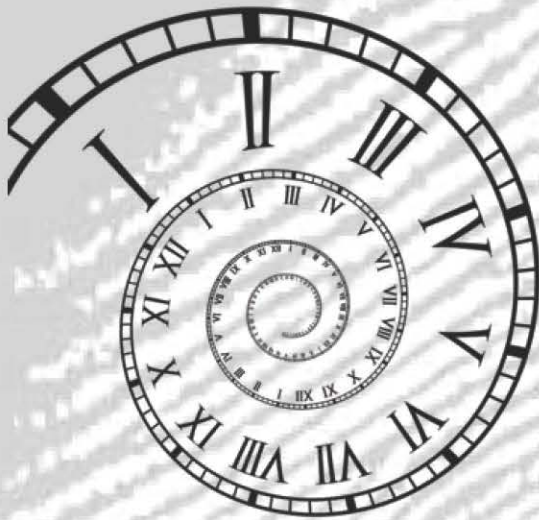
After the recording of their sixth album in 1982, Blondie embarked on a tour in North America. However, by that point, things were already starting to fall apart. With everything going on in their personal lives and Stein being diagnosed with an autoimmune disease, the band broke up.

The band reformed in 1997 and their sixth number one single, "Maria", released in 1999, exactly 20 years after "Heart of Glass". A lot of people have joined and left the band throughout the years and as of now the only ones left from the original formation are Harry, Stein and drummer Clem Burke.

Blondie has adapted to time, space and industry evolution, yet they've always remained indisputably Blondie. The band is known not only for the striking stage persona and vocal performances of Harry, but also for incorporating elements in their work from numerous subgenres of music, reaching from their punk roots to embrace new wave, disco, pop, rap, and reggae.



Sofia Tudor
Co-ordinating teacher:
Ana-Maria Stefanescu



What is Déjà vu?

Have you ever had the feeling that you have been somewhere before, even if it is the first time you have seen that place? Or that you have lived the same action before? However, you cannot associate that event with one that had ready happened to you, but it rather gives you a foggy sensation. This sense was first introduced by Emile Boirac as Déjà vu, a French term which means "already

seen". Even though there isn't a proper explication of how it is manifesting, more than 40 theories have attempted to explain this phenomenon.

One theory which explains this perception is known as dual processing. For instance, think that you are in a café you have never been before. Suddenly, a person walks into the café and you start to analyse: their walk, the way they are dressed, the action of them greeting someone. As all these movements are passing by your eyes, your brain hemispheres process a flurry of information that goes through pathways and is processed into one action in-sync. However, this theory asserts that Déjà vu occurs when there is a slight delay of one of this action in one of these pathways. The difference in arrival time makes the brain believe that the late processed action is a separate event. So, when the delay is played over the recorded moment it gives the sensation that this action had already happened before.



Another known theory is called Hologram which means that the feeling is caused by a confusion of the past. Let's imagine that you quickly observe a random chair, as you examine a certain section of it, a distant memory recalls from deep within your brain. This is because memories are stored in holograms as a result of our brain absorbing the information in sections. In holograms you only need one fragment to see the whole picture. Your brain has associated that chair with one from your past, however instead of remembering it your brain has recalled that memory without identifying it. This leaves you stuck with the familiarity but with no connection of the certain moment, although you have seen that chair, your brain just fails to identify it, leading you to having the feeling that you have been to that place before.

So, these are some of the few theories about Déjà vu that can help us better understand this feeling which two thirds of us have anticipated. It is an often phenomenal that gives us a weird yet appealing sensation of curiosity.



Teodora Garaiman
Co-ordinating teacher: Ana-Maria Stefanescu





Astral Projection: An Exploration of Out-of-Body Experiences



Astral projection, also known as an out-of-body experience (OBE), is a phenomenon in which an individual perceives their consciousness as being separate from their physical body, allowing them to travel through different realms, dimensions, or even distant physical locations. Rooted in ancient spiritual traditions and widely discussed in esoteric literature, astral projection remains a topic of great fascination, skepticism, and scientific inquiry.



ka

The concept of astral projection has been present in various cultures and traditions for centuries. In ancient Egypt, the Ka, or the spirit double, was believed to leave the body and travel independently. Hindu and Buddhist traditions describe similar experiences in their religious texts, particularly in references to meditation and higher states of consciousness.

There are several techniques practitioners use to attempt astral projection. Some of the most commonly reported methods include:

1. The Rope Technique – Imagining climbing a rope while in a deeply relaxed state.
2. The Monroe Technique – Developed by Robert Monroe, this involves inducing deep relaxation, followed by vibrational awareness and an intentional separation of the consciousness from the body.
3. Sleep Paralysis Induction – Utilizing the state between wakefulness and sleep to transition into an out-of-body state.
4. Lucid Dreaming as a Gateway – Transitioning from lucid dreaming into an astral state.

These methods often involve meditation, deep breathing, and concentration to facilitate the separation of consciousness from the body.



Many who claim to have experienced astral projection report sensations of floating, seeing their own body from an external viewpoint, or traveling through different realms. Some accounts describe encounters with spiritual entities, visits to celestial landscapes, or interactions with deceased loved ones. Others describe more structured, physical-like journeys where they explore real-world locations and later confirm details they could not have known otherwise.

Astral projection remains an intriguing and widely debated subject, bridging the realms of spirituality, psychology, and science. While ancient traditions and personal accounts suggest that consciousness can exist beyond the physical body, scientific investigations lean toward psychological and neurological explanations. Whether astral projection is a genuine metaphysical experience or a construct of the human mind, its profound impact on individuals and cultures ensures its place as a subject of enduring interest and mystery.



Radu Nicola

Co-ordinating teacher:
Carmen Malaet





Indian Culture

India is a South Asian country with a culture that seems to be completely unusual for Europeans. Indians have many holidays and at the same time many characteristic rituals.

These are the most beautiful and representative holidays and festivals of India:

Diwali is the Hindu festival of lights, with variations celebrated in other Indian religions. It symbolises the spiritual victory of light over darkness, good over evil, and knowledge over ignorance. Diwali is celebrated during the Hindu lunisolar months- between around mid-September and mid-November. The celebrations generally last five or six days. On Diwali, people light clay lamps outside their houses and make ragnol arrangements. This holiday is as important to Indians as Christmas is to Christians.



Holi celebrates the arrival of spring in India, the end of winter and the blossoming of love. It is also an invocation for a good spring harvest season. It lasts for a day and a night, starting with the full moon evening. It falls around the middle of March in the Gregorian calendar. The colored powder that they apply on their faces and throw at each other is a fun habit that represents the soul of this festival.

Raksha Bandhan is an annual ceremony held in August. Today, sisters of all ages tie a bracelet called rakhi around the wrist of their brothers. In this way, they protect their siblings but also assign them the duty of taking care of them. After getting married, Indian women return to their birth house on the occasion of Raksha Bandhan to officiate the ritual with their brothers.



Makar Sankranti marks the transition of the Sun from the sign of Sagittarius to that of Capricorn. Some people go to sacred lakes and rivers as a ceremony to thank the Sun. This holiday takes place in January and it is an enjoyable festival. On this day, kites are flown and a campfire is organized.



These rituals are still held by Indians who enjoy their interesting and varied culture.

Crina-Elena Manafu
Co-ordinating teacher:
Carmen Malaet



The Stonehenge enigma: A window into an Ancient Civilization



The beauty and mystery of Stonehenge have made it one of the world's most popular and beloved ancient landmarks, with nearly a million people visiting the site each year. Stonehenge in southern England ranks among the world's most iconic archaeological sites and one of its greatest enigmas.

The stone circle on Salisbury Plain still amazes and fascinates people—even after 4,600 years. It was built by ancient Britons who didn't leave any written records. The mystery surrounding the monument has led to many different ideas about its purpose.

Some believe it was a cemetery, a ceremonial site, or even an ancient calendar. Evidence shows that Stonehenge was used for ceremonial purposes between 8000 and 7000 B.C. Stonehenge was the site of 150 or more cremation burials between 3000 and 2300 B.C. and became the largest cemetery in Britain.

Modern discussions about what the monument means mostly fall into two groups: some believe it was a sacred site, while others think it was used as a scientific observatory. Both groups base their ideas on the way the site is connected to the sky, with its alignments to the sun and moon seen as proof of rituals tied to the changing seasons and the summer and winter solstices. On the other hand, alignments with stars suggest that Stonehenge might have been a kind of calendar to figure out dates or to observe and predict things like solar eclipses.

In conclusion, Stonehenge remains one of the world's most fascinating and mysterious ancient monuments. Even after 4,600 years, the enigma surrounding this site continues to spark debates and inspire various theories, from sacred spaces to scientific observatories. Regardless of its true purpose, Stonehenge stands as a symbol of human ingenuity and the deep connection between people and the sky, leaving a lasting impact on our history and culture.

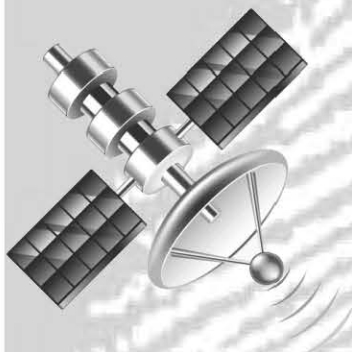


Andreea Bianca Dinulescu
Co-ordinating teacher:
Carmen Malaet





Space exploration: benefits and costs



Space exploration has fascinated humanity for centuries. From early astronomers dreaming about distant planets to the groundbreaking missions of today, the quest to understand the universe has always driven technological and scientific progress. Today, space missions are not only led by governments, but also by private companies like SpaceX, which are making space exploration more accessible.

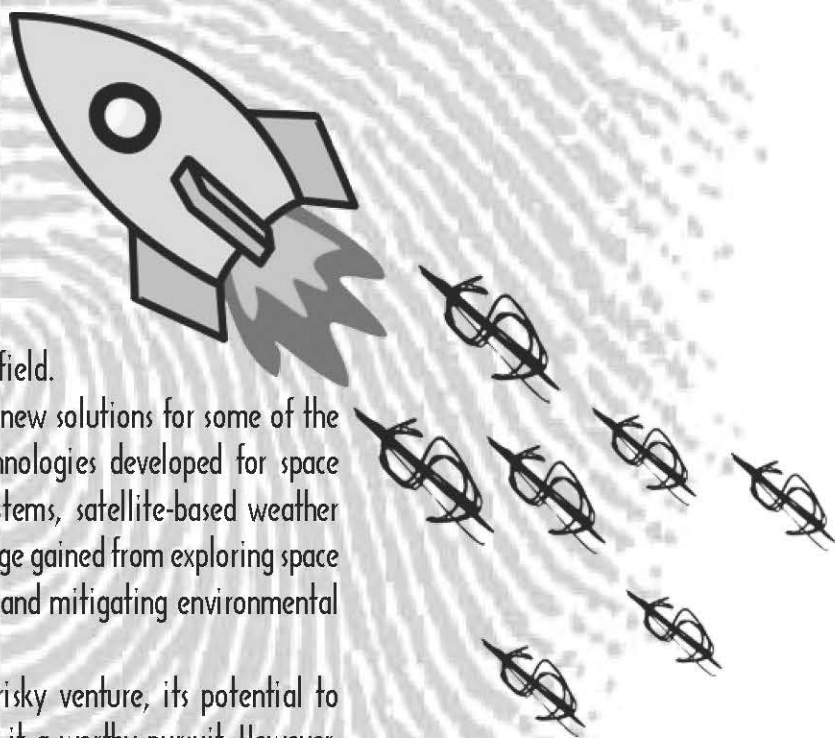
Space exploration has led to numerous technological advancements that benefit our everyday lives. Innovations like GPS, satellite communications, and medical technologies such as improved imaging techniques all have roots in space research. Moreover, as we explore other planets, we could uncover new resources and solutions to help address challenges here on Earth, from energy shortages to climate change.

However, space exploration does come with a hefty price tag. Building spacecraft, launching missions, and training astronauts are expensive endeavors, often costing billions of dollars. With global challenges such as poverty, education, and climate change, many wonder if such resources would be better spent addressing urgent issues right here on Earth.

The journey into space is not without its risks. Space missions are complex and come with a high risk of failure, which can result in financial losses and even loss of life. The setbacks of missions like the Challenger disaster and the recent Artemis program's delays show how fragile and costly space exploration can be. These risks are a constant reminder of the challenges faced by those working in this field.

Despite the risks and expenses, space exploration offers new solutions for some of the biggest problems we face on Earth. For example, technologies developed for space missions have already helped improve solar energy systems, satellite-based weather forecasting, and disaster response strategies. The knowledge gained from exploring space could be applied to creating sustainable energy sources and mitigating environmental damage here at home.

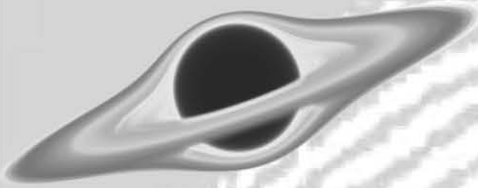
While space exploration continues to be a costly and risky venture, its potential to revolutionize technology and solve global issues makes it a worthy pursuit. However, finding a balance between space missions and addressing Earth's immediate needs is crucial. With careful investment and global collaboration, space exploration could lead to advancements that benefit both humanity and the planet.



Dragos Gabriel Dorobantu

Co-ordinating teacher:
Carmen Malaet





Black Holes: Mysteries of the Universe

Black holes are some of the most fascinating and enigmatic objects in the universe. They are regions of space-time where gravity is so strong that nothing, not even light, can escape from within them. These cosmic structures form when massive stars collapse under gravity, leaving behind a singularity—a point of infinite density where the laws of physics as we know them no longer apply.

A key feature of a black hole is its event horizon, the boundary beyond which nothing can escape. Although we cannot directly observe the interior of a black hole, astronomers use indirect methods, such as detecting the gravitational effects on nearby stars or analyzing the radiation emitted by the accretion disk—matter drawn into the black hole by its immense gravity. Some supermassive black holes, located at the centers of galaxies, can have masses millions or even billions of times greater than the Sun and dramatically influence the evolution of their galaxies.

A groundbreaking discovery occurred in 2019, when astronomers obtained the first image of a black hole in the galaxy M87, using the Event Horizon Telescope. This image confirmed Einstein's theories and provided direct evidence for the existence of these objects. More recently, observations suggest that black holes may have hidden parts, such as wormholes, that could connect distant regions of the universe or even other universes.

Another mystery related to black holes is the information paradox. According to quantum physics, information cannot be destroyed, but general relativity suggests that anything that falls into a black hole is lost forever. A possible solution could come from the theory of quantum gravity, which attempts to unify quantum mechanics and relativity. Some

researchers propose the idea that black holes could emit Hawking radiation, a form of radiation that could allow them to gradually evaporate over time, perhaps revealing some of the universe's best-kept secrets.

As technology advances, the study of black holes can help us better understand the nature of the universe, explore the possibility of interstellar travel through wormholes, and decipher the fundamental mysteries of physical reality.



Alexandru Dobre
Co-ordinating teacher:
Carmen Malaet



The Viking Invasion on Britain



The Viking invasions in England have left a lasting impact on the history and culture of the British Isles. From the late 8th century to the early 11th century, Norse seafarers from Scandinavia raided, settled, and significantly influenced the political and social fabric of England. Their legacy can still be seen today in place names, language, and even legal systems.

EGG HUSBAND WINDOW

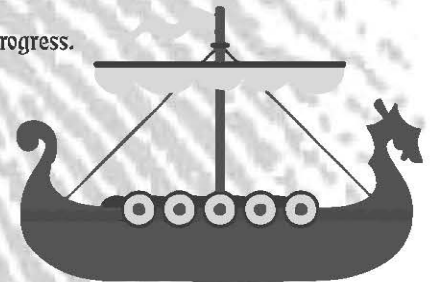
The Viking invasions brought both destruction and innovation. While monasteries and towns were often pillaged, the Vikings also introduced new technologies, trade networks, and cultural practices. They influenced the English language, adding words like "sky," "window," and "knife." Additionally, their legal systems and governance structures had a lasting impact on English society. The blending of Norse and Anglo-Saxon cultures eventually contributed to a more unified England under rulers like Alfred the Great and later, King Cnut.



However, the Viking invasions were not without their costs. The constant warfare and instability caused significant suffering for the local population. Villages were destroyed, and many people were killed or enslaved. The struggle to resist Viking incursions also placed a heavy burden on English kingdoms, both financially and militarily. The need to defend against Viking raids led to the construction of fortifications and the reorganization of armies, which drained resources and shifted priorities.

Despite the challenges, the Viking invasions ultimately contributed to the development of a stronger, more centralized English state. The threat of Viking conquest forced Anglo-Saxon rulers to consolidate power and improve their defenses. This period of conflict and cultural exchange laid the groundwork for the eventual unification of England under a single monarchy.

The Viking invasions of England are a testament to the complex interplay between conflict and progress. While they brought devastation, they also spurred innovation and cultural exchange. The legacy of the Vikings is a reminder of how historical events, even those marked by violence, can shape the course of civilization. By studying this period, we gain a deeper understanding of how societies adapt, evolve, and ultimately thrive in the face of adversity.



Eduard-Eugen Enache
Co-ordinating teacher:
Carmen Malaet

Sharks: Rules of the ocean

Sharks have fascinated humans for centuries, admired for their strength, agility, and ability to adapt. This species plays a crucial role in the evolution of the marine ecosystem. With over 500 species and an existence since the Mesozoic Era, sharks dominated other species and became the largest marine predators. Despite their fearsome reputation, sharks are often misunderstood and face significant threats from human activities.

How does a shark hunt?



Sharks have different techniques for catching their food depending on their species. The great white shark uses ambush techniques, launching powerful attacks from below, taking prey by surprise. The whale shark, the largest fish in the world, is a filter feeder. You may ask "What do you mean filter?", well, these sharks have three rows of very small and fine teeth, swallow large amounts of water which are eliminated and only retain plankton. Most sharks are solitary hunters, but some, such as the lemon shark, exhibit social behaviors and can form loose groups.

Are sharks the bad guys in their relationship with humans?



Well, contrary to popular belief, most sharks do not pose a direct threat to us humans. It has been confirmed that only about 30 species have been involved in incidents with humans. Despite their physical appearance, sharks are often the victims of our actions and curiosities. Fishing for their fins is one of the most destructive practices that humans engage in. The end of this activity is throwing the shark back into the water after its fins have been cut off, eventually causing it to die in excruciating pain.

In conclusion, sharks are some of the oldest living things and have undergone many changes. Despite their fearsome reputation, they are not the ruthless killers often portrayed in the media. Instead, they play a crucial role in maintaining the balance of the ocean.



Andreea-Maria Tudor

Co-ordinating teacher: Carmen Malaet





Yves Saint Laurent : The Designer Who Changed Fashion Forever



Yves Saint Laurent wasn't just a fashion designer - he was revolutionary. Born on August 1, 1936, in Oran, Algeria, he showed a passion for fashion from a young age, designing clothes for his mother and sisters. At 17, he moved to Paris to study at the prestigious Chambre Syndicale de la Haute Couture. His talent quickly caught the eye of Christian Dior, who hired him as an assistant in 1955. Just two years later, after Dior's sudden death, Saint Laurent, only 21 years old, became the head designer of the House of Dior.

His first collection for Dior in 1958 featuring the now iconic Trapeze dress, was a huge success and saved the brand from financial trouble. However, in 1960, he was drafted into the French military during the Algerian War. With the support of his partner, Pierre Berge, Saint Laurent launched his own fashion house in 1961. From there, he redefined women's fashion with bold, timeless designs like Le Smoking tuxedo suit (1966), the Saharan Jacket, and the Mondrian dress. He also pushed for diversity by featuring Black models on the runway-something rare at the time.



After 40 years of shaping the industry, he retired in 2002 and spent his later years in Marrakech, Morocco. He passed away in 2008, but his legacy lives on. More than just a designer, Yves Saint Laurent proved that fashion is about confidence, power, and timeless elegance.

The rise of Kanye West



Maria-Cristina Rosu
Co-ordinating teacher:
Carmen Malaet



Kanye West is one of the most controversial, yet influential, hip-hop artists of our generation. A self-proclaimed genius, he is also the most decorated hip-hop artist of all time. But how did he get here? Let's take a closer look at his rise to fame.

The Producer Who Dreamed Bigger



Kanye's journey began not as a rapper, but as a producer. In the mid-90s, he started producing beats for local Chicago artists, earning his first official credits at just nineteen. His big break came when he produced tracks for Jay-Z, whose 2001 album "The Black Album" was revitalized by Kanye's work. This marked a turning point in Kanye's career.

Overcoming Doubt: The Car Crash That Changed Everything

Despite facing criticism, with many dismissing him as a mere producer, Kanye's life changed dramatically after a car accident left him with a broken jaw. This near-fatal experience fueled his determination to succeed.

"The College Dropout": A Hip-Hop Game Changer

He released his debut album "The College Dropout" in 2004, a groundbreaking project that was both critically acclaimed and commercially successful, peaking at No. 2 on the Billboard 200. What made this album so special was Kanye's departure from the traditional hip-hop "gangster persona". Instead, he focused on personal storytelling and social commentary, reshaping the genre.



Albert Nikolas Pofilan

Co-ordinating teacher: Carmen Malaet





How PTSD Affects a Person's Life: The Struggles and Path to Healing



Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) is a condition that affects many people long after they've experienced a traumatic event. Whether from an accident, military combat, or assault, the effects of trauma can last far beyond the initial event. PTSD doesn't just affect emotions—it influences how a person sees themselves, interacts with others, and handles day-to-day activities.

The Impact of Trauma

Traumatic events create intense fear and helplessness that can remain with a person for years. Flashbacks, nightmares, hypervigilance, and intrusive thoughts are common symptoms, making it difficult for someone with PTSD to feel safe. The memories of trauma remain deeply ingrained, often leading to emotional and physical reactions that affect every part of life.

Psychological and Emotional Effects

PTSD changes how a person feels about themselves and the world. Shame, guilt, and isolation are common, often causing difficulty in forming connections with others. Anxiety and depression may accompany PTSD, making it harder to manage emotions and everyday situations. Trust is often broken, and even small interactions can feel overwhelming.

Physical and Relationship Struggles

PTSD can also affect physical health. Chronic stress, insomnia, and heightened anxiety can take a toll on one's well-being. Relationships often suffer, as it becomes hard to express emotions or maintain healthy connections with loved ones. The cycle of isolation and distress can be difficult to break without support.

The Journey Toward Healing

Healing from PTSD is a process that takes time, but it is possible. Therapy, medication, and mindfulness practices can help manage symptoms and guide a person through the recovery process. Support from friends and family is crucial. Small gestures of kindness, like simply listening, can make a big difference in helping someone move forward.

A Life Beyond PTSD

While PTSD leaves lasting effects, it doesn't define a person's future. With the right support, individuals can learn to cope and rebuild their lives. By understanding PTSD and offering empathy, we can create a supportive environment that helps people heal and regain control over their lives.



Bogdan Costin Dumitrescu

Co-ordinating teacher: X F
Carmen Malaet



BE HAPPY !!



Miscellaneous

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ISSUE #23

THE MAGIC OF MUSICALS

Did you know that musicals have a unique ability to blend storytelling, music, and emotion in ways that can transport us to different worlds, all while keeping our feet tapping? From the fun and quirky to the deeply dramatic, musicals come in a variety of forms, each offering its own charm and appeal.

Ride the Cyclone is one of the most unusual and intriguing musicals of the past decade. Created by the Canadian duo Brooke Maxwell and Jacob Richmond, it follows six teenagers from a small town in Canada who meet tragic fates on a roller coaster. In the afterlife, they are given one last chance to live, but only one of them will succeed. The show combines quirky humor with dark themes, exploring life, death, fate, and the absurdity of human existence. Each character represents a different teen stereotype, but the show delves into their personal struggles, desires, and insecurities in a way that makes them relatable and often heartbreaking.

Heathers takes us into the heart of high school drama with a dark, satirical twist. Based on the 1988 cult classic film, the musical by Kevin Murphy and Laurence O'Keefe reimagines the lives of the popular "Heathers" and the troubled Veronica. In this high school world, the Heathers are the ultimate clique, ruling the social hierarchy with beauty, cruelty, and superficiality. However, when Veronica gets involved with the dangerous new student, Jason "J.D." Dean, things take a deadly turn. Blending comedy, drama, and rock-inspired music, *Heathers* tackles themes of identity, peer pressure, and the consequences of unchecked power.

In contrast, **Hamilton** by Lin-Manuel Miranda is a historical musical that uses hip-hop, R&B, and traditional musical theater to tell the story of Alexander Hamilton, one of the U.S. founding fathers. What makes *Hamilton* unique is not just its music and lyrics, but also its casting. Miranda's decision to cast predominantly Black and Brown actors in the roles of historical figures challenges traditional ideas about race and history. The musical's fast-paced rhymes and powerful performances shine a light on Hamilton and his contemporaries' struggles and triumphs. Themes of ambition, legacy, love, and betrayal make *Hamilton* a relevant and timeless epic that resonates with modern audiences.

Each of these musicals offers something distinct, yet they all explore the human experience. *Ride the Cyclone* is for fans of dark humor and surrealism. *Heathers* resonates with anyone who's dealt with high school cliques or peer pressure, while *Hamilton* is perfect for history buffs and fans of dynamic music. No matter the choice, each provides an unforgettable and transformative experience.



Elena Balan
Co-ordinating teacher: X C
Carmen Malaet

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What festivals do teenagers attend nowadays?



Teenagers in Romania mostly go to festivals that feature popular music genres like hip-hop, trap, EDM(electronic dance music), and pop. Here are the most popular festivals among young people in the country today.

1. Beach, Please! (Costinesti)

It is the most popular festival among teenagers, focusing on hip-hop, trap, and urban music. It features major international and local artists like Travis Scott, Central Cee, Yeat, and 6ix9ine. "Beach, Please!" takes place at the seaside, creating a summer party atmosphere.

2. Untold (Cluj-Napoca)

Untold is the biggest EDM festival in Romania, known for top-tier DJs like Martin Garrix, David Guetta, and Armin van Buuren. It attracts a young audience who love electronic dance music and large-scale productions. The festival is held at Cluj Arena with spectacular light shows and stage designs.

3. Neversea (Constanta)

It is a beachside Electronic Dance Music (EDM) and pop festival, often called the "little brother" of Untold. "Neversea" is popular with teens who enjoy dancing all night to artists like Kygo, Don Diablo, and The Chainsmokers. Takes place right on the Black Sea coast, creating a summer holiday vibe.

4. Summer Well (Buftea, near Bucharest)

It focuses on indie, alternative, and pop music, attracting a more artsy, fashion-forward teenage crowd. Artists like Florence + The Machine, Arctic Monkeys, and The 1975 have performed here.

5. Electric Castle (Banffy Castle, near Cluj-Napoca)

"Electric Castle" is a mix of EDM, rock, and indie music, offering a more diverse lineup. Known for its unique location at an old castle and unpredictable weather (rain is common), it attracts both teenagers and young adults who enjoy camping and festival life.



Madalina Stefania Stancu, Maia Alexandra Popescu, Carla Rebeca Sfetcu
Co-ordinating teacher: Carmen Malaet



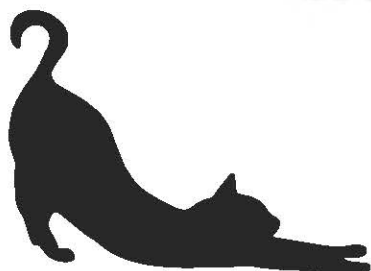
THE ORIGINS OF SUPERSTITIONS

13

Superstitions have shaped human behavior for centuries, influencing traditions, daily habits, and even major decisions. From crossing fingers for luck, to avoiding black cats, many superstitions have deep historical, religious, or cultural roots. But why do they persist in today's world?

Many superstitions date back to ancient civilizations. The idea that breaking a mirror causes seven years of bad luck originated in ancient Rome, where reflections were thought to represent the soul. Knocking on wood for luck comes from pagan traditions, where trees were believed to house protective spirits. Walking under ladders was considered unlucky due to its association with the Holy Trinity in medieval times.

Different cultures have unique superstitions. In China, the number 4 is avoided because it sounds like the word for "death," while in Turkey, chewing gum at night is thought to turn into the flesh of the dead. Despite modernization, these beliefs still influence people's actions.



Psychologists suggest superstitions provide comfort and a sense of control over uncertainty. While many are harmless, some lead to real fears, like avoiding the 13th floor in buildings. Whether based on ancient beliefs or modern habits, superstitions remain a fascinating part of human culture, blending history, psychology, and tradition in ways that continue to shape society.

Raisa Badica
Co-ordinating teacher: Carmen Malaet





Fast Fashion

Latest Trends



Fast fashion has always been a touchy subject among us, teenagers. Whether we are talking about new brands of clothes, dyeing your hair or getting a new piercing, adolescents would do anything to keep up with the latest trends.

Trends of 2025

Animal Print

Leopard/Cheetah print is in full force this year. The rise of its popularity started towards the end of 2023 and, although this print has never really left, you'll no doubt be seeing it on anything and everything this year.

Cherry Red

Cherry Red is still on the indefinite rise from last year into 2025, being such a playful pop of color to bring some excitement to your outfits. It peaks in autumn season, often being associated with October, and you'll definitely see it on clothes and nails.

Faux Fur Coat

What better way to elevate an outfit than through a statement faux fur coat? As the last years we had puffer jackets in the center of attention, this winter's trend revolved around faux fur hats, coats and even boots.

Ribbons

"Girlhood" shouts cute, pink and...ribbons! Worn as accessories at first, mainly as hair clips, ribbons eventually started popping up everywhere. Going to malls, you'll see T-shirts, jeans, even socks filled with ribbons.



Ultimately, style is about individuality, and while we might be influenced by the latest trends, we should always aim to make fashion our own, staying true to who we are while keeping an eye on the bigger picture.

Bianca Popa

Coordinating teacher:
Carmen Malaet



The Beauty That is Learned

Nowdays, makeup is much more than just a way of beautifying yourself. It is a form of personal expression, a way to gain self-confidence and an important element in various professional fields. For me, makeup is not a necessity from a physical point of view, but I cannot say the same from a moral point of view. For me, it is a therapy.

But how did makeup appear, reaching today's high-quality products? Makeup, in its beginnings, evolved along with the beliefs of the people. Where exactly makeup appeared is still unknown.

In Ancient Rome, lipstick was used for the cheeks, eyeliner for the eyes, and eye makeup was indispensable. Women used crocodile fat to cure pimples on the skin or freckles. Eyebrows were made up with gold powder, and red was the favorite color to highlight the beauty of their lips. White skin was considered the standard of beauty until the mid-20th century, so in Ancient Greece, ladies would whiten their facial skin with limestone. Charcoal-based eyeliners were extremely used and appreciated by women in Ancient Greece.



Queen Elizabeth started a real trend among the ladies of the time, using whitish paint to color her face. This look was more of a practical one, to hide the wrinkles dug by old age and the signs of chickenpox in her youth. However, this type of makeup was adopted by other royal houses.

So, makeup will always reflect personality. Find yourself in your makeup!



Daniela Diaconu

Coordinating teacher: Carmen Malaet





THE CULINARY WORLD

ITS TRADITIONS, INFLUENTIAL FIGURES, AND REMARKABLE CREATIONS

The culinary world is a rich and diverse realm where tradition, innovation, and culture blend to create remarkable dishes enjoyed across the globe. Throughout history, culinary traditions have evolved, reflecting the values, ingredients, and techniques specific to each region. In this essay, we will explore the traditions of various cuisines, the people who have shaped the culinary landscape, and the ways in which they gained recognition, both in their home countries and internationally.

Culinary traditions are deeply rooted in the history and culture of a country. They not only define the way people cook and eat but also embody the values and customs of a nation. For example, Italian cuisine is renowned for its use of fresh, high-quality ingredients like tomatoes, olive oil, and basil, creating dishes such as pizza and pasta. French cuisine is considered the epitome of fine dining, with its intricate techniques and delicate dishes, such as croissants and foie gras, which have become synonymous with sophistication. On the other hand, Asian cuisines, such as Japanese or Chinese, emphasize balance and harmony, combining sweet, sour, salty, and spicy flavors in every meal.



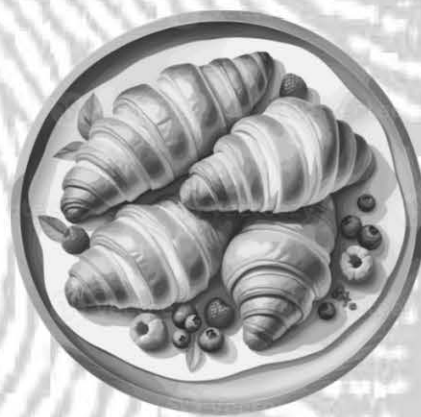
Romanian cuisine, which also reflects a rich history influenced by various cultures, includes dishes like sarmale, mici, and bors, incorporating flavors and techniques borrowed from Turkish, Hungarian, and Slavic traditions. These dishes, often passed down from generation to generation, showcase the simplicity and comfort of traditional home cooking, while regional specialties highlight the diversity found across the country.

Throughout history, several individuals have made significant contributions to the culinary arts, transforming the way people approach food. One such figure is Marie-Antoine Carême, a French chef considered the father of haute cuisine. He was instrumental in developing elaborate, decorative presentations and formalizing French culinary techniques. His influence is still seen in the refinement and presentation of French dishes today.

Another monumental figure is Auguste Escoffier, who modernized French cuisine and is credited with creating the kitchen brigade system still in use today. His simplification of traditional French cuisine made it more accessible while maintaining its elegance and sophistication. Escoffier's impact extended beyond France, shaping kitchens worldwide.

In the world of pastry, Gaston Lenôtre revolutionized patisserie with his light and innovative desserts. He elevated pastries to an art form, creating intricate yet delicate creations that changed the way pastries were perceived. Meanwhile, Dominique Ansel became internationally famous for inventing the "cronut," a pastry that combined elements of a croissant and a doughnut, captivating the culinary world and sparking a global trend.

In Romania, chefs like Adrian Hadean and Mihai Neacsu have gained national recognition for their innovative approach to traditional Romanian dishes. They have worked to modernize and elevate the country's culinary offerings while respecting its traditional roots, gaining recognition not only within Romania but also in international culinary circles.



The culinary world is a constantly evolving landscape where tradition and innovation coexist. The culinary traditions of different countries represent a deep connection to culture, history, and identity. Throughout history, chefs and pastry masters have played a pivotal role in shaping the way we cook and eat, leaving behind legacies that continue to influence modern gastronomy. Whether through refining techniques, creating new dishes, or elevating the art of presentation, these individuals have helped define and revolutionize the culinary world, earning admiration and recognition both at home and abroad.

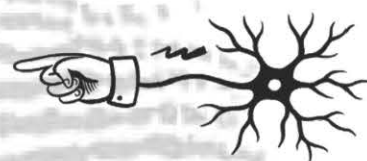


Elena Ruxandra Glavan
Co-ordinating teacher: Carmen Malaet





The Secrets of Your Brain: The Supercomputer Inside You



Did you know that your brain is more powerful than any computer in the world? It's true! This amazing organ controls everything you do, think, and feel—and it never stops working, even when you're asleep. Let's take a journey into the incredible world of your brain and discover some mind-blowing facts.

1. Fast and Efficient Neurons

Your brain is made up of billions of neurons that talk to each other faster than the speed of light. Imagine this: when you touch something hot, your brain sends a signal to your hand to pull away in just milliseconds. That's how fast and efficient it is!

2. Creativity and Imagination

Your brain isn't just about reacting—it's also where your creativity and imagination come to life. Every time you dream, write a story, or come up with a new idea, your brain is hard at work creating connections.

3. Your Brain Learns and Adapts

What's even cooler? Your brain is always learning.

This ability, called neuroplasticity, means that every time you practice something new—like playing a sport or learning a new language—your brain rewires itself to get better at it. It's like leveling up in a video game, but in real life!

4. The Brain Keeps You Alive

And don't forget how your brain keeps you alive.

It controls your breathing, heartbeat, and even your emotions without you even realizing it. But just like a superhero, your brain needs rest to stay strong. While you sleep, it cleans itself, organizes memories, and gets ready for the next day.

5. Treat Your Brain Well!

The human brain is the ultimate mystery, and you're carrying it around in your head right now! So, the next time you learn something cool or solve a tricky problem, remember how amazing your brain truly is. Treat it well—eat healthy, sleep enough, and keep learning!

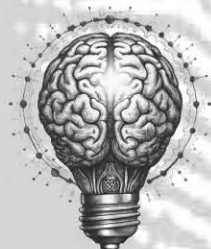


Amalia Gabriela Virban
Coordinating teacher:
Carmen Malaet



The Human Mind Fascinating Curiosities

The human mind is a universe of mysteries and incredible abilities. From the power of the subconscious to the way emotions shape decisions, our brain continues to amaze researchers. Here are some mind-blowing facts about the human mind:



The brain doesn't feel pain – Although it processes all sensations, the brain itself has no pain receptors. This is why brain surgeries

can sometimes be performed on awake patients!

Memory is often an illusion – Studies show that our memories are not perfect recordings of the past but rather reconstructions influenced by emotions and new experiences. Every time we recall something, we create a slightly altered version of the original memory.

Thoughts influence reality – The placebo effect proves that the mind has the power to cause real changes in the body. If a person believes they are taking an effective medication, even when it's just a sugar pill, their body can react as if they received the real treatment.

A tired mind is more creative – While we might think that great ideas come when we're well-rested, research suggests that being slightly tired can make the mind more open to unexpected connections and creative thinking.

We dream more than we remember – Even if we don't recall them, everyone dreams for about two hours each night. The brain uses this time to process emotions and information from the day.

The human mind remains an endless enigma, but one thing is certain: its power is far greater than we can imagine!

Iulia Roxana Stefanescu
Co-ordinating teacher:
Carmen Malaet





STAFF

General Co-ordinator	CARMEN MALAET
Editor-in-Chief	Tecu Catalina-Teodora
Deputy Editor	Constantin Beatrice
Public Relations(PR)	Constantin Beatrice Guta Daria
Make-up Editors	Nicola Issabela, Starasnită Bianca, Popa Bianca, Maicanescu Maria-Miruna
Article Responsible	Marinica Maria-Alexandra
Cashier	Baragan Cristiana
Contributors	<p>Riana Badea, Cristiana Mirea, Patricia Prodan, Alexandra Danciu, Stefan Alexandru Gresita, Andrei Diaconu, Denis Robert Tone, Daria Gabriela Iovanescu, Giulia Bulai, Viviana Stefania Marin, Catalina-Teodora Tecu, Alexandru Chiva Roibu, Mara Lungu, Lucian-Cristian Dobre, Laura Elena Virban, Doroteea Rotaru, Izabel Bulai, Adina-Gabriela Mihai, Elena-Carina Mare, Elena Beatrice Constantin, Denisa Stoenica, Daria Vava, Ioana Drighiciu, Anna Crasovan, Oana Bianca Negrila, Alessandra Bratu, Petru Dovan, Crina-Elena Manafu, Marian Georgescu, Anamaria Iancu, Alisia-Mihaela Iorga, Maria Cristiana Radutoiu, Elena Teodora Nicolae, Sofia Tudor, Teodora Garaiman, Radu Nicola, Andreea Bianca Dinulescu, Dragos Gabriel Dorobantu, Alexandru Dobre, Eduard-Eugen Enache, Andreea-Maria Tudor, Maria-Cristina Rosu, Albert Nikolas Pofilan, Bogdan Costin Dumitrescu, Elena Balan, Madalina Stefania Stancu, Maia Alexandra Popescu, Carla Rebeca Sfetcu, Raisa Badica, Bianca Popa, Daniela Diaconu, Elena Ruxandra Glavan, Amalia Gabriela Virban, Iulia Roxana Stefanescu</p>
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INSPECTORATUL ȘCOLAR JUDEȚEAN DOLJ

Str. Ion Măiorescu Nr.6, 200760 Craiova, Telefon 0251/420961;
0351/407395 (407397) Fax: 0251/421824, 0351/407396
E-mail: isjdolj@isj.dj.edu.ro Web: www.isj.dj.edu.ro



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Se. General Berthelot nr. 28-30, Sector 1,
050168, București
Tel: +40 (0)21 405 57 06
Fax: +40 (0)21 510 52 05
www.medu.ro





T'AKE CARE

STR. MIHAI VITEAZUL NR. 12, CRAIOVA, JUDETUL DOLJ

TEL./FAX 0251.413.615-0251.416.353

E-MAIL: disteentarticle@yahoo.ro

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