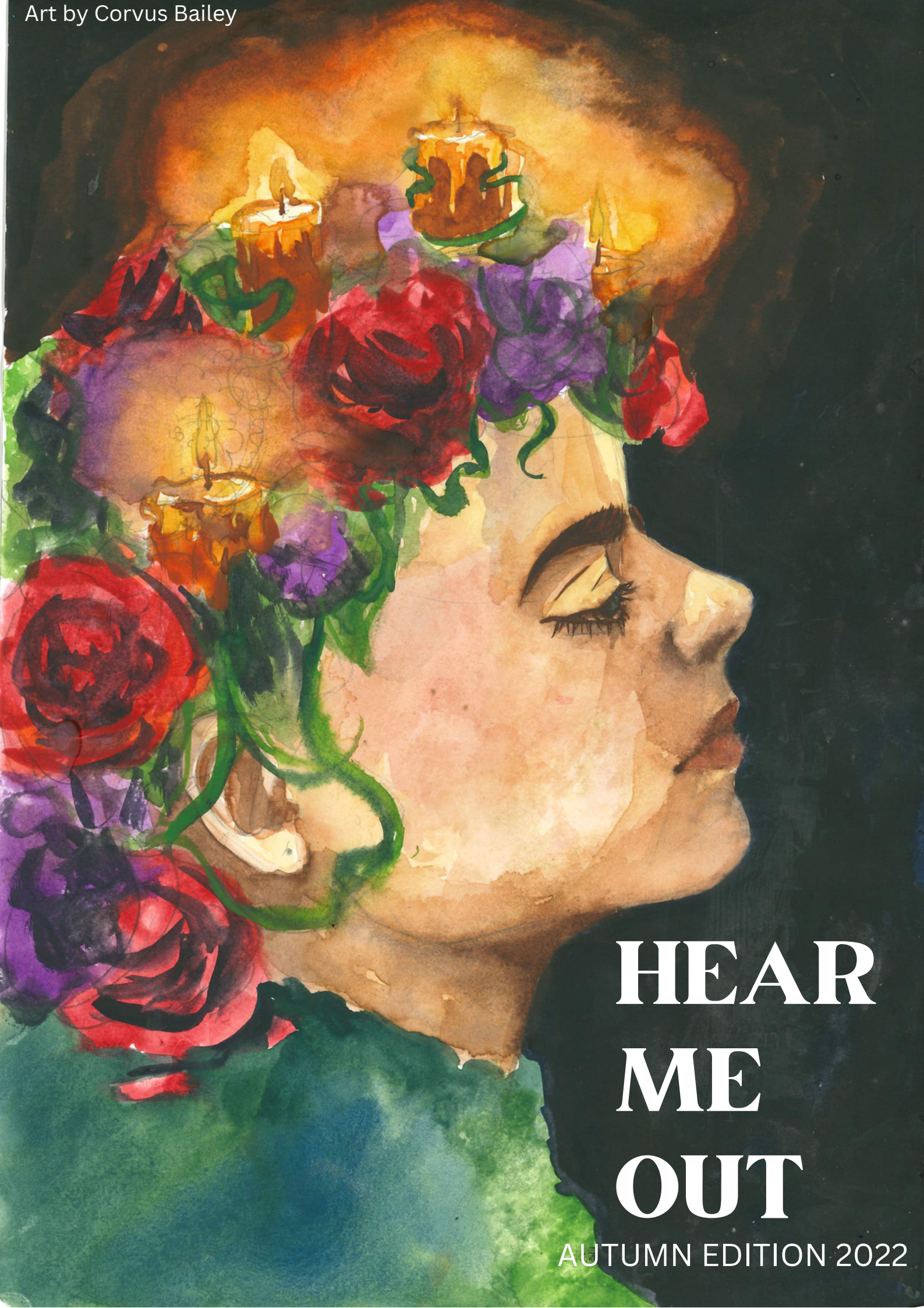


Art by Corvus Bailey



HEAR ME OUT

AUTUMN EDITION 2022

HEAR ME OUT

Lettie Hoskin

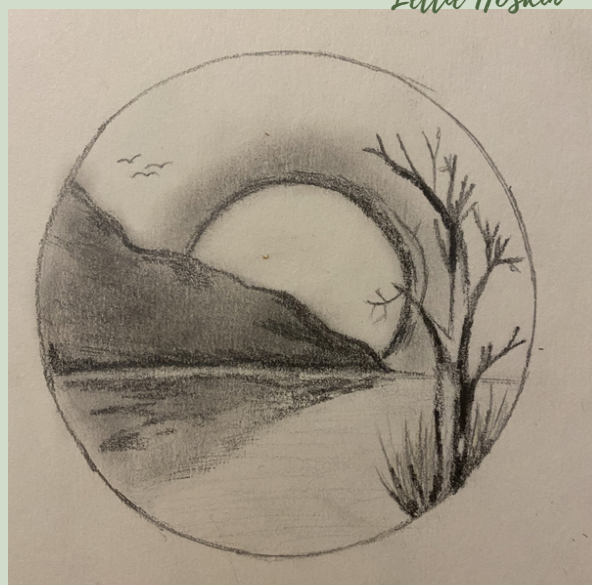
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Imogen Brown

Written by the students and teachers across the
Thinking Schools Academy

EDITED BY AMELIA VARLEY



A thank you and goodbye
from the Head Student
Team **2022**

@phsgheadstudents 



Charity and Wellbeing 2022

ESTHER TREND

HEAD STUDENT

Leading the charity and wellbeing events this year has been a pleasure and it's great to be able to reflect on everything we have accomplished. Throughout this year, we have supported and raised funds for Hugs Children's Cancer Charity and Young Minds UK, the two local and national charities collectively chosen by the student body at the beginning of the year. Some highlights included the Shoe Donation in tandem with Hugs in March and raising awareness and funds for Young Minds UK on World Mental Health Day in October. It was great to see how many students and staff got involved with the sports activities on the courts during lunchtime, and it was so successful that we will continue to organise events such as these more regularly, to raise awareness of our mental health and different charities, along with supporting the PE department.

Co-hosting the Trust wide student conference was also an amazing opportunity which allowed us to discuss ways to improve student voice and student led projects with other student leaders across the Trust and it's exciting to begin to see the outcomes of that event. Within my Charity and Wellbeing Workshop, we discussed ways to promote student achievement (through the Trust Website), and to also create a sense of community with all the schools by collectively choosing one national or international charity which we can all support. While these plans are still in motion, it will be great to see how the new Head Student Team tackle these projects and begin to write their own legacy within these roles.

It's also been rewarding working collaboratively within the Head Student Team. Whether that be helping with projects within the Diversity Group or running assemblies. Overall, my time as Head Student has allowed me to continue the legacy that is Plymouth High, adapting the role to encompass my vision which over the course of the year has been to improve student voice; to increase awareness of mental health; and to support a wide variety of charities, organisations and causes along the way.

HEAR ME OUT EDITOR 2022

AMELIA VARLEY

DEPUTY HEAD STUDENT

The HST position of Hear Me Out editor has been so rewarding and such an insightful experience which has provided me with a breadth of knowledge that I'm sure will help me with my journey into the writing industry.

The main highlight and achievement from this year for the magazine was beginning the incorporation of articles from schools around the trust, through the hosting of the HST conference. During the Student Magazine talk, we discussed the process of putting together a magazine and what challenges came with it. We also discussed how rewarding it was to create one and this led to encouragement of starting magazines in the other schools. There was lots of engagement with this as there were many questions about PHSG's method – I described how the HST recruitment system went and detailed the rigorous interview process but also my technique in putting the magazine together and what I learned (from Jess, the previous editor and through my own experimenting). We discussed how I got people interested, how the submitted artwork and writing was reproduced and my use of Canva to create designs for each page.

We discussed each school's stance on a school magazine and discovered most had newsletters of some sort or used to have magazines. There were some great conversations of how the other schools put together their magazine as well as topics they seem to write about – for example school trips. It was clear PHSG was the only school broadening what writing pieces the students could provide.

I felt many schools were willing to begin a magazine in their school, or revive it, or were at least open to new ideas towards the magazine. With the few contributions sent to me, I have hope that next year's editor will find more engagement and truly make the trust-wide magazine possible.

Creating two editions of 2022 has been a privilege and I'm grateful for the opportunity.

STUDENT COUNCIL LEADER 2022

KAITLYN ROBERTS

DEPUTY HEAD STUDENT

Leading the student council has been an amazing opportunity and extremely eye-opening when receiving ideas and thoughts from PHSG students. Currently, a lot of people are really enthusiastic about Student Voice and the turn out to meetings is amazing, which is a great thing because it is so important that these ideas and concerns are shared.

We started off with a food survey at the beginning of the year, due to some students not feeling happy with the variety or prices as well as meeting with the lead of catering for the Trust to give feedback. Students should be able to see changes in the canteen over the next few terms, one of them was the meal deal to help reduce prices. We are also trying to help with the shortage of transportation to school as it causes a huge inconvenience; at the moment I am investigating ways to make transport to school easier and less stressful for students through contacting Plymouth City Bus.

There is a lot that has gone on behind the scenes with Student Council; trying to find ways to bring ideas to life can be tough, there have been changes made due to council raising the issues - like toilets and classrooms being renovated, and raising the awareness of anti-bullying around the school.

The biggest thing for council this year was definitely the Thinking Trust Conference that was held in June. I could communicate with schools across the Trust to discuss Student Voice and how that can be implemented on a higher scale where we have one council for the whole of the Trust, we are currently in the process of trying to create this Student Voice body in which each school will have a spokesperson and they will all come together a few times a year and report to the Trust board. This is one the main plans for the future of the student council, as well as having a continued focus on supporting young people's mental health, and bringing more creativity to Plymouth High.

It has been an exciting and rewarding journey to lead student council. I want to thank everyone that has helped and had any input with the group, and I can't wait to see how the next HST elevate Student Voice.

DIVERSITY & INCLUSIVITY LEADER 2022

CHRISTINA HUANG

DEPUTY HEAD STUDENT

The Diversity group has accomplished many goals this year.

The book club (run by Ingrid Zamfir) debuted at the start of this year, where all students are welcome to come and discuss books relating to diversity and inclusivity. The books are chosen by the group and it's a great place to talk and share ideas between one another, not only expanding on your literature reading outside of school, but to also help broaden your understanding of equality from different points of view. If you have any questions, please contact Ingrid.

At the start of this year, we ran a Cultural Food Celebration, where students were given the opportunity to bring in food from a culture of their choice. We were able to raise funds to use for the Diversity group and with that got a Bollywood dance class in our second Cultural Food Celebration that took place later in the summer. Through this, we celebrated and highlighted the vast variety of cultures within this school as well as raise money for future projects to be done in the group.

The Head Student team held their first Trust Wide Conference and, in the diversity meeting call we were able to share ideas of how different schools celebrated equality and diversity. This was a great opportunity to look at different perspectives and aid one another to improve the inclusivity aspects of school life. From this, we had also sent out our school system booklet, which was written by the students of the diversity group at Plymouth High.

The school system booklet is an information booklet from KS2 up to post 18. It goes into detail about each of the school years and will aid you if you are unsure about any stage of the UK school system.

Before half term, the school celebrated Black History Month with the food in the canteen, writing the pledge and the trust wide art competition. We are so pleased with all the students who were involved, and we can't wait for the art board of inspirational black figures to go up in the school.

The Diversity group has accomplished much this year and there is so much we are planning to do in the future. Thank you to everyone who got involved in any of the events we've held since January.



Written by: Ingrid Zamfir

Crying in H Mart

by Michelle Zauner

In this book, Michelle Zauner provides such a striking recount of her personal journey grieving her mother, all while exploring the development of her identity, personal relationships, her music and growing up as Korean American. Zauner is a musician as part of the indie-pop band Japanese Breakfast, with their songs reflecting personal experiences encapsulated in experimental themes and styles. Japanese Breakfast has grown in popularity with two nominations at this year's Grammy awards and countless concert dates throughout the year. Zauner's book, *Crying in H Mart*, has been equally successful receiving attention all around the literary world. As a result, it has become a New York Times Best Seller and winner of the Good Reads Choice Memoir and Autobiography Award.

The name of the book is *Crying in H Mart* and it made me cry in the car. "Umma, please wake up," I yelled, as if trying to wake her. "I'm not ready. Please, Umma. I'm not ready" This was the quote that reduced me to tears. The desperate cries of fear and confusion sent a surge of urgency into my body. I found myself reading as rapidly as I had never read before, in shock by the raw emotions described. I feel that this quote encapsulates, not only what a reader feels while reading this deeply personal memoir, but the tension of expecting the death of a loved one. Throughout the book, we know and are constantly reminded that Zauner's mother dies, yet the impact of it happening is so much more emotionally penetrating than expected. Reading this book has made me realise that the concept of the death of a loved one is distinctly separate from its effects.

Nothing seems to be able to sufficiently prepare you, no matter how aware and accepting you are of it. To add to this, this book strongly highlights the importance of food and our specific relationships, something that I had never thought of prior.

In *Crying in H-Mart*, we see Zauner describe how food in different periods of her life have stirred up different emotions. Throughout the book, Zauner explores her connection to her Korean Heritage in H-Mart, as a reminder of her mother's cooking and her own involvement in this too. Reflecting on the times they used to share via food, provides a sharp, heart wrenching contrast to Zauner making Kimchi independently after her mother's death. The food on her table at different points in the book transports us, as readers, to different stages of Zauner's grief and life, reminded of how volatile life can be.

In this book we also get an authentic insight to Zauner's musical growth. From first picking up a guitar, to switching bands and marrying her bandmate, Zauner does not shy away from describing the harsh reality of just starting up as a musician. The theme of time is very prominent here, as we see many attempts at the start to launch herself into the music sphere, while forced back into a more traditional career path, as a result of failures. Yet, several chapters on, Zauner's success leaps very suddenly, starting to open concerts and gain more popularity overall. *Crying in H-Mart* can only be described in one word – raw. The book is so beautiful, yet heartbreakingly, raw. The specific details and descriptions provide a thought-provoking account of human nature progressing through grief, while the rest of your life somehow continues in tension. A must read for someone who is looking for a gripping account of the pure emotions one experiences throughout life.

TREEHOUSE

By Zara Toefy

You were 4 years old; small hands clumsily creating on the walls of an old treehouse my father had built when I was young. I wish I could have had a stenographer follow you when you were small, just in order to capture every idea, every story that emerged when you weren't burdened by inhibition and a fear of rejection. Height written on the door frame and the print of your hand that seemed so tiny as it led crayons and brushes across the page with an unknowable plan and unwavering confidence in an infallible vision. Lying on the floor listening to your stories, indulging in your imagination, trying to keep up with your thought, there couldn't be a happier person than me.

You were 7 years old when you had your first sleepover, waiting for your friend, gently swaying in the playground waiting for her class to come out. Up and down, up and down, you transferred your weight from the balls of your feet to your heels, sacrificing unscuffed school shoes to treat your nerves. I remember so clearly your face in one position: jaw set, shoulders squared, bushy brows set in concentration, already you were so determined to please.

You were 7 years old when you were taught that sometimes you can't.

You must have been 11 when I found you sprawled out on the floor, my phone propped up against a copy of 'Holes' you were reading at school; 'How to draw Naruto' playing loudly and you in your garden of Eden, blissfully completing your magnum opus in one of your notebooks. You were always a wonderful artist.

You were 13, I know, when I found you trying get an extension cord out of your bedroom and into the treehouse, so entirely unaware of the danger or absurdity of the task. You framed yourself against the sky, one arm outstretched as if in an effort to touch it, the other holding tightly onto the window frame. Even the sun was conspiring to create a piece of art, lighting you from behind so that your silhouette stood out dark against the bright blue of the sky and your ears, nose and the tips of your fingers glowed red.

You were 15, 3 days after I got a call from the school asking if I could pick you up. I didn't ask any questions that day, you looked like you'd been asked enough.

16, 17, 18, all you talked about was that school. Every spare moment of every day was spent in a fortress built out of sketchbooks, tablets and canvases and secured by your extensive collection of pens, pencils and mystical instruments to aid your crusade. Everything came second to the construction of the portfolio. I saw you once while you were working. When going to bed I noticed the treehouse was still lit up from within, a gentle, friendly warm sort of glow.

I found you, upon going up, hunched over a massive book you had received for Christmas 'The Animators Survival Guide' low light cut harsh shadows into your cherubic face, crinkled in complete concentration. A pigeon that had made its nest nearby cooed softly but you never stirred, I'm sure you didn't know it ever made a noise, eyes glossy, reflecting the candle you kept on your desk, mind a million miles away. For a moment I thought time had stopped, you were so still that your pulse had stopped to try and listen to your thoughts. And then the pigeon cooed again.

You received an email saying your portal had been updated while we were having dinner. I saw the whole thing like a scene from one of your stories, a knight approaching the guillotine, a revolutionary on the wrong side of a pistol.

I knew you would succeed.

Lying on the floor of the treehouse watching your little hand trace the shapes you saw in the wood I knew you would succeed. All I had to do was bear witness and wait.

TREEHOUSE ARTWORK

By Isolde Thomas



ARE WE BORN *EVIL*?

ZOE STINTON-BROWNBRIDGE

If we are all born evil, then is there any point in pretending to be good? If we are all born good, then do our good actions mean anything because we are simply doing what is in our nature and not acting by our own volition? Is it fair that some people may be born evil, and some may be born good?

These are the types of questions that philosophers dedicate lifetimes to; there are endless responses to this philosophical paradox and entire novels barely scratch its surface.

It is much vaguer that people may initially realise, with infinite rabbit holes to go down. For instance: you must begin with the origin of good and evil, which is a very long time ago.

The concepts of 'good' and 'evil' have coexisted with humans for centuries; for Christians 'good' was around before humans were (in Genesis God created the world and said it was 'good'). It is not fair to assume, however, that just because humans have had this 'right vs wrong' ideology' for so long, that it has remained roughly the same throughout.

Imagine if you were complaining to your friend about having nothing to do at the weekend and they were to suggest that you could watch someone be hanged in public

with the rest of your village. Public executions were a popular family activity, and it wasn't until 1868 that literally witnessing someone be executed in the town square was abolished.

Ludicrous, it seems, to allow people to go to executions like they were exhibitions, and the fact that people got joy from seeing it makes it more horrific, but it was clearly viewed very differently in the 1800s. Point being that what we now view as inhumane used to be totally acceptable.

Since we have contemplated the difference between right and wrong for centuries, you might assume that we are now at a point where we have a relatively good definition of them.

Plato believed in the Realm of Forms, which is where he said our souls resided in previously, and in this other world is the perfect form of good. Supposedly, it is because of this that we withhold the knowledge of perfect good. It is easy to criticise Plato's Forms because it offers no idea of what this ideal concept of good is despite our souls already being there which leads to the question: if we have this knowledge within us then why can't we identify it?

Augustine believed that there is real good and apparent good which is how humans believe that something they are doing is good (when it is arguably not) because we get confused between pleasure and what is right.

Miles Rote argues that goodness is 'the reconnection to the essence of everything despite being an individual' and that evilness is 'the disconnection from everything in order to serve the self' but this raises its own dilemmas. For instance, Hindus would disagree with people being individuals because their faith teaches that we are one, Brahman, and other people might argue that we do need to disconnect from everything because they believe there is an ultimate reality that is not this one and so we need to move beyond our material desires.

Evidently, it is practically impossible to define good and evil in a way that works for everyone, and people in the future will most likely look at our culture and find things that they find immoral. Therefore, despite Miles Rote's best attempt, how can we even answer the question 'Are we born evil?' if we don't even know what evil is?

Another difficulty is that the world is getting more complex as the years go by. This is explored in 'The Good Place' where it is argued that the points system, which determines if you end up in the good place or bad place, is deemed unsuitable for the modern age. We often use the theories of philosophers who lived hundreds of years ago but I think that we cannot apply all their

ideas to our lives because the world was extremely different back then and the influences upon our decisions were not the same.

Therefore, will we ever reach a point of being able to define good and evil because the world is constantly changing, and we can't use history's view to help us because of its impermanence?

Pretend for a moment that there is a definition of good and evil, would humans even be able to meet the standards for it anyway? Or are there things in our nature stopping us? Is the world too complex?

Many scientists believe that our altruism is due to an inherent desire to protect our genes, by helping family members, and for the promise of returned favours in the future. Extreme altruism is not explained by either of these so Georgetown University looked at the difference between brains of the truly altruistic compared to other brains, including the brains of psychopaths.

The team at the university looked at the amygdalas in each brain. The right amygdalas of the extreme altruists' brains were larger than average; this is particularly interesting because the right amygdala is smaller in psychopath's brains.

This raises many ethical dilemmas because, if we are genetically programmed to have a certain level of care for others, then does our 'goodness' even matter since we are not actively choosing to do something good. It is the same for bad actions; if someone's right

amygdala is slighter than average then does that remove some of their responsibility for doing something bad because that is the way their brain is? It also questions free will – does the size of our right amygdala impact the control we have over our actions?

Aristotle's argument for good habits leading to a good person is weakened by the fact that some people may be disadvantaged at 'being good' from birth due to their brain, and their upbringing (there are a multitude of debates on 'nature vs nurture'; so some might argue that people can become bad because they were raised a certain way, and they are not inherently bad).

Augustine had a very simple response to 'Are we born evil?' according to him we have an inherent evil within us all from the beginning of our existence. Like many of the sexist men in history, Augustine blames the world's woes on women. When talking about his mother he spoke "in her agony was seen the inheritance of Eve, - seeking in sorrow what in sorrow she had brought forth."

It is his belief that Eve manipulated Adam into eating the fruit in the Garden of Eden and it is because of this that everyone is born with sin in them, especially women.

I completely disagree with Augustine; this narrative incentivises misogyny and I also really dislike the concept of us all being born sinful. It is one thing to have a leaning towards good or bad and another entirely to be tainted for life (unless you are baptised) by something you did not do yourself.

Lots of people believe we are not born evil because then we would have no free will.

We may as well ask 'Are we born good?' because, while it seems, at first glance, better than evil it still removes the idea of free will.

Determinists believe that our actions are a direct result of a build-up of events. So, while you may do one thing in one circumstance you could just as easily have done another thing in another situation, if something was slightly different. I don't believe that this necessarily must impact free will depending on how easy it is to go down a different path, but many disagree.

How about this: you have eaten a lot of food earlier and are now full, so you choose to not eat a slice of cake. Did you choose to not eat that cake because you didn't feel like it and you could've just as easily chosen to eat it, or did you make that decision after a series of events that obligated you to make that decision. And were those decisions also forced upon you by other decisions, to the point where everything leads back to one action which you may or may not have chosen for yourself?

If you genuinely wanted an answer to 'Are we born evil?' then I am sorry to disappoint you: after doing lots of research and having debates in my head - like it's the House of Commons - I still have no clue. I do however know that I disagree with the idea that we cannot change as people, for the better or for the worse, so if we are born as good or evil (and it is that linear) then I hope that our moral compass isn't fixed in place.



CHRISTINA ROSSETTI

By Lara Toefy



1940

by Amelia Varley

I,
dream to dream
that if I may die here,
I'll let the poppies grow through me,
let my fingertips be their soil.
give me to them,
my veins the roots and
pass me over and let them triumph.
beauty can live through me
in memoriam.

love,
if the dead may return to this world,
and dance around those they love, consider me
home
consider me in warmth
feel my unseen hand in yours and
the blush upon your cheek

mourn not me, dead,
breathe me into acrylic
use water colour and put me to paper
recreate my hues
let them search for blank canvasses
paint my cheeks red and lips blue
feel I'm there in the smell of the oils-
you'll function my lungs
each time the paintbrush glides

if I dream to dream
that I might live on,
through you when this ends,
and through your dreams my heart will
beat
then the terrors may stay at bay.
gunshots will at last quieten.
the soldiers' screams are hushed,
and his cries cannot creep my skin
and sit as a sweaty residue

if I dream to dream
that you're here with me
each night,
consider me the safest I've ever been
only if I can dream.

THE FINANCIAL CRISIS: WHAT DOES IT MEAN FOR YOUNG PEOPLE?

Written by Sarah Darwich

As we wait and watch the shadow of yet another recession loom closer on the horizon, it is perhaps difficult to comprehend the ever increasing troubles we hear about on the news like double-digit inflation, a worthless pound and the sky-high energy costs as we move into winter. After seeing global and domestic political turmoil like no other in the last year as well as recovering from the pandemic, it feels like another hardship that we have no choice but to accept in our stride. Our generation alone has witnessed the most turbulence in decades as young people, and thus it is easy to see why we can feel a disconnect from the government and its economic choices. However, understanding what all of this means for us personally before we venture into the working world and face being at the bottom of the career and property ladder, saddled with an eye-watering student debt, is crucial in one of the most significant financial crises in a generation.

Being aware of how to manage money in abnormal circumstances begins with an awareness of what words like 'inflation' and 'recession' really mean. You might know that inflation in literal terms means the percentage increase of prices from the previous year, but grasping what it means in the real world for both a squeeze on savings and relative decreases in wages outlines why the current rate, higher than

it's been in 40 years, is so monumental. Acknowledging the continuing climb of prices makes it difficult to plan ahead, and thus, for school leavers supporting themselves on minimum wages that are resistant to increases as fast as inflation, it can be daunting to think about affording the necessities-made worse by the steep changes in rents. A key part of helping young people through this comes in the form of education about how to budget and plan emergency funds, which are few and far between in schools currently. The national curriculum requires that financial literacy is covered in forms such as compound interest and recognising how to work with money in maths lessons, and in PSHE at secondary level discussing the functions of money, and limited exploration of concepts like credit and risk and budgeting. Notably, there is no obligation to cover situations like recessions despite more than one occurring in the last 15 years. Having an awareness of how recessions affect us beyond the impacts on the markets, which feel distant from real people, is essential for our personal finance protection. The biggest shockwave felt is often the loss of jobs and decrease in wages as companies have less to go around. Recessions cause inequalities in society as those on fixed incomes or receiving benefits are hit the hardest. Establishing an interest from an early age is key to avoid detachment and disengagement from these issues, and make

THE FINANCIAL CRISIS: WHAT DOES IT MEAN FOR YOUNG PEOPLE?

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those in power add what is important to everyone in their manifestos. This begins with meaningful personal finance education that is more prevalent in schools, the media and beyond.

A major concern for many young people is paying student loans in this period of economic turmoil—an issue that will directly burden our generation and below more than any other. While fees remain stable at up to £9250, revision of the repayment of loans beginning with the 2023 cohort means that gaining a higher level education comes with the price tag of a 'lifetime tax'. Loans will be paid off at lower incomes and not written off until after 40 years, rather than 30: thus they will be paid nearly up to retirement. Under the new rules, more than 52% of students will completely pay off the enormous sum of loans, compared to around 23% at present. This poses serious considerations for many, and with the current state of economy meaning that graduate jobs, higher level apprenticeships and other job markets are more competitive than ever, young people will either put off pursuing post-18 education or face an intimidating debt when climbing the career ladder in today's expensive society. Since the landmark increase of tuition fees from £3000 to £9000, many young people feel distrust in the system, leading to decreased voter turnout and the consequences of reduced focus on matters that we face from those in government.

Therefore, engaging with this financial crisis and understanding how to deal with it presents many questions about how our generation moves forward after this period of instability.

Young people, like every other generation, face uncomfortable financial uncertainty ahead, which combined with the many adversities brought on by the pandemic and the like, can lead to a desensitisation to turbulent times. Understanding and considering how we can ask questions of those in power and begin to find ways to support ourselves means that we could encounter inevitable turmoil in the near and distant future with more preparedness and awareness of the inequalities and difficulties that arise from it.

THE NOTICING POEM

By Mr Rutherford

On a bench at the top of a churchyard
with ox-eye daisies poking through the
wooden slats, while behind some trees a
chainsaw splits and splits wood

Knee deep in a seaweed stuffed sea on a
still hot day in a sheltered bay where the
only thing moving is your feelings about
the bladderwrack against your ankles
and calves and shins

On a street in the sky, beside cream
paint flaking, and some source of water
dripping, and a football thudding into the
supporting wall

On the first bus of the morning, all
metallic surfaces sharp with a cold that
sends every memory the bus has of the
abandoned night pinching every nerve
you have, leaving the feeling – for all the
shuddering – that this is a real journey, a
real beginning

and always the ground below (beneath
the floor) and always a sky above
(beyond the ceiling)

Packed together with a hundred others
on chairs that feel unnervingly liquid
inside a version of quiet that isn't any
sort of quiet but an airful of creaking,
shuffling, shifting, rustling, sighing,
waiting, dreaming bodies

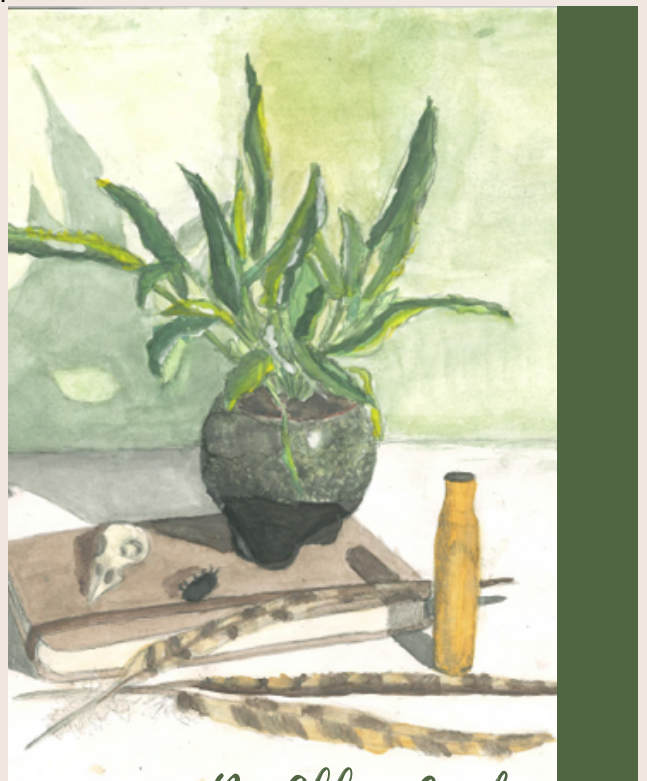
On a red brick terraced street where the
red brick is browner than that and
somehow the terraces seem to be
splitting apart

Downwind from the chocolate factory, in a
smell rich and smooth and liquid
Under a canopy of trees in the beginning to
pour rain, safe and happily listening to the
syncopated sound of the drops having their
downward progress stop, then stop, and
stop, again stop
and always the ground below and always a
sky above

Inside a café tipping from cosy and buzzy to
crowded and busy, with the air turning
sticky and the steamed milk machine
seeming loud like a Victorian factory,
crushing the momentum of conversation,
so that you and your friend are leaning
further in to your meeting, and your being
together

On the car deck of a ferry among the
thickest air you've ever experienced, like
your lungs are lined with oil and every word
you say could start an engine

Inside an avatar, inside the misleading
metaphor of a cloud,



By Abbey Gaylard

THE NOTICING POEM

By Mr Rutherford

Inside the drifting dust conjured into
consciousness by the beam of a
projector and the breath of words, the
cheapest of spotlights

and always the ground below (beneath the
floor) and always a sky above
(beyond the ceiling)

In a cheap football strip that's both too
smooth and shiny and too abrasive

Inside a car that's been left in the glare of
a whole long summer day with the seat
pattern branding itself into your skin,
and the seatbelt searing a sash across
you, a permanence of winning

Downwind from the sugar refinery, in a
smell sharp, bitter and left cooking too
long

In a narrow lane with the primroses being
superseded by the stitchwort and the
bluebells beginning to bend

and always the ground below and always
a sky above

In a poster-rich city, on the corner by the
chip shop, planning the week from
fragments of home-made advertising

In a nightclub where to bounce – if
you're tall – is to risk concussion from the
lights and from the ceiling which is
deeply regrettable when you're tall and
bouncing is your favourite kind of
dancing.

In the crumpled aftermath of a party
when the brighter lights reveal just how
much of its

specialness was an extraordinary effort of
collective projection, and how much of its
fuel now needs to be tossed in a bin, and
someone needs lifting from a slump and to
do this, and to do this in secret, feels like the
very best kind of tidying up
and always the ground below (beneath the
floor) and always a sky above (beyond the
ceiling)

In a miniature city, cobbles of the streets
and vennels slightly throwing each step off
balance, always in a miniature state of
discomfort, always waiting to leave

In a supermarket car park, listening to the
action and reaction of a shivering chain of
collected shopping trolleys being returned
to starting positions

In a museum stuffed with a king's trophy
killing

In an air-conditioned car passing a caravan
named after a bird passing under a bridge
carrying the previous version of this road
towards a cul-de-sac of industrial units
and always the ground below (beneath the
floor) and always a sky above (beyond the
ceiling)

and always the ground below and always a
sky above.



By Christina Huang

'OROONOKO' VS 'ROBINSON CRUSOE'

"I was born in the year 1632, in the city of York, of a good family, though not of that country, my father being a foreigner of Bremen." is the first line of 'Robinson Crusoe' written in 1719. It is a world renowned book, inspiring hundreds of stories that followed it; partially responsible for the 'English schoolboys get trapped on island and have a fun adventure' genre, which has been overshadowed by its satirisation, 'Lord of the Flies', and it's author Daniel Defoe is regarded as one of the fathers of the novel. This could be largely attributed to Ian Watts' 'The Rise of the Novel' (1957) in which he presents Daniel Defoe, Samuel Richardson and Henry Fielding as the triumvirate that wrote the foundational works for the 'English Novel'. Ian Watts is easily proven wrong: Eliza Haywood published 'Love in Excess' in the same year as 'Robinson Crusoe'. Delarivier Manley had been writing throughout the 1710's; and Aphra Behn published 'Oroonoko' thirty years before it. However, Ian Watts is not isolated in his misconfiguration of the English cannon in respects to the novel, Defoe himself claimed in a letter to a friend (Aaron Hill 1741) that he was the creator of a 'new species of writing' and ignorant of any previous fictional trends despite his female predecessors and contemporaries political, outspoken and ground-breaking writing making ignorance impossible. Women have been excluded from the mythology of the novel since it's inception: undermined and ignored, they are erased from our understanding of language, society and introspection. Why is Robinson Crusoe remembered when Oroonoko is forgotten?

Aphra Behn was born in 1640 in Canterbury or Kent or Sturry, the daughter of John and Amy Amis or a Mr and Mrs Cooper or Mr Johnson and Mrs Denham. Her father was most likely a Barber and her mother was probably a wet-nurse but she claimed to be the daughter of a lieutenant in 'Oroonoko' although none of her contemporaries acknowledged any aristocratic status. Her life, especially her early life, is obscured by time of course but mostly by Behn herself; in a roundtable discussion on Aphra

Behn (Sorbonne 1999) Germaine Greer describes her as "a palimpsest; she has scratched herself out". This is most likely because she came from a lower or middle class background, no connections no family, no wealth and supposedly no education – but her writing clearly shows some form of it. Aphra Behn was most likely self-taught as she wouldn't have had much opportunity for tuition and she probably received religious education but other than that it is largely a mystery. By whatever means she obtained her education, it granted her a freedom that women seldom had. In 'A Room of One's Own', Virginia Woolf wrote that Aphra Behn earned women "the write to speak their minds" because "now that Aphra Behn had done it, girls could go to their parents and say, 'You need not give me an allowance; I can make money by my pen'. The easiest way to subjugate people is to rid them of their autonomy.



PENGUIN CLASSICS

APHRA BEHN

Oroonoko

'OROONOKO' VS 'ROBINSON CRUSOE'

One of the things that initially distinguished the novel at its inception was its focus on introspection, cataloging the life, emotions and interpersonal relationships of one person, often with a focus on their character growth or originally their moral development. For example in 'Moll Flanders' (1772) Daniel Defoe documents the chaotic life of the titular Moll, who rises in social rank, marries five times (once to his brother), has many lovers, becomes an expert thief and then, at the end of her life, she repents. The consequences of a writing style that focuses on the thoughts, motivations and life experiences of one person is that the audience is prone to feeling connected to the main character and relating to their personhood. If the women who were writing many of the earliest novels were understood as people, undermining their intelligence and autonomy would be a lot more difficult to justify. After all, it's a lot more difficult to subjugate a group of people after you've acknowledged their humanity.

The transatlantic slave trade is the backdrop for 'Robinson Crusoe' and 'Oroonoko', their stories almost mirror each other. The initial catalyst for 'Robinson Crusoe' is the eponymous Robinson Crusoe, an English captain, deciding to obtain slaves from Africa for his new sugar plantation in Brazil, and the catalyst for 'Oroonoko' is the eponymous Oroonoko being double-crossed by an English captain, kidnapped from his home (Kormantse, West Africa), sold into slavery and sent to Suriname (an English colony in South America). Robinson Crusoe's ship, containing hundreds of slaves, is shipwrecked leaving him the sole survivor. Despite this, he ends his story happy, successful and fulfilled having found solace in Christianity. Oroonoko is hunted down by a colonial government official, tied to a stake and dismembered. This, after he's forced to kill his wife to end her suffering, having been attacked by plantation owners for freeing the other slaves and trying to run away so his unborn child wouldn't be born into slavery. Colonist stories have been consistently prioritised over those of the colonised and 'Robinson Crusoe' being chosen over 'Oroonoko' by literary historians is a repetition of this pattern.

'Robinson Crusoe' has been commemorated as the first novel in the English canon because of racism and misogyny but more specifically because the nature of the novel forces readers to empathise with groups (women and colonised people) when it would benefit white men for them to remain marginalised and subjugated.



PENGUIN CLASSICS

DANIEL DEFOE

Robinson Crusoe

written by Zara Joefy

WHAT'S IN A NAME?

THE DIVERSITY AND INCLUSIVITY GROUP PHS

“

"We value and celebrate all cultures within our community. We are mindful that people's given, and family names are an essential part of their cultural identity and as such we pledge to afford everyone the respect of the correct pronunciation of their names." Plymouth high School for Girls 2022.

Has someone ever said your name wrong?

Our names are something that are important to us, our identification, our sense of self. Whether they're chosen ourselves, or given to us, they're crucial to who we are.

HOW DID IT FEEL WHEN SOMEONE SAID YOUR NAME WRONG?

"I'm so used to it as it is an unusual surname and I have to spell it out for people and even then they get it wrong."

"It was just a bit annoying at first, but then it became very common to mispronounce to the point of intentionally mocking me especially in primary school. "

"It makes me feel that I am clearly not that important to them because they haven't been bothered to check how to spell it. This is especially exacerbated in an email reply, because my name is literally spelt out at the bottom. "

"Condescending!!!"

WHAT DOES YOUR NAME MEAN TO YOU?

"..freedom from who I was"

"I made a choice to spell my name in this way when I was very young, in primary school. With 4 of us with the same name in my class. I struggled with individuality and wanted to make sure I could be 'identified as me'.

"It's just me."

"My mum and grandma and her mum etc all had my name in some way."

"I chose my name almost on a whim after I came out. It's technically a shortening of my deadname, and I didn't even know it was a real name until I looked it up. Turns out it's Dutch and very gender neutral. I toyed around with other names from time to time, but nothing ever stuck. Now I love my name, the longer version of it, and the quiet acceptance I feel when I'm called it."

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ADVICE/THOUGHTS

"With so many languages and cultures in the UK, it is easy to see how pronouncing names can be difficult if you are not from the original country or speak the language. People whose first language is not English can also pronounce my name incorrectly as the letter 'v' has a different sound/pronunciation in different countries. Phonetics will not always help you either, because letters are pronounced differently in other languages. If I am unsure of a pronunciation then I try with phonetics firstly and raise the tone of my voice at the end to indicate a question, followed by a 'sorry is that correct?' giving the other person the opportunity to correct me. I then always try to repeat the correct pronunciation back. I think it is important to acknowledge language and ask if you are unsure rather than to completely ignore the name or trying to 'fluff' your way through. I think that is more respectful to the other person."

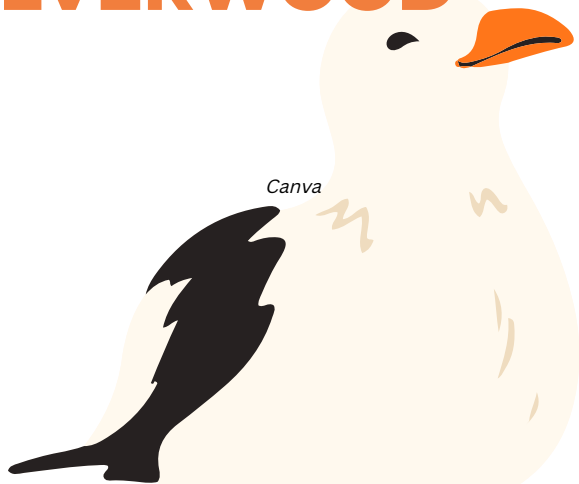
"Choosing a new name is hard, but so worthwhile. A good metaphor I once heard was doing little things like changing your name or pronouns is like taking a rock out of your shoe that's been there your whole life, and realising it shouldn't hurt to walk."

"Just ask. Then listen. Ask so the person feels valued."



by Christina Huang





SEAGULL STOPPER

Although the golden flecks of light dappling the courts, and the wavering blanket of shadows dancing across the ground create a serene and calm atmosphere, the society of students at Plymouth High School for Girls is currently quite the opposite of content with their “lunchtime experience” at this otherwise wonderful school. The shrill shrieks of diving, swooping, pinching, “borrowing” gulls rapidly whisk the playground into a hurricane of chaos from time to time. Shocked and nervously laughing, a student will bound to their friends to relay their experience of being the rather unfortunate victim of the renowned sandwich snatch. Although this is not a constant occurrence (the gulls pause their attacks for a period of time to devour their takings), pupils still remember the previous day’s pizza pinch, and laugh until the next day it is their own much-cherished food which is stolen. However, there is, of course, one plausible solution to Plymouth High’s woes. We need a hero to maintain peace at break and lunchtimes, and it could be you!

The position of “The Seagull Stopper” at this secondary school involves a range of opportunities and responsibilities. Firstly, the heroic individual selected to fill the post at Plymouth High School will participate in the occasional toilsome grapple with the devious birds. A regular day would generally cover ensuring that seagulls are ultimately prevented from engaging in troublesome activities such as group food raiding, or even merely removing a lone gull from the premises. The diversity of activities and challenges that you must be able to conquer in this position requires you to be open to innovative solutions to the day’s problems. Working with these disorderly and rather undisciplined birds will demand great resilience, a quality the school highly values.

This occupation will require many physical capabilities, such as having advanced flying abilities, and exceptionally strong agility. These skills are useful in catching the seagulls – quick moving, nifty birds when soaring through the blue of our skies. However, this must be done in a way that does not harm the seagulls or disturb the community. Therefore, an inflexible requirement for the intentions of the figure in the role is that they must wish to quietly remove seagulls from the premises, bearing in mind the environmental impact of their position and duties. The role will therefore require thought-altering powers; which enables you to divert the attacking ambitions of the troublesome gulls. Additionally, this person must be able to contribute innovative solutions to the issues at Plymouth High. Whilst we wish to remove the birds, we must also acknowledge that they need to eat also! This personal attribute is one of originality and strong team skills that can be used to tackle the problems. You will interact with students regularly.

At PHSG we strive for a happy future. We are on the path of success, yet the seagulls interfere with socialising on the courts, and many students have lost their food that they paid for. Although the catering staff try their hardest to provide another item of food for the one that was lost, how long can they do this before the seagulls get out of hand? The birds, in the future, could disrupt our learning and ability to focus! Looking forward, we can predict that with you, the economy, community and social situation within the school will be much stronger.

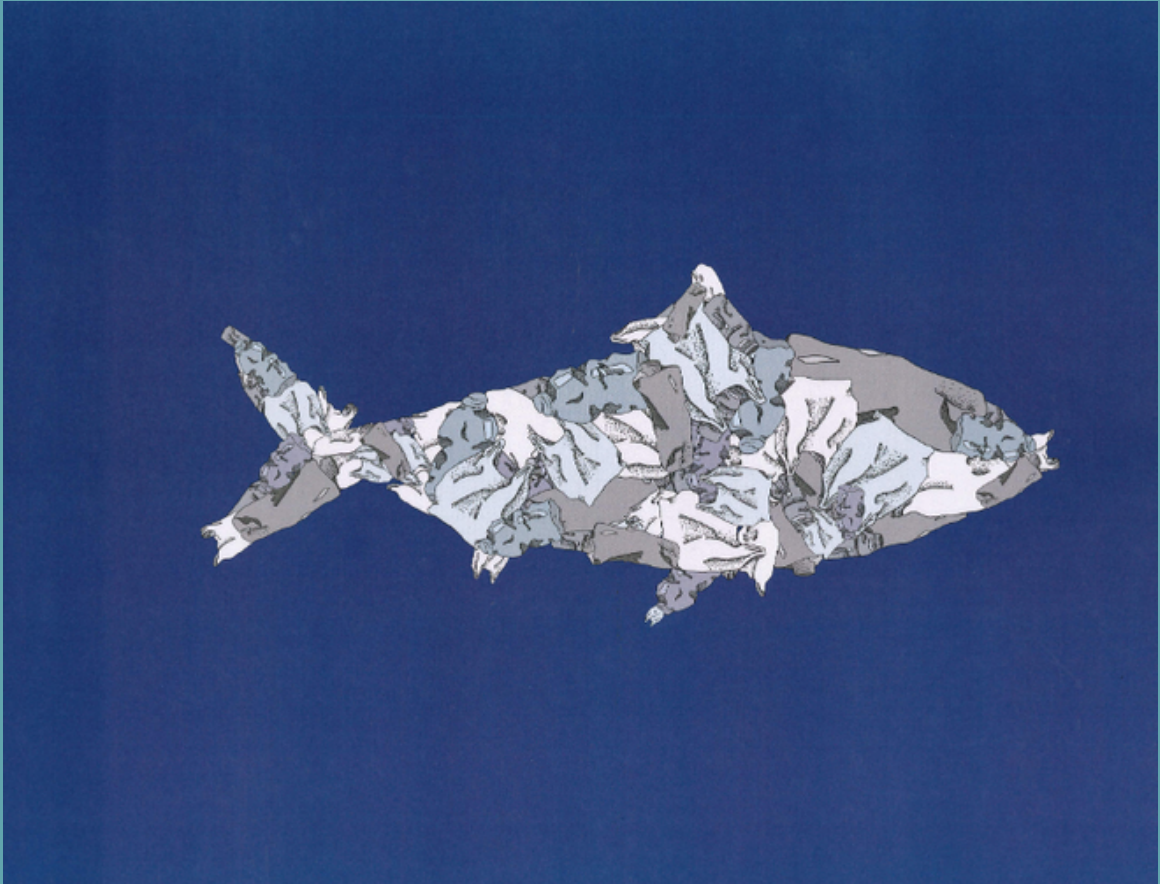
You must be resilient, friendly and empathetic. You should be decisive and strong willed.

Plymouth High School for Girls needs you!



Melody Boddington

Elle Alden



Other TSAJ Contributions

Newbridge School

A NEW BEGINNING

On the 5th and 6th of July, Newbridge had their transition days. All of the children were excited to meet their new teacher and find out who would be in their new class. Julia and Mollie, from Year 5, took some time to write a poem about transition to a new class.



Art from Canva

There once was a girl,
Who was called Rose,
Eyes shiny like a pearl,
And her personality always glows.

When Rose is in class,
She is always happy and joyful,
She had friends to make her smile,
But today she has been tearful.

Next week is transition week,
Rose, she was really scared,
But she thought her teacher was really
unique,
And she knows she really cared.

Rose got excited about meeting her new
teacher,
And quickly she started to relax,
As she only focussed on the positives,
And knew her teacher would work her to the
max.

Once they started learning,
She realised the fun she would have next year,
Her tummy stopped turning
And her joy became really clear.

A week in her new classroom,
And she had nothing to worry about,
Rose's happiness had really bloomed,
And luckily, she had no more doubt.

By Julia and Mollie

Making Habits at Maritime Academy

What is it like to go to a brand-new secondary school?

First day:

On my first day I felt extremely nervous to go to secondary school. I was used to the soft and easy ways of primary. I feared the consequences of a mistake I might make; aware of secondary school being a lot more strict, but I soon found that it wasn't that bad. If I made a mistake, I was usually informed of it and didn't get into trouble. If I didn't understand something, I wasn't told off and if I got lost, someone was there to help me. It was nice to have our Fleets (Maritime's name for tutor groups) to help us learn everything and remember when or how to do something.

Things I like about Maritime Habits:

I like the choice of habits. Strength proves our abilities and how we cope. Pride shows us the way to enjoy and represent our school. Unity unites us among our peers. All of these are personally really important and guide us as Maritime students.

Opinions about the first 2 weeks at Maritime:

The first two weeks have been better than expected. It's been really easy to find my way around with our Fleet and I have made a friend or two. It's been really enjoyable!

The school site and one: one devices:

I like how the school is shaped: it feels quite simple to remember and there's not any endless corridors like some other secondary schools. As Engineering Officer (Maritime's sustainability focus group), I appreciate the trees and grass in our playground; it makes me feel even better when I see a squirrel or two in one. As for the one: one devices, I love them. I expected a really small barely even functional laptop like my brothers had, but was proved wrong by the brilliant devices we were gifted. They are slightly smaller than a normal laptop but still pretty big, and function well. They fit into our bags snugly but have a bit of a weight to them.

by Daisy Loubser, Year 7



DISCLAIMER: This magazine was prepared and written by the students of Plymouth High School, and schools across TSAT. The opinions expressed in it are the authors' own and do not reflect those at Plymouth High School, the DfE or the Thinking Schools Academy Trust.