

КОРНАНА
ИЗ
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Westminster Bridge



Kiosk
Giles Gilbert Scott



DISTINCT

ISSUE #24/May 2026

Teen Challenges
Alice in Borderland
A Soulmate or a Twin Flame?
Artificial Intelligence: Shaping
Modern Life





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 Zoîța 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, Simona Copacescu - educational counsellor.



Teo Says



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A Distinct Farewell Alas, the final page turns. After four remarkable years, my journey as editor-in-chief of Disteentc magazine comes to an end—a moment filled with both happiness and sadness, excitement and nostalgia. What began as a space where ideas flourished has grown into something far greater, reflecting the personal growth of every contributor who shared a story close to their hearts.

Looking back, my high school years will always glow in light of this project, which has become such a central part of my journey, and whose lessons I will carry with me long after I graduate. To every student, reader and teacher who made Disteentc possible: thank you. I can only hope that I, too, was a distinct part of this beautiful journey.

Catalina-Teodora Tecu
Editor-in-Chief



Disteentc is not just an English magazine. It is the voice of students who dared to express themselves, to write, to create, and to be heard. This issue of Disteentc marks the end of a chapter that has meant far more than simply being a deputy editor.

It has been a place where I grew, where I made mistakes, where I learned, and most importantly, where I felt part of something truly special. To those who will take it further, trust your voice and don't be afraid to leave your own fingerprint on every page.

Beatrice Constantin
Deputy Editor





Opinions

DISTEENCT

ISSUE # 24

What Would Our Lives Look Like If We Learned to Live Without Worrying About the Future?

We live in an era where planning for the future is an instinct. We are taught from childhood to make plans for what's to come, to have a clear goal, and to prepare for any challenge. It's almost impossible not to worry about what lies ahead, about what we might lose or what could go wrong. But what would happen if we let go of this constant control over the future and simply learned to live in the present?



Every day, our minds are bombarded with questions about what's to come: "What will I do tomorrow?", "What will next year look like?", "What will happen to my career?". We're so focused on the future that we forget to truly live in the moment. I'd say that, sometimes, this constant worry about what's next is a mental trap. And this trap isn't just a waste of energy, but a way to frustrate ourselves and limit our joy of living.

What would it mean to live without this fear of the future? What would it mean to accept uncertainty as part of our lives and learn to embrace it, rather than fight it? I believe we would discover immense freedom, a psychological relief. We'd let go of obsessive control and begin to truly live. No longer would we feel pressured to be ready for anything, because life, by its nature, is unpredictable. We can't control everything, and maybe, instead of worrying about what we don't know, we should learn to enjoy what we do know - that we are here, now and that matters most.

be present

I've often noticed how people get so caught up in worrying about the future that they forget to enjoy what they already have. We get trapped in an endless race where "more" always seems to be the answer. Maybe we don't need more. Maybe the secret to a balanced life is learning to be content with what we have now and living each moment consciously.

Life isn't about what you will do tomorrow or about your big plans for the future. It's about how you feel now, what you learn from each experience, and how you connect with the world around you. Perhaps if we stopped stressing about what's to come, we would learn to enjoy the journey, not just the destination.

Perhaps, in the end, life isn't about reaching a particular destination but about learning to live in a constant flow of change and uncertainty. If we let go of the fear of the future and accepted life in all its forms, we would discover that all we have is now. Maybe, in this fragile present, lies the true essence of existence - where fears and worries fade away, and we begin to truly live.



Laura Elena Virban
Co-ordinating teacher: XI A
Carmen Malaet



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Alexandra's Year in the United States



Have you ever wondered what life is like for a Romanian exchange student in the U.S? Alexandra is currently finishing her senior year in Alabama as a finalist in the FLEX program. She is living with a host family until the end of the school year. Here is an interview where she talks about her experience so far adapting to a new country:

Q1: How does the American school system compare to the one in Romania? Is it better or worse in your opinion?

Answer: The American school system differs a lot. I got to pick my classes and there were a lot of options to choose from. For example, at my school some of the interesting classes they offer are Agriscience, Robotic Systems, Aviation Technology, Sports Medicine and Forensic Science. Other than being able to pick your own classes, another difference is that school days start at 7:40 and end at 15:03. We have something called a block schedule which is 4 classes everyday that we take for a semester and then our classes change. The class itself is 1 hour and 30 minutes long and we have a breakfast and a lunch break. Our school's breakfast and lunch are free. What I like most about school in America is that there's different people in every class, so I got to meet a lot of people. I think the school system in America is better just because you get to do what you actually like, with the possibility to change your mind at any time.



Q2: How has living in the U.S changed your lifestyle?

Answer: Living in the U.S. has drastically changed my lifestyle. I used to be more active in Romania. However, people here try to avoid walking as much as they can. They have drive-throughs for everything, some that shocked me are banks, pharmacies, and liquor stores, and where there isn't a drive-through they'll order stuff for pick up or just deliver it to their homes. Another thing is food, it's just horrible. They eat a lot of fast food and frozen/precooked meals, my school's lunch almost every day is Pizza Hut or chicken nuggets with fries. I had a way healthier lifestyle in Romania and adapting to the one in America has been a little difficult.

Q3: What has been the most exciting part of your exchange experience so far?

Answer: The most exciting part of my exchange experience has surprisingly been going to school. I used to not really go to school at all in Romania, I'm pretty sure I had over 250 absences my junior year. That's how much I dreaded going to school; however this changed a lot in America because classes are actually fun. Most teachers here are young and they make class interesting and interactive. School work is also very easy; we don't take that many tests and in some of my classes they'll give you a Quizizz or a Blooket with some of the answers on the test. Most of our grades come from classwork and I haven't gotten any homework this whole year.



Alexandra's instagram



An interview taken by Alexandru
Chiva Roibu

Co-ordinating teacher: Carmen Malaet

Why Sports Are Essential for a Healthy Life



Sports play a crucial role in maintaining a healthy and balanced life. Regardless of age, physical activity offers immense benefits for both our body and mind.

Firstly, sports help improve overall health by increasing physical endurance and preventing serious conditions such as heart disease, diabetes, and obesity. Through movement, the cardiovascular system becomes stronger, and metabolism improves.

In addition to physical benefits, sports also have a positive impact on mental health. Physical activities release endorphins, known as the "happiness hormones," which reduce stress and improve mood. Regular participation in sports helps combat anxiety and depression, and by developing a consistent training routine, we feel more confident and motivated.



Another important aspect is that sports foster the development of essential skills such as discipline, perseverance, and teamwork. In many cases, engaging in sports requires setting goals and putting in continuous effort to achieve them, which means we learn to manage challenges and stay focused on our objectives.

Moreover, sports provide an excellent way to socialize and build connections with others. Whether it's a football team, a group of runners, or a yoga class, sports offer opportunities to connect with people who share similar interests, contributing to a sense of belonging and mutual support.

In conclusion, sports are not just a physical activity but an essential component of a healthy lifestyle. From improving physical and mental health to personal growth and socializing, the benefits of sports are numerous and should not be overlooked. Therefore, regardless of personal preferences, it is important to incorporate sports into our daily routines in order to live a longer, happier, and more balanced life.



Marius Dragos Alexandrescu
Co-ordinating teacher: Carmen Malaet





The technology that defies imagination: A future unfolding before our eyes



We are living in a time when technology is evolving faster than ever, blending the future with the present. Around us, the world is quietly transforming in ways that would have seemed impossible just a few years ago.

One of the most exciting breakthroughs is artificial intelligence. It no longer just imitates human thought in many cases, it surpasses it. AI can create original images, write stories, compose music, and even detect medical issues with remarkable precision. Technology is becoming a partner for ideas, not just a tool.

At the same time, scientists are creating materials that repair themselves, almost like living organisms. Plastics that "heal", concrete that fills its own cracks, and artificial skin sensitive to touch show that technology is beginning to act more like nature. Cities of the future may become living systems that regenerate on their own.



Entertainment is evolving too. Some video games can read your emotions and adjust difficulty based on how you feel. Reality becomes interactive, and games respond not only to commands, but also to your very state of mind.



Above us, thousands of satellites form a global network, bringing high-speed internet to even the most remote places and connecting the world in ways we have never imagined.

These innovations show that the future isn't something we wait for.

It is something we are already building and our role is to stay curious, creative, and ready to embrace this extraordinary technological revolution.

Bogdan Dumitrescu

Co-ordinating teacher: Carmen Malaet



The hidden struggle of living with a speech impediment

Stuttering, or stammering, is a speech impediment where a person involuntarily repeats or prolongs sounds and syllables, or experiences brief pauses called blocks that temporarily prevent them from speaking smoothly.

Living with a speech impediment presents a unique set of challenges that most of the time are overlooked by the ones who speak effortlessly. Yet, for many people, even saying their own name or asking a simple question can cause them anxiety and a high level of distress. The daily struggle of having a speech impediment can create emotional, social, and practical obstacles.

People with speech disorders often fear being misunderstood. They may repeat words, pause, or avoid certain phrases to prevent a block or mispronunciation. In most cases, this can be very frustrating and embarrassing for them. Simple tasks like making a phone call, speaking in class, or ordering food can become extremely stressful. This often leads others to mistake their hesitation for shyness or even lack of intelligence, even when they are fully aware of what they want to say.



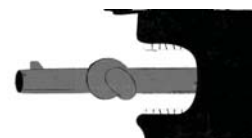
In addition, social situations can make speech impediments harder to manage. Individuals may feel judged, interrupted, or pressured, which can lead them to withdraw, speak less and even feel isolated.

Things that in time will take a toll on their self-esteem or ability to form friendships.

Despite these struggles, people with speech impediments show incredible strength and resilience. With patience, understanding, and support from others, they can find their voices and thrive. Understanding these struggles is the first step toward fostering empathy and ensuring that everyone, regardless of how fluently they speak, feels heard and valued.



Alexia-Ruxandra-Georgiana Stoenica
Co-ordinating teacher: Carmen Malaet





Music is the Secret Language of the Soul



“ Where words leave off, music begins.”

This thought by Heinrich Heine perfectly captures the invisible power of sound. Music is a bridge between the heart and the world, between thought and emotion. It speaks without a voice, yet everyone understands it. In my opinion, music plays an essential role in human life because it helps us express our emotions, heal our inner wounds, and rediscover our balance.



First of all, music possesses true therapeutic power. When we listen to a melody that touches our soul, our body reacts: the heartbeat changes its rhythm, the breath slows, and the mind becomes clearer. For example, studies show that music reduces stress, lowers anxiety, and stimulates the release of happiness hormones. Yet beyond science, healing through music is a deeply human experience: a favorite song can momentarily stop pain, a memory can be reborn through a few chords, and a tear can turn into peace.

Furthermore, music allows us to express our emotions and identity. Every person carries an “inner melody” that reflects their feelings. Music gives us the freedom to be ourselves: sincere, vulnerable, and authentic. It transforms pain into art and silence into story. Artists who create from the heart do not just sing; they share pieces of their own lives. And the listeners, finding themselves within the lyrics or rhythm, feel less alone.

Moreover, music has the power to unite people. In a concert, an orchestra, or even a simple song shared between friends, hearts beat in harmony. Music erases differences of age, language, and culture. It builds bridges where words might fail. Through it, we learn empathy, the joy of sharing, and the beauty of harmony. When two people listen to the same song and feel the same emotion, an invisible connection of understanding is formed between them.

Music Therapy



In conclusion, music is more than art, it is life in its purest form. It expresses us, heals us, and connects us to one another. Through music, we return to our essence: a beating heart, a feeling soul, a being that vibrates. I truly believe that as long as we listen to music, we will continue to be human, sensitive, alive, and full of hope.

Matei Laurentiu Florea

Co-ordinating teacher: Carmen Malaet





The dangers of the Internet obsession

In today's technology-dominated world, the Internet plays a vital role in shaping our understanding of events and influencing how we regard others. Though it may seem harmless, mindlessly scrolling through social media for hours on end has such a negative effect on us that more often than not affects our moral values. Therefore, a need to log out of our accounts every once in a while, is absolutely crucial for our well-being, since a lot of problems can spring from this artificial setting.



To begin with, we must mention the hidden enemy that creeps in our minds, easily, video by video, until it seizes and blinds our senses; Internet addiction. Nowadays, it is increasingly more present in teenagers and children, encountered through behaviors such as irritation and aggressivity when said contact is interrupted. This can go so far that fights might break out. I, for one, have witnessed such a case and the reason was something as insignificant as a phone charger. Hence, it's not a mean feat to affirm how dependent we have grown to our mobiles and how we can't imagine how to live without them.

Moreover, this can lead to financial consequences and social isolation, impacting one's relationships with friends and family, as this toxic dedication to the virtual environment requires sacrifices to be made in order to keep up the façade of said happiness that could come from it. For instance, ever since the pandemic, the amount of Internet scams has rocketed, a study showing that, in 2022, Americans lost 10.3 billion dollars to digital fraud, let alone the National Library of Medicine, declaring in April of last year based off a study which took place in Nepal, that Internet users increased by 822 thousand between 2021 and 2022 and that Internet overuse ranged from 7.4% to 46.4% among student from Southeast Asia, a spike compared to previous years.



Another key point to explore are both physical and mental issues that can follow an Internet dependency. The obvious neck and back pain, as well as the negative impact on one's eyesight and the higher risk of insomnia alongside mental conditions such as depression, anxiety and low self-esteem are worth mentioning. However, it's important to realize that the Internet obsession goes even deeper than that. Most are not aware of this lesser-known impact of surfing the Web, but it is certainly something that must be shed light upon; the so called parasocial relationships.

This refers to individuals becoming so disillusioned with reality, as a result of constantly viewing someone else's life online, that they start imagining scenarios of them in a different status, usually as celebrity or artist, which distorts their perspective of reality. They can lose sight of being able to distinguish facts from fiction, hindering themselves from doing anything else other than daydream excessively. An article from Thriveworks affirms that whereas 51% of Americans have engaged in parasocial relationships, only 16% of them are aware of the fact, proving just how easily it is to give you all towards something unrealistic and not even realize the dangers you are exposing yourself to.

Other threats we are facing when in a parasocial relationship are the possibility of having to face cyberbullying or other scams such as phishing and Ponzi schemes that are typically the cause of spending a higher amount of time online, enlarging the exposure to those kinds of crimes. Therefore, we must be careful regarding how we spend our time online, since, in the world of entertainment and consumerism, it is easy to get roped into situations that could deter our peace of mind and financial stability.

To conclude, it's important to acknowledge that even if the Internet provides us with faster ways of finding information, communicating with people thousands of miles apart and, overall, proving as gap to uniting all cultures through the bringing of awareness, the down sides of its excessive use can have an irredeemable effect on you.



Catalina-Teodora Tecu

Coordinating teacher : Carmen Malaet





Plastic Happiness: How We Lost Our Essence in a World That Demands More Than It Can Offer

How often do we truly pause and ask ourselves what the meaning of life is? More and more, the answer seems to be delivered to us before we even start searching for it: pursue a well-paid job, build a family, buy a nice house. This formula is promoted as the guaranteed path to a “happy” and fulfilled existence.



From an early age, we are taught to study hard so we can secure a future in which we fit seamlessly into the workforce. But this outlook is mechanical and impersonal. It reduces our lives to a long preparation for becoming efficient performers in a system that rarely asks who we genuinely are. Our purpose is not just to complete tasks. It is to bring into the world something unmistakably our own, something rooted in authenticity. When we choose a path that resonates with who we are, we remain truly alive and present. Without passion, we slip into autopilot, and in a world increasingly shaped by technology, anything done without real commitment becomes replaceable.

Many young people choose a career mainly for its financial promise. It is an understandable decision because stability matters. Yet few consider the risk of ending up in a place where each day feels identical, draining, and silent. We fear uncertainty, but we rarely fear the possibility of living without meaning. And that, too, is a fear worth acknowledging.

Society often does little to encourage self-discovery. Many reach adulthood without knowing what truly brings them joy simply because no one guided them to explore their inner world. But only by understanding our desires, emotions, and limitations can we choose a direction that allows us to grow. Real motivation comes from within, not from pressure to fit a pre-established ideal.

We live surrounded by comparisons, achievements, possessions, careers. We measure ourselves by what is visible rather than by what is felt. Yet empathy, sensitivity, and the ability to form genuine connections are essential elements of our humanity. They cannot be bought, and nothing material can replace them.

True happiness appears when we are at peace with who we are and with the path we choose. It does not come from things or from checking boxes on a societal list. It is found in sincere moments, in meaningful relationships, in the quiet certainty that we are following a road that truly belongs to us.

In a world that constantly demands more, perhaps the greatest act of courage is to remain authentic, to pause, look inward, and rediscover what genuinely matters. Not the life we are told to live, but the life that reflects who we truly are.



Iulia-Roxana Stefanescu
Co-ordinating teacher: Carmen Malaet





ボーダーランドのアリス

Alice
in Borderland

Alice in Borderland: A Show That Keeps You Guessing

If you're into fast-paced shows that mess with your brain (in a good way), *Alice in Borderland* is definitely worth watching. It follows Arisu, a lonesome gamer guy, who suddenly finds himself in a totally empty version of Tokyo where he has to play dangerous games just to stay alive. The games aren't just physical — they test how smart you are and how well you can work with others, which makes every episode feel like a puzzle.

One of the best parts of the show is watching how the characters change. Arisu starts out kind of lost in life, but the Borderland forces him to step up. His partner, Usagi, is brave, independent, and honestly just really cool. Together, they make the story feel both intense and emotional.



Some of the side characters also make the show way more interesting. People like Chishiya, with his calm, almost sneaky genius vibe, keep you guessing about whose side they're/he's really on. Then there's Kuina, who's strong, loyal, and has one of the most memorable backstories in the series.

Even characters who don't stick around for long leave a big impact, because everyone in the Borderland is fighting their own battles. They help build a world that feels intense, unpredictable, and way deeper than you'd expect.

With its mysterious setting, surprising twists, and characters you actually end up caring about, *Alice in Borderland* keeps you hooked from start to finish. If you're looking for something exciting to binge, this is a great pick.

Alisia-Mihaela Iorga**Co-ordinating teacher:**
Carmen Malaet

XI F

Prison Break: A Thrilling Escape Packed With Suspense



Prison Break is an American television series that first aired in 2005 and ran for five seasons, created by Paul Scheuring. It follows the story of Michael Scofield, a brilliant structural engineer, who devises an elaborate plan to break his wrongly convicted brother, Lincoln Burrows, out of prison. The show quickly gained popularity for its intense storytelling, clever plot twists, and compelling characters. With a mix of action, suspense, and emotional depth, becoming one of the most gripping TV dramas of its time.

The plot revolves around Michael Scofield deliberately getting himself incarcerated in Fox River State Penitentiary, where his brother Lincoln is on death row for a crime he didn't commit. Michael, having designed the prison, uses his intricate tattoo, embedded with hidden escape plans, to execute a daring breakout. Along the way, he teams up with a group of inmates, each with their own motives and secrets. As they escape, the story expands beyond the prison walls, unraveling a larger conspiracy and forcing them into a relentless cat-and-mouse chase with law enforcement and dangerous enemies.

One of the strongest aspects of *Prison Break* is its brilliant storytelling and well-developed characters. The series keeps viewers on the edge of their seats with its unpredictable twists and constant tension. Michael Scofield, played by Wentworth Miller, is an intelligent and resourceful protagonist, while Robert Knapp's portrayal of T-Bag, a manipulative and menacing inmate, adds a layer of complexity to the show. The action sequences, emotional moments, and strategic planning all contribute to making the series highly engaging.

While *Prison Break* is widely praised, some aspects might feel exaggerated or unrealistic at times, especially in later seasons when the scope of the story expands significantly. The plot can become overly complex, and certain character decisions may seem questionable. However, these elements also add to the show's unpredictability, making it exciting to watch. Instead of sticking to a predictable formula, this show continuously reinvents itself, keeping audiences intrigued.

Overall, it is a must-watch for fans of thrilling, fast-paced dramas. It delivers an intense mix of action, suspense, and emotional depth, making it hard to stop watching once you start. Despite a few over-the-top moments, the series remains highly entertaining and keeps viewers invested in the characters' fates. If you enjoy mind-bending escape plans, conspiracy-driven narratives, and compelling character arcs, *Prison Break* is definitely worth watching.

**Ciprian Tulitu****Co-ordinating teacher: Carmen Malaet**



THE IMPORTANCE OF FITNESS AND SPORTS

Staying active is one of the most important things we can do for our health. Regular exercise improves cardiovascular health, strengthens muscles, and boosts mental well-being. Studies have shown that people who engage in physical activity are less likely to suffer from diseases such as obesity, diabetes, and heart conditions. Beyond physical benefits, fitness also plays a crucial role in reducing stress and anxiety. After all, a healthy body supports a healthy mind, don't you agree?

One major argument in favor of fitness and sports is that they encourage discipline and perseverance. Athletes and regular gym-goers learn to set goals, stay committed, and push through challenges. Additionally, team sports promote social skills, cooperation, and leadership. Physical activity also boosts self-esteem, as achieving fitness milestones fosters a sense of accomplishment. Overall, engaging in sports teaches life lessons that go beyond the field or gym.



On the other hand, some argue that fitness and sports are not essential for everyone. Not all people enjoy exercising, and for some, it can feel like a burden rather than a benefit. Furthermore, injuries are a risk, and professional sports can be physically and mentally demanding. Some even claim that the fitness industry pressures individuals to achieve unrealistic body standards.

In conclusion, while there are valid concerns, the advantages of fitness and sports outweigh the drawbacks. They promote health, personal growth, and social development. Whether for fun, competition, or well-being, an active lifestyle benefits us all.



Andrei Mladin

Co-ordinating teacher:
Carmen Malaet

Why Biology might be the most important class you will ever take

Let's be honest: when you hear the word Biology, you probably think of diagrams, microscopes and that one frog you wish you didn't have to dissect. But Biology is so much more than memorising cell parts or learning the difference between arteries and veins. In fact, it might be one of the most valuable subjects you'll study in high school and here's why.

Biology literally explains YOU

Biology helps you understand how your body works: why your heart beats faster when you run, why you need sleep and how your brain reacts when you fall in love. You're not just learning facts—you're learning how to take care of yourself. From nutrition to immunity, Biology gives you the tools to make better choices every day.

It teaches real-life problem-solving

Climate change, pandemics, pollution, food shortages: all the world's biggest problems are deeply connected to Biology. When you study this subject, you learn to think critically, analyse data and understand how living things interact. These skills aren't just for scientists, they're for anyone who wants to make informed decisions in the real world.

It opens doors to amazing careers

If you're dreaming about becoming a doctor, psychologist, veterinarian, nurse, environmental scientist, biotechnologist or forensic expert, guess what? Biology is your foundation. Even jobs that don't seem "biological" rely on it: nutritionists, fitness trainers, teachers and lab technicians all use Biology daily.

It connects you to the world around you

Biology shows how every creature on Earth plays a part in the bigger picture. You learn why bees matter, how ecosystems survive and what happens when humans disturb natural balance. Suddenly, the world feels more connected and your choices feel more meaningful.

It makes you curious (and that's a superpower)

Biology pushes you to ask questions:

Why do we age?

How do viruses work?

Can we grow organs in a lab?

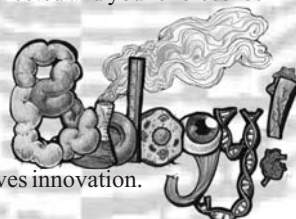
Could humans ever live on Mars?

The more you learn, the more you want to know. And curiosity is what drives innovation.

So, why is Biology important?

Because it helps you understand your body, your planet and your future. Whether you become a doctor, an engineer or an artist, Biology gives you knowledge that actually matters. It shapes the way you see yourself and the world and that's something no other subject can quite match.

So next time you step into Biology class, don't think of it as "just another lesson." Think of it as discovering the science of life, your life.



Lucian Cristian Dobre

Co-ordinating teacher: Gabriela Militaru





The Inescapable Roots of Doubt

Whether it arises from self-doubt, distrust of others, or scepticism of the forces that govern our fate, doubt anchors itself permanently, winding through the deepest corridors of our consciousness. So, can absolute certainty ever be achieved, or does doubt persist unconquered? The myth of Orpheus and Eurydice shows this tension clearly. Orpheus, a legendary musician whose songs can move gods and humans alike, falls in love with Eurydice. When she dies, he ventures into the Underworld, the dangerous realm of the dead, to try to bring her back to life. The gods grant him a chance. The condition is that he may lead her out, but he must not look at her until they reach the surface. Filled with hope, Orpheus begins the journey, trusting that Eurydice is following him. Yet, doubt takes hold in his mind. He fears she might not be there or that the promise will fail. At the final moment, he turns to check, and as a result, Eurydice is pulled back into the Underworld, lost forever. The story demonstrates that even when circumstances are favourable and desire is absolute, hesitation and mistrust can dominate action entirely, altering all outcomes in irreversible ways. Orpheus's glance backward seals Eurydice's fate precisely because doubt prevails over trust.



Doubt is always present, yet it need not be victorious. Humans are creatures obsessed with control, with certainty, with the visible and measurable. We crave proof, evidence, and guarantees, and we rarely allow ourselves to act on what we cannot see or fully grasp. Yet life rarely affords such clarity. Hesitation only kills us when we allow it to, when we fixate on what might go wrong rather than embracing what we know to be right. To hesitate, to look back, to mistrust one's own conviction, is to surrender to the paralysis that doubt so easily imposes. It is not a matter of eradicating doubt, which is impossible, but of acknowledging its presence while refusing to let it govern every decision. Just as Orpheus's journey into the Underworld demanded both faith in the unseen and persistence despite fear, humans too must navigate their own uncertainties, seeking to act rightly even in the absence of perfect knowledge or control.

The Orpheus myth offers a timeless lesson in which reclaiming what is precious requires moving forward without faltering. There is no room for second-guessing, no space for hesitation in the face of certainty about what one loves or what one knows to be right. Uncertainties may whisper, fear may loom, yet the human task is to act with clarity, courage, and unwavering trust in oneself. Hesitation at the critical moment undermines not only opportunity but the balance of life itself, replacing potential triumph with irreversible loss.

Ultimately, the moral is as sharp and immediate as the myth's climax: do not look back. Trust yourself. Let doubt exist, but do not let it command your steps. Act decisively in the things that matter, in the things you know to be true, and in the moments that define who you are. Doubt is inevitable, but kneeling in front of it is optional. To live fully, we must embrace moving forward with courage, conviction, and faith in our own judgment.

DOUBT

Doroteea Rotaru
Co-ordinating teacher: Ana-Maria Stefanescu



Teenkeen on Ink

ISSUE # 24

Swirling Hearts

DISTEENCT

Never forget
the first time they met.
Her pink skirt,
his black shirt,
the soft glow around her,
the shadow clinging to him.

She was such an angel
praying for love.
He was the demon
lost in dreams.

She walked like a prayer.
He breathed like a warning.
She didn't yet know
how wrong they were.

And I?
I hovered above them,
above everyone.
I am fate.
Too cruel, some whisper.
Too kind, if you ask me.

Because look closely:
it could've been worse.
You could all be gone,
silence blooming
everywhere
so easy for me.

He kept wanting,
wanting,
and wanting
as if her heart
was a well with no bottom.

She couldn't see it,
but I could.
That hollow behind his eyes,
the hunger in his silence,
the stillness
after she whispered
"I love you."

Poor girl,
you thought desire was devotion.
You loved him
the way storms love the sea.
He only loved
what he could take.

And that is the truth
you had to swallow.
No fairy tale,
no shining prince,
no girl waiting to be saved
just the weight
of the world you forget
until it crushes you.



But nothing I choose
is ever enough for you.
And if your voice
would finally disappear,
I'd hear no more shouting
at the sky for mercy.

This is what you asked for,
just not what you imagined.
But blame?
Never on you.
I carry that burden.

So let's rewind.
Not far, just a breath back.
She prayed for love,
and love came,
dressed like a boy
who wanted more
than anything she could give.

Such a pretty beginning
for such a ruined tale.
The ending
even harsher.

but don't forget one thing
fate will always laugh at the end.



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Oana Bianca Negrila

Co-ordinating teacher: Carmen Malaet



Where love begins

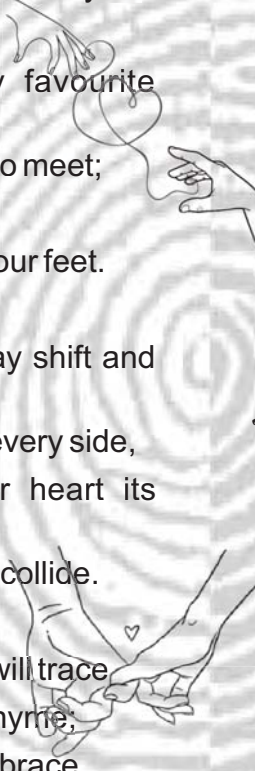
I found you in a quiet place
Between a heartbeat and a sigh,
A gentle light, a touch of grace,
A truth no storm could ever pry.

You turned my nights to woven gold,
My days to songs I never knew;
The world felt brighter, soft and bold,
Each time my path was drawn to you.

Your voice became my favourite sound,
Your smile the dawn I rise to meet;
In you, a universe I found
Where every fear falls at your feet.

And though the winds may shift and groan,
And shadows press from every side,
My heart still calls your heart its home,
A place where all the stars collide.

So take my hand, and we will trace
A life that hums in tender rhyme,
For love begins in your embrace,
And echoes on through endless time.



Ghosts we never greet

I've never touched your hand or seen
The way you smile beneath the sun,
But still your words live in between
The hours when day and night are one.

You live in letters, thoughts half-spoke,

Expressions shared through our screens' light,
Yet somehow every word you wrote
Felt closer than the edge of night.



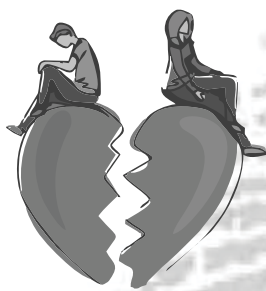
How strange it is to miss a soul not near,
A stranger who still feels like home,
I search the wind, but you're not here,
Just whispers in silence when I roam.

One day our roads may twist and meet,
And then, perhaps, you'll truly see
That even ghosts we never greet
Can haunt our hearts with certainty.



Elena Balan
Co-ordinating teacher:
Carmen Malaet

Elena-Carina Mare
Co-ordinating teacher: Carmen Malaet



Twilight Pulse

I'm not sure we ever truly existed, you and I, not in a way that lived outside my own words. I don't know if we were ever what I hoped for, what I kept imagining we could be. Maybe we were just two people pushed by life into the same space, sitting in front of the same screen every night, trapped in an endless echo of our voices.

We were never only us. There was always someone else, someone who had to be there, because without her, the thought of 'you and me' would have fallen apart. She sat with us, laughed at your jokes, stood by me when I confronted you. She never chose sides, yet somehow, she leaned toward the invisible bond forming between us.

The late-night words, the secret glances, the conversations that wandered through every corner of who we were, all of it pulled us closer without permission. The quiet moments, when the whole room fell still and the only sound left was our breathing trying to fight the heavy silence... and the times when my voice filled your mind so completely that you couldn't hear your own thoughts anymore, as if my words were trying to reach the place in your heart where echoes go to live.

Our first real moment together was full of trembling emotions, of looks that touched deeper than skin. And yet, your silence, your hesitation, pulled us back to the beginning, as if nothing had changed at all.

One day, all of this will end. It will be an ordinary day for the world, but not for us. It will be the day you decide to let everything go, and she will be the one to tell me the words you couldn't say. And even then, the connection that felt like it came from another world will continue to exist, because some bonds don't die.

Even if we will never speak again, a part of you will stay with me, a part of me will stay with you, always and forever, with every ray that leaps out every summer day.

Denisa Stoenica
Co-ordinating teacher:
Carmen Malaet



Owl boy

Owl boy has the eye of moths and feet of humans
And he skins both to the ground.
Rotten apron with a spot of blooming omen
Make him bow in front of crowned.
If he's got a present made of acorn, tears and dust,
He will leave them in the ring and his heart is filled with lust.

The girl that's buried in the moss drinks from the crow's beak
Until the wishes hug the grass
And a soft light kisses the cheek
Of all those buried in the past.
They took his wings so long ago and left him bleeding by a tree,
So he cannot fly anymore, yet still tries to plan its flee.



A group of leaves climb the eyes of trees, drawn
with chalk or ash
Who aid the kids in finding path
Through swamps of winter spirits that keep
twirling their moustache
And whisper and infuse their wrath.
To every spirit of the oldest forest that lied to
nymphs and deer,
May they find a bit of peace near the spirits that
can hear.

Owl boy has the eye of moths and feet of humans
And he sinks both to the ground.
And he sees through gilded curtains
That the world is but a pond.



Ioana Drighiciu
Co-ordinating teacher:
Roxana Udrescu



Teen challenges

Teenage years are often described as the bridge between childhood and adulthood, and like any bridge, the path can sometimes feel shaky. Teen challenges come in many shapes, some loud and obvious, others quiet and hidden beneath the surface. Even though adults sometimes think teens have it easy, the truth is that this stage brings its own unique struggles, shaped by a fast-changing world and the pressure to grow up quickly. Understanding these challenges helps us understand what makes the teenage experience both difficult and incredibly important.

One of the biggest challenges teenagers face is finding balance. They stand in the middle of expectations coming from everywhere: from family, from teachers, from friends, and even from the online world. School demands focus and discipline, yet personal life demands energy, creativity, and emotional strength. Many teens feel like they are juggling too many responsibilities at once, trying not to drop anything while still pretending to be calm. This constant balancing act can be exhausting, especially when every day seems to bring something new to handle.



Another challenge lies in the pressure to define their identity. Teenagers are expected to know who they are, what they want to study, and even what kind of future they want to build, all while they are still discovering themselves. Some days they feel confident and ready to take on the world; other days they feel lost and unsure, as if the path keeps changing under their feet.

This confusion is completely normal, but it often feels stressful because everyone around them seems to have strong opinions about who they should become.

Social life also brings its own difficulties. Friendships during these years are intense, emotional, and sometimes unpredictable. A small argument can feel like a huge storm, and wanting to fit in can become a daily challenge. Teens worry about being accepted, about saying the right things, and about not standing out in the wrong way. Social media adds even more pressure, turning every photo, comment, or message into something that might be judged.

Emotionally, being a teenager can feel like riding a roller coaster. They experience everything more deeply, from happiness to frustration. Sometimes they don't fully understand their own reactions, and other times they struggle to express what they feel. This emotional intensity can lead to stress, self-doubt, or moments where everything seems overwhelming.

Even so, these experiences are part of learning how to handle feelings in a healthy way, something that becomes incredibly valuable later in life.

Another major challenge is the pressure to prepare for the future. Teenagers are often asked to make big decisions about their studies, career plans, and life goals before they even know what adulthood truly looks like. The idea of choosing the "right" path can be frightening, especially when so many possibilities exist.

Many teens fear failure or worry that one wrong decision will ruin everything. In reality, life offers countless chances to change direction, but at this age, the future can feel like a giant door that must be opened carefully.

Despite all these struggles, it's important to remember that teen challenges are not just obstacles they are also lessons. Every difficulty helps teenagers grow a little stronger, more self-aware, and more independent. These challenges build resilience, teaching young people how to solve problems, how to ask for help, and how to keep moving forward even when things feel tough. Teenagers may not always realize it, but every step they take, even the shaky ones, shapes them into the adults they will become.

In the end, teen challenges are a natural and essential part of growing up. They test courage, patience, and confidence, but they also create opportunities to learn and discover. And while the challenges are real, so is the strength teens develop along the way.





In the Silence Between Words

Never had the first day of school felt so strange: hallways buzzing, lockers slamming, voices spilling over one another, and yet, inside our classroom, silence waited. Our new teacher entered without a word, without a smile, letting the quiet stretch between us like a held breath. Slowly, he wrote his name on the board, Mr. Keating, and beneath it, a single line: "No words shall be spoken in this classroom". Laughter rose, faltered, then died, because we knew, somehow, he meant it.

At first, the quiet was unbearable. Pens scratched nervously across paper. Chairs scraped too loudly. Notes passed clumsily, meanings misunderstood, anger spilled sharper than intended, kindness dulled by the absence of tone. Then came his rule: "Read every sentence before you share it". And so, slower became our writing. Shorter grew our words. Between lines appeared pauses, soft as rests in music. I began to know my classmates by rhythm rather than voices: grief fading like mist over a cold morning, joy in letters that danced across the page. Fingers hovered over paper, trembling slightly, brushing edges as if to feel meaning. The room, once cold, began to hum softly, warm with attention.



the rest is silence.

One day, a classmate dropped her stack of books, papers scattered, pens rolled, notebooks slid. We froze, then moved together, hands gathering, notebooks stacking, all silent, in perfect sync. Even the smallest gestures spoke.

On the last day, Mr. Keating spoke: "Now that you know how to listen, you may speak". When we did, our voices were careful, trembling, almost musical. Then I understood: sound is only an instrument that, when shaped by the soul, becomes music.



Maria Cristina Rosu

**Co-ordinating teacher:
Carmen Malaet**

How to smile



A paper boat on a silver stream,
Went sailing through a summer dream.
The shy wind clapped with gentle cheer,
And whispered secrets only it could hear.



On a tiptoe morning, soft and bright,
The sun wore freckles made of light.
The clouds all giggled drifting by,
Practicing shapes against the sky.

A ladybug hummed a tiny tune,
The daisies danced along the noon.
Even the clocks took time to play,
Losing their seconds in the day.

And in that hour, sweet and small,
The stars leaned close to hear it all
They learned from earth, for a little while,
The simple art of how to smile.



Patricia- Stefania Prodan

Co-ordinating teacher: Carmen Malaet





Finding balance in a digital world

Let's be honest — our lives revolve around screens. We wake up to alarms on our phones, check notifications before brushing our teeth, and somehow, before we even realize it, hours disappear into the black hole of scrolling. Technology is amazing, yes — but sometimes it feels like we're more connected to Wi-Fi than to each other.



So... how do we find balance?



For our generation, “digital balance” doesn't mean giving up our phones or deleting every social app. It's about learning when to disconnect in order to reconnect — with ourselves, our friends, and the real world around us.

Psychologists say this is part of digital well-being, but I think it's also about emotional well-being. When we step away from screens, even for a short time, something shifts: the world seems a little brighter, conversations feel deeper, and time slows down just enough for us to breathe.

Here's a thought: what if we treated our attention like it was the most valuable currency we have? Because, honestly, it is. Every time we scroll, watch, like, or comment, we're spending a piece of it. The question is — are we investing it wisely?

Try this little experiment:

- One hour a day screen-free. Go for a walk, talk to someone face-to-face, or write something — on actual paper.
- Turn off unnecessary notifications. Not every buzz deserves your heartbeat.
- Be intentional online. Post, share, and engage with meaning — not just out of habit.



Technology should amplify our lives, not replace them. The goal isn't to go offline forever, but to live online on purpose. Because at the end of the day, the best kind of connection is still the one that doesn't need Wi-Fi.



Alexandru Valentin Truta
Co-ordinating teacher:
Carmen Malaet

THE INVISIBLE SUITCASES OF PEOPLE



You see people everywhere. Children, teenagers, the elderly, everywhere. What if we stopped for a few minutes and looked at them from a different perspective, one we may have never noticed before? Simply. A new angle, a new perception.

These people carry a brown suitcase with them, even if they don't show it. That suitcase represents unseen burdens carried with every step. They are so deeply rooted, hidden even from their own eyes, like the roots of a tree that you can only fully see after you dig them up. Some allow themselves to be seen; others do not. Perhaps they want to show themselves, but they feel they cannot be completely discovered. There is a part of them that wants to be heard, but remains silent.

If you want to fully uncover a tree, a few minutes are not enough. It may take hours, weeks, or even years. People are just the same. The reason they do not open their hearts immediately may be fear of judgment or the feeling that their time does not matter. But if we treated each other with more kindness, perhaps it would change how we relate to the burdens of others. When we observe others in vulnerable moments, it becomes clear that these experiences are part of life - they are universal.

We may never fully understand what prevents us from opening up, but we can discover fragments, reflect, and learn to know ourselves and others better.

Perhaps it is precisely in this search that our true strength lies: the courage to look, to understand, to feel, even just for a moment, our own authenticity.



Izabel-Emmanuela Bulai
Co-ordinating teacher:
Carmen Malaet



Fear is holding you back



Ever since I was young, I've always had this persisting feeling of fear and anxiety gnawing at me. Fear that I wasn't good enough, fear of what people thought of me or fear of not being accepted into social groups. Only this year have I understood how much that was actually holding me back.

I have always been the type of person to stay in their comfort zone, too scared to venture out and try new things. I could list a hundred times when this fear made me miss opportunities and prevented me from having new experiences that could've helped me grow as a person.

This year, however, has been different. I've been more carefree and less anxious about how people perceive me. So, what changed? My high school years so far have definitely played a crucial role in this realisation.



One notable example is when I was abroad in Greece earlier this year. I was one of the fortunate people to be chosen to participate in the Erasmus+ project and while that may not sound so grand, it was one of the biggest things that helped me grow this year. When I



was first chosen and found out who I'd be going to Greece with, I was equally excited and unnerved. Everyone knew at least one person from the group, everyone had their partners, everyone except me. Taking all I have written above into consideration, you can imagine just how intimidated I felt. But nonetheless, with all of

my worries and irrational questions such as "What if I don't make any friends?" or "What if I'll be all alone?", I went and realised what a foolish mindset that was. The event I was so anxious about became a lifelong cherished memory, the people I was so scared to talk to became some of my closest friends. Those five short days helped me adapt to situations better, helped with my social skills and overall helped me become a more confident person.

This is just one of the many similar experiences I've had this year. Every new person I've met and every single thing that has happened to me has all ultimately led to my bubble of comfort slowly being shattered. I think putting yourself out there, whether that means making a new friend or doing something you've always wanted to do, is the only way to get over this, to realise that not everything is so serious.

Fear used to control a big part of my life. Now, with every opportunity I get, I'm learning to let go of it and let myself try new things because you never know which ones might stick with you. Everything gets easier when you stop caring as much about what others might say and realise not everyone has to like you, just a few close people. Ultimately, it just has to make sense to you and no one else.

Believe
IN
Yourself

Mara Lungu
Co-ordinating teacher: Carmen Malaet





Learn more about...

DISTEENCT

ISSUE # 24

A remnant of the past- Cula Cernatestilor

Nestled in the hills of Dolj County, Romania, Cula Cernatestilor is one of the most intriguing cule (semi-fortified dwellings) in Oltenia. Originally constructed in the late 18th century by the boierii (wealthy family) Cernatesti, the building was later modified during the 19th century to include a wooden balcony walkway and other structural reinforcements.

Architecturally, the cula is rectangular, comprised of three levels, with the ground floor housing a cellar and entrance hall, and upper floors serving as living quarters. Its walls are thick—measuring about 85 cm at the base, tapering to 50-60 cm near the roof—offering defense in turbulent times. Metereze (arrow slits) remain visible on the lower levels.

Historically, cule like this one were built in Oltenia between the 17th and 19th centuries to protect landowners and their assets against raids or local unrest. The Cernatesti cula forms part of a wider heritage of cule in Dolj, alongside Cula Izvoranu-Geblescu and Cula Poenaru.

In recent years, Cula Cernatestilor has been the focus of a major restoration project funded with a budget of over 1.9 million lei. The work has involved consolidation, preservation of original architectural elements, and plans for making the museal function even more appealing.

When fully restored, the cula will be part of a cultural circuit open to the public, enabling visitors to step back into the era when defensive homes were a necessity.



Elena-Teodora Nicolae
Co-ordinating teacher:
Carmen Malaet



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Santa Claus and his story



Nowadays, Santa Claus is the most well-known holiday figure, due to the tradition of giving gifts to children and their parents. But what are his origins? How did this mythological character come to be in the form he is now and be adored by so many people around the world?

The true story of Santa Claus begins with Saint Nicholas, the bishop of Myra, Lycia. Saint Nicholas became known for his care and generosity towards the needy, as well as his love for children. Over the centuries, many stories about his deeds have been told, highlighting his empathetic and giving character.



One of the stories tells about a poor man who had 3 daughters. At that time, the fathers of the young women had to offer dowries to their future son-in-law. The bigger the dowry, the greater the chances of finding a good husband, and if there was none at all, then the girl remained unmarried. The man had nothing to offer. But Saint Nicholas, generous as he was, prevented this and left 3 bags of money in their house. It is said that the bags of money, thrown through a window, landed in the shoes left in front of the fire to dry. This led to the tradition of leaving the shoes at the door and eagerly awaiting Saint Nicholas's arrival.

The inhabitants of America began to popularize the celebration of Saint Nicholas in the 18th century as a reason to give gifts, without having any commercial interest. Once the commercial side began, the change of his name to Santa Claus gradually started to appear. In 1820, his well-known ornaments, the sleigh, reindeer, bells, began to be attributed to him. All of this actually coincides with the reality of the world in which he was born, for example, people at that time travelled by sleigh in New York.



Clement Clarke Moore, a New York professor, had an idea, in 1822, that changed the way people perceived the character. He wrote a 56-line poem he called "A Visit from Saint Nicholas," now known as "The Night Before Christmas." In this work, Santa Claus was not presented as a bishop, but as a small, cheerful elf, dressed in fur, smoking a pipe, and carrying a bag of gifts on his back. Moore created for him a sleigh that flew into the distance, pulled by 8 reindeer, each named differently.

For the next century, Santa Claus was portrayed by dozens of other artists, in a variety of styles and colours, and by 1920, the image of the American Santa Claus, fat and dressed in a red suit, was formed. However, the one who definitively established the way he is perceived worldwide was Haddon Sundblom. He used himself for 35 years as the image of Santa Claus for the Coca-Cola company. His presence was very successful and defined the image of Santa Claus as a symbol of contemporary commercial culture.



Concluding, Santa Claus has gradually become more and more associated with the commercial side, an obvious fact considering the aggressive institutions that promote this image of him. However, people still do not forget the true essence of Christmas giving. Saint Nicholas was a symbol of charity, helping people when they were in need. Nowadays, people offer gifts as a sign of gratitude and for the sake of seeing a smile on the face of their loved ones. It is important to remember the main characteristic of Christmas, which is the closeness and love of one person to another.

Teodora Garaiman
Co-ordinating teacher:
Ana-Maria Stefanescu





Claude Monet and Impressionism

~ "I like to paint as a bird sings"

The French painter Oscar-Claude Monet (1840–1926) is considered the father of the artistic movement known as Impressionism, a term derived from the title of his painting *Impression, Sunrise* (*Impression, soleil levant*). Monet developed a method of painting the same scene multiple times throughout the day or across different seasons in order to capture changing light and weather conditions. This approach led to some of his most famous works, including the *Water Lilies* series, inspired by his own garden and comprising more than 250 paintings.

When the art dealers stopped showing support, Monet, Renoir, Pissarro, Sisley, Paul Cézanne, Edgar Degas, and Berthe Morisot decided to organize an independent exhibition, as the Anonymous Society of Painters, Sculptors and Engravers. The artists chose this title in order to not be associated with any style or movement. They preferred pale tones to the dark and contrasting lighting of Romanticism and Realism.

The first Impressionist exhibition in 1874 featured the painting *Impression, Sunrise* (*Impression: soleil levant*) depicting the Le Havre port. The term "Impressionism" was coined from the painting's title.

When his wife passed away in 1879, Monet made a study in oils of her on her death bed. This painting was described by critic John Berger to be one of the "very few death-bed paintings which have been so intensely felt or subjectively expressive."

Afterwards, he began to abandon Impressionist techniques as his paintings utilized darker tones and displayed environments, focusing on the elemental aspect of nature for the rest of the decade. Sometime between 1911 and 1914 Monet developed cataracts. His color perception suffered and his paintings grew darker. He began to label his paint tubes, keeping them in a strict order on the palette so that he could achieve his desired outcome. After he underwent cataract surgery in 1923, he was again able to see "real colors" and destroyed the canvases made before his surgery, thus returning to his previous style.

Impressionists needed to understand the effects of light on the objects' colors as well as the effects of the juxtaposition of colors with each other. Monet's flowing style has been described as "almost ethereal", incorporating quick and bright-colored brushstrokes. He also practiced the *en plein air* (outdoor) painting techniques, which he learned from his mentor, Eugène Boudin, whom he met in 1858. He thought very highly of his teacher, considering that he owed everything to him for his success.

Monet was fascinated by light's effects and often made it the central focus in his works. He sometimes would complete entire paintings in one sitting to capture light's variation. He had the habit of painting the same subject at different hours of the day, even working on as many as eight canvases at once. He freed himself from theory by thinking in terms of colors and shapes instead of scenes and objects. The artist spent countless hours perfecting his canvases and was not hesitant to destroy them when he deemed them as unsuccessful.

Monet is now the most famous Impressionist and his art is said to link Impressionism with modern abstract art, creating a bridge between tradition and modernism, representing one of the greatest influences in the world of art.





The Neighbourhood



THE NBHD

A Band That Defined the Mood of a Generation

Over the past decade, few bands have shaped the sound and aesthetic of alternative music as strongly as The Neighbourhood. Known for their moody atmosphere, black-and-white visuals, and smooth blend of alternative rock, R&B, and indie pop, the California-based band became a cultural reference point for many teenagers searching for music that feels both emotional and stylish.

Formed in 2011, The Neighbourhood quickly stood out thanks to the distinctive voice and artistic vision of lead singer Jesse Rutherford. Their breakout single, "Sweater Weather," released in 2012, became an international hit and remains one of the most streamed alternative songs of the decade. Although many listeners first discovered the band through this track, The Neighbourhood proved that their sound goes far beyond a single viral moment.

Throughout their career, the band released several successful albums, each with its own unique identity. I Love You. introduced their cinematic, melancholic atmosphere, while Wiped Out! explored dreamy surf-rock influences and deeper emotional themes. Later, Chip Chrome & the Mono-Tones surprised fans with a futuristic concept and a more polished, experimental sound. No matter the style, their music consistently deals with topics such as love, insecurity, identity, and the complicated process of growing up - themes that many young listeners relate to.

Even though the band announced an indefinite hiatus in 2022, their impact hasn't faded. In fact, The Neighbourhood officially reunited this year, surprising fans and generating excitement for their next chapter. With their return, old and new listeners are eagerly waiting to see how the band will evolve and what new music they will bring.

More than just a group of musicians, The Neighbourhood has become a mood, a visual style, and a voice for modern youth. Their legacy lives on through the atmosphere they created - one that feels nostalgic, emotional, and unmistakably theirs.



Anamaria Valentina Iancu
Co-ordinating teacher:
Carmen Malaet





Pigeons

Nature's Messengers and Companions



Pigeons are among the most familiar birds in the world, often seen cooing in city streets, town squares, and parks. Among them, the rock pigeon (*Columba livia*) is the species most closely connected to humans. Their long history, adaptability, and unique contributions to society show that pigeons are much more than ordinary city birds.

Rock pigeons originally lived on cliffs and rocky areas across Europe, North Africa, and parts of Asia. They are medium-sized birds with short necks, small heads, and sturdy bodies. In the wild, their bluish-gray feathers, two dark wing bars, and slightly shiny necks make them easily recognizable. Highly adaptable, rock pigeons can thrive in many different environments, which has allowed them to live alongside humans for thousands of years.

One of the most remarkable traits of rock pigeons is their ability to find their way home over long distances. Even when moved far from their nests, they can navigate back with surprising accuracy. This skill was central to their domestication and made them highly valuable to humans.



Humans have relied on pigeons for thousands of years. Evidence shows that rock pigeons were domesticated over 5,000 years ago in the Middle East. Early humans kept pigeons for food, as pets, and for their eggs. Beyond their role as a food source, pigeons were prized for their homing ability. Ancient civilizations, including the Egyptians, Greeks, and Romans, used them to carry messages. These messenger pigeons delivered news about battles, royal orders, and urgent events, often traveling long distances quickly and reliably.



Pigeons became even more famous during the 19th and early 20th centuries for their role in wars. During World War I and World War II, pigeons carried critical messages across dangerous battlefields, saving lives. One famous pigeon, Cher Ami, is remembered for delivering a message that helped save nearly 200 soldiers, even after being injured in flight.

Today, pigeons are often taken for granted in cities, but they continue to have an impact. Many are still bred for racing and competitive exhibitions, with pigeon racing remaining a popular sport worldwide. Pigeons have also contributed to science, helping researchers study navigation, homing behavior, and even genetics, deepening our understanding of animal behavior.

Rock pigeons are more than urban wildlife. From wild cliffs to busy cities, they have lived alongside humans for thousands of years, providing food, companionship, and valuable services. Their remarkable homing abilities turned them into living messengers long before modern communication existed. Even today, pigeons symbolize resilience, adaptability, and the special ways humans and animals can coexist.



Eduard-Eugen Enache
Co-ordinating teacher: Carmen Malaet



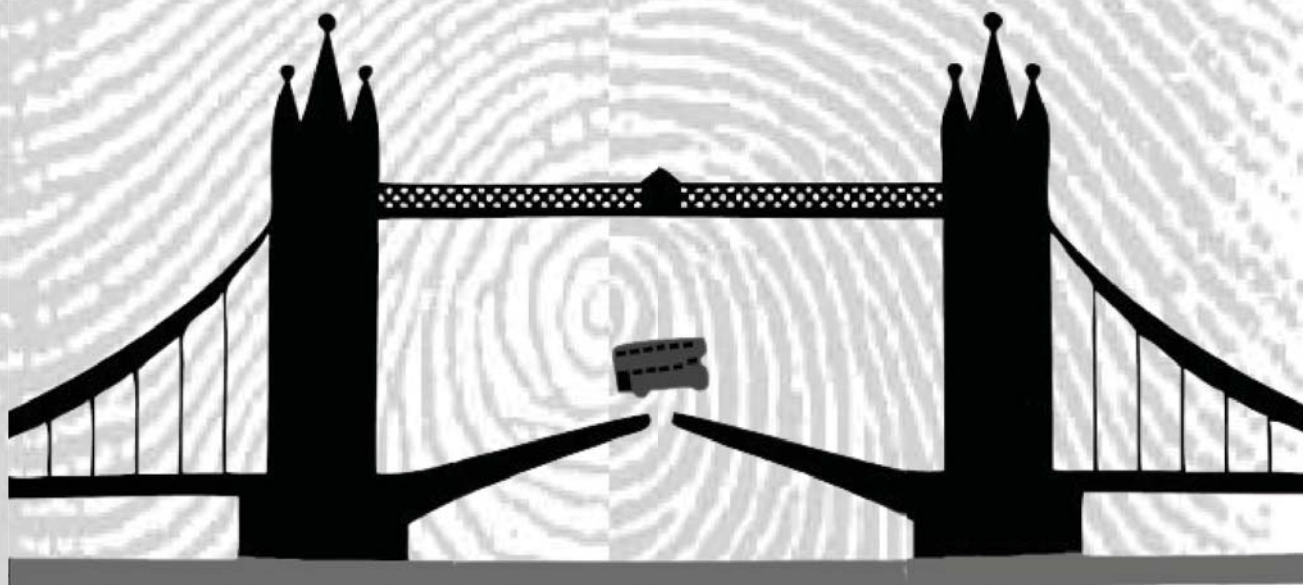


THE NIGHT A LONDON BUS JUMPED TOWER BRIDGES

It sounds like something straight out of an action movie—but this story is 100% real. On a freezing, fog-stained night in December 1952, London witnessed an almost unbelievable event: a double-decker bus jumped Tower Bridge. What began as an ordinary trip aboard the No. 78 quickly turned into one of the most dramatic moments in the city's transport history.

Driver Albert Gunter, travelling at a steady 12 mph, saw nothing unusual. The traffic lights were green, the warning bell silent, and visibility already poor from the lingering smog. But as he rolled across the southern bascule, he suddenly realised the road ahead was rising beneath him. Tower Bridge was opening and he, his conductor, and twenty passengers were already on it.

With no time to stop and no space to reverse, Gunter had seconds to choose between disaster and daring. Drawing on his experience as a wartime tank driver, he slammed the bus into a lower gear and accelerated straight toward the widening gap. Passengers were thrown forward as the front wheels lifted off the rising roadway. Incredibly, the bus cleared the gap, landing with a jarring crash on the far side but remaining upright. Despite the shock, everyone survived.



Witnesses described the scene as terrifying and surreal. One passenger, Peter Dunn, recalled being hurled to the floor before stepping outside to stare in disbelief at the space they had just crossed. Another passenger, May Walshaw, was so shaken she avoided buses entirely until Gunter personally helped her board again and face the bridge that had nearly claimed them all.

A rapid inquiry revealed the truth: a bridge operator had made a critical “error of judgment,” allowing the bascule to rise without proper warnings. Gunter's quick thinking had prevented a tragedy the city could have been discussing for decades.

For his bravery, he received 10 pounds, a day off, and later a holiday, but what mattered more was the story he left behind. On that icy winter night, an ordinary London bus driver made a split-second decision that turned a routine journey into legend.

Sometimes heroes don't wear capes,
sometimes they drive buses.

Stefan Iacob-Spataru
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The Secret Planet Beyond Neptune

I'm sure you're all fascinated by our Solar System, and you've obviously heard many theories about aliens, black holes, and so on. But have you ever heard of the mysterious Planet X?

For many years, astronomers have been interested in the possibility of a hidden planet located far beyond Neptune. This hypothetical world is often called Planet X or Planet Nine. Although no one has ever seen it directly, some scientists believe that its existence could explain the unusual orbits of several distant objects in the Kuiper Belt.

The idea of Planet X first appeared in the early 20th century, when astronomers tried to understand small irregularities in the motions of Uranus and Neptune. Their search led to the discovery of Pluto in 1930, but it soon became clear that Pluto was too small to account for those gravitational effects. As a result, the mystery of a possible hidden planet remained unsolved.



In 2016, two astronomers, Konstantin Batygin and Mike Brown, revived the hypothesis. Their research suggested that a planet about five to ten times the mass of Earth, following a very elongated orbit, could explain the strange alignment of certain distant celestial objects. However, NASA's observations, including data from the WISE mission, have not yet found direct evidence of such a planet.

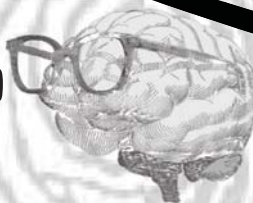
Today, Planet X remains an uncertain but fascinating idea. Whether it truly exists or not, the search for it encourages scientific curiosity and helps us better understand the outer edge of our Solar System.

Andreea-Maria Tudor
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The Teen Brain:

Why We Feel Everything at 200%



If you've ever caught yourself thinking, "Why did that tiny thing ruin my entire mood?" or "Why do I suddenly want to change my whole life at 2 .m.?"—congratulations. You're the proud owner of a teenage brain, a marvelous machine that runs on high-speed emotions, questionable decisions, and the occasional burst of pure genius.

Scientists say the teen brain develops kind of like a house renovation: the emotional rooms get upgraded first, while the decision-making department is still waiting for new furniture. The amygdala—your emotional alarm system—is fully equipped and *VERY* enthusiastic. Meanwhile, the prefrontal cortex, responsible for planning and logic, is casually strolling in like, "I'll be ready in a few years."

This mismatch explains a lot. Why a compliment feels like a trophy, but a small embarrassment feels like you should move to another continent. Why your favorite song hits you like it understands your soul better than anyone else. Why every experience seems to come in "Extra Intense" mode.

And yes—dopamine, the brain's "reward chemical," is throwing confetti everywhere. It makes new experiences thrilling, friendships powerful, and risks... well, extremely tempting. (No, this is not permission to do something reckless, but it is why you sometimes consider it.)



But here's the best part: feeling things at 200% isn't a flaw—it's a feature. This emotional turbo-mode gives you creativity that adults envy, passion that moves mountains, and the ability to form deep connections that feel like they're straight out of a movie. So the next time you feel overwhelmed by life, remember: your brain is not broken. It's upgrading. You're in the most dynamic, dramatic, occasionally chaotic, but incredibly powerful stage of your entire life.

Amalia Gabriela Virban
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Blood, Sweat and Baskets: The Making of a Pro Hooper

Every aspiring basketball player dreams of hearing their name on NBA Draft night, stepping under the lights and proving they belong among the best. But behind every highlight is a story of sacrifice, dedication, and belief.



Most players start young, often introduced to the game by their parents. From there, each player takes their own unique path. While the goal is the same everywhere, the journey looks very different depending on where you grow up, especially between North America and Europe.

In the United States of America, players often learn basketball in a very individual way. Early on, the focus is on scoring and making flashy plays. As they rise through the ranks, many struggle with team concepts because they've been taught to prioritize personal stats. Media outlets like ESPN and 247Sports rank high school players each year, and most top-ranked prospects are more focused on their own numbers than their team's success. The elite few go on to play college basketball, a level reserved for about 400 of the best high school players. The college season ends with the high-stakes March Madness tournament, where pressure is intense and NBA scouts are watching. Around 300 players from all over the world get a shot at the NBA, but only 100 have guaranteed contracts. The rest either keep fighting or move overseas, many choosing Europe for its strong competition and good salaries.



In Europe, the journey is structured differently. Players join private clubs as early as age 8, competing in national leagues where the focus is on winning. By 13, most join junior teams linked to city clubs, where the pressure is on to win national championships. Development often takes a back seat to results, but top teams get invited to international tournaments, offering scouts a broader look at young talent. One major difference in Europe is that players can turn pro at 15. National youth teams give the best players exposure, and even small contracts, sometimes as low as €300

per month, can be the first step into a serious career. These players grow up competing in strong systems and end up better prepared for elite leagues like Liga ACB (Spain), the FIBA Europe Cup, the Basketball Champions League, the EuroCup, and the EuroLeague. Over the past decade, European players have made their mark on basketball worldwide, with names like Nikola Jokić, Luka Dončić, and Victor Wembanyama leading the way.



One player who's lived through both systems is Chima Moneke. He began in Nigeria, where youth development follows a European model. He later moved to the U.S. for high school, then played college ball at Northeast CC and UC Davis. After going undrafted in 2018, he began his professional career in France's second division, playing for Rouen, Denain, and Béliers de Kemper. In 2020, he moved up to LNB Pro A with Orléans, then joined BAXI Manresa in Spain, where he had a breakout season. That success earned him an NBA contract with the Sacramento Kings. Though his time in the NBA was short, he returned stronger, starred with AS Monaco, and now plays for Baskonia, one of Europe's top teams and one of the most decorated teams in European basketball history.



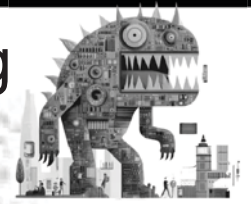
Success isn't easy. It's filled with setbacks, long nights, and tough decisions. But those who stay focused, keep working, and believe in their journey often find their place. Whether in basketball or in life, talent is only part of the equation. What matters most is perseverance, heart, and the will to keep pushing forward.

Alexandru-Mihai Ciuca
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Artificial Intelligence: Shaping Modern Life



Artificial Intelligence (AI) is rapidly transforming modern society, influencing the way we live, work, and communicate. From virtual assistants like Siri and Alexa to recommendation systems on platforms such as YouTube and Netflix, AI is becoming an integral part of daily life, helping people complete tasks faster, make decisions, and discover content suited to their preferences.

Beyond everyday convenience, AI is revolutionizing industries. In healthcare, AI systems help detect diseases early, analyze medical images, and develop personalized treatment plans, improving patient outcomes. In finance, AI predicts market trends, optimizes investments, and helps prevent fraud. In education, AI tools provide personalized learning experiences, allowing students to learn at their own pace. Even creative fields such as art, music, and design are embracing AI, generating new ideas and assisting artists in exploring innovative forms of expression.



Moreover, AI is shaping global issues, from climate modeling to disaster response. Smart systems analyze complex data to predict natural disasters, optimize energy use, and support sustainable development. In transportation, AI is driving innovations in autonomous vehicles, traffic management, and logistics, making travel and deliveries faster and safer.

Despite these advantages, AI also presents challenges and ethical dilemmas. Automation may lead to job displacement, especially in repetitive tasks, while algorithmic biases can reinforce social inequalities. Privacy concerns are increasing as AI systems collect and process large amounts of personal data, raising questions about surveillance and data security. Society must adopt AI responsibly, ensuring fairness, transparency, and accountability while maximizing its benefits.

As AI continues to evolve, it not only enhances efficiency and innovation but also challenges us to rethink human potential and responsibility. By integrating AI thoughtfully into our lives, we can harness its power to solve complex problems, improve daily experiences, and create a more connected, intelligent, and efficient world.



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Aristotle's Philosophy: The Pursuit of Virtue and Happiness



Aristotle, one of the most influential philosophers in history, developed a practical approach to understanding human life, morality, and the natural world. Unlike Plato, who emphasized abstract ideals, Aristotle focused on observation, experience, and the tangible aspects of life, believing that philosophy should guide people toward flourishing (or eudaimonia), often translated as happiness or fulfillment.

At the heart of Aristotle's ethics is the concept of virtue. He argued that living well requires cultivating moral and intellectual virtues, such as courage, honesty, generosity, and wisdom. Virtues are developed through habit and practice; one does not become brave by thinking about bravery, but by courageously over time. Aristotle emphasized the Golden Mean, the idea that virtue lies between extremes. For example, courage is the balance between recklessness and cowardice, generosity lies between extravagance and stinginess. This approach highlights moderation, self-awareness, and thoughtful decision-making as keys to ethical life.



Aristotle also explored purpose and function, introducing the idea that everything in nature has an inherent purpose, or telos. For humans, he argued, the telos is rational activity in accordance with virtue. By fulfilling this purpose, individuals achieve eudaimonia, a life marked by meaningful action, reflection, and contribution to the community.

Beyond ethics, Aristotle made foundational contributions to logic, metaphysics, politics, and science. His method of careful observation and categorization influenced centuries of scholarship, emphasizing that knowledge arises from experience as well as reason.

Ultimately, Aristotle's philosophy is deeply practical. It asks not only what is true, but how to live well, emphasizing that virtue, purpose, and rational thought are inseparable from happiness. By cultivating habits of excellence and striving for balance, Aristotle argued, humans can achieve a life that is fulfilling, ethical, and meaningful.



Marian Georgescu

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The Mandela Effect and False Memories

The Mandela Effect describes situations in which large groups of people remember the same event or detail in a way that does not match reality. The term was introduced by researcher Fiona Broome after many people claimed to remember Nelson Mandela dying in prison in the 1980s. In reality, Mandela was released, became president of South Africa, and died in 2013. This shared but incorrect memory sparked curiosity about how the human mind works.

Scientists explain the Mandela Effect through the nature of memory. Memory is not a perfect recording of events; instead, it is reconstructive. Each time we recall something, the brain rebuilds the memory from fragments, filling gaps with details that seem logical or familiar. These added details can gradually feel like real memories, even if they never happened.



Social influence also plays an important role. When many people share the same incorrect memory, others are more likely to adopt it. We tend to trust information that comes from groups or that matches our expectations. As a result, false memories can spread quickly and become surprisingly convincing.



Examples of the Mandela Effect include misquoted movie lines, small changes in logos, and incorrect recollections of historical facts. A well-known case is the line "Luke, I am your father", which many believe appears in *Star Wars*, although the actual quote is different. Such mistakes show how easily our brains mix details from culture, media, and conversations.



The Mandela Effect matters because it reminds us that even strong, confident memories can be inaccurate. This has real-life consequences, especially when people rely on memory to make decisions or describe events.

In conclusion, the Mandela Effect is not evidence of alternate realities but a reflection of how the human mind processes and reconstructs information. It encourages us to question our memories and recognize that they can be flawed, even when they feel completely true.



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The Hidden Science of Time Perception

Have you ever wondered why time seems to pass slowly when you're waiting for something exciting, yet rushes by when you're having fun? Or why childhood summers felt endless, while school years now seem to fly? Time itself never changes—seconds remain seconds, days remain days—but the way our brains perceive time is one of the most fascinating mysteries in science. Understanding how this works reveals surprising truths about memory, emotion, attention, and even survival.

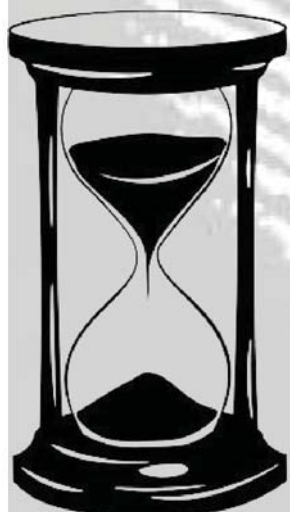
Humans don't measure time like clocks do. Instead, our brains rely on electrical and chemical signals that fluctuate depending on our emotional state, environment, and how much information we process at once. When something unexpected happens—like suddenly stumbling or hearing a loud noise—the brain switches into “high alert.” It begins recording more details per second, creating the illusion that the moment lasted longer. This is why scary or intense situations often feel slow-motion. Your brain isn't slowing time—it's speeding up your awareness.

On the other hand, routine experiences make time feel faster. When the brain knows what to expect, it stops collecting unnecessary details. Think of walking the same route to school every day. After a while, you barely notice the journey. Because fewer memories are stored, the brain compresses the experience, making time feel shorter. This is one reason adulthood seems quicker than childhood: as we grow up, fewer events feel “new,” so the brain records less, making years appear to pass in a blink.

Emotion also plays a huge role. Happiness, excitement, and engagement make time feel faster because the brain is immersed rather than observing. Boredom, stress, or waiting slow down our internal clock. Scientists believe this happens because the brain's “timekeeper,” located in the basal ganglia, speeds up or slows down depending on dopamine levels. More dopamine? Time feels fast. Less dopamine? Time drags.

But the most surprising discovery is this: our perception of time is closely tied to memory, not the present moment. When you look back on a fun day, it feels long because your brain stored many rich memories. When you remember a dull day, it feels short because your brain recorded very little. This means our sense of time is actually a story we construct in hindsight.

Animals experience time differently as well. Small creatures like birds, flies, and mice process visual information faster, making the world appear in more frames per second—almost like watching a slow-motion movie. This helps them escape predators. Larger animals, such as humans or elephants, process fewer frames per second, giving them a smoother, more fluid sense of time. So from a fly's perspective, your attempt to slap it probably looks like a slow, gentle wave.



Finally, there's the big question: can we control our sense of time? Surprisingly, yes. By experiencing new things, paying closer attention to everyday life, practicing mindfulness, or breaking routines, we can make time feel fuller and slower. In other words, the more alive our moments are, the longer they feel—both in the present and in memory.

Time doesn't change.

We do. And that is what makes the study of time perception so deeply human and endlessly fascinating.

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BE HAPPY !!



Miscellaneous

DISTEENCT

ISSUE #24

Unlock the wonders around you



The world has many small details and amazing facts we often overlook in our everyday lives. From science, which explains the sky's colors and the remarkable ways animals communicate, there is a hidden story behind each part of our environment.

Curiosity is one of our strengths. It makes us explore and think about things we often miss. Shadows have shapes that change with the time of day, music changes our feelings and some places have a unique feel. The answers to these wonders are fascinating and will amaze us.

Learning happens beyond the classroom. It happens when you stop to watch and when you ask yourself why and when you stumble upon something surprising which sparks a new idea. The more you explore, the more you see that facts might hide in what seems like ordinary moments.

Exploring the world with curiosity allows us to turn ordinary moments into opportunities for learning. Even a simple walk in the park, observing people's behaviors, or noticing small changes in nature can spark new ideas and inspire creativity. Each discovery, no matter how small, can lead to bigger questions and a deeper understanding of how the world works, showing us that there is always more to see, learn, and appreciate around us.

In conclusion, by maintaining curiosity and noticing the small things in our life, we might uncover beauty, marvel, and inspiration.

Denis Robert Tone

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You'll Laugh: It's All Chemistry

A scientific excuse for why you giggled at that terrible joke.

They say laughter is the best medicine which is convenient, because it comes with no side effects and doesn't require a prescription. Though, to be fair, your brain is doing quite a bit of pharmaceutical work behind the scenes.

Every time you laugh, your neurons release a delightful chemical cocktail: dopamine, endorphins, and serotonin, those molecules of pure happiness. Your stress hormones drop, your muscles loosen, and for a brief, shining moment, everything feels manageable - even Mondays.

And if you've ever said "we have chemistry" with someone, you're more right than you know. A shared laugh releases oxytocin, the so-called "bonding hormone." That's why we feel instantly closer to people who share our sense of humor - it's literally a social glue, made of molecules.

Here's the experiment in short:

- Reactants: one joke + open mind
- Catalyst: good company
- Reaction: contagious laughter
- Products: happiness, friendship, maybe tears (of joy).

So yes, laughter may seem spontaneous and mysterious, but it's pure biochemistry - the most charming reaction your body can produce. And the best part? Unlike most experiments, this one never fails.



Eliana Daniela Tonea

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Minimalism in Fashion



an answer to overconsumption?

I've always loved fashion, but it took me a while to figure out what really feels like me. I went through phases — loud colours, trendy pieces, clothes that looked good in theory but didn't actually feel right when I walked out the door. At some point I started paying attention to minimalist fashion. Clean lines, neutral colours, simple silhouettes, not boring, but intentional. My style now is elegant without trying too hard, soft but confident, calm but still expressive. I don't need flashy outfits to prove anything. I feel the most beautiful when my style looks effortless, like I didn't overthink it... even though I probably did.

It's often said that minimalist fashion was born in the 1920's, when Coco Chanel first introduced the world to the little black dress "Simplicity is the keynote of all true elegance," the designer reportedly said. Over a century later, the less-is-more approach is still considered one of the chicest ways to dress. Just consider the enduring covetability of understated labels like The Row, Calvin Klein, Jil Sander, and Phoebe Philo's Celine.

For all its visual brevity, minimalist fashion isn't always totally effortless to pull off. In certain hands, a turtleneck and a pair of pants can be the ultimate in sophistication, or a total snooze. To that end, minimalist fashion requires a certain appreciation for nuance. An understanding of silhouette, texture, and proportion helps, but it's mostly about having the confidence to let your discernment speak for itself. Minimalism is the "simple expression of a complex thought" and about "the whole" being more interesting than its individual parts. It's helpful to define your wardrobe foundations and to be disciplined when shopping. Stick to a uniform of the pieces that make you feel the best and invest in what you truly love.



Accessorizing is where minimalism really finds its strength. Think of your wardrobe essentials as the canvas that grounds the look, then "add interest" with pieces like a vintage ring or a staple bag she recommends. Jewelry, even when small, can make a large impact on an outfit.

In other words, minimalist fashion is as much a philosophy and a practice as it is an aesthetic. "It's about an ease that you can feel and see,"



Irina Mihaela Preda

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Beyond the Sun: The significance of your Moon and Rising sign

In astrology, the three main components of an individual's birth chart are their Sun sign, Moon sign, and Rising sign (also known as Ascendant). Each of these signs represents different aspects of a person's personality and character traits, and they are derived from the positions of the Sun, Moon, and the Ascendant at the time of their birth. Here's an explanation of the significance of each:

1. Sun Sign: This is the sign that most people are familiar with as their "zodiac sign." It represents the core of one's identity, ego, and individuality. The Sun sign reflects the qualities that people express outwardly, how they approach life, and their basic personality traits. It's often seen as the primary indicator of a person's character in popular astrology.

2. Moon Sign: The Moon sign represents one's emotional nature, inner self, instincts, and subconscious mind. It reflects how a person reacts emotionally to situations, their deepest needs, and their instinctual responses. Understanding the Moon sign can provide insights into a person's emotional makeup, their instincts, and their inner world.

3. Rising Sign (Ascendant): The Rising sign is the sign that was rising on the eastern horizon at the time of a person's birth. It governs one's outward demeanor, the image they project to the world, and their initial approach to new situations. The Rising sign represents the "mask" or the first impression that others perceive, as well as the way a person approaches new experiences and environments.

The significance of these three signs lies in the fact that each offers a unique perspective on an individual's personality. While the Sun sign represents the core essence of who a person is, the Moon sign delves into their emotional landscape, and the Rising sign offers insights into their outward behavior and how they interact with the world. Together, they provide a more comprehensive understanding of a person's character, motivations, and behavior patterns, allowing for a deeper exploration of self-awareness and personal growth. Astrologers often analyze all three signs in a birth chart to gain a more nuanced understanding of an individual's personality and life experiences.



Alexandra Danciu

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A soulmate or a twin flame?



Everyone has heard of soulmates and twin flames, but not everyone knows that these two connections are completely different. Each serves a different purpose.

The twin flame is a kind of mirror of yourself. That person possesses your flaws or those parts of you that you deny. The relationship with your twin flame is not about peace and happiness. This is a journey of self-discovery and becoming a better version of yourself. It can also be about romance, but in general this connection is one extreme. You can go from a great attraction with that person to a very big hatred. Sometimes you don't even realize what is wrong with you and why you that person is always on your mind. After it achieves its purpose of helping you evolve spiritually, the intensity of the relationship begins to disappear. Some people have transposed their relationship with their twin flame into literature or music, which has helped others to cope with these intense experience. This connection is painful and sometimes you wish you had never met that person. Yet you feel like they were part of your destiny, even if for a short period of time. If you think that person is, for example, arrogant, then it means that this trait belongs to you too, but you are trying to deny it. When you become aware of this and try to correct these flaws, the connection with your twin flame will no longer seem like such a bad thing.

Soulmates are, however, the people with whom we truly feel at home. With a soulmate you feel like you can be yourself and you are the happiest version of yourself. Many soulmates often make the most beautiful couples. However, specialists say that we have more than one soulmate, unlike the twin flame which is only one. Some of them can even be our parents or good friends, that is, people who bring a smile to our faces. In short, those people with whom your heart laughs and with whom you would like to spend your entire life are probably part of this category. While in the case of twin flames, the "flame" usually fades quickly and abruptly, the love for the soulmate is enduring and comforting.

To cut a long story short, it might help to reflect on your relationships and notice how each one truly makes you feel. Everything happens for a reason, and all bad things are for the better. Try to be optimistic and this way you will attract only positive things and you will get through difficult times more easily.



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Top 5 Serial Killers in History

Throughout history, there have been criminals whose actions went beyond individual crimes and left a strong impact on society. Due to the number of victims, the methods used, and the fear they created, these individuals became well known far beyond their own time and place. The following five serial killers are among those who significantly influenced public awareness of crime and remain frequently referenced in historical and criminological records.



1. Jack the Ripper (United Kingdom)

Jack the Ripper was active in the Whitechapel district of London in 1888. He is believed to have murdered at least five women, commonly referred to as the “canonical victims.” Despite numerous investigations and suspects, his identity was never confirmed. The case revealed the poor living conditions of the time and the limited investigative techniques available in the late nineteenth century.

2. Ted Bundy (United States)

Ted Bundy committed his crimes during the 1970s in several American states. He confessed to 30 murders, although the actual number is thought to be higher. Bundy often gained his victims' trust by appearing friendly and educated, which made his crimes particularly disturbing. He was sentenced to death and executed in 1989.

3. Jeffrey Dahmer (United States)

Jeffrey Dahmer was responsible for a series of murders between 1978 and 1991, mainly in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. He killed 17 young men and boys before being arrested in 1991. His case later became known for the serious mistakes made by authorities, which allowed his crimes to continue for years. Dahmer was killed in prison in 1994.



4. Andrei Chikatilo (Soviet Union)

Andrei Chikatilo carried out his murders between 1978 and 1990 in the Soviet Union. He was convicted of 52 murders, most of them involving women and children. For a long time, Soviet authorities refused to acknowledge the existence of serial killers, which delayed his capture. He was executed in 1994.

5. H. H. Holmes (United States)



H. H. Holmes was active in the late nineteenth century and is often described as one of the first known serial killers in the United States. The exact number of his victims remains unknown. He used deception and false identities to commit his crimes during a period of rapid urban growth. Holmes was executed in 1896.

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The Future of Jobs

What Careers Will Exist in 20 Years?



Have you ever wondered what your job might look like in 20 years?

Imagine waking up, putting on a pair of smart glasses, and stepping into a virtual office located... on Mars. Sounds crazy? Maybe not. The future job market is changing faster than ever, and by the time we graduate, many careers that exist today will completely transform — and new ones will appear out of nowhere.



VR World Designer: Think of someone who creates entire virtual worlds — schools, cities, games, even vacations. Instead of building with bricks, they build with pixels. If you love art + technology, this is a dream job.

Robot Engineer for Everyday Life: Robots won't just be in factories. We'll have robots that cook, clean, help the elderly, or even walk pets. Someone will need to design, fix, and improve them — that "someone" could be you.

Health & Body Upgrade Specialist: In the future, we might have tiny devices that monitor our health 24/7 or even improve our physical abilities. Specialists will help people choose and manage these "upgrades."

Eco-Innovation Architect: Climate change means we'll need experts who design green buildings, smart forests, and pollution-free cities. A mix of creativity, science, and saving the planet.

Digital Detective: As everything moves online, cybercrime grows. Digital Detectives will investigate online mysteries, from hacked identities to virtual thefts.

The truth is simple: the best jobs in 20 years will belong to the people who are curious, creative, and willing to learn new things. Technology changes fast, but so do we. And maybe the coolest part? The job you'll have one day might not even exist yet.

Andreea Bianca Dinulescu
Coordinating teacher: Carmen Malaet



Why Today's Teens Are Turning to Tattoos

Over the past decade, tattoo culture has undergone a remarkable transformation. Once seen as symbols of rebellion or reserved for certain subcultures, tattoos have moved firmly into the mainstream—especially among younger generations. Today's teens, raised in an era of self-expression and digital identity, are more fascinated than ever by body art.

A Shift in Cultural Perception

Tattoos are no longer viewed as permanent mistakes or impulsive acts. Teens today see them as meaningful forms of storytelling—ways to express personal values, memories, or creativity. Social media platforms such as Instagram, TikTok, and Pinterest have also played a major role, offering endless inspiration through tattoo artists, influencers, and curated aesthetics.

The normalization of tattoos among celebrities, athletes, and content creators has further erased the stigma previously attached to body art. As a result, younger people now feel more confident embracing ink as part of their identity.

A Desire for Personal Expression

For many teens, tattoos serve as a deeply personal outlet. Some choose symbols that represent their cultural heritage, mental health journeys, or personal mottos. Others are drawn to the artistic aspect—fine-line designs, minimalist motifs, watercolor styles, or intricate patterns.

In an age where individuality is celebrated, tattoos offer teens a way to stand out while still feeling connected to a larger creative movement.

The Importance of Responsibility and Education

While enthusiasm for ink is rising, so is the need for proper education. Many countries set legal age limits for tattoos, often requiring parental consent for minors. Professional artists emphasize safety—sterile equipment, reputable studios, and thoughtful design choices are essential for avoiding regret or health risks.

Teens eager for tattoos must understand the long-term commitment. Permanent body art deserves careful consideration, not impulsive decisions influenced by temporary trends.

The Future of Teen Tattoo Culture

As societal attitudes continue to evolve, teen interest in tattoos is likely to grow. Customization, artistic innovation, and improved safety standards will shape the future of tattoo culture for the next generation.

This reflects more than a trend—it captures a shift toward self-expression, body positivity, and creative freedom. For today's teens, tattoos are not just designs etched on skin; they are living, breathing pieces of identity.

Petru Dovan
Coordinating teacher: Carmen Malaet





The wild world of cheese rolling

England's most chaotic race

Every year, in the quaint village of Cooper's Hill in Gloucestershire, England, a peculiar event takes place that draws thrill-seekers and spectators from around the globe: Cheese Rolling. It's not your typical marathon or 100-meter dash. Here, participants chase a giant wheel of cheese down a steep, grassy hill – and chaos is guaranteed.

The rules are simple: a round of Double Gloucester cheese, weighing around 11 pounds (4 kg), is rolled from the top of the hill, and competitors sprint, tumble, and sometimes fly down after it. The first person to cross the finish line at the bottom wins the cheese.

What makes this event famous – and slightly terrifying – is the hill itself. It's extremely steep, uneven, and slippery. Falls, sprains, and minor injuries are common, making every race a mix of exhilaration, comedy, and danger. In fact, some participants embrace the unpredictability, knowing that tumbling down the hill is part of the fun.

The origins of Cheese Rolling are a mix of legend and tradition. Some say it dates back hundreds of years as a pagan ritual to welcome spring, while others see it simply as a quirky village tradition turned international spectacle. Today, competitors come from all corners of the world, eager to test their speed, balance, and courage.



Despite the risks, the event has a devoted following. Spectators line the sides of the hill, cheering as racers somersault, slide, and occasionally crash in pursuit of a rolling cheese wheel. It's messy, unpredictable, and utterly entertaining – a celebration of daring fun that's uniquely British.

So, next time you hear about Cheese Rolling, remember: it's not just a race. It's a chaotic, hilarious adventure where the prize is cheese and glory, and the journey down the hill is as important as the finish line.



Maria Cristiana Radutoiu

Co-ordinating teacher: Carmen Malaet



How the Best Athletes in the World Think: The Heart of a Champion



The world's greatest athletes do not just perform differently – they think differently. Their minds carry a fire that refuses to go out, a vision so sharp it cuts through doubt. No one embodies this better than Cristiano Ronaldo, a boy from Madeira who transformed what others called “impossible” into history. His mindset shows exactly how champions think – and science explains why it works.

Ronaldo's greatness came from evolution, not perfection. Ronaldo wasn't the strongest or most complete when he began. Instead of hiding weaknesses, he attacked them: improving his weaker foot, building his strength, sharpening his technique. He once said the simple truth: “Talent without working hard is nothing.” This aligns perfectly with studies from the Journal of Sports Sciences, which show athletes with a growth mindset improve up to 25% faster than those who believe talent is fixed.

Ronaldo didn't just want to be great – he structured his entire life around becoming the best. While other players dreamed casually, Ronaldo dreamed with purpose. His goals guided the way he trained, ate, slept, and recovered. And sports psychology backs this up: Athletes who set clear goals achieve 20–30% higher performance than those who rely on hope alone.

This is why Ronaldo often appears calm in the biggest moments – his mind has already been there. Before the world sees Ronaldo shine, he has already lived the moment thousands of times in his mind. Every run, every finish, every celebration is rehearsed internally. Neuroscience proves that visualization activates the same brain circuits as physical practice, strengthening performance and reducing anxiety.



Ronaldo converts pressure into power. Ronaldo faces a level of pressure few humans ever experience: global attention, constant criticism, and the expectation of perfection.

He famously said: “Your hate makes me unstoppable.” Science explains this response. Confident athletes produce 30–45% less cortisol, the stress hormone, during competition. They think clearer, react faster, and perform better.

Ronaldo said it clearly: “If you don't believe you are the best, you will never achieve all you are capable of.”

Razvan Enescu

Co-ordinating teacher: Carmen Malaet





THE CHINESE HOROSCOPES



Chinese horoscopes are an important part of Chinese culture, deeply rooted in the country's rich history and tradition. They are based on a 12-year cycle, with each year being associated with a specific animal sign, creating a cycle that repeats every 12 years.

The Rat embodies attributes of quick-wittedness and resourcefulness. Those born under this sign are believed to possess an unparalleled ability to think on their feet and find innovative solutions to challenges. For individuals born in the years 1912, 1924, 1936, 1948, 1960, 1972, 1984, 1996, 2008, and 2020, the Rat represents their identity in the Chinese Zodiac, influencing their personalities and interactions.

The Ox, a symbol of diligence, dependability, strength, and unwavering determination, holds a significant place in the Chinese zodiac. Those born in Ox years, such as 1913, 1925, 1937, 1949, 1961, 1973, 1985, 1997, 2009, and 2021, are believed to inherit the Ox's traits, including a strong work ethic and resilience.

The Tiger signifies power, passion, and bravery, embodying a majestic aura that captivates attention. Those born in Tiger years, such as 1914, 1926, 1938, 1950, 1962, 1974, 1986, 1998, 2010, and 2022, inherit qualities of strength and tenacity. The Tiger's enigmatic nature intrigues individuals, symbolizing resilience amidst adversity and an unyielding spirit.

The Rabbit symbolizes kindness, gentleness, and sensitivity, making it an invaluable presence within the Chinese zodiac. Rabbit years, such as 1915, 1927, 1939, 1951, 1963, 1975, 1987, 1999, 2011, and 2023, are marked by an aura of grace and contemplation, reflecting the essence of this enigmatic zodiac sign.

People born in the Year of the Dragon are ambitious and have a strong inner drive. Their natural leadership qualities and determination make them stand out in social and professional settings. Those born in Dragon years, which include 1916, 1928, 1940, 1952, 1964, 1976, 1988, 2000, 2012, and 2024, are believed to possess a lively and charismatic nature.

The Snake, a prominent symbol in the Chinese zodiac, embodies intelligence, gracefulness, and materialism. Individuals born in Snake years, such as 1917, 1929, 1941, 1953, 1965, 1977, 1989, 2001, 2013, and 2025, are believed to inherit the enigmatic characteristics associated with this captivating creature.

The Horse embodies strength, energy, and independence, symbolizing determination and an unwavering spirit. Individuals born in the year of the Horse, including 1918, 1930, 1942, 1954, 1966, 1978, 1990, 2002, 2014, and those to come in 2026, are believed to inherit the Horse's innate characteristics of vitality and autonomy.

The Goat, also known as the Sheep or Ram, embodies tranquility, creativity, and compassion, positioning it as a symbol of deep emotional intelligence. Those born in the years 1919, 1931, 1943, 1955, 1967, 1979, 1991, 2003, 2015, and future 2027 are believed to inherit the Goat's serene characteristics, fostering empathy and harmony in their relationships and pursuits.

People born in the Year of the Monkey are characterized by their natural curiosity, mischievous spirit, and quick wit. They possess an unparalleled ability to adapt to various situations and can deftly navigate through life's complexities. Monkey years, which occur in twelve-year intervals, include 1920, 1932, 1944, 1956, 1968, 1980, 1992, 2004, 2016, and 2028, each bringing its own set of unique attributes and experiences.

The Rooster is a symbol of confidence, intelligence, and punctuality. Those born in the years 1921, 1933, 1945, 1957, 1969, 1981, 1993, 2005, 2017, and the upcoming 2029 are governed by the spirited essence of the Rooster. Known for their meticulous nature and sharp intellect, individuals born under this sign exhibit a commanding presence and a penchant for precision.

The Dog symbolizes loyalty, honesty, and empathy, embodying admirable traits that inspire trust and companionship. Years under its influence include 1922, 1934, 1946, 1958, 1970, 1982, 1994, 2006, 2018, and 2030, exuding the essence of integrity and loyalty for those born during these times.

The Pig symbolizes good fortune, honesty, and happiness, endowing those born under its sign with a compassionate and genuine nature. Individuals born in the years 1923, 1935, 1947, 1959, 1971, 1983, 1995, 2007, 2019, and 2031 are attributed to the Pig, marking them as bearers of its invaluable traits.



Oana Bianca Negrila
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Ca urmare a solicitării dvs. privind obținerea avizului I.S.J.Dolj, conform Regulamentului pentru avizarea revistelor școlare din unitățile de învățământ ale județului Dolj, nr.4786 din 18.06.2010, vă comunicăm faptul că, în urma evaluării de către comisia special constituită la nivelul I.S.J.Dolj, revista **DISTEENCT** a primit aviz favorabil.

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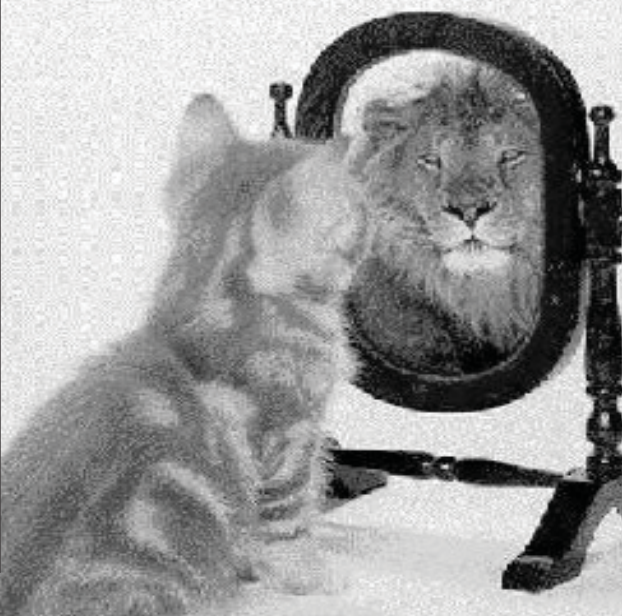
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