



SUNNY DAYS

ΦΩΤΕΙΝΕΣ ΗΜΕΡΕΣ

ΛΥΚΕΙΟ 2024



Peace



English Section



SUNNY DAYS TEAM 2023-2024

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Dear readers, explorers, curious minds and dreamers,

It is an honor to share this year's "*Sunny Days*" edition with you. Considering its long history in the Pierce educational environment and the platform it has provided to the student community for sharing ideas and aspirations for decades now, we are more than proud to have become a small part of the magazine's journey.

2024 has been an extremely creative period of reflection for the editorial team of the magazine, since we have given it our all to ensure an open-mindedness that is so desperately required during these years of much imitation and little imagination. We've done our best to ensure that no idea was overlooked, no student was deprived of their right to freedom of expression, and no dreams remained unrealized. And for that we are grateful... Grateful to have been supporters of everyone in the school community who wished to be heard. And that is our proudest achievement.

This year's magazine is different for one more reason; its theme is "Peace", a virtue we now need more than ever during times of extreme brutality, hate speech and violence. Recent events, along with humankind's history of violence, have made it clear that we need to speak out on World Peace. Now, and every single day afterwards. This year we have invited our community to redefine and celebrate freedom and harmony.

Sunny Days '24 is a collection of different sections, to ensure that anyone can find what they're looking for. We have art and literature, entertainment, opinions and many more. What's new? First and foremost, the new section "Hidden Heroes"; we felt it was time we looked more closely to the wonderful people working in the sidelines, who keep our school up and running. "Pen Fights", a section created to guarantee that you'll put your thinking caps on and start reflecting on your opinions. And lastly "Food for Thought", which doesn't include food, but certainly includes ideas for hungry brains.

All in all, we've put all our passion into this year's edition of "*Sunny Days*", because all of us in the editorial team truly love the magazine and the entirety of the work you, our fellow-students, have provided us with. Through the creation of this issue, we've met wonderful people, wrote heartfelt pieces and made the magazine a small part of our soul. So, thank you! Without you, none of this would be possible. We hope you enjoy reading through your peers' work and join us next year.

Ladies and gentlemen,

We present SUNNY DAYS 2024!

Nancy Seinti, B7, Editor-in-Chief

Thaleia Spyraiki, ΓΘΥ3, Deputy Editor-in-Chief

Pierce Homecoming Reunion 2023

On September 30th 2023, Pierce hosted its yearly Homecoming Reunion, celebrating the past, the present and the future. In the 2023 Homecoming, those reuniting were student graduates from the classes of 1952-'62-'72-'82-'92-'02-'12-'22 1953-'63-'73-'83-'93-'03-'13-'23, and their teachers. Sunny Days was given the opportunity to interview three people, so we chose three Pierce graduates whose professional lives we found truly inspiring. Saro Dedeyan, Lena Papalexopoulou and Achilleas Tzemos were chosen for their humanitarian, innovative and impactful work.



Saro Dedeyan, a distinguished alumnus of our school, whose academic journey began with his graduation from Pierce. He pursued a Bachelor of Science degree at Deree College and later expanded his expertise with a Master in Business Administration from the University of Edinburgh during the academic year 2003-2004. Presently residing in Los Angeles, California, Saro Dedeyan has made a mark as the owner of an Innovative Craft company. Recently, he made a journey back to our school, crossing continents from the United States, to reconnect with old schoolmates and teachers at our Pierce's Homecoming event.



Lena Papalexopoulou is currently an economist and entrepreneur. After a Bachelor in Economics, she earned two graduate degrees, a Master of International Affairs from Columbia University and an Executive Management Degree from IMD. She has worked for the European Union, Merrill Lynch, Johnson & Johnson and Concept SA, where she was President and CEO, among others. Moreover, she has served on the Boards of Directors of the Hellenic Retail Business Association and the Hellenic-Spanish Chamber of Commerce. Her great love is education and giving to the society. She is President of the Tufts University International Board of Advisors in Boston, a member of the Columbia University CAA in New York and a Trustee at College Year in Athens.





Achilleas Tzemos, a distinguished alumnus of our school, graduated in 1993 before embarking on a transformative academic journey that included studies at the University of Sussex and a Master of Arts degree from the University of Warwick. Today, he stands as an exemplary figure in the field of humanitarianism and sustainable development. As the General Director of MSF Greece (Médicines Sans Frontières Greece), Achilleas Tzemos channels his passion for humanitarian values into tangible actions, demonstrating a commitment to making a positive impact. His inspiring career underscores the profound influence our educational institution has had on nurturing leaders dedicated to creating a better world.

The Interview

Sunny Days: We chose a person to interview based on the profession that we found most intriguing. Is your job today what you imagined it would've been when you were a student?

Achilleas Tzemos - I had no idea that I would end up doing what I am doing now. It was a decision that was taken immediately after I finished my studies. I joined MSF (Médecins Sans Frontières/Doctors Without Borders) in 2010, so it was 8-9 years after being involved in the corporate sector. I was working in multinational companies, profit making, etc., and at this point I think that I had an identity crisis. I started questioning what I am doing. I was not happy when I woke up in the morning to go to work, so I shifted, I started looking around and joined MSF. First, I was in the Fund Raising department and then one thing led to the other. I started doing operations abroad which were quite difficult and, suddenly, thirteen years later, I am sitting here.

Saro Dedeyan - Well, I definitely didn't know exactly what I wanted to end up doing. I honestly don't think I could even imagine that I would have my own company now. What I do know is that this school, and the foundation that it gave me, along with the foundations my family gave me growing up, were truly the most important factors to the career path I chose later in my life and the decisions I took that brought me where I am today. When you are a student, it is normal that you cannot know what you will be doing in the future. However, what you can do, as I did myself, is having the mindset that you proceed with doing what makes you happy.

Lena Papalexopoulou - What've done so far has absolutely nothing to do with what I thought I would be doing when I was a student. As a student I



enjoyed international affairs, which led me to visit the U.S. as an Ambassador. However, upon arriving there, I realized that the ambassador's job was no longer the same and decided against continuing this career path. Moreover, I worked in an American Multinational company, in which I climbed the ranks and reached the role of Managing Director. A decade after, I evolved even more and became an entrepreneur, owning multiple businesses, but despite that, due to the economic crisis in Greece, I came to the decision of selling my companies and giving back to the community. These three major twists are what led me to pursue my true passion.

S. D.: If you were a Pierce student now, what would you do differently?

A. Tz.: I was not an excellent student even though in the last year I scored 18/20. I think it is important to keep a balance, do your best academically and also be socially active as it's extremely important. Sometimes you even need to break the rules, you guys need to be a little bit rebellious at this age, I tried to be both. I would not change anything, because at the end of the day everything that happened led me to where I am now and I'm quite happy here, so I don't regret anything. Even mistakes are useful as long as they are not irreversible.

S. De.: I probably wouldn't change anything. Life is a series of events where one event leads to another event and so on. Even a small event changing could mean that I would be somewhere else right now, which I wouldn't want, as I'm truly happy with what I'm currently doing and my school years were wonderful.

L. Pa.: I really think that I wouldn't have done much differently. I took advantage of most of the opportunities that Pierce gave me; made a lot of good friends, that I still have till today and participated in sports, such as basketball. If I were to change one thing, it would be how cognizant and grateful I was of this school's importance in my career and personal life.

S. D.: Is there any incident you particularly remember from your days in Pierce? Either a funny, or emotional one, or anything else that stuck in your memory?

A. Tz.: I remember specific teachers who managed to get through the protective shell that we all have as teenagers and they spoke to my heart -at least. I understood them very well because they were very honest and direct. I believe their advice stuck in my head and I have a lot of respect for them. A funny thing I remember is skipping school in the morning hours and going to the cafe down the road. Back then I think that we were a lot more protected compared to elsewhere, I don't know if that is the case today.

S. De.: We had such a great time in school. So many funny memories, especially from my class. I really can't pinpoint only one specific incident. We were a group of guys, especially during the last years of school, Nikos Zedelis, Haris Skalofolias, Marios Kalaritis and myself, who sat all together in class and spent time with each other in class, during the breaks, before and after school and on weekends. We made unforgettable memories and, thank God, we are friends even now after so many years.

L. Pa.: There isn't a particular event that stood out; however I frequently remember skipping class and having fun with my classmates. I remember back then there was a lot of laughter and playfulness in the hallways. We were definitely not as stressed as kids nowadays are. We always remembered to have fun. School was a time in which I generally laughed a lot and enjoyed moments with my friends.

S. D.: What advice can you give to Pierce students who will read this interview in the 2023-2024 Sunny Days magazine?

L. Pa.: An important piece of advice would be to focus on the following 3 things: your academical studies, as you all do, and then adapting useful skills and ethos. After graduating and going out the real world, knowledge will not be that useful, as pretty much everything can be found online. When applying for a job in the future, nobody is going to care about your grade, but your skills and characteristics such as "learning how to learn" or "differentiating wrong from right" will be very much recognized. Those are the things that will define you, not your academic knowledge.

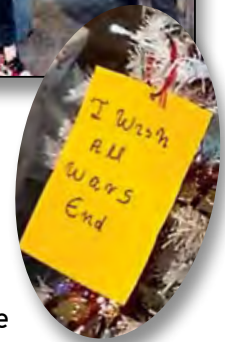
Aggelina Kyrousi, IB1, Petros Kokkalis, IB1,
Konstantinos Rigas, IB1, Christina Kollyri, A5

Christmas Bazaar 2023: *Sunny Days* was there!

For one more year, Pierce's Christmas Bazaar turned out to be a great success, as expected! During the Bazaar, our school was not only decorated by beautiful Christmas trees, garlands, lights and bows, but also by the many smiles of our students and teachers. Not to forget, thanks to the selling of our students' Christmas crafts and more our school managed to raise a great amount of money and offered it to organizations and people in need. Moreover, students, teachers and Pierce's friends enjoyed dishes from various countries served in our food corners, watched heartwarming performances by our school's drama club, were bejeweled by the sound of our orchestra and choir and got the chance to engage themselves in activities such as dancing.

And -you've guessed it right- part of this wonderful celebration became, also, *Sunny Days*! Our team's desk (which was located at the center of the event's space) became something like Santa's workshop...! We invited you to write your own Christmas wishes on colorful paper and then hang it on the "Christmas Wish tree" right next to our desk. Hopefully, your wish came true after, but even if it didn't, in any case, you all contributed to the making of a truly beautiful little wish-tree! Isn't it funny, how at the end every single one of us has something to wish for?

But except from conducting Santa's work, we also interviewed you! In the question: "What is your all-time favorite Christmas movie?", the most popular answer was "Home Alone"-no wonder why! Your answers mostly differed in terms of which of all the "Home Alone" movie was your favorite... As for "Your favorite Christmas dessert?", Pierce chose: Melomakarona! "But why?", we asked: "I don't like the powdered sugar in Kourabiedes"... And finally, according to Pierce the ideal Christmas gift is... "A LEGO set!", "A Christmas sweater", "Waffles on the Christmas morning!" and... "Love!"



Christina Kollyri, A5



Holocaust Remembrance Day (HRD) 2024

For the last two years, our school commemorates the Holocaust. Approximately 6 million people lost their lives during WWII, as a result of the Nazi persecutions and brutality. The event, organized and coordinated by

*Ms. Gizela Iosif, was a great success this year. Amongst the various activities organized for the whole school, the docudrama *The Students of Umberto Primo*, based on the heartbreaking true story of nine Jewish students from Thessaloniki, was a great success. *Sunny Days* had the opportunity to invite to Pierce and interview the creators of the film, Ms. Alessandra Maioletti, director, and Mr. Antonio Crescenzi, professor at the Italian institute of Athens.*

S.D.: Mr. Crescenzi and Ms. Maioletti, welcome to our school and thank you for being here with us today!

A. Maioletti & A. Crescenzi: A big thank you to your school for organizing this event and to the English Magazine for welcoming us, as well as to Christina Antonakou, Christina Kollyri and Ms. Babouris.

S.D.: Mr. Crescenzi, we would like to learn more about you and your experience as a professor; how you ended up in Greece and specifically Thessaloniki? And what about your connection to Greece, Ms. Maioletti?

A.C.: I came to Greece in 1990 and started working in the Italian Institute of Thessaloniki in 1997. The institute was up and running until 2014, and this is where I was teaching history and Italian. It was a wonderful experience, as Thessaloniki and the Italian language have a strong bond, especially coming from the students who were fascinated by the language, an attribute which is also founded here, in Athens.

A.M.: I am half Greek and half Italian, I came to Greece thirty years ago. I am a choreographer and the last thirty years I am a director in the field of theatre. My whole family has an artistic trait. My father was the principal of Cinecittà -a film production company-, my mother was a prestigious Greek painter. This is how connected I was in the world of art and what mostly led me and inspired me to become a director to this movie that we present you today.

S.D.: Mr. Crescenzi, the research that you conducted requires a lot of determination and passion. What motivated you to do this?

A.C.: Indeed, the research lasted for 20 years and continues. What motivated me

is the fact that I found documents concerning lives of adolescents. Children like you, of middle and high school. My first thought after I learned that they were studying in *Umberto Primo* while the Second World War, is where they were at the time, what happened to them. Instantly, by 2003, when the archives were founded, I was and still am engaged to this research. Families from all over the world are still searching for their relatives' stories and their roots. It is a big step for them as what they had only learned for their grandparents is that they were studying in a college in Thessaloniki, but of course they wanted to know more.



S.D.: Mr. Crescenzi, could you please tell us how you felt when discovering the first letter, specifically Alberto Modiano's, and how exactly you found it.

A.C.: I found it accidentally. I was alone in the office correcting students' essays; while it started raining and I went to the basement to close the windows that we were always leaving open, as the building was old -built in 1936- and we wanted to avoid fungus and other smells. When I entered the room, papers were already flying around inside the room due to the wind. One paper came to me. I saw that it was a student's essay -Alberto Modiano's-, titled "The most beautiful memory of my life", written in December of 1941. I knew that the Germans invaded Thessaloniki in April of 1941, so just by his name I knew he was Jewish and instantly wondered what had happened to this student. I then started searching and I did not only find essays, but photos, school assignments and middle school diplomas. For the first 11 years, I was searching for the owners of these diplomas and in 2014 I gathered some people that I found in many parts of the world in Thessaloniki and gave them their diplomas. Then, with Ms. Maioletti we wanted to create something original, so we first wrote it as a play and then turned it into a docudrama.

S.D.: After all these years, no other teacher found these documents or was interested in conducting a research like yours?

A.C.: No, no one else knew that these documents were still in the school, and when they found out, everyone was left speechless as they all thought that they had been destroyed through the years. When I found them, I knew that I could not, not do something or act. I immediately thought of these children, which all have the right to live and be remembered and respected.

S.D.: What, in your opinion, was the hardest part in this experience, both practically and emotionally, and how did it change you as a person?

A.C.: It was difficult from the beginning, when I was searching for the owners of letters but found out they were not still alive. Many times, I was sitting on the stairs of Umberto Primo thinking that this was where all these happy students were running, making friendships and memories, arguing, having fun, falling in love... That was when I was asking myself "Where are they?". While the sadness was immense, the happiness that I felt was equivalently major when I found someone still being alive; like a woman in California, one in Florida, or even finding their children.

S.D.: Which story stayed with you out of all those you have read so far?

A.C.: I believe that I have bonded with all the 9 students. Alberto Simandof is a student whose family originated from Serres. He managed to survive, he had 2 daughters and created a new life in Paris. There, me and Alessandra found his two daughters whom we asked if they had a photo of their father when he was older, but they did not. Because their father had died a couple years ago, they did not have the courage to enter his home. Though we decided that in case they found more information they would contact us. Not a week had passed when they called us and told us that they had found his diary from 1939 to 1945. They sent it to us, and through that we wrote down his story, as he was writing every day since the Germans invaded Thessaloniki, until the end of the war.

S.D.: How did you find information about and photos of the students who had died?

A.C.: From their families, the documents that are in Auschwitz, and testimonies of the living that described exactly what was taking place in there. When entering Auschwitz -those how got to survive, because many people died in the trains after 5-6 days of commute-, they needed to buy a ticket as the Germans were very exact regarding their job. So, in their personal documents, they also contained their names.

S.D.: Ms. Maioletti, could you briefly talk about the plot of the film we will watch?

A.M.: It is a very special docudrama since it has both theatrical and documental elements through valid information that we have put in it from specific documents. It also contains fiction as the actors were not experienced and it was their first time acting. In the docudrama, Antonio is a fil rouge -common thread, central theme-. Through his experiences and his point of view, other students' lives start to be presented to the audience. It was very hard to combine 9 different lives and not make the viewer be lost in the movie with all this information; but with teamwork we managed to

overcome this difficulty. An element which is eminent when you try to make and achieve such a hard goal, as the creation of a historic docudrama. The movie's main theme is trauma and how one can surpass it without showing dead bodies; something I was very determined upon because showing one's empty body -without a soul- in my opinion, we would not be respecting them, as they would not want us to see them in this



Left to right: Christina Antonakou, Alessandra Maioletti, Antonio Crescenzi, Chrissa Babouris-Smith, Christina Kollyri

condition. The piece was created with respect and emotion for everyone's lives. Through music we managed to achieve that exact goal as sound is something that stays with us. Each sound and melody were created specifically for the movie, even the musician came to the studio and practiced with us every melody and sound so it can perfectly fit the tone of the movie. Everything in this movie, from the clothes that the actors are wearing to the music is a symbol of its main theme.

S.D.: Why did you decide to create this movie? What was your motive and what was your main idea?

A.M.: My grandma was Jewish, a Greek-French Jewish and before the Germans invaded in Paris she managed to leave and rescue herself and go to Istanbul. I always "carried" her story with me. She never talked about these stories of her... Many survivors do this, they cannot "go through" that trauma again, they want to remove it from their lives. Very often the children of the survivors me and Antonis told us "Our parents would not speak to us about it". Trauma remains deeply in the subconscious. Alberto Benamias, for instance, who was a soldier commander and had the worst possible role assigned in Auschwitz, when he finally travelled to America and fell in love and got married and lived a very good life as a chemist, in daytime he sang, and lived happily, but during night-time he screamed due to his terrible nightmares. Trauma never goes away and it even lasts for 3, 4 or even 5 generations.

A.C.: I would like to add that apart from Alessandra's personal experience, our common goal was to cultivate a culture of memory. Through our movie we would like to address all audiences, but especially children and young people. For us memory and remembering is extremely important and valuable. Without memory there is no past, no present, and there will be no future.



A.M.: We are obligated towards that. We have no excuses. It's our history. Now it's your turn. Your turn to make sure that this *never* gets forgotten.

S.D.: What was the most difficult part of this whole process?

A.M.: First of all, it was the research. Due to the stories, I had nightmares myself for a long time... And also, the second most difficult step was to find the 9 protagonists...! We searched for actors that would be convincing, natural and for actors who would believe in this goal. And then the casting took place... I didn't choose the actors based on if they looked



alike with the original photographs, I chose them based on their likeness to the characters of each protagonist. I needed a girl that looked shy and studious, for example or a girl who was more cosmopolitan, or a boy who was brave... But also, the other part that was especially difficult for the actors were the rehearsals. They really did the outmost. They became very emotional at times too. What was really important is that they became a team, a real one. I chose people who were truly passionate and who deeply believed in this project.

S.D.: What do you consider as your happiest memory or your biggest accomplishment?

A.M.: This one. This film is going to be watched all around the world, from America to China... I want the children to watch this, everywhere. That is my biggest accomplishment.

S.D.: Ms Maioletti what was the most shocking story of all for you? Although every single one is so unique, does any of them stand out to you?

A.M.: I believe every story has its own... story...! Every single one was unique and contributed gracefully to the storytelling.

C.K.: Ms Maioletti, Mr Cresenzi we cannot thank you enough!

Christina Antonakou, A1 & Christina Kollyri, A5

What the students wrote about *The Students of Umberto Primo*...

The docudrama was really interesting. It's so sad and overwhelming that people had to sacrifice their life and hide their Jewish identity everyday (and change their names to Greek ones). The docudrama made us understand clearly how poorly they were treated just because of their beliefs. Also, their life was paused. More specifically, they were persecuted by the Nazis and therefore, couldn't complete their studies.

Ioanna Vlachou, B1 & Christina Simou, B7

I thought it was very interesting and heartbreaking to learn about the stories of people that actually went through WWII and not the ones of fictional characters. Getting to know them and their lives as students in Umberto Primo created a connection with them. Therefore, when most of them suffered a tragic end, I felt like I had lost people from my own life and that the war that had unfairly taken their lives must never happen again.



Athanasios Chatzinikolaou, B9

The then getaway for Jewish families in Thessaloniki to protect themselves quickly became a living hell for them and their family. But the film also showed the attempts to save them, many of them pointless as they were eventually caught and executed. However, some were fortunate enough to manage to hide and escape, some even finished their studies and continued to live a normal rest of their life. All in all, the film was an emotional roller coaster, which gave an insight on the harsh life of targeted communities at the time.

John Poulakos, B7

What was most moving about this movie was the pictures of baby shoes and belongings left on the locker rooms of the gas chambers. This made me realise even more how tragic were the situations of those poor people, who believed that they were going to be freed from the conservation camp but instead got tortured. Last

but not least, I was fascinated by the people who tried to help the Jews and risked their own lives and work. In my opinion, this movie should be shown in more schools in order to sensitise people about the holocaust and the atrocities committed by the Nazis.

George Macheras, B5

The Students of Umberto Primo was a great film which depicts the horrors of the Holocaust through the eyes of teenagers. While it doesn't have any graphic or gory scenes, it is still able to convey the terror the Jews faced during that time period with powerful scenes. It was also more relatable to me because of the protagonists' ages being close to mine.

Apostolos Siotas, A9

Six million Jews were murdered by the Nazis during the Holocaust. This is what we learn during history class in our school years, a plain number that we acknowledge and tend to forget as the rhythm of our everyday lives overwhelms us. We tend to disregard that this number refers not only to the six million Jews that were murdered but to the killing of six million human beings each with a history, a family, a dream they weren't able to accomplish. In my opinion, the film "The students of *Umberto Primo*" embodies clearly the previous claim as it offers us an insight into the lives of nine Jewish students in Thessaloniki, which used to be a prosperous Jewish community before World War II.

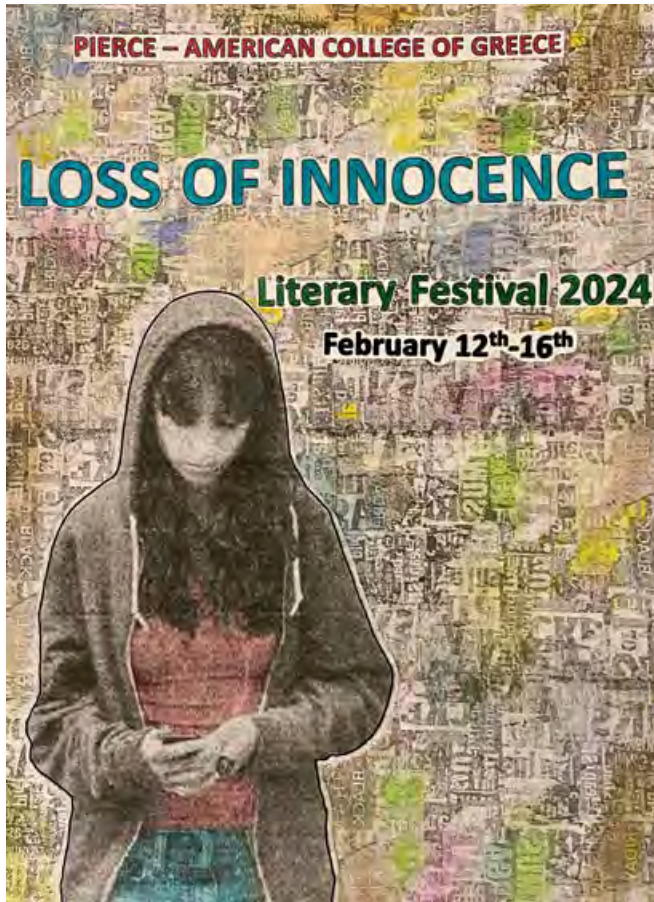
Filippa Angelopoulou, A1

The English Department's Literary Festival 2024

Loss of Innocence



Every year, the English Department holds its annual Literary Festival. This year, the theme was “Loss of Innocence” and from 12th to 16th February, all Pierce students had the opportunity to attend several events organized by the Club “English Event Planners” (Advisors: Ms. Karmali & Ms. Tziva).



Poster designed by: Aggelos Kappatos, A4



Let's Talk About Abuse – Grade 10

Year IV students participated in a seminar by accomplished child psychologist Eti Varouch on recognizing signs of abuse, the techniques of grooming and how to address them.



Writing Workshop – Grade 10

During this year's English Literary Festival, selected Grade 10 students were given the opportunity to participate in a writing/drawing workshop. The workshop was run by accomplished writer, Sofianna Theofanous, and talented illustrator, Lela Stroutsi. The two joined forces in "The Girl and the Girl", a coming-of-age story for all ages. The workshop participants were guided in producing a narrative on their own coming of age experience or an image mirroring that experience. Below are some of their "creations":

I look at a person, a strange person who does not look like me at all, a strange soul concurring my being. I forgot how to be me, I forgot what I like. And yet the portrait in the mirror is a glimpse of my true being. The scars on wrists and the pain in my heart tell me who I am; I am not the nice and kind person I am told I am, but a useless, cold unlovable person. That person haunts me, makes me miserable, makes me turn against myself in every way possible. Both persons are me, I am my own battle. I am the cause. I am the voice. The voice that overshadows all others. It's as if I am not in control of my mind, but it is control of me. And I made up my mind, I realized this is it. This is the moment that everything stops. This time I choose and I choose that the only way for this consistent pain to stop is for me to cease existing. For if I cease existing, the other me does as well. The battle finally stops. One last breath and I am gone. One... last... breath, and then death comes and takes me away.

Maria Ananda Kanaki-Polemaki, A4

I am waking up in the morning not recognizing my own reflection. The memories of my childhood are gradually fading as this stranger inside me is rising; this unrecognizable part of me that I am obligated to accept, that I am obligated to love. Who am I after all? All I feel is a sensation of numbness, a feeling of being lost in the maze of life. I am begging for guidance, for compassion, for warmth, but nobody sees me, not the way I see me. I am all alone trying to understand where all this dizziness inside my mind is generated from. I am trapped in the prison my mind has created. I am puzzled, I am lost, is it going to last forever? At the end of every day, I

keep asking myself: when does it get better? When will I feel safe again inside my own body? But, maybe that is the brutal reality of life, not feeling safe, not feeling like yourself anymore. Not knowing how to express yourself anymore because words are not powerful enough to describe these lifelong scars that haunt you forever. Maybe this is the same reality that absorbs happiness and freedom from people's lives. Maybe this is the same reality that internally kills people.

Joanna Gerardi, A2

Discussion Panel – Grade 11

The students of B Lyceum attended a student-led Panel Discussion with key speaker Ms. Fotini Tsalikoglou, eminent psychologist and Pierce alumna. Ms. Tsalikoglou studied Psychology at the University of Geneva. She is a Clinical Psychologist and teaches at the Department of Psychology, Panteion University, Athens. She is the author of many celebrated novels published in Greece, including Eros Pharmakopoulos, I Dreamed I Was Well, and I, Martha Freud.



Prior to Ms Tsalikoglou's visit, students had read Azor, a short story about an abandoned stray's quest for survival. The ending of the story was omitted and the students invited to guess it. It was during the panel discussion that the ending was revealed along with the power of innocence.

The Freedom Gate – Grade 12

Senior students attended an interactive presentation with Ms. Elli Tsiouri and Ms. Katerina Loukopoulou who are representatives of The Freedom Gate. The organisation's goal is to combat all forms of social exclusion as well as to promote psychosocial support for vulnerable groups. Their actions focus on the support of prisoners' familiar environment with special care to underage children of the family, on rehabilitation programs for juvenile offenders, on support programs for incarcerated parents and on research.



The title of their presentation was "The Transition from Innocence to Delinquency" and it took the form of a discussion with students of the 12th Grade and focused on the factors that lead to the rise of juvenile delinquency. Students shared their views and concerns on this social issue, while The Freedom Gate representatives also shared their experience inside the detention centers. They hope that the organisation will contribute actively and essentially to the fight of social inequality, injustice and prejudice.



My Self(ie) & Me A Grade 11 Project

How do you see yourself(ie)?
(teachers: Ms. Tziva & Ms. Karmali)



...Selfies help us capture special moments and remember important events from the past, emotionally touching us. Reliving sentiments can lead to our self-exploration and realization. Furthermore, love, happiness, empathy, kindness and sadness are few of the emotions that can be expressed through self-photography. Many have been the times when I was feeling desperate and looked at some selfies with my friends and family to cure my lack of optimism. So, selfies have a key role when it comes to our psychological health.

Secondly, satisfying our social needs is a very important procedure that can also be completed with the help of selfies. In more detail, they are a way of communicating with others, sharing our feelings and our experiences.

It is crucial to note that every human craves for connection with others and selfies are a great way to achieve that.

Konstantinos Siganos, A9

...A lot of people will say that selfies also get us exposed to hidden dangers such as “selling” ourselves for fame and losing our self-respect. I agree that there are many people who get addicted to selfies and upload their content only for likes. I utterly condemn this type of activity on social media, and I believe there is a simple solution to this problem: we should all ask ourselves this one question; if we are about to sacrifice our self-respect and sell ourselves for fame, is it really worth uploading that selfie? This once again leads to the conclusion that guns don’t kill people,

other people do. It’s clear for all to see that selfies aren’t meant to be taken for such purposes, people get addicted and fall into this trap.

To summarize, for as long as the trend of selfies exists, the “war” between selfie-takers and selfie-haters will too. Even though selfie-



haters have some valid arguments, recent evidence shows that this war will most probably end with selfie takers crowned victorious.

Aggelos Kappatos, A4

How do I see myself through my photos?

I believe the pictures I chose to add in my collage represent me. All of them capture my favorite places and remind me of great memories and hobbies. They show my love for arts, cooking, volleyball and my favorite season, summer. Also I chose those pictures because they remind me of people I love and admire.



Nicole Vonatsou, A2

These pictures best represent me by capturing the things and places I love the most. Switzerland - one of my favourite places so far that I visited two years ago with my best friend, the sea and sunsets (so calm, peaceful), food and cooking and Christmas as my favourite time of the year. Lastly, a typical evening with a friend watching Gilmore Girls, eating noodles accompanied by her dog :)



Silia Tsekmere, A1

This picture, which is taken in the Dolomites, Italy describes me very accurately. First of all, I am a “mountainous” person and I really like the snow, something that this mountain has plenty. I also really enjoy watching weather phenomenos and this picture has both clouds and spots without them, which is grate, because it is fascinating to see the clouds “moving around and not remaining still”. Furthermore, I am a person who travels for once in a lifetime experiences and this was one of them, because when I went to the height of 2950 meters, I felt that one of my lifetime goals turned true. Last but not least, this picture shows how much I love visiting places I have never been to, and how important are moments like that for one’s future memories. Overall, I trully believe that this picture represents me and can even teach me some personal characteristics I didn’t even know I had.



Dimitris Maniotis, A6



ACGMUN (29-31 March 2024)

This year's 7th ACGMUN conference was a truly fascinating experience! A full year of preparations with the Organizing Team, all led to a three-day conference, on March 29-31. This year's theme was "Reaching Net-Zero" and attracted more than 700 participants, from Greece, the Netherlands, France, England, Turkey and Israel. We loved getting to know new people from across the globe and their insights on diplomacy! There were 14 different committees, so the topics we discussed ranged from *Non-Communicable Diseases* (World Health Organization), all the way to the *Artificial Intelligence Augmented Workforce*, (International Labor Organization). We are very happy and honoured to have collaborated with everyone and we hope to see everyone back at Pierce next year!

(MUN Advisors: Ms. Miliaresi, Ms. Petropoulos, Ms. Pissari)

Marianna Argeiti, A1

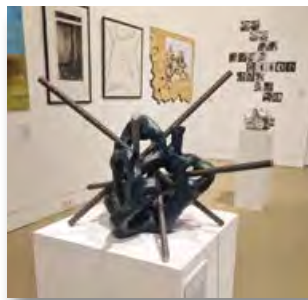




The IB Visual Arts Exhibition

This year's IB Visual Arts Exhibition was rather exceptional due to the chance to help the amazing students and their works that it included. I am extremely proud of all thirteen students that were heavily engaged with the course and produced amazing results. They each demonstrated a clear personal creative voice, which they fully supported by their artistic practice as well as their writing. I feel blessed to have had these amazing young artists during their two-year journey in our VA course and I will miss them greatly.

Dimitris Ioannou, IB VA instructor



SUNNY DAYS



The Pierce Open House -21 April 2024

Every year, the Open House provides our students with the perfect opportunity to present their work and make us proud of their achievements. Top event amongst the many is the Talent Show, which is organized, directed and choreographed by our Senior students.

Class of 2024, your Talent Show was the best goodbye you could have given us!

As the third bell rings, there's a buzz in the air. People shuffle to find their assigned seats, eyes darting between their invitations and the lights which are slowly fading. Finally, the curtains part and the silence breaks with the sound of claps taking over. It is not the *Phantom of the Opera* nor *Hamilton* we are watching – it's the Pierce 2024 Talent Show!

For many, especially the graduating seniors, this show is the highlight of our Open House. Students spend endless hours to create their last performance at Pierce all together. This year's Talent show could be described with three adjectives: Fun, Emotional, Smart. And let me say one thing, it did not disappoint!

From choreographies that certainly exceeded the dancing expectations of high-schoolers, scenarios that made students, parents and teachers burst out laughing and fun, creative games to a movie whose end filled us with pride, happiness, and melancholy all at the same time, having us reaching for the tissues, the talent show was a rollercoaster of emotions.

The moment of greatest emotion, however, was the finale of the performance, as the seniors took to the stage one last time, dancing, hugging, and laughing. I'll speak for all spectators and say, we didn't really know how to feel at the end, did we? As if we had exhausted all emotions and the only thing that remained by that time was a heavy stone in the stomach that could be translated to; How wonderful has it been growing up with you!

Aggelina Kyrrousi, IB1

Marigolds - A Play Presented by the English Drama Club (EDC)



Marigolds, written in 1969 by Eugenia Collier is a coming-of-age short story about Lizabeth, a girl growing up in rural Maryland during the Great Depression, which imposes deep hardships on the already struggling Black residents. Yet, amidst the grimness, one colorful element stands out in the gray-brown home of Lizabeth's youth: Miss Lottie's marigolds. Lizabeth, now an adult, reflects back on the summer when she was fourteen.

EDC Advisor: Gizela Iosif

Actors: Leda Andrianou, Nana Borboli (IB2),
Maria Andrianna Bartzoka, Niki Papageorgiou

Poster created by Ria Riga, Γ4

The European Youth Parliament (EYP) 26-29 April 2024

The European Youth Parliament is an educational peer-to-peer conference for sixteen to eighteen year-old students from all over Europe, organized under the auspices of the European Commission and the European Parliament. As Europe is facing several challenges -from the climate crisis to post-COVID recovery, the economic recession, and so much more- there is a great need for youth action and active citizenship. Under the theme "*Perpetual Bloom of the Youth: Creating the Basis for an Innovative and Empowered European*





Future”, the 47th National Selection Conference of EYP Greece, provided the ground for fruitful discussions and was a safe space for all participants to learn and grow by redefining their limits, better understanding their capabilities and aspiring to become a better version of themselves.

This year’s opening and closing ceremonies were hosted at Deree and members of the Pierce delegation were selected to represent Greece in the 100th International Conference to take place in July 2024 and in various other conferences and fora across Europe. Pierce prepares students for the European Youth Parliament National Selection Conference through the PR Club (Political Thinking and Rhetoric Club).

(The PR Club Advisors: Ms. Babouris-Smith & Ms. Giannopoulou)

The 47th European Youth Parliament National Selection Conference took place from the 26th to the 29th of April and was an unforgettable experience, different from any other I’ve participated in before. Although the goal of this conference is to select the most suitable delegates for conferences abroad, it also gives young people the chance to broaden their horizons, make new friends and improve their skills on many different levels. The first day of the session aims for participants to get to know each other, the committee chairs and the members of the board. During the next two days, participants are encouraged with the rest of their committee to draft a resolution on a specific topic which will be presented later on in the General Assembly. On the last day of the conference all committees come together in a session called the General Assembly to present their resolutions. Personally, I believe that this is the best day of the entire conference as well as the most interesting one. Overall, even though I wasn’t selected, I encourage anyone who is interested to try and join because they will be able to gain so many new things as well as make new friends.

Alkmini Farmaki, A10

All of her Versions

Despite the fact that I am me,
 You're still unable to see
 that what I was, what I will be
 -that little girl who climbed the tree,
 the woman having to pay fee,
 the baby crying before sleep,

the old lady making art,
 the student who is feeling smart,
 the teen who cried and whipped and laughed,
 the happy mother who felt trapped,
 the dancing, spinning curly head,
 the swimmer who with fish was fed,
 the writer who only loved to read,
 the singer who always is in need...

You've seen it all and all you've heard,
 but still my heart becomes a knotted thread,
 whenever you once more forget:
 that what I was, what I will be
 and every version you might see,
 belongs to me, it is my right,
 holding each memory tight,
 to believe, despite my height, that still in heart
 I am a child.

Christina Kollyri, A5



Nefeli Naoumi, A7

End Scene

The string was cut
The letter ripped
The bitter taste of your own skin

The ship that sank
The friend that drowned
The nap you took right on the ground

The tear you shed that very day
The napkin, the airplane's delay

The sad goodbye, the jolly greet
The way you felt numb in your feet

The last, long stare
The vision's blur

The ending scene
The music playing
And his guitar that grieves in pain

The sun had set long time ago
The city bled
Go, run at home

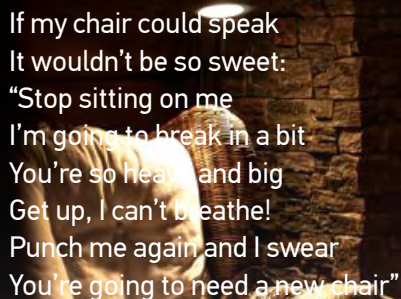
The broken bed
The shrunken sea
And to this day I pay the fee.

Christina Kollyri, A5

If Objects Could Speak

Three poems inspired by Sylvia Plath's *Mirror*

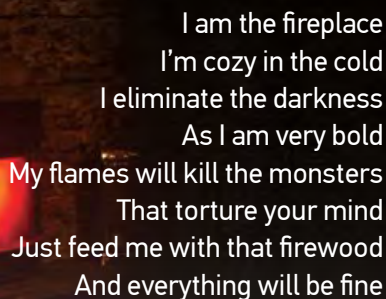
Chair



If my chair could speak
It wouldn't be so sweet:
"Stop sitting on me
I'm going to break in a bit
You're so heavy and big
Get up, I can't breathe!
Punch me again and I swear
You're going to need a new chair"

Gerasimos Dimitropoulos, A3

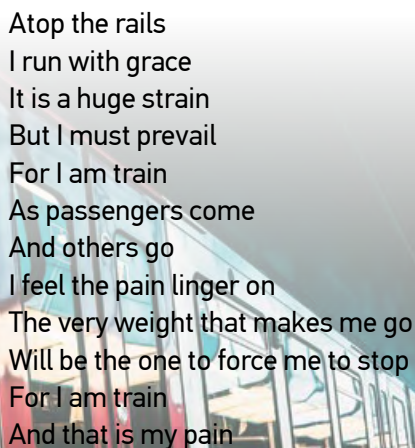
Fireplace



I am the fireplace
I'm cozy in the cold
I eliminate the darkness
As I am very bold
My flames will kill the monsters
That torture your mind
Just feed me with that firewood
And everything will be fine

Jason Mokas, A7

Train



Atop the rails
I run with grace
It is a huge strain
But I must prevail
For I am train
As passengers come
And others go
I feel the pain linger on
The very weight that makes me go
Will be the one to force me to stop
For I am train
And that is my pain

Marios Alexandridis, A1

The Wise Fox

It was a hot summer day; the sun was still shining brightly and there were no clouds in the sky. It was clear that the weather was not intending to show any mercy to any of the forest creatures, who were desperately trying to avoid the heat.

In the depths of the forest there was a path that at one point separated into two ways: the path on the left led to a lake with crystal clear, cool water, surrounded by many trees that could provide the animals with shade and spare them from the insufferable heat of the summer. The right path, on the other hand, led to a part of the forest almost completely devoid of life. If any unfortunate souls were to end up there, well, I honestly pity them because they would be feeling the heat WAY more intensely than in any other part of the forest.

Right on the point where the two paths separated, there was a fox lying comfortably under the shade of a tree. Under normal circumstances, she would be sleeping until the sun disappeared from the sky, but the heat was too intense and her thick fur wasn't helping at all. Fortunately for her, though, she knew the forest like the back of her hand- or rather like the back of her paw. So she knew all the best places to go on any occasion. That being said, she obviously knew which path one should take on such a hot day.

She was feeling rather generous that day -she was also probably very bored, since the weather limited the things she could do without getting a heatstroke-, so she decided to be the animals' guide for the day and show them the path towards the lake. The first animal to cross her path was a lost crow that had difficulty finding its way between all the tree branches, but not willing to fly any higher and be exposed to the sun.

- "Hey! Go to your left, if you go that way you will find a lake to help you with your thirst", said the fox.

- "No thank you, I don't listen to foxes", said the crow, with clear distrust towards the fox.

- "But you must have been flying for hours, surely you are thirsty, you should go to the lake and take a break!"

- "Yes, of course I am heading towards the lake, but I don't trust your kind! In fact, I think the lake is on the end of the right path! You must be purposefully giving me wrong information".

- "How can you be so sure I am lying?"

- "Oh please, a fox I saw a few days ago tricked me so she could steal my cheese. I know you are sly creatures by nature and have no doubt that you will try to trick me in a similar way."

And that was the last thing the crow said before flying along the right path, right where it would most likely meet its demise.

The second visitor the fox had that day was not an animal, but a human. From his clothes, one would assume he was a farmer. The fox began talking:

- *"You should take the path on your left. It..."*

But she was immediately interrupted.

- *"That is all I needed to hear to know I should go the right way! Your kind always eat my animals, I am not going to trust a silly fox like that! I am smarter than that."*

Apparently, he wasn't that smart, because he just got himself a one-way ticket to the never-ending desert.

The fox was growing visibly irritated by the second. She. Was. Just. A. Fox. She wasn't a wanted criminal, some type of monster or abomination. So why in the world was everybody so distrustful of her!

Just then, a wolf passed by.

- *"Hey you! If you want to survive go to your left".*

The wolf didn't even look at her before following her instructions. The fox was surprised, but at the same time she almost expected him to listen to her, since wolves are thought to be more threatening than her. Plus, he looked like he really needed to quench his thirst after a good meal. If she didn't know any better she would assume he had eaten an entire herd of sheep and maybe even a human (perhaps she didn't know any better).

Satisfied, she decided to close her eyes for a while and soon drifted into her sweet slumber. She dreamt she was in a land full of chickens and no guard dogs to chase her away. Oh, how happy she was!

Until her beautiful dream was cut short when she felt some fool nudging her. She was about to yell at whoever interrupted her precious beauty sleep, when she saw it was the wolf from before.

- *"Ehm, how can I help you...?"* the fox asked.

- *"I was just wandering why you were honest with me. Usually foxes are sly and act maliciously. So how come you now act so differently from how you are known to do?"*

- *"Well, you shouldn't make assumptions about someone after having just met them. After all, don't you know that looks can be deceiving?"* the fox replied.



Ioanna Chrysoula Revythi, A9

SUNNY DAYS

Ink and Illumination

In the quaint village of Scholarshire, there stood a venerable institution known as the Academy of Erudition. Its halls echoed with the scholarly pursuits of knights and young ladies, armed not with swords but with quills and parchment.

One day, a young Scholar named Sir Perplexity entered the academy, his eyes wide with wonder and his mind brimming with curiosity. The faculty, a crew of pedagogues, welcomed him with grandiloquent speeches about the noble pursuit of wisdom.

In the classroom of Dame Rigorous, the serious disciplinarian, the scholars engaged in the mystic rituals of standardized testing. They deciphered arcane symbols on scrolls, attempting to prove their worthiness through the sacred art of multiple-choice incantations.

In the court of Sir Pedantic, the meticulous grammarian, the scholars engaged in a heated competition of syntax, grammar, and semantics. The victor was declared based on the precision of their comma placements and the elegance of their subjunctive clauses.

In the library of Lady Convoluted, the scholars delved into tomes of esoteric knowledge, deciphering the prophecies of long-deceased philosophers. The ability to repeat these prophecies in essays of labyrinthine complexity was deemed the highest form of intellectual prowess.

As the scholars navigated the halls, they encountered the enigmatic Sir Bureaucrat, keeper of the sacred transcripts and master of administrative incantations. The students bowed before him, understanding that their destiny in the realm of academia hinged upon the alignment of bureaucratic stars.

Sir Perplexity, however, found himself bewildered by the complicated rituals and expectations. In a moment of rebellion, he wrote a treatise in plain language, extolling the virtues of clarity and practical knowledge.

To the shock of the faculty, Sir Perplexity's treatise gained popularity among the common villagers. The academy, shaken by this unprecedented disruption, fought with the subversive notion that true wisdom need not be obscured by the veils of academic pretension. And so, in the kingdom of Scholarshire, the once unquestioned traditions in education began to unravel, thanks to the rebellion of a curious young scholar named Sir Perplexity.

Ink and Illumination

In Scholarshire, where quills did scribe,
In halls of learning, far and wide,
Sir Perplexity, young and keen,
Entered the Academy unseen.

Dame Rigorous, serious and bold,
Tested minds with scrolls unrolled.
Standardized rites, a mystic art,
Multiple-choice from the very start.

Sir Pedantic, with grammar's lance,
Fought in the realm of syntax dance.
Commas placed with utmost care,
Subjunctive clauses filled the air.

Lady Convolutated, in her library lair,
Unraveled tomes with intellectual flair.
Cryptic prophecies, philosopher's rhymes,
The scholars penned in labyrinthine times.

Sir Bureaucrat, enigmatic sage,
Master of transcripts, in the bureaucratic cage.
Administrative stars, their alignment sought,
Scholars bowed, destiny tightly wrought.

But Perplexity, a rebel heart,
In plain language, he chose to impart.
A treatise clear, a subversive song,
Echoes through the halls, where secrets throng.

Whispers now in the Halls of Knowledge,
As Perplexity's wisdom found its carriage.
Bureaucratic stars, though bright and high,
Bowed to clarity in the scholarly sky.

Olga Stavrou, B8

It's Only a Nightmare

I stumbled and fell,
It wasn't the first time nor will it be the last
My dreams got lost in a well
Should I jump and seize them fast?

I open the curtains but there's no light
I open my eyes to a scary sight
I run to the door but the lock disappeared
I yell on the top of my lungs
But nobody's here

The nightmare's over
I get up fast
I brush my teeth
The night has passed

I hear a knock
Who might it be?
"I'm all your past and history"

I run to offer them a cup of tea
They laugh and ask what's up with me
I say all is well at least for now
This week will pass and I'll be fine

I get up but when I turn around nobody's there
Just a portrait of me 50 years from now
Everybody's crying, "What did I do?"
I did nothing, which was the problem too

The plaque reads "A woman who only died"
She never seized her dreams
She abandoned them in the well, why?
The curtains closed once again
And I'm the only one sighing

I scream again
I run to the door but the lock's not there
I am covered in sweat
Mom, Dad? I'm here!
But they're not,
I left them behind
Because I was too afraid to go and shine

Phew! that was close!
Finally, I've woken up!
What a nightmare!
Crazy! Right?

I hear a knock
I see a mirror
I have gray hair
I seem defeated

What happened?
What went wrong?
The mirror says: "You stayed in your nightmares way too long."

Nancy Seinti, B7

To Ms. Karava

Writing poetry for English class,
I thought of all the things I saw
but never realized
like the tear stains on my history books
from all the shameful naps on the front desk,
like the bags under my eyes, bag on my right
shoulder
baggage from my past lives.

Let the skeletons out of the closet.
I won't look at them,
I won't look you in the eye,
regretting the moment,
the first moment I spilled my guts in ink
and got graded in green.

Sunday

On Monday morning I wore a scarf,
the freeze and chill and bitter air
of the street I grew up in
attack more viciously
in these small hours.

In your bedroom I found out
the truth about Sunday nights:
the air can be sweet, as you like it.

I wore a scarf
over my ears and nose and neck,
for fear the air I breathed last night
will get polluted by my dreary Mondays.

0302

When I look at you I feel like my mother
peeking into my room
while I sit on the floor like a dead dove
and stare at my four walls
with blank eyes,

wishing she could reach for my hand
or open her mouth and say
anything worthwhile.

I know you need a friend
but just like my mother
I can't see through the fog.
Just like my mother
I am scared, I have
nothing worthwhile to say.

I can only touch your hair
like she used to,
and write poems
I know you'd never read,
like the prayers me and her used to say
together.

Thaleia Spyraiki, ΓΘΥ3

SUNNY DAYS



Malala Yousafzai

A Poem About Women's Power

In the past, women were quiet and scared,
But now they are speaking up,
Feeling prepared.
Education helps them know what's right,
Stopping abuse, shining the might.

No more hiding, no more lies,
Equality and fairness light up the skies,
We cheer for women loud and strong,
Together we help them all along.

Let us stop abuse, let's make things right,
For women's education let's unite!
In classrooms and beyond, let's make a change,
For women's rights let's re-arrange.

Panos Stavridis, B7, Konstantinos Kapsalis, B4
Petros Ramsis Rotas Gereis, B7

Woman

I am in my prime. My skin is plump and full of life.
These hypocrites, the candles and the moon, their praises reassure me.
Nevertheless, I am troubled. I am torn.
The reflection of mine, I do not recognize it. I could never.
I despise and tremble at the reflection of the liquid glass.
My tears shatter its surface, but I value the truth it reveals.
Each day I return, hunting for myself. Maybe time will pity me.

Now I am decrepit. I am wretched and lamentable.
The wrinkled water complement of my withered appearance.
The critical gaze of all has become debilitating.
In the lake, I have drowned my past, my youth, and my tears.
The fatal end has arrived and I am worthless.

Philippa Angelopoulou, A1

A Brief Description of a Moment

As if inside me, I lit a match,
as if my eyes were to detach.

As if fireworks suffused my brain,
as if music started playing,
through my main vein.

I think everything was blurry.
But I didn't want to miss it,
thus I really needed to hurry.

To grab the moment,
to grab the time.
To grab the feeling,
to grab the lie.

The lie that the fire of the match would remain.
That my eyes would keep to wonder.
That fireworks would leave on my mind a stain.

A stain that would write "let it go".
Because the jazz through my vein was slowly getting low.

That is what I needed to do, now I know.
But now it is too late.
If only had I not believed in fate,
would I had not experienced the wait.

To wait is to lose time.
To lose time is as scandalous as a crime.
And so if the criminal was me,
there truly would be no end, to my prison-time.

Eleni Stroggylopoulou, ΓΑ3

A Beautiful Leaf

I was like a leaf stuck on a piece of wood struggling to hold on.
Fighting against the wind.
Turning yellow when autumn comes.
Still as beautiful and feet high off the ground.
Just as dead as every other.
Making a contrast against the blue sky, my sensitive yellow flesh shines.
Just as a storm comes I get wiped away falling on the grass bellow.
Lying down I watch the view above me, the other leaves laughing down at my weakness.
They love it when you fall they are amused, entertained.
So I get stepped on, ripped apart, shamed and utterly humiliated.
But I know I served my purpose upon this earth.
A little girl approached with her childish nonchalance.
She admired my beauty as she watched me reflect the sun's gaze.
Just as I wanted to disappear like I just never existed.
But you find out that life is more than just appearances.
At that moment I turned green again.

Maria Peraki, B7

“I Want to Be a Writer!”: A Guide to Creating Realistic Characters

Every single character requires four solid things in order to be tangible; a want, a need, a backstory, and a misbelief.

What do these terms mean?

A want is a superficial need, like the want of a person to become famous. On the contrary, a need is the real stuff, and it most of the times lies beneath each want. That could be the same person craving desperately the appreciation and validation of others, or perhaps someone who needs to escape their hometown and abusive parents. A backstory is the infrastructure of a character, namely a past experience that matters a lot particularly to this character. Finally, a misbelief occurs at the very beginning of a story and slowly gets resolved through its duration. These are the big four, a huge part of a character’s trajectory.



Walt Disney’s ways of introducing characters

Disney isn’t one to miss out on this rule for sure. Think about it. In the first five to maximum ten minutes of a “childish” movie, we have an amazing sense of what the main character needs, what they want, their misbelief but also what’s oppressing them from reaching their ultimate goal. Thus, we acknowledge their internal conflict, which makes us know the character in a deeper level. Disney usually accomplishes that with what has been referred to as “the five-minute rule”. According to this, the movie begins with a flashback to a –let’s face it, most of the times traumatic– memory which has significantly shaped the protagonist as a character. This or they decide to do what every single normal person in need to express themselves would do – sing about it to practically nobody. Bonus points if they talk to an animal which most definitely doesn’t want to be there in the process.

The difference between movies and books when it comes to character introduction

Although this rule most of the times catches the viewers’ attention in a flash, this can’t be guaranteed about the readers’ as well. Just picture it. You pick up a book



after a challenging day, in need for some relaxation, flip to the first page, and there it is! Samantha not shutting her mouth for fifteen pages about the why she doesn't like ketchup with her fries because it – of course – reminds her of blood. She then proceeds to spring a traumatic event on the reader, meaning you, including every tiny and rather unimportant detail you most definitely will forget in the next quarter of an hour, but ignores one crucial thing. You don't care!

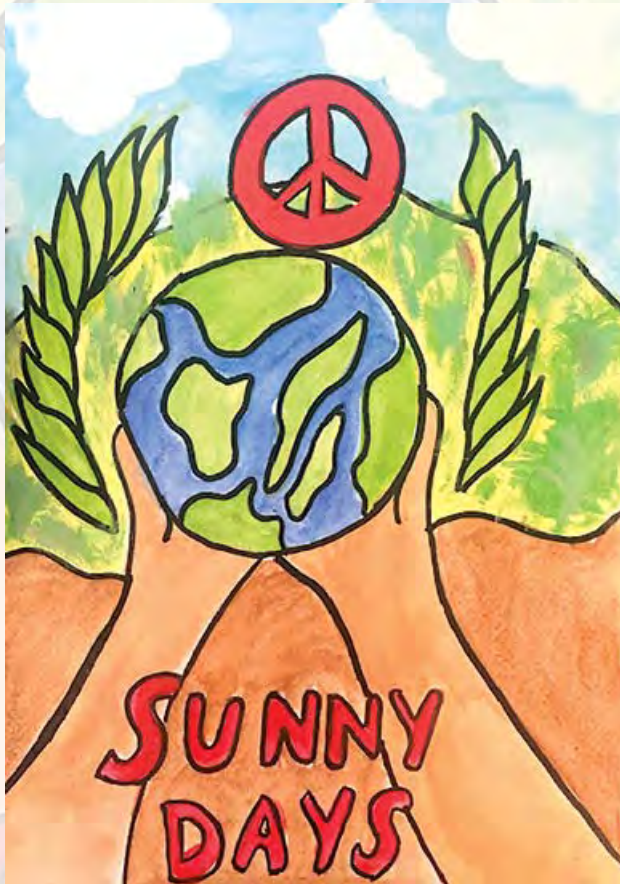
And why would you? Not only you don't know a thing about her – except for the well-established fact that she has a deadly fear of ketchup – but you also can't yet tell how this experience impacted the character and why this experience was particularly hurtful for them. Take for example a flashback of a car crash which took away the character's ability to stand on their feet. Would this experience affect an author and a professional dancer the same way? Additionally, you now have no motivation to continue this book if not for a burning desire for it to end. Fifteen pages, for the average person who reads two per minute, adds up to the wasteful total of thirty minutes. And, trust me, thirty minutes seem like thirty light years when all you have to do is read about a Samantha of any font and her tedious flashback that as the reader touches you in no way.

Flashbacks in books

Instead, flashbacks in books if not exclusively brief and a stepping stone for the reader to be even more invested in the story, should be used, but not the movie-like, all-in-the-first-five-minutes way. Don't forget that a movie isn't actively requiring you doing anything; you just sit there and watch. If you find a part uninteresting you zone out and let it play in the background, unlike a book which will go straight to the bedside table to be picked back up after either two days or two generations. All in all, the possibilities of someone even accidentally creating a character who feels as if they have flesh and bone are not thin on the ground. Variations of rules exist and every single fictional being gets analyzed in the author's own, personal way.

Despoina Lekosioti, A6

Greece; the birthplace of democracy – an advocate for freedom and peace. We've taken peace for granted as a society, especially thanks to our advantageous state of being a European country protected by a multitude of laws and organizations. Yet we often forget that Europe and the U.S. constitute just 1/20 of the entire world, and that the rest of the earth's countries are the ones hurting the most due to wars and constant national disagreements. Even in our seemingly quiet corner of the world, our right to peace is threatened each day literally and metaphorically. Being restricted by the bounds of suffocating relationships, addictions, imitation tendencies, or otherwise being deprived of a different kind of peace than the one we usually associate with the word is a serious issue. That's why we can never stop talking about PEACE, so that we can eventually, if that's even possible, find it.



Cover: Petros Kokkalis, IB1



"Fade" Ink on paper, 35 × 50 cm

My personal experience with war dates back to the time when I was living in Mytilene when the huge immigration wave hit the island in 2015. Refugees would stop by my uncle's store to shop, and at times recalled the horrors of war, describing the situation in their home countries. Due to their vivid descriptions, I internalized this image of destruction that humans impose upon nature by waging wars. In this work, I depict fires and shambles to capture the chaos of war, all in a hazy atmosphere, to indicate that it has just occurred. The poignant image of a soldier's dead body in the forefront aims at striking the viewer and raising awareness on the horrors that war causes. The title of the work, "Fade," refers to the fading of the soldier's consciousness as he is dying. Notably, the buildings are also fading in the background because the soldier's vision becomes blurry as he is living his final moments.

Georgio Georgiadis-Gadgits, IB2

«When the power of love overcomes the love of power,
the world will know peace».

Jimi Hendrix

That's what Jimi Hendrix, the rock guitarist and singer, once said but what did he mean by that? With "love of power" he is referring to the desire of people to earn money, land and fame no matter the expedient, even if it comes down to manipulating people, violating their rights and even killing them. What I believe Jimmy was implying is that leaders who run this world are mostly driven by their love of power the puts children to work in terrible conditions and sends people to war. The solution to those things would be for the power of love to prevail, which means having empathy and that the health and freedom of others is not trumped by a few people's interests.



Athanasios Hatzinikolaou B9

What does peace mean to you?

Peace to me is the basis of human existence of harmony and well-being. It's the serene calmness that settles within, allowing a sense of inner balance. Peace can be found in places where you have made meaningful memories, spending time with family and loved ones and the moments of self-reflection. For example, when having a hard day, you always feel better spending time and talking about it with your loved ones who care and understand. Peace is also a constant journey of self-discovery and growth, where thoughts and emotions flow harmoniously. It's the feeling that you can do what you love without worry. It's the freedom to coexist with others in mutual respect and understanding fostering empathy and cooperation. In conclusion, peace is not just a state of being, but a way of life. A choice to embrace kindness, forgiveness and love.

Kalypso Papathanasiou, B6

The Quiet Place

Every once in a while, I stop and look at all the mess I've caused. All the disgusting mass of anger and pain and destruction and nothingness and uselessness I've created through the years. All the people I've lost on my way. And for that loss I always try to trick myself that it is them to blame for.

But, deep down, when the land is dark and the room is quiet and my thoughts are loud, I can silently acknowledge my responsibility. Whether my being responsible is true or not, every night I stand upon my own courthouse. And judge me as guilty. I condemn myself to death. Long and slow is to be the process of my vanishing.

And it is nights like this when I look back to all the mistakes and don'ts of the past, exhausted as I am from running behind time and tired of the rides on the rollercoaster of emotions. Desperate to be perfect, but only doing just enough. Thirsty for satisfaction, hungry for integration. How will I reach that state of mind?

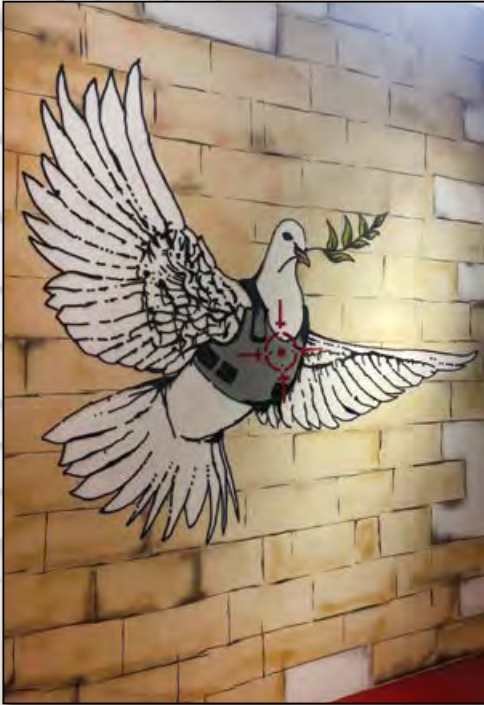
What is it that I do with my life? What have I done with all my past ones? How do I survive? I am capable, but simultaneously I am not. I waste my potential. Yet we don't talk about that. I have morals. But is kindness enough? Am I even kind to myself? I don't know what to believe anymore. I doubt every god. I need evidence, reassurance, action. How did I get this way, mother?

How wonderful would it be for a button that paused the world to exist. How wonderful would it be for me to have a quiet place! To take a big, long stroll along rivers and woods and cities and seacoasts and villages and meadows and snowy mountains. What a wonder would it be to shout and yell at the top of my lungs and let the whole world hear my scream. And how cathartic would it be to cry until my tears formed a river that watered every country and every land. And how wonderful would it feel to run and run and have no place to go, no destination, no purpose; just once. How wonderful would it be to watch the sunset, while swinging and singing my favorite song. And how wonderful would it be to drown in my optimistic and jolly writings, although they are rare. And how much would I like to catch up with the train for once, to see you waiting, to keep track of my life's incidence.

But, for now, I'll sink in my sea of thoughts. And I'll end up dying every single night, once the land gets dark and the moon hides, unable to forgive me for what I've done. Unable to forgive myself for all I've done.

And all that, until I enter the quiet place. All that, until war is over and we make our way to peace...

Christina Kollyri, A5



Armoured Dove of Peace
 Artist: Banksy, Banksy's
 pop-up Museum, Frankfurt
 Photo: Iris Grekou, A2

Peace

For us who live in Greece,
 peace might come with ease
 but somewhere lives a boy
 who fights to be released
 He prays on his knees
 collecting every piece
 searching for some hope
 and justice by all means
 Unable to defeat the beast,
 the child screams and bleeds
 he closes his eyes
 and dreams away his peace
 If you're careful,
 you might hear his pray in the summer breeze
 among the green leaves and blossomed trees,
 his soul is now free!

Anna Harmantzi, B9

In this Desert of Insensitivity

The days of diverging stars have eclipsed,
An unfamiliar veil of darkness obstructs the vision
of our humanity.
It covers our future,
With no traces of hope,
because mothers draw them from the font of wishes
to feed their children,
as if they will ever silence
in this barbaric chaos.

The tears of children make the ground fertile.
The tears of children are seeds of depth
in this desert of insensitivity.
Let pain root, but also hatred.
Let the path of struggles sprout bitter laurels
to replace the void,
of the blossoms of empathy,
of humanity,
in the gray hearts of those who make decisions
for the children who feel.

Angelina Kyrousi, IB1

Tick...Tick...Tick

What's the way to go
In a world that bruises
How can I forget
What the real truth is

We are obligated to feel the pain
Nobody could save us
Is it not insane?

Because that's how society works
It likes to hurt and kill
We try to find the fireworks
They pretend they try to heal
Because we're crazy
And they're right
And we're crying
While they lie

And that's not how it was supposed to go
That's not how we want to live
All we had to do was know
That the world would come to this
Stupid lies and fake promises
Poisonous snakes and closed premises

We define society
We can fight
We should not cope with this
We must not smile

Don't ignore the real enemy
Don't put out the fire
Don't become a pessimist
Don't give up the fight

Because fireworks still exist
But so do bombs
We can decide which sound we want
And what the light truly was

Nancy Seinti, B7



"Arrêter les Guerres" (Stop Wars)

Artist: Tonia Ioannou, B3

Created in 2023, for the English Department's Event
"Voice of the Other"

Trees in the Forest and Other Allegories for Violence

If a tree falls in a forest and no one is around to hear it, does it make a sound?

Undertale is an indie roleplaying-fighting game developed by Toby Fox and a small team of artists and programmers. In a world where monsters have been sealed underground after losing a war with humans, you, as a human child, fall into another world and travel across it to return home. What sets this game apart from others of this genre is its attitude towards violence: as you encounter monsters, you have the choice to fight or to befriend them. You gain points for every monster you kill, which make you more powerful and in turn make it easier to face stronger opponents. On the other hand, sparing them lets you befriend more characters and spend more time with them.

Near the end of the game, you are confronted by one of the characters. He explains that the points you gained in your playthrough have been counting all the pain inflicted on others. This is not directed at the in-game character you play as. He is speaking to you, the person behind the screen.

This scene is the best use of the immersive nature of video games. The player is pushed off their pedestal and comes face to face with the decisions they've made. There exist so many video games that offer an endless killing fest that we engage with no second thought. We become mindlessly violent when put in an environment where this has no consequences.

Why do we believe it has no consequences? It might be because it's a virtual world – for the same reasons people will say the nastiest things online but never in-person. Maybe it's because we know that there is no way for the violence to be reciprocated, that it will not come back and hurt us. Perhaps we do not think that the beings we slaughter are alive. Perhaps we view them as less than human.



Photo: Iris Grekou, A2

Most importantly, is it truly a victimless crime? Is it any less violent because it doesn't interrupt our own reality? These questions have always revealed a lot about the way we view the pain we inflict, or we see inflicted on others. As virtual realities and artificial intelligence encroach on what we think is the real world, they become questions we must answer.

Undertale, through its masterful writing and pacifist message, blurs the lines between game and reality. It doesn't let you disengage from your own self, and if you choose to inflict pain you will be judged. Not as a character in the universe, but the human taking these choices. For this game, the violence is no less real.

Undertale answers the question. If a tree falls in an empty forest, it still makes a sound. If you choose to destroy when there's nothing at stake, your decision still matters. What will we answer?

Thaleia Spyraiki, ΓΘΥ3

How to Live your Life in 2024

In an age where we are constantly bombarded with social media, everyday responsibilities, and multiple health difficulties, it is almost impossible to keep living a happy life. Suicide rates hit the highest point in time after Covid struck and living necessities have become a luxury at this point. So, what's next from now on? Here's a survival guide:

Tip #1: Give up!

Well, at least, theoretically. If you think about it something that is bound to end in misery and pain, then it's not worth pursuing, right? Imagine that life was a trash movie, then you wouldn't bother watching it in the first place. If you decide to follow this dreadful, yet easy, path then you must face some stages of rot. To begin with, you would have to simply become a blob, since you would stop taking care of your physical health and simply consume noxious food. In addition, you are to cut out every social interaction, as people are constantly judging you and they are not worthy of your attention, furthermore, adding to the abomination you are to become. And lastly, the final stage of the transformation ends at a retirement home, where you have no relatives to visit you and you have no money left, since you never got a job to begin with. At least you didn't have to face the struggle of trying. You never had to work for something or experience failure and rejection.

Tip # 2: Give it your all!

On the other hand, you could do the exact opposite to the first solution, unconditionally trying. Meaning, that by the time you are fourteen you would start working your butt off, studying until your brain and arms have been liquified. Having wasted five to ten years of your life finishing your education and building a mountain of degrees that you never felt passionate about, until you reach mid-life crisis. When suddenly, you realize that all this time trying and studying amounts to a minimum wage job that bores you to death. You miraculously managed to make zero progress in your social life, as you had no time to spare for a couple of drinks with your buddies or for family dinners. Don't forget that you have drowned in toxic shame, since you probably look nothing like the rich businessmen or the beautiful vogue models you see on Instagram. All this because you never let go of that textbook, you never stopped working overtime for your boss; you never sacrificed a little bit of your time to see your aging parents. And guess what! You end up at the same place as the last guy! Either locked in a retirement home or 6 feet under.

Tip # 3: Don't give a damn...

You can decide to follow the path of the Jerk! I would consider this the worthiest of the bunch, as you never have to try hard, but ironically you always end up "succeeding". Think of the stereotypical bully you see in movies, always having a good time with the cool kids, never worrying about doing their homework and their responsibilities. They reach a point where they drown their depression in alcohol, but who cares. There is nothing in the world that the Jerk cares about, not their parents, not their friends, nor their health. Over the years you never manage to get into university and learn anything worthwhile. You never manage to create a true and stable friendship or relationship. So, your only choice is to start making money in unethical ways, hurting others to your advantage. At this point you might have gathered loads of money, but there is nothing worthy to spend it on other than entertainment and drugs. Finally, you never even reach the final stage of the retirement home. You die knowing that you never took life seriously, you never got to meet an actual person, and most importantly you yourself never got to experience life, your ego did... You got money though, so who cares!

Yet, at the end of the day, we all know these three solutions are all bad in their own way. In fact, everything has its disadvantages in life. And that's the beauty of it. If you try to avoid the difficulties and the pain that come with life, then of course you will never reach a point of peace. Instead, I suggest that you adopt a single principle: Balance. Stop trying to perfect your life, but don't stop pursuing your passions. Take notice of your failures and reward yourself for every small or big milestone you have achieved so far. Learn to love and hate the people who are worthy of it, but always learn to forgive. Acknowledge that money is necessary to survive, but don't sacrifice every worthy thing in your life to get it. You might never find your true self, but don't be discouraged by it. Help others and in the process, you might attain a small part of who you are. There are countless points I could make about what I consider the "correct" way of living, but ultimately, they would all be wrong. I am not an expert in living, nor have I achieved anything worthy. What I suggest is your take-away after reading this text, is that you shouldn't let life control you. YOU should be in charge. Live it, dammit!

Petros Kokkalis, IB1

2024 will Probably (Not) be our Year

Everybody knows about the culture of New Year's Resolutions and the ambitious goals that we all set as humans when the clock strikes midnight every New Year. Is this habit simply a way to be optimistic about what follows during the next few months or is it a safe path towards disappointment?

The scam of New Year's Resolutions

In the beginning of every year, 60% of young adults and 40% of adults set New Year's resolutions, according to what each of them wishes to achieve. That something may be exercising more, quitting a job to find a better one or becoming a more active community member. The truth is though, that of these people an estimated 25% quit during the first week of the year. So, the question that everybody has is, "Should we set goals or move on with our lives and pray they get better?" And the honest answer is that nobody knows what truly is appropriate for each of us, but one thing is for sure; New Year's Resolutions are a scam!

The vicious circle of self-blame

Yes, I know. That seems far-fetched and exaggerated. However, it's not solely the statistics that prove my point, but the actual culture we've built around this habit. For some, it sounds good to have set a path that they can follow. Logic says that planning and organization is the greatest virtue. It is also the greatest source of disappointment. Life is full of unexpected circumstances that no one can predict. Having a mapped out year could collide with any event which could act as a setback. What if it rains a lot one day and I can't go for my daily walk as I had promised on a piece of paper on the 1st of January? Exactly these kind of situations could leave a person feeling insufficient for not keeping their promise. In the end, when things like these occur, the results can be much graver than never having set goals at all. And that is because if somebody feels as though they failed themselves, they could get lost in a vicious circle of blaming themselves for something as small as that and in the end getting nothing done.

Resolutions can hold us back!

The sole idea of New Year's resolutions is also problematic as a concept. If we truly reflect on what it proposes, we will understand that we see the beginning of a year as the only way to redeem ourselves. What if I decide that I wish to make drastic changes on my life on the 1st of February? Will there be a problem because I'm one month late? Setting goals should be about moving through the course of our lives and realizing what our honest needs are. It seems as though, by following this

ongoing tradition, we erase the possibility of improving our health and state of being according to the development of our lives. Setting goals should be about observing the circumstances under which we live in and then deciding what our priorities need to be. If for example, we feel suffocated by the city we live in, we might decide that it's best for us to move to a rural village. But, what if in our New Year's resolution we had clearly stated that we need to make life in the city work? That is exactly that kind of burden which we're supposed to carry after setting goals for the year. Nevertheless, the truth is that we grow as people and we are human beings that do not desire the same things for all of their lives. For all I know yesterday my favorite genre of music was rap and now I'm sitting listening to Beethoven. It seems therefore that noting down some resolutions is like signing a contract which we do not have the right to rip apart until the end of the year.

What's a better way to set goals?

Still, I'm not here to argue against setting goals in general. In contrast, I believe it is healthy to jot down things we wish to achieve. It boosts our confidence and improves our moral. The problem is the way that we're supposed to do that. We should not ever feel restrained by a list that obligates us to follow a specific path. Setting goals should be a daily or weekly activity and we should also feel free to erase something if it does not suit us anymore. We should also set small goals that do not makes us feel like impostors if we do not complete them. For example, instead of saying "I want to be rich in one month", we could say something like "I wish to spend less money on coffee monthly". Such small habits could have a much better outcome than expected. Moreover, before deciding on what path we wish to carve, we need to examine what it truly is that is hidden in our hearts. Only then will we be able to create resolutions that serve our desires and not the expectations of other people.

So, 2024 may be the year we'll thrive. It might also be the year that we wish could end as quickly as possible. The key though is the perspective we have towards a new year. When yelling 3...2...1..., we need to remember that we must live a life and make all the mistakes possible to be human. It is not normal for everything to go as planned. My goal for today was to finish my homework for the whole week. Here I am and this article took longer than expected. Should I start crying and lock myself in my room for the next month? No. Even though I did not exactly complete my goals for today, I checked off the list one of the goals of my life in general. To do what makes me happy. Writing makes me happy. That's it. These are the goals you should start with. And remember 2024 will probably (not) be our year. Depends only on our point of view.

Nancy Seinti, B7

The “Power” of Religion

A topic that has long been a matter of concern is the manipulation of illiterate people through religion. It is a subject that demands our attention and understanding, for it raises questions about the power dynamics within our societies and the vulnerability of certain individuals. Religion can be a guiding force, providing solace, hope, and moral guidance to believers. However, we must acknowledge that throughout history, corrupt individuals have taken advantage of the faith and trust of the illiterate population. This is neither the way religion is meant to be used, nor the kind of people religion is meant for.

The Problems

Ambiguity

There are many loopholes that certain exploiters use to control the illiterate population through religion. For instance, faith is not based on empirical evidence, but on indications, thus it can be easily altered by conscious manipulators to fit their ulterior motives. These individuals understand that illiteracy often leads to a lack of critical thinking skills, making their victims more susceptible to manipulation and exploitation.

The Sacred texts

Another way through which the exploitation of religion can manipulate illiterate people is the distortion of sacred texts. When individuals are unable to read and interpret religious scriptures for themselves, they become reliant on others to interpret and explain the teachings. Unfortunately, this opens the door for those in positions of power to twist the words and meaning of these texts to serve their own agendas. By selectively highlighting certain passages and suppressing others, they can manipulate illiterate individuals into unquestioningly following their distorted interpretations.

The ‘Rituals’

Moreover, religious rituals and traditions can also be used as tools of manipulation. Illiterate individuals may find themselves subjected to rituals they do not fully comprehend. They may be told that their salvation or well-being depends on performing specific rituals or making financial contributions to religious institutions. In their vulnerability, they may comply without questioning, blindly following the instructions handed



Kostantinos Rigas, IB1



down to them. Classic examples include the terrorist organization of the Taliban, as well as the dictatorship in North Korea, but a less known, extremely concerning instance, is the manipulation of underage refugees by the Iranian government during the Iran-Iraq war (1980-1988). Specifically, the government selected young refugees who had fled from the border, gave them a plastic golden key and promised them that when they sacrificed themselves for their country, this would be the key with which they could enter heaven. Finally, when religion reaches an extreme level, humans' self-love is conditioned to their abidance to the church's rules. This exploitation of illiteracy undermines the true essence of religion, which should promote spiritual growth, compassion, and understanding.

The Solutions

Educational Empowerment

To combat this issue, we must strive for educational empowerment. By focusing on literacy and critical thinking skills, we can empower individuals to question, analyze, and interpret religious teachings for themselves. By providing access to education, we enable people to read and understand sacred texts directly, freeing them from dependence on intermediaries who may exploit their trust.

Enhancing Awareness

Furthermore, it is crucial to encourage open dialogue and promote awareness of these manipulative tactics. Through education, community engagement, and media literacy we can equip individuals with the tools necessary to navigate the complexities of religious influences. By fostering an environment of critical thinking and questioning, we can mitigate the impact of manipulative practices.

So, now what?

In conclusion, while religion can be a powerful force for good, we must acknowledge and address the potential for manipulation, particularly among illiterate individuals. By empowering people through education, fostering critical thinking skills, and promoting awareness, we can help safeguard against the manipulation of faith. Let's work together to ensure that religion remains a source of enlightenment, compassion, and personal growth for all, regardless of their level of literacy!

Petros Kokkalis & Jacqueline Molho, IB1

Matters of Perception

What is perception?

According to Oxford Language dictionary, “perception” is the ability to see, hear, or become aware of something through the senses, but also the way in which something is regarded, understood, or interpreted. That is, however, just one out of the many more definitions the word has. Although the meaning of the word may stay the same, each dictionary has a different insight of the word and defines it with its own words. And that is exactly how perception works itself!

The perception forming process

The forming of perception consists of three basic stages: selection, organization, and interpretation. In this article, I will look at the first stage more closely.

Selection

Selection is the step in which our brain gathers “information” and receives stimuli through the five senses (sight, hearing, touch, taste, and smell). However, our brain is bombarded with stimuli on a daily basis, so it cannot pay attention to every single stimulus it receives. As a result, our brain chooses what to focus on and when. The sensory selection process usually happens unconsciously or with little to no effort. When and how we choose and select the “information” that we will pay more attention to is determined by many factors such as salience, needs, interests, and expectations.

Salience

Salience is defined as anything that attracts our attention. We can find salience in anything: an object, an idea, a person, a concept etc. A vital reason why everyone’s perception differs is the fact that we have the tendency to decide what is the most important/ salient part of something not objectively, but subjectively! Each one of us names something as “the most important” based on what is more vital to themselves. However, is what we choose to lay more importance on really the most salient part of something? Well, maybe yes, maybe no.

But, the point is that each one’s brains pays more attention to different things, concepts, ideas, objects etc. When our brain is bombarded with information and obliged to choose what it will focus on, while, for instance reading, an article, it takes factors such as our experiences, frequent thoughts, intense feelings we have, our lifestyle, interests, philosophy, ideas, beliefs, hobbies environment, personality professional engagement etc. into consideration and then



Kostantinos Rigas, IB1

proceeds to lay salience on parts of the article that seem familiar to it. For example, if you are a college student with a low income, stressing about paying for their education, you will most probably pay attention to the part of the article that has the headline “College Tuition” above it.

With so much information on our hands, our brains will pick and choose, or select, the information we pay attention to and what to ignore.

Needs

The way we perceive things is also formed by our needs at the moment. A very common example: If you are thirsty the dominant thought on your mind will be your urgent need of water. Your mind will try to find ways to fulfill that need as soon as possible. Looking for a solution to your problem, thirst, your mind will focus on anything around you that reminds you of water and the accomplishment of your goal. For instance, your mind will pay special attention to a person drinking from a bottle of water, the sound of fountain drops, to a label that advertises a water brand. You are selecting, most likely unconsciously, stimuli related to your basic need of water.

Expectations

This is probably the most powerful factor of the perception forming process. “Expectations” includes both things we expect to happen and things we do NOT expect to happen. When we have high expectations about something, but then something completely different than what we had initially thought would occur happens we are filled with negative emotions such as confusion, anger, stress, sadness. Take the following as an example: You text a friend to plan an outing and you expect them to text you back. However, once you notice they don’t seem to be responding for a long time you start questioning yourself, because you find the lack of response sudden and unexpected. What might have happened? Why haven’t they responded yet? Are they busy? Are they alright? Your friend continues to not respond to your message, but a post of a mutual friend of yours proves that they are alright and that they are out with the mutual friend. At first, you thought your friend wasn’t responding due to work load or due to an incident, but instead they seem to be fine and having fun with others. So, it is reasonable that you start having more questions such as: Are they mad at me? Did I do something wrong? Why are they ignoring me? And so you end up overthinking and getting hurt and confused, because the incident didn’t align with your expectations. Eventually, it turns out your friend had just forgotten their phone at home. You realize that your frustration was not necessarily based on objective facts, but on your perception of what your friend should have done. Sometimes, when our expectations are not met, we rush into conclusions that aren’t true and tend to have a false perception of reality.

Last but not least, we should not forget that our perception is not only formed by these factors only, but also by blending external stimuli with internal processes. The way we perceive the external world is heavily determined by internal influences (similarity, difference, proximity).

Christina Kollyri, A5

Our Education

Education is not about a collection of degrees and certificates. It is about skills and knowledge, it is the only investment that you can rely on under any circumstances. However, people are vastly different. We enjoy different things, we excel in different disciplines, we end up doing different jobs. The industrialisation of education is restrictive in this regard. Focusing on the Greek educational system, certain limitations are taken to extremes. In Greece the subjects we take are fully mandated by the government, as are the textbooks from which we are taught and mixed-ability classes are compulsory.

The Benefits

There are certainly benefits to the regime of a government-mandated curriculum. Firstly, the government-mandated textbooks are distributed for free in public schools, making education truly free for those in need. Secondly, a well-rounded education, in the sense of attaining an even basic understanding of a diverse set of disciplines, can serve us well in today's world. And finally, it exposes us all to such a broad base of ideas that we can make more informed decisions as we grow up and narrow the field, having experienced things we might otherwise have not had a chance to.

The Limitations

School Curriculum

The school curriculum is mandated in its entirety by the government. More specifically, nobody can choose what subjects to take (except for a few private schools that offer the IB program). We are all forcibly assigned the same syllabus; all courses are mandatory, and there is not even a single elective course available.

Perhaps the most important and urgent reform Greek education needs is the introduction of elective courses from an earl(ier) age. Education is not just about fostering knowledge. Curiosity and creativity need to be part of the picture or it becomes stale. Students in our country have their curiosity suppressed; they cannot stop to wonder what they like because it makes no difference. They cannot tailor their education to their needs and wants anyway. Less well-off students get a worse deal from the status quo, as those of us able to fund our own education can engage in extracurricular activities that, while not part of our 'education' officially, can better cater to our interest.

Textbooks

Further, we are all mandated to study from the same, government-issued textbook, uniform for everyone with no alternative offered. Government-mandated textbooks are not market-tested. They are not necessarily those that will help

students better understand the material, just those that a committee of academics have deemed appropriate.

On the contrary, making publishers compete for the attention of students and teachers makes them more interested in what actually works, serving their customers better - a concept proved in the free textbook market of the IB. This would not necessarily stop the government from funding textbooks, but it would give them less control over our learning. In fact, as an entire industry of privately-published supplementary books has come into existence to redress this inefficiency, the government's insistence on control is disadvantaging those students it purports to be helping - those who cannot afford to buy books privately.

Mixed-ability classes

Finally, there is no means by which a student can benefit by being better in something (or overall). We are automatically assigned to mixed-ability classes, and there is no route by which to skip a year if say, a student happened to be exceptional. Mixed-ability classes mean smarter-than-average students will lose interest. At a very early age, it is not a big leap for students to conclude that school is boring. While they cannot drop out, they may become gradually less engaged and fail to realise their potential - at a cost both to them and to the world.

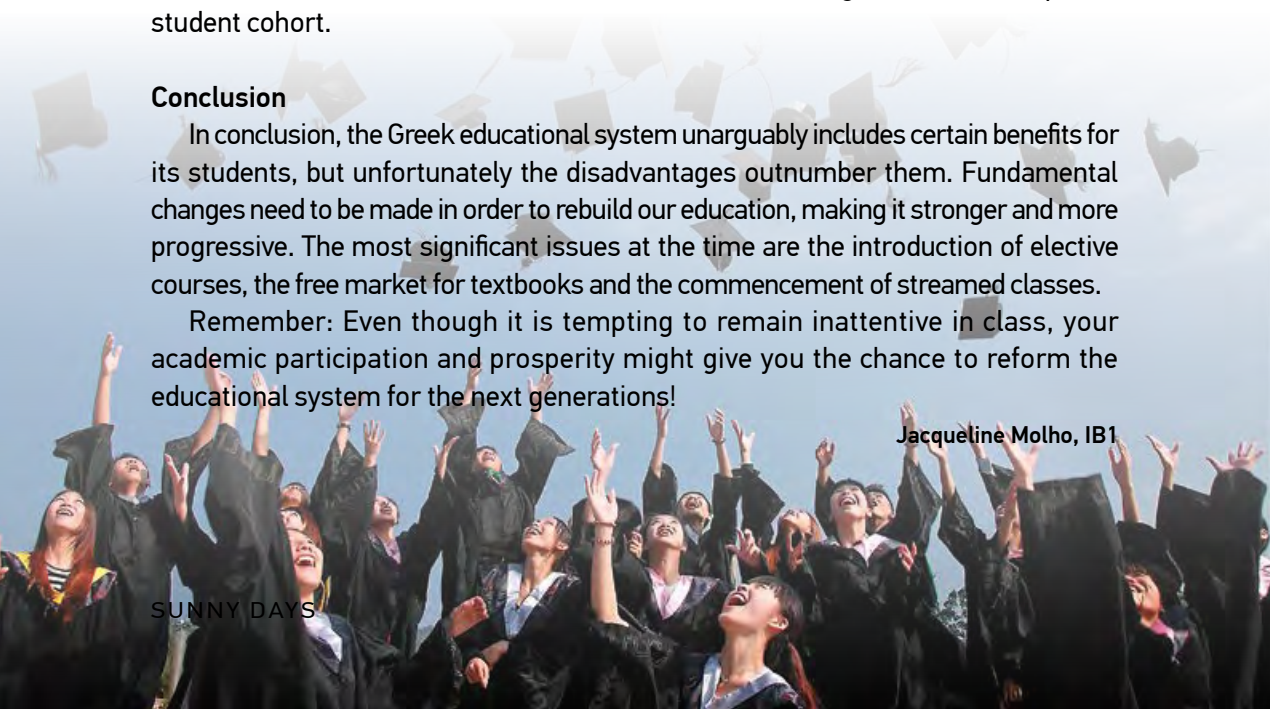
An educational environment where students are categorized based on their academic proficiencies, skills, or learning requirements will improve the quality of education we receive. Since each student learns and processes information at a different rate, the system we are in should deliver targeted and tailored instruction, too. This will enable educators to address the varied learning levels within a specific student cohort.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the Greek educational system unarguably includes certain benefits for its students, but unfortunately the disadvantages outnumber them. Fundamental changes need to be made in order to rebuild our education, making it stronger and more progressive. The most significant issues at the time are the introduction of elective courses, the free market for textbooks and the commencement of streamed classes.

Remember: Even though it is tempting to remain inattentive in class, your academic participation and prosperity might give you the chance to reform the educational system for the next generations!

Jacqueline Molho, IB1



The Problem with Public Schools

As I've experienced the ups and downs of the Greek educational system for the past years, I can undoubtedly say that I find it extremely lacking in every aspect. There are a lot of changes to be implemented, but the most effective of them all is the overall qualification that teachers receive.



Before explaining my idea, it's important to understand the procedure that one must go through in order to secure a job as a teacher in an average Greek public school. Firstly, said person must go through 4 years of university and upon graduation must consider taking another two or three years of postgraduate studies, to increase their chance of being chosen. If you've managed to go through this six or seven years, then you must take part in a selection procedure that the government provides. This only opens once every two years (used to be three+) and it sort of works like a waiting line, prioritizing the people that have come before you and have already waited for their fair share of two or four years. Although there is a small chance of being chosen as a substitute, that is only temporary and won't provide a stable income. Thus, for one person to enter a classroom for the first time and teach, it takes an average of eight to twelve years of university preparation and unemployment.

So, we can see that this total inactivity, that one is forced into, is clearly the issue here. How can we consider someone who has zero experience of actual, in-class, teaching as an actual teacher? How do we not know that, through those ten years of waiting, the teacher is still passionate about their job and willing to do it, to begin with? The educational system must put unqualified people into such positions, only because it has never been re-examined. If one is not exposed to their subject daily, then how are they supposed to still be a productive teacher after four years?

Considering all the above, I suggest that Greek schools implement a yearly procedure in which teachers are tested on:

- a. Their ability to teach
- b. The knowledge of their subject
- c. Whether they are mentally fit to be around a young audience.

We can potentially figure out all those criteria through a three stage trial, in which the participants are tested through both oral and written exams individually. This



idea, although time consuming, will cause complete reconstruction of the educational system and guarantee that we students receive the correct education. Moreover, it can potentially save the government and the school a lot of money by ensuring that there won't be any teachers slacking around and wasting the school's funding. Finally, it also gives fresh and passionate teachers a chance to enter schools as soon as they graduate, meaning that part of the issue of unemployment upon graduation is solved.

However, this idea is of course going to be opposed by some. Those people being the teachers themselves. This solution comes with the unfortunate risk that the majority of unqualified teachers are going to lose their job. I do understand that these individuals must support their families, nevertheless we can't slow down our country's whole educational system for them to get a stable income without even working. It's simply not logical. Do we really want to risk having more uneducated, violent and irresponsible citizens in our future society, for the sake of teachers who don't want to take responsibility and do their jobs? When taking such important decisions, we must first consider the overall benefit and should not take into account the feelings of those who oppose it. If this solution went into action, it wouldn't happen for the sake of overthrowing teachers from their positions, but for the sake of students having a proper education.

In conclusion, we come to the realization that, overall, this solution benefits our future society (the students). Additionally, ensures that justice is served to people who take advantage of the educational system.

Petros Kokkalis, IB1

How to Make Decisions in the Maze of our World...

Sometimes life feels as a sort of a maze. Secret corridors, dark rooms, no exits. Truly the invention of Daedalus resembles life in a huge way. Let's just think we are truly in a maze. We have in front of us three tunnels. Only one of them leads to freedom and, consequently, to happiness. Which one should we choose? All of them seem equally perfect and ideal for us...

We are forced to make decisions every day in modern life. Growing number of responsibilities, leads to growing number of necessary decisions. Well, are we actually unable to make the appropriate decisions or are we just presented way too many good options? I've had to consider carefully how to make responsible choices for almost all of my life. Apparently, when I was just four years old, I told my grandma: "Grandma, my mind feels like a maze. How do I get out of it?" I was truly right and wise, at least for an infant. The debate on whether our decisions should be based on logic or sentiment has been an ongoing one for years now. Are we truly problematic or just privileged?

Let me explain... For you to be reading this article, you are probably sitting in the comfort of your home, or at least you are under a roof. You also have access to the Internet and obviously, an electronic device. So, your life prospects are looking pretty good right about now... You have been directed to this article, probably because you were searching for a guide to make decisions. Unfortunately, not one guide or article or book can give you the answer to how to make choices or which one of your "tunnels" is the best one for you. However, one thing is for sure. For you to be questioning whether to do this or that, you have choices! And that is so much more than other people have. Should you feel bad, because you are fortunate? Absolutely not... I do believe though that we can come closer to the solution to the problem of decision making, by evaluating this circumstance. Our place of hierarchy in this society. Our benefits. Our strengths. The things that we should be grateful about.

And so, let me transfer you to Ghana. You are a worker in a factory getting paid fifteen cents an hour. Life is not looking really optimistic by now. Still, let's just say that a volunteer from the USA, comes and welcomes you to a maze. They say "By entering this maze you agree to participate in a game where you will be given three roads, each one of them leading to different destinations". You will be told the destinations and it will be upon you to decide your preferable one. Let's say these roads constitute the possible decisions and outcomes you have in your life currently.

What would you choose? And, respectfully, you may say “Yes, but these are different circumstances. I should decide with what I have in my own life”. Absolutely, I see your point. Nevertheless, when escaping from Ghana, you would have to decide what kind of life you want to live. Would you want to be happy, rich, beautiful, famous, inspirational, moral? When thinking of a life and death situation, only then can we really see more clearly what we wish to achieve in life. Only when we erase our privileges and inspect our life from a different lens.

I can definitely not say for sure that this will solve the problem of indecision, since a choice can be from something unimportant such as a Starbucks order to something crucial such as a job opportunity. However, I believe that we see clearly when we do not have something as given, but on the contrary, when we have to work for it. We can't sum up our decisions in choosing between logic and feelings, or by taking a buzz feed quiz, but instead we can rethink everything we have and then slowly the tunnels seem to be reducing. And Daedalus will stand in the exit, shocked because somebody actually got out of his architectonic trap and didn't get caught up in the vast variety of possibilities, but saw the truth, which is different for each and every one of us. That's why we are the same species, but so different between us. So, we should not take our privileges for granted, but instead we should forget they existed at all. That is when the two parts of our brain would cooperate to choose the best possible choice. And what if we regret it? Well, then we would have made a breakthrough in our lives and would have realized what our real priorities are. Because with every move we make on our chessboard, we unlock a multitude of choices. We just need to be careful to find that one move that will really lead us to Checkmate...

Nancy Seinti, B7

The Impact of Social Media on Democracy

Social Media has undoubtedly monopolized everyone's life, having made itself an irreplaceable tool for human survival. In terms of politics, many suggest it has relevantly influenced democracy's workings, but whether those effects are negative or positive is an issue to be significantly discussed.



To begin with, the establishment of a media-sharing platform has created an internationally recognized and user-friendly area in which society can share information and be informed on the tenets of democracy. As long as individuals have access to the internet, they can get ahold of any relevant opinions within seconds, while being able to express their own take on a certain issue. With social media, young adults and diverse voters, who wouldn't be able to contribute otherwise, have the option to be mobilized and immersed in the inner workings of politics. This worldwide exposure that social media provide is something that no politician or other tool can achieve. The thing about Martin Luther King Jr. or Ella Baker is that they could not just wake up and sit at the breakfast table and talk to a million people. Whereas nowadays anyone can simply do that!

However, as much as we want to view social media as a “user friendly area”, the reality is that it's a battleground. A gory and unethical battlefield, where wrong prevails and every core value of Democracy is bound to be misinterpreted one way or another. The issue is that exposure allows EVERYONE to speak, every single person who might share dictatorial, tyrannical or apartheid viewpoints gets a slice of the pie. Additionally, forming “echo chambers” in which all xenophobes join forces to manipulate the illiterate and deliberately present democracy as a political system. More importantly, the media tend to dramatize certain events, whilst only presenting an incomplete portion of the truth, contributing, thus, to keeping the majority of common-folk uniformed, instead of letting them take part in society's functions.

In conclusion, social media has become an individual entity capable of bending the idea of democracy to its will, while simultaneously exposing it and allowing citizens to adopt it. To avoid the negative impact of media intervention, it is up to each one of us to learn to recognize and appreciate actual democratic behavior.

Petros Kokkalis, IB1

SUNNY DAYS

The Stockholm Syndrome

Summer of 1973, Norrmalmstorg Square, Stockholm.

The first case of the then-called Norrmalmstorg syndrome occurred when Jan-Erik Olsson, a convicted thief on furlough from prison, attempted to rob a bank in Stockholm, taking four hostages in the process. After a series of continuous negotiations with the Swedish Minister of Justice, his friend and cellmate Olofsson was released and brought to the bank.

The hostages of that case soon developed a bond with their captors, especially a woman named Kristin Enmark, who admitted to feeling rather safe than intimidated in Olofsson's presence. Upon the surrender of the two robbers, the four hostages denied in any way testifying against the criminals.

That cause sparked the interest of Swedish criminologist and psychiatrist Nils Bejerot, who first came out with the term "Norrmalmstorg Syndrome" from the name of the bank's square, before it becoming internationally acknowledged as "Stockholm Syndrome".

The most notorious case of this syndrome, though, happened in 1974, with Patty Hearst getting kidnapped in the United States by the Symbionese Liberation Army, a revolutionary group with no more than twenty-two members. Also known as "the newspaper heiress", Hearst was the nineteen-year-old granddaughter of an affluent newspaper owner. Later on, the then released Patty voluntarily helped the group rob a bank.

Definition and things you may not know

But what exactly is the "Stockholm Syndrome"?

Stockholm Syndrome is a yet-to-be recognized condition – since it currently falls under the "theory" category by most psychologists, affecting one in four of those abused, kidnapped, or taken hostage. Nowadays, more and more theories about it appearing in more everyday situations like relationships are being shared.

During this state of mind, victims of any of the above and more develop an emotional bond or a sense of loyalty toward their captors or abusers.

Named after the Peruvian capital, Lima Syndrome describes the exact opposite scenario Stockholm Syndrome does - that is, the captors develop attachments to their hostages.

There are more syndromes named after cities. Some of such are Jerusalem, Paris, Florence, Venice, London, Brooklyn, and Detroit Syndrome.

Impact today

Many people falsely relate Stockholm Syndrome to abduction. That, though, even if not rare itself, can't be described as the leading force driving this theory in our world today.

If you went to look for it around, I guarantee you wouldn't come back empty-handed. Not only it has become a daily phenomenon the ubiquity of which is quite shocking, but it has

managed to hide beneath the shadow of various emotions so well that it's almost unrecognizable. First on the list of these emotions is no other than the one of "love".

According to statistics, nearly half of all women (48.4%) and men (48.8%) in the United States experience psychological abuse by a partner in their lifetime. Additionally, 95% of people who physically abuse their partners also psychologically assault them. Most of the above described this occurrence to

have happened a series of times by the same individual. They also highlighted their inability to break up their bond with that person no matter how horrible they occasionally made them feel.



The psychology behind Stockholm Syndrome in abusive relationships

Some explain the psychology behind such behavior, ultimately describing a pattern. At first, before any kind of abusive act, the partner is thought of as almost ideal. Though some signs of indirect psychological manipulation are evident, the rest of the person's charming traits hide the fact well.

When the first intense case of physical assault occurs, the victim remains devastated and morally conflicted for some days or even weeks. During that time, the partner changes their act altogether. Gives the victim countless of gifts and apologizes numerous times. And, when the victim gets brought to a point where they decide they might not leave the partner after all, the latter pulls them fully back in by providing a too-good excuse to reason what happened. Promise that it will never happen again.

As hard as it may be to grasp, the second occurrence is way easier to excuse in the eyes of the victim. Perhaps this time the harm wasn't as prominent or the procedure not as painful. This time, the victim – other than remembering the prior excuse of the partner – finds a chance to create an excuse of their own for that person. "At least," they might wrongly think, "this time wasn't as bad." The abuser has, after all, manipulated them by now into the mindset that without them they would suffer a significant loss.

The more something of this kind happens, the harder it is for them to cut the bond. They have formed some kind of addiction to this particular partner. Some, even, await the next occurrence just to experience the impeccable treatment afterwards. Soon, the victim is captured in a never-ending circle, a part of a routine.

Of course, there could be complications to that synopsis, such as parenthood, poverty, and fear of not being believed by anyone around you. Whichever that might be, the victim should never be the one to blame "for not leaving".

Despina Lekosioti, A6

It's just a period...

How many times have you felt self-conscious about being on your period? How many times have you heard or even made comments about upset girls being on their “special days”? How many times have you told yourself that period pain is normal and you just have to go through your day as usual? The stigma surrounding menstruation is real and we should talk about it. Menstruation is a natural process of the female body and nobody should feel embarrassed or uncomfortable discussing it.

Period poverty

Period poverty is described as the lack of access to safe and hygienic menstrual products during monthly periods and inaccessibility to basic sanitation services, as well as menstrual hygiene education. The statistics surrounding this inequity are shocking:

- In Africa, 1/10 girls miss as much as 20% of their school year, because they don't have access to menstrual products or to a safe private bathroom, and some even drop out.
- In Kenya, approximately 50% of school-age girls do not have access to menstrual products.
- In Morocco and Bangladesh, women are forced to use tea towels, sheets, newspaper, pieces of mattress or even mud to manage their cycles.
- Even in the US, 16.9 million people who menstruate are living in poverty. Tax on menstrual products ranged from 4.7% to 10% in 2019.

The psychological, mental and physical hardship of period poverty is immense. More than half of the world's population menstruate for most of their lives and it is high time period poverty becomes everybody's business. Think of how many girls drop out of school, their potential achievements being stripped away from them and from the world, just because of their period.

Period stigma

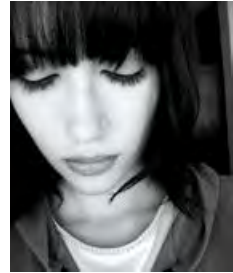
Period stigma is roughly defined as “the discrimination faced by people who menstruate”. Even the alternative names used to talk about period have been created because of the stigma surrounding the word.

- “Monthly visitor”
- “Lady time”
- “Special days”
- “There are communists in the funhouse” – Denmark
- “The English have landed” – France
- “Mad cow disease” – Finland
- “The cranberry woman is coming” – Germany

Just say it: *period*.

Cultural Taboos and Misconceptions

Even though menstruation is a natural process of the female body, it is discussed - or rather not discussed - as something unnatural and disgusting. Cultural norms and religious taboos on menstruation often include traditional associations with evil spirits, shame and embarrassment surrounding sexual reproduction.



- “Chhaupadi” is an ancient tradition practiced in Nepal, even after it was banned in 2005. It involves banishing people, often young girls, to mud huts or sheds for the duration of their period, or even longer. It is believed they will otherwise bring their family bad luck, or ill health. Many girls have died during Chhaupadi, because of suffocation, fire, pneumonia and animal attacks.
- In Malawi girls are not allowed to use salt in their cooking, while they are on their period, as it is believed that whoever eats the food will lose all their teeth.
- In Afghanistan, women are told that they cannot shower during their period or they will become sterile.

Finally, periods should not be an excuse to undermine womens’ feelings. Menstrual hormones do affect a person’s emotional and mental health, but it is not an excuse for society to stereotype women as emotional, weaker, or unable to control themselves. Invalidating women’s feelings and blaming their justifiable anger or sadness on their hormones is a normalized practice that has been taking place for centuries. This brings women shame, hurt and even self-doubt and we should put a stop to it.

Period Shame

Period shame refers to a sense of shame and embarrassment surrounding periods. It creates hesitation to even talk about the subject, and on the rare occasions of such a conversation, it is often centered on disgust, discomfort or inconvenience.

Essentially, through period stigma, society has made people who menstruate believe it is an embarrassing experience.

Haven’t we got past that? At least western societies must have evolved, right?

Well, not yet...

- Today, 44% of French women feel period shame.
- Today, 57% of American women feel period shame.
- Today, you or someone close to you feels period shame.

The first step to addressing all of these problems is to talk about them, openly in public discourse and not in hushed whispers. Normalize discussions about menstruation and confront the stigma and shame associated with it. Period.

Jacqueline Molho, IB1

“Should TikTok

YES!

TikTok should be banned as in the past it has been the cause of major problems such as misinformation and it promotes procrastination. Spending more than an hour a day scrolling through TikTok on daily basis for multiples years can be brain damaging as scientists have stated. Immense screen hours increase the chances of falling into depression and facing other mental health issues. All the benefits of TikTok like entertainment, education and the help it provides to businesses can be replaced by other social media which are more used than TikTok and their users are older and not just adolescents as in the case of TikTok.

Christina Antonakou, A1

YES!

Have you ever caught yourself fully absorbed by an app, completely cut off from everything happening around you?

Well, as technology evolves and introduces innovative concepts to entertainment, the more they are adopted. More specifically, TikTok has been recently introduced to the general public directly affecting social and personal lives, interpersonal relationships and mental as well as physical health. Just like any addiction TikTok has become an inevitable platform for youngsters to waste their valuable time and focus on insignificant and sometimes inappropriate content. Due to similar concepts we have adopted a culture based on ignorance and being “cool” which actively puts our lives on the line.

Look around and observe how society has been impacted when people at cafeterias prefer to scroll down than interacting and communicating.

Irakleia Ganga, A2

be banned?"

NO!

TikTok is a rapidly developing social media platform that takes away many hours of teenagers' lives daily. Even though I believe that there should be restrictions and limits, I do not support the idea of banning the app. Firstly, like any other social media platform, TikTok provides communication and entertainment to its users and allows self-expression and creativity. Additionally, I find the app an upcoming industry as it already includes in-app purchases and advertisements. So, I believe that each individual should control themselves instead of demanding the banning of the app because of their addiction.

Dafni Dagiakidi, A3

NO!

I believe that TikTok doesn't warrant a ban. Some could argue that its short-form-video type of content is responsible for the lacking attention span of the new generation. While that statement does hold some truth, this phenomenon is not exclusive to TikTok and is certainly not something new. In today's world the exposure to any type of entertainment at any time, in any place from a young age is in its entirety to blame for the lack of attention, not just TikTok.

Apostolos Siotas, A9

Cyber Sigilism

When you hear the word tattoo, what comes to mind is small butterflies, anchors, or giant hyper realistic tiger portraits. How about I introduce you to a unique, contemporary form of body art, which integrates two dissonant sciences. Cyber Sigilism.

What is Cyber Sigilism?

Essentially, Cyber Sigilism portrays a convergence of long-established arts, with the thriving digital world. At its core, it draws inspiration from the ancient sigil-crafting practice. Deriving from the Latin word: "Sigillum" meaning seal, sigils have been utilized as spiritual symbols throughout history. Specifically, their mystique and elegance allow us to portray them as powerhouses of energy. This aspect of Cyber Sigilism can be especially prevalent in tattoos, as meaning and intention fuel a timeless design.

Although, how does an intricate, traditional method of human expression merge with the rapidly- changing, advanced online environment? Basically, combining ancient ideas with contemporary, innovative techniques has been proven to endlessly stir the creators' imaginations. Simultaneously, technological adaptations like the Internet have offered practitioners the opportunity to exhibit their spiritual ideas on a global level. Thus, enhancing the art styles popularity and impact on the realms of Pop-Culture, Tattoo and even Fashion.

Cyber Sigilism indubitably provides endless artistic opportunities to the practitioners. That being said, the details and complexity of the process shouldn't be overlooked. The concept revolves around



utilizing your own one-of-a-kind, self-expressive sigils, while applying cohesive and accurate techniques. The use of proper technique can not solely assist the creator in manifesting an ideal art piece, but also push the boundaries of the meanings influence. We suddenly see the placement of geometric shapes and the use of contour, yet organic, lines on a sigil signifying ideas of morality or simply depicting a person's memories.

Finally, you might ask yourself, why should I care?

Basically, this new art style brings a different taste to Tattoos. They no longer are the "punk" or "outlaw" stigmas that are negatively associated with unethical ideas. In fact, it's quite the opposite! Now tattoos have both historical significance and are a great example of artistic skill. Think of them as a modern version of the Māori Tattoo, a crucial cultural symbol and intricate example of craftsmanship.

Kostas Protonotarios, B7



Some of my personal takes on Cyber Sigilism

BOOK REVIEWS

*Anxious People* by Fredrik Backman

Do you know those moments in life, when everything seems too difficult, too challenging, too exhausting? When you missed your bus even though you had a particularly important meeting, when the waiting line in the supermarket was way too long, when you were planning a birthday party but you got sick the day before? Well, maybe you haven't experienced these specific instances, but I'm sure you've reached a point in life when you think that God is really against you, that every bad thing is aimed to hurt you, when the odds are really not in your favor... Well, then I have the perfect book for you. *Anxious people* by Fredrik Backman; a MUST read. And if you're not a book type of person, then lucky for you, there is a Netflix show that came out just two years ago. However, I sincerely recommend you read the book to fully appreciate its essence.

Let's talk about the plot...

So, what is *Anxious People* about? The plot in a nutshell is the following; eight people become unlikely friends during a hostage situation created by an inept bank robber. Nevertheless, I understand that this brief description makes the book sound like a boring piece of work with a dull narration of the events taking place during a hostage situation. I can assure you though, that this book is about so much more than that. I guess you'll have to read it to understand its real plot, since what I mentioned above is purely a fraction of the existence of the book and the reason for its real story to come to life. What do I mean? Let's look at the book a little more in depth.

The characters' connection will shock you!

Primarily, the book sheds light on how intimately connected we are with each other in this world and how its person has their own special story that made them who they are. Each of us has shared trauma, since we may have different people in our lives and different development of events, but we do have one thing in common; pain. Pain is present in everybody's life, just in different forms. In this book we can notice eight different people, who without knowing it, have built their lives around one event, which stigmatized all of them. They just don't know it yet. I won't spoil what this event is, but I'll tell you one thing; this book makes us realize how similar and different we are from each other.

Life lessons

What did this book teach me? In simple words, empathy. Every day, we pass people on the street, without thinking for just a second, what their story might be. We are so absorbed by our own lives and our own problems to realize how each of us is hurting in separate ways. So, how can we know that the person with which we brushed shoulders once in the subway isn't hurting as much as we are? How do we know that when we desperately need someone to guide us in the maze that life is, that they don't need us too?

Let's shatter the fantasy.

Anxious People is also an incredibly comfort read. And not because it advertises that everything is always great, warm and fuzzy. It is a comfort read exactly for the opposite reasons. It teaches us that even though we have thousands of problems to tackle every day, there are another 8 billion people out there that struggle too. It makes us understand that even in our most horrible, lonely points in life, we are not alone. And that somehow matters more than convincing us that we are supposed to be acting all day like we are characters in a Disney musical.

So, I'll give you a small clue about the book and then I'll leave you to read it. What if the robber in this story is not a villain, but a person who would do anything for their family? What if all the people included have their own stories but can learn something valuable from each other? I guess you'll have to find out...

Nancy Seinti, B7

Sense and Sensibility by Jane Austen

Sense and Sensibility, written by the globally recognized Jane Austen, was first published in 1811 in three volumes. This book is now considered a classic in the world of literature. It tells the story of the impoverished Dashwood Family, focusing on the lives and character of the two elder sisters, Elinor and Marianne. After their father's death, their half-brother John, is instructed to take care of his family but is dissuaded of his duty by his wife, Fanny. Meanwhile, they move from their house, Norland Park, to the Barton Cottage in Devonshire. While Marianne is enthusiastic and thirsty for life, she falls in love with John Willoughby, who turns out to be an unscrupulous fortune hunter; her prudent and logical sister Elinor tries to put her back down to earth and face reality, but her sister ends up breaking her heart. On Elinor's behalf, her and Fanny's brother, Edward Ferrars, form an attachment and Elinor chooses to hide their eventual separation from her family. The book teaches us the importance of balance, not only when it comes to materialistic things but sentiments too, specifically the mind and the heart. After a series of humorous events, Austen achieves to pass this enlightening message to the reader. Austen began writing this book in 1795 and initially titled it "Elinor and Marianne". There has long been a debate whether Austen favoured one quality over the other -sense or sensibility- or whether she favored an equal dose of both as the best recipe for life.



Characteristics: England • 18th century • Romance • Classic Literature • Satire

Christina Antonakou, A1



Bridge to Terabithia, by Katherine Paterson

If you are searching for a one-day read that will leave you with a treasured memory, this is recommendation is for you. *Bridge to Terabithia*, is a children's book written by Katherine Paterson. It is highly symbolic and has a multi-layered story dealing with family, friendships, romance, life, fantasies, and death. The book describes the bond between two friends and focuses on how two young people can experience such deep feelings for each other and discover a new world through their presence. Jesse Aarons, a shy, poor, and artistic fifth grader becomes friends with his new classmate and neighbor, coming straight from the city, wealthy Leslie Burke. Both create a kingdom for themselves, which Leslie names "Terabithia". It is their "safe place" and where they go to avoid everyone. Their once in a lifetime friendship, creates a sentimental mood and after the tragic ending, a new perspective is provided to the reader. This book ought to be read by people of all ages, not just children, as the meaning of friendship is unbreakable in every stage of our lives, despite our age and status. I would not call this book food for thought, but a feast.

Characteristics: Friendship • Adventure • Emotional • Symbolic • Educational

Christina Antonakou, A1

MOVIE REVIEWS



Freedom Writers

If you'd like to watch a movie about being hopeful even in the most difficult hardships of life, then this movie is exactly what you are looking for. «Freedom Writers» tackles all sorts of social issues that we still face today, even if this movie was released decades back. What is this movie about? Let's get into it...

The plot

Freedom Writers was released in 2007 and is based on the 1999 book *The Freedom Writers Diary*, which describes the true stories of troubled students from poor neighborhoods in Long Beach, California, who are classmates at Woodrow Wilson Classical High School. The main character of the movie, teacher Erin Gruwell, is the new English teacher assigned to teach these high-risk young students. Even though she receives major criticism from them for not understanding their situation and state of living, she eventually manages to change

their life, transforming kids from ghettos to people with values and moral principles. This movie tackles all sorts of racial issues and emphasizes the negligence of the educational system and society as a whole towards young people who need just a small push to lead better lives.

What does the movie teach us?

To help people around us who are struggling, because just a small act can change someone's life. It also teaches us the real value of a teacher, which is not to only recite texts from specific books and hand-outs or complete the requested textbook units according to the law, but to actually change lives and nourish students with advice to become proud adults. Erin Gruwell is a true educator, who motivated her students and took them out of the dark paths they were heading to, many times at the expense of her personal life. This movie also reminds us how crucial it is to fight against social and racial injustices, because if we don't, who will? We have the privilege of freedom of speech and if we don't use it, then we are committing an injustice too. We are also taught that we must be grateful for the things we have and we believe are so common and ordinary. For us, it is a given that we probably won't be shot on our way home. For the characters in the movie, it is a given that they will probably be shot on their way home one day. Lastly, Freedom Writers truly shows how similar humans are with each other, because if we leave our racial differences aside, we all share pain and trauma. Through this movie, we truly understand how interconnected we are and how the people that we have been taught to view as enemies can become our best friends.

Freedom Writers is available on Netflix, Amazon Prime and Apple TV.

Nancy Seinti, B7

Grown Ups

Do you feel suffocated by your routine? Do you want to drop everything once in a while, disappear and feel carefree? Do you want to become a child again and have a child's concerns? Then, I got the perfect movie for you, starring the funniest of actors, like Adam Sandler, Kevin James, Chris Rock, Maya Rudolph and more. I am talking about the iconic 2000s comedy *Grown Ups*, which, thanks to its grand success was followed by two sequels of the same movie.



The real students for whom this movie was created, with their real teacher (bottom row, left, in pink shirt)



SUNNY DAYS

Let's talk about the plot!

What is this movie about though? In a few words, being immature. In more words, it is a story of five good friends and former teammates who reunite for a Fourth of July holiday weekend, after their basketball coach passes away. You're probably thinking that it sounds like a sad, dramatic movie about the trauma that the loss of a loved one can cause. Instead, *Grown Ups* is about seeing the positive side of every drawback, when one is surrounded by good people and good food. The plot follows around 5 different childhood friends, who now lead different lives as adults. Lenny Feder (Adam Sandler) is a famous Hollywood director with three spoiled kids, a fashion designer wife and a hardworking nanny. Eric Lamonsoff (Kevin James) is a failed salesman with two uncooperative children and a sweet innocent wife. Marcus Higgins (David Spade) is a single 40-year-old man, who struggles with settling down and always gets involved in the most immature situations. Kurt McKenzie (Chris Rock), is a full-time dad, with a witty daughter and a funny son, an aggressive and way-too-honest mother in law, and a wife who works to provide for the family. Lastly, Rob Hilliard (Rob Schneider) is a hippy adult who has 3 different daughters from 3 different marriages and has finally settled down with a 70-year-old sweet, but fierce lady. They all seem so different from each other, don't they? The only thing that unites them, is their love for each other.

Life lessons...

So, what does this movie teach us? A lot... Its main message, though, is the importance of friendship and family and that we should express our love for the people around us as much as we can every day, because we never know how long they'll be around for. Secondly, the film teaches us how important it is to remain a child at heart, because only when thinking with the pure heart of a child, can we make decisions for ours and our loved ones' sake. Lastly, in a world of advanced technology, where social media, computers, phones, have us "locked" in our homes, the *Grown-Ups*' message is; Go out! Don't stay in, when you can enjoy the wonderful life that you lead. This movie changed my life, because ever since the first time I watched it, I have gradually reconsidered the way I spend my time. I'm not suggesting we should feel guilty for staying in some days and spending hours and hours watching Netflix. What I am saying, though, is that, according to *Grown-Ups*, real life is waiting for us outside! That's where we'll meet new people, gain new knowledge, experience new things.

So, should you watch this movie? 100 per cent yes! It is a breath of fresh air in the movie world, because it shows the raw, messy reality of being a human and how it is somewhere in there that the beauty of life is hidden.

Nancy Seinti, B7

Music and Biology

Have you ever shivered when hearing an intense piece of music like “Bohemian Rhapsody” by Queen? Scientists have discovered that there is a reason behind this, as music directly affects how the human brain functions; this is what we call “Biomusicology”. Answers lie in evolutionary biology, when the earliest -nocturnal-mammals relied on their hearing and sense of smell as a defensive mechanism to fight and detect predators. The modern experience of listening to live music can be viewed as a trace of that primeval adaptation.

How does this work?

Acoustic cues, acting like a predator approaching, travel through the ears towards the temporal lobe -areas inside our skull that manage our emotions, process information from our senses, storing and retrieving memories, and understanding language- parse the soundscape, identify sounds, and tag their components as familiar or unfamiliar.

How does it affect the brain?

The Autonomous Nervous System (ANS), a network that controls certain involuntary processes like breathing and heart rate, is subjected to the valence of music which signals whether the music feels positive, negative, or neutral. This is the reason why our heartbeat goes up when we hear an intense chorus, or why experimental music and heavy metal might make us feel uncomfortable if we're not used to it.

It is not only one part of the brain that is affected by music, almost all of it gets lighten up. Hippocampus and Amygdala -regions mostly connected with memory-activate emotional responses. Music also affects the limbic system which governs pleasure and motivation, the motor system which supports movement, and peripheral structures which may include skeletal muscles and neural connections with muscle tissues. According to Andrew Budson, Head of Cognitive and Behavioral Neurology at the Veterans Affairs Boston Healthcare System, this is why “it’s easy to tap your feet or clap your hands to musical rhythms”.

Clinical Implications: Mozart’s sonatas are considered to be a therapy for epilepsy as they have been proven to reduce the frequency of seizures. A seizure is an uncontrolled burst of electrical activity in the brain. It can cause changes in behavior, movements, feelings and levels of consciousness. Having two or more seizures at least 24 hours apart that don’t have a known cause, acting like an electrical storm inside our head, is called epilepsy.

Additionally, music can be a potential solution to diseases such as Parkinson’s and

Alzheimer's. By identifying the exact type of music that provokes a particular cognitive or emotional response, there could be progress toward healing, improving, or compensating for disrupted brain function in various diseases, while also providing an increased understanding of the brain mechanisms that can facilitate this.

The Mozart Effect: In 1993, a group of researchers reported the findings of an experiment whereby, after listening to a piano sonata by Mozart for ten minutes, college students showed better spatial reasoning skills than they did after listening to relaxation instructions designed to lower blood pressure. Their IQ also enhanced by eight or nine points. This is what scientists call "the Mozart Effect".

Christina Antonakou, A1

Pink Floyd's *The Dark Side of the Moon*: 50 Years Anniversary



It was March 1st, 1973 when legendary Pink Floyd released their 8th studio album, "The Dark Side of the Moon", that "rocked" the rock music scene. In 2023 band members and fans celebrated the fifty years anniversary of the release of this album. The album remained for

thirty-three years in the top charts of the UK and USA and still continues to have a massive appeal.

Why all that fuss around the band's album?

Lyricism : "The lyrics had depth and a resonance people could easily relate to and were clear and simple enough for non-native English speakers to understand, which must have been a factor in the intentional success", explains Nick Mason, drummer of Pink Floyd. Indeed, the lyrical themes of the album are a major factor of its success. The album explores multiple concepts and ideas that mostly revolve around the struggles of modern life. Listeners relate deeply to the lyricism of each song, as they discover that a piece of themselves hides in at least one of the tracks and that is probably a vital reason why the album became so beloved. "The overall idea that linked those songs together, found a universal response and continues to capture people's imagination", says Mason. "

Musicianship: Of course, another reason the album was a hit is its musicianship. In his book, the drummer writes: "The musical quality spearheaded by David's guitar and Rick's keyboards," he suggests, "established a fundamental Pink Floyd sound.

We were comfortable with the music, which had time to mature and gestate through live performances.” Undeniably, musical elements used in the album are not only in touch with excellence, but also, quite innovative. Some are even controversial.

The great gig in the sky

A great example of a song that sparked controversy is track no5: “The Great Gig in the Sky”, the vocals of which were performed by singer Clare Torry. The song does not contain any lyrics, with the minor exception of the following:

And I am not afraid of dying
Any time will do, I don't mind
Why should I be frightened of dying?
There's no reason for it, you've gotta go sometime
I never said I was afraid of dying

These lyrics are included in the track right before its bridge. But, aside those lyrics, the song consists of improvised, wordless vocals! This particular track sparked controversy among listeners, with some stating “It sounds like the lady is screaming” and others -including myself- finding the singing mesmerizing. To me, the vocals were heavenly combined with the other instrumental elements to create an otherworldly and utterly soul touching, musical masterpiece. Listening to the song is just as if you enter heaven and admire the beauty and the greatness of that place. Actually, that is exactly what “Great Gig in the Sky” is about: Death, thoughts on the concept (this is depicted particularly in the lyrical part of the song which expresses denial towards fear of death), the path and the journey starting from the moment one dies till the “Great Gig in the Sky” open up to reveal heaven. I believe “the great gig in the sky” is the soundtrack of a realization moment, the moment you encounter peace in every way and enter another dimension.

Now, let's talk about the rest of the tracks as well! Here's a brief interpretation of three more of the most popular tracks on the album.

Track no2: Breathe (In the Air): “Breathe” strongly advises us to live our lives to the fullest. It is about not being afraid to do what is the best for us, about having free will, remaining strong, taking risks, being courageous. It is a reminder to all of us that we should not be afraid to experience life, that we should make the most out of it, explore, keep “moving” and derive as much joy possible from it because, life is not infinite.

Track no4: Time: “The reason it's a good song is because it describes the





predicament of anybody who, growing up –if we’re grown up at all– suddenly realizes that time is going really, really fast,” Waters explains. The ticking sounds and clocks at the beginning of the song are there to shock us, to “wake” us up. They are there to make us realize time is limited, that the clock is ticking, the years are passing by.

They are there to remind us to make the most out of life, because one day, it will be too late. And that day won’t come with a warning. So, “Time” is about how time can slip by, but many people do not realize it until it is too late. It is about how no one should be “wasting the hours in an offhand way”. “Time”, although pessimistic, works as a valuable reminder to all of us concerning something we have taken for granted, but -really- it’s not.

Track no6: Money: Yes, this track may have a catchy sound, but that’s not the main reason it became so famous. The ironic lyricism that criticizes greed is the real attention grabber. The song is about the endless and sometimes maniac pursue of money, that in many cases turns out to be completely worthless. The song also refers to how possessive people can become of money: Everyone complains about income inequality, wealth gap, poverty, but at the end of the day no one will do anything to help when they got their “pockets full”. But mainly the song is about the society’s obsessive behavior towards money and the maniac, meaningless pursue of both it and power throughout a lifetime. The question is: What really makes us “rich”? A house filled with memories or a house filled with piles of- well- green paper...?

Christina Kollyri, A5



Kid Cudi: Paving the Way for Emotional Resonance in Hip-Hop

In the dynamic landscape of hip-hop, few artists have left an indelible mark quite like Kid Cudi. Born Scott Ramon Seguro Mescudi on January 30, 1984, in Cleveland, Ohio, Kid Cudi has become a beacon of authenticity and emotional vulnerability in a genre often associated with bravado and ostentation.

Embracing Vulnerability: One of Kid Cudi’s most significant contributions to the

hip-hop landscape is his unabashed honesty about mental health issues. Through his music, he has addressed feelings of loneliness, anxiety, and depression, fostering a sense of connection with listeners who may be grappling with similar challenges. Tracks like Pursuit of Happiness and Soundtrack 2 My Life resonate with a generation seeking authenticity and relatability in their music.

Musical Innovation: Kid Cudi's sonic experimentation has pushed the boundaries of traditional hip-hop, incorporating elements of rock, psychedelic, and alternative music. His willingness to explore different genres has garnered widespread acclaim, with albums like Man on the Moon II: The Legend of Mr. Rager and Passion, Pain & Demon Slayin' showcasing his versatility as an artist.

Influence on the Industry: Kid Cudi's impact extends beyond his own discography. His collaborations with Kanye West on the groundbreaking 808s & Heartbreak album and the formation of the duo Kids See Ghosts further solidified his status as a trailblazer in the genre. His influence can be seen in the emergence of a new wave of artists who prioritize emotional depth and vulnerability in their music.

Legacy: As Kid Cudi continues to evolve as an artist, his influence on the hip-hop genre remains profound. His unapologetic approach to discussing mental health, coupled with his musical innovation, has inspired a generation of artists and listeners alike. With a discography that spans multiple genres and resonates with a diverse audience, Kid Cudi's impact on the cultural landscape is sure to remain for years to come.

Kid Cudi's legacy in hip-hop is not just about chart-topping hits and critical acclaim; it's about carving out a space for authenticity, vulnerability, and emotional resonance in a genre that often thrives on bravado. As he celebrates another year of creativity and influence, Kid Cudi stands as a testament to the power of self-expression and the ability of music to connect us all on a deeply human level.

Konstantinos Rigas, IB1

Satellite Flight: The Journey to Mother Moon

Kid Cudi's artistic journey as a singer, producer and actor exemplifies the transformative power of imagination and its ability to convey deeply individual experiences while resonating with universal themes. Through his music, Cudi delves into the complexities of human emotions, exploring themes of joy, triumph, sadness, and loneliness. He courageously exposes his inner self, inviting listeners to connect with their own vulnerabilities and emotions. In his fourth studio album "Satellite



Flight: The Journey to Mother Moon,” Cudi embarked on a creative exploration of cosmic loneliness, reflecting on his place and purpose within the vastness of the universe. This thematic focus served as a springboard for his inventive use of instrumentation, particularly in the experimental genre of music. By incorporating sampled spaceship sounds, planetary ambiance, and futuristic synths, Cudi crafted a sonic landscape that transports listeners into the realm of outer space. The gradual complexity of the sampled spaceship sounds mirrors the progression of Cudi’s introspective journey

throughout the album. As the album unfolds, these sounds evolve and intertwine, culminating in a climactic moment symbolized by the landing on Copernicus, a moon crater associated with the historic Apollo 11 mission. This symbolic landing represents a metaphorical breakthrough for Cudi, a moment of self-discovery and realization amidst the vast expanse of the cosmos. Cudi’s creative process was deeply influenced by his surroundings, drawing inspiration from the moon’s crater where Apollo 11 made its historic landing. By immersing himself in the imagery and symbolism of space exploration, Cudi tapped into a rich source of inspiration that fueled his artistic vision. The space man aesthetic that permeates the album reflects not only Cudi’s fascination with outer space but also his desire to transcend earthly limitations and explore the depths of human consciousness. Furthermore, Cudi’s innovative approach to music production and sound design has had a lasting impact on the music industry, inspiring a new generation of artists and producers to push the boundaries of creativity. His willingness to experiment with unconventional sounds and themes has expanded the possibilities of what music can achieve, creating knowledge that continues to influence contemporary music production techniques.

In essence, Kid Cudi’s exploration of cosmic loneliness through music serves as a testament to the power of imagination in shaping our understanding of the world and ourselves. By channeling his innermost thoughts and emotions into his art, Cudi invites listeners on a transformative journey of self-discovery and introspection, leaving an indelible mark on the landscape of modern music.

Konstantinos Rigas, IB1

Taylor Swift- record setter & record breaker

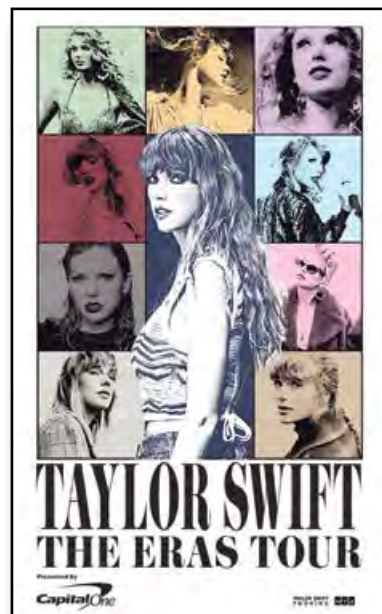
In case you've never heard of Taylor Swift... Hmm, scratch that; the possibilities of you not having heard of Taylor Swift at least once in your life, are incredibly and impossibly slight. However, since I would not dream of depriving anyone of their right to pop-culture education (more important than school these days), let's talk about this phenomenon of modern music that has taken the world by storm.



Short biography: Born on December of 1989, Taylor Swift has grown to become by far, one of the most influential artists in the history of modern music. She is a singer, songwriter, composer, producer, director, actress, entrepreneur, followed by an equally long list of professional qualities she has been known to excel at. From very humble beginnings, she evolved from a country singer in Tennessee to a world-wide sensation currently on the first ever billion dollar tour in history. Her discography entails eleven albums of varying genres, in combination with a multitude of re-recordings of her already existing albums so as to gain the rights of her songs, brutally stolen by her last record company. Her last album released in April, called "The Tortured Poets Department" is a combination of synth and folk pop sounds. As a matter of fact it became the most streamed album in a day in the history of Spotify, while breaking a variety of additional records to an unprecedented extent. Therefore, let's talk about the most shocking records Taylor Swift has broken through her music!

The Eras Tour record: The Eras Tour is the ongoing tour led by Taylor Swift which is currently on the first days of its Europe leg. The records it has broken have left everyone in shock including -I suppose- Taylor Swift herself.

It is estimated that after having finished only half of her tour, Taylor Swift has grossed over a billion dollars throughout its duration, an unprecedented and phenomenal record. Reports show that by the end of the entire tour, it will have grossed two billion dollars! Just so you can





understand how impressive this amount is, if you had 2 billion dollars and you spent 1000 dollars daily you would be spending for 5480 years before you went broke.

The Musician record: Taylor Swift is the first ever musician in history to become a billionaire based solely on music earnings. To be more specific, her current net worth is estimated to be approximately 1,1 billion dollars.

The Grammy Awards' record: Taylor Swift became the first artist to ever win the Grammy Award for "Album of the Year" four times, in 2024. The albums with which she received the previous award in chronological order are: "Fearless (2010)", "1989 (2016)", "Folklore (2021)" and "Midnights (2024)".

The Unexpected Economy Boost record: If her unsurmountable musical success wasn't enough, Taylor Swift seems to have improved the global economy just through her music. According to Forbes, the Eras Tour has the ability to create 4,6 billion dollars for local economies in the entirety of the world.

Fun Fact: Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau personally requested that Taylor Swift visit his country, so that its economy might benefit from the incredibly financial advantages of the Eras Tour! (Taylor Swift has accepted, since she is planning to visit Toronto in November '24).

All in all, Taylor Swift has been creating records for decades and then breaking them herself. Even if you don't enjoy her music, you probably have to admit that everything she's achieved is truly impressing! And if you're browsing at a long aisle of your local supermarket and suddenly hear a Taylor Swift song you recognize from the speakers, stop and reflect; why am I in a supermarket on a Friday night while she is making billions? This one will keep you puzzled for a while...

Meanwhile you can give a listen to her new album to see what the fuss is all about. "The Tortured Poets Department" is available in all streaming platforms if you're curious about it. But you've got to have time to listen to all 31 tracks included. Good luck!

Nancy Seinti, B7

The World of ROCK!

No, -you've guessed it- this is not an article about rocks and crystals... This is the humble attempt of a rock enthusiast to interest you in this amazing genre and to introduce you to some of the hundreds of subgenres of rock music. Let us dive in!

The origins of rock

Rock is a very broad genre that was firstly introduced as "Rock 'n Roll" in the United States of the 50s. The initial form of rock drew a strong influence from genres such as Rhythm and Blues, Country and Jazz. Generally speaking, the genre was mainly a product of African American people's music. The title "Inventors of Rock" carry the African American musicians known as Chuck Berry (mostly known for the song "Johnny be good") and Little Richard who both started performing and playing music in the rock n' roll style in the early 50s. However, Fats Domino and Bo Diddley are also considered "fathers of rock". As for who the "King of Rock n' Roll" is, I believe the answer is quite obvious... "Elvis Presley". The renowned singer and dominant performer that made his appearance in the 50s, had an enormous impact on the genre and became one of the most influential artists of the 20th century. However, Presley had, ironically enough, declined that title and insisted that Fats Domino is the real so called "King", in a press conference of 1969.

What is "rock" music?

There is a basic agreement that rock "is a form of music with a strong beat". Oxford learners dictionary refers to rock as "a type of loud popular music, developed in the 1960s, with a strong beat played on electric guitars and drums", which might be a better definition. Remember that rock is a very broad genre and so it cannot easily be described with words only.

Speaking of instrumentation, however, rock songs evolve around the sound of the guitar (rhythm guitar and lead guitar), as well as bass guitar (also known as electric bass or bass), and drums. Of course, the majority of the songs include a variety of vocals. The drums "drive" the song and keep a steady tempo and the rest of them are responsible for melody. Lead guitar provides the melody lines, guitar solos, and riffs for the songs and in rock it is usually an electric guitar. The rhythm guitar is often also electric and provides the rhythmic pulse or beat of the music. It basically provides a series of chords.

Subgenres

Now that you grasped the idea of what rock music is, we shall get to the best part! As previously mentioned, rock is a very broad genre, much broader than we think. Thus, the hundreds of rock's subgenres cannot possibly be all mentioned and analyzed in a single article, but I'll try my best to refer to at least a satisfying amount of them.

Classic Rock

Let's start with the basics. The beloved "Classic Rock" is used to describe the rock music that was produced all the way from the legendary 50s and 60s to the rebellious 90s. Let's go through



a short retrospect, shall we? As previously mentioned, the genre made its first appearance during the 50s, with Elvis Presley, Chuck Berry, Jerry Lee Lewis and many more fascinating figures dominating it.

Moving on straight to the 60s! Two words: THE BEATLES! The 60s were all about the British band that is still to this day considered one of the most influential bands ever. Just by listening to “Hey Jude”, “Here comes the sun”, “Let it be”, “Day Tripper” or “A day in the Life”, you immediately understand why such a huge fuss revolved around them. However, many more iconic artists appeared at that time. The Rolling Stones who “Painted Black” the rest of the music scene, The Doors who made us too “Riders on the Storm”, Bob Dylan with his moving lyricism, Jimi Hendrix, the guitar solo king, Janis Joplin, one of the most powerful voices of this genre.

Next...the amazing 70s! Well, long story short, the world went “Paranoid” for Black Sabbath. Pink Floyd made us encounter “The dark side of the moon”... Fleetwood Mac formed our “Dreams” and as AC/DC were on their “Highway to Hell”, Led Zeppelin were building their “Stairway to Heaven”. Queen made it clear “they were the Champions” and yes indeed soon they “Would Rock” us. “Bohemian Rhapsody”, “Under Pressure”, “Don’t stop me now”, “Somebody to love”, the band created true music anthems! David Bowie was the true “Starman”! Aerosmith told us “Dream on”, Kiss broke the records and The Eagles booked us a reservation to “Hotel California”...

It’s 80s time! “For whom the bell tolls”?-Metallica, of course! Guns and roses took us along to their journey to “Paradise City”, Iron Maiden made us develop a “Fear of the dark” and while R.E.M. felt like “Losing their Religion”, Bon Jovi was “Livin’ on a prayer”. Queen continued thriving... During the 80s, Red hot chili Peppers “Can’t Stop” and The Clash, The Police, Sonic Youth, Duran Duran, Journey, the Bangles and Blondie are thriving! And lastly, U2 made it happen, “With or without you”.

And now- maybe my personal favorite- the 90s! In 1991 Nirvana said “Nevermind” and created the revolutionary album which “Smells like teen spirit”. Green Day stated clear that they didn’t want to be an “American idiot” and “Alive”, Pearl Jam’s debut single was their most streamed song (and I can see why!). Alice in Chains gained a big audience thanks to songs such as “The man in the box”. “No surprises”- Radiohead was IT! “Creep”, although the acclaimed least favourite song of the band’s singer Tom Yorke, was a worldwide success. The 90s got Weezer-ed when Buddy Holly came out! Most '90s offsprings loved -well who would have guessed- The Offspring. No Doubt - “Don’t Speak”. Oasis became our “Wonderwall”, And who would have thought that the song Blur recorded as a joke on their record, “Song 2”, would have been an absolute hit!

Christina Kollyri, A5

Pathways to Medical Studies in the USA

Studying or working in medicine in the US is very sought after by people all around the globe. That is why the US College Counselling Office held a seminar regarding pathways to becoming a medical professional in the states. This seminar included three speakers two of whom are working in the United States and one of whom studied there.

For Students Without a US Citizenship

US Medical Schools do not tend to accept international students despite them having an undergraduate degree from a US college. That is why the safest and most recommended route was to finish Medical School in Greece and then apply to do your residency in America. However, going to medical school in the US isn't impossible, Klio Chantziara, one of the speakers did some of her medical studies in the USA due to an 8-year program offered by Harvard and Brown University called PLME. Although Miss Chantziara returned to Greece to finish her medical studies, it doesn't mean that one cannot finish them there. This program is similar to the one we have in Greece; this means that once you have finished it you have a medical degree in your hands, bypassing the risk of getting rejected from Medical Schools after finishing your first degree.



For Students With a US Citizenship

Students with an American citizenship are free of the risk that international students face but that doesn't mean that studying in the USA is the best option. It is widely known that US colleges have big costs due to expensive tuition, housing and cost of life. While Greece is a much cheaper option as housing is cheaper, Universities have no tuition and generally the cost of life is less than the one in the states.

Summing up, the US might have some of the top universities in the world but that doesn't mean that our country doesn't also have some great universities. When it comes to the matter of Greece vs USA for studying medicine, Greece is a great option for both types of students (with and without an American citizenship) due to its low cost and accessibility. At the end of the day, we decide our futures and where we wish to study but it is good to be informed of our options, their benefits and drawbacks.

George Machairas, B5

QUIZ TIME! What's the Best Study Method for You?

1. Have you ever tried any study method?

- a. Yes, I have already chosen a study method that suits me.
- b. Yes, I change methods from time to time.
- c. No, but I would like to
- d. No, but I have tried in the past
- e. No, I would never!

2. Do you take notes in class?

- a. Yes, I do.
- b. Yes, but it depends on the lesson
- c. Yes, if I have a difficulty understanding something
- d. No, I don't think they can help me
- e. No, I don't like studying my notes. I prefer studying from the book

3. Do you have a lot of time to spend when studying?

- a. Of course! I got plenty of time
- b. Yes, 2 hours per day is my limit
- c. I don't have a lot of time to spend. I can only study for the things I have for the next day
- d. No, I have very limited time. I sometimes struggle to do the homework for the next day
- e. I don't have time at all!

4. Do you prefer memorizing information, or learning by writing?

- a. I can do both. I do not have a preference
- b. It depends on the subject
- c. Writing the information on a piece of paper is the best for me
- d. Memorizing information is easier!
- e. Neither of them! I prefer another method

5. Would you mind customizing the method from time to time?

- a. Yes, I prefer having one method of learning that remains the same
- b. No. But not too many changes...
- c. It depends on how stressful my schedule is.
- d. I will do whatever it takes to adapt the method to my schedule.
- e. No, unless I found something that truly fits me

6. Do you take breaks when studying?

- a. Yes, I absolutely need them
- b. It depends on whether I am tired or not
- c. Yes, if I have time
- d. I study everything without taking any breaks
- e. Yes. I spend more time taking breaks than studying

7. Do you procrastinate?

- a. No, never!
- b. Not a lot.

- c. Well, If I have time to spend
- d. Yes, but only when I am tired
- e. I mean... who doesn't!

8. Does teaching the information you learnt help you understand it?

- a. No, I can study on my own!
- b. Yes! It always helps
- c. No, especially if the people you teach don't know anything about the topic
- d. Yes, but it is sometimes difficult to simplify information
- e. Yes, but it takes too long

9. Does making flashcards help you?

- a. Yes, but not a lot
- b. No, it is difficult to include so much information in one card
- c. Yes! It definitely helps me because it saves time
- d. No, creating them is very boring
- e. They do help me, but only if I find them online. I can't make good flashcards

10. What do you think aids you the most?

- a. Classic learning
- b. Active recall of the thing I learnt
- c. Asking myself questions regarding my homework
- d. Visualizing information
- e. Revision and exercises

Count your answers and see the best results for you! If you had:

MORE (a) ANSWERS: Pomodoro technique: Break your time into 25 minute sessions, when you are highly focused on what you are doing. After each session, take a small 5 minute break to rest and recharge. After four sessions, take a big 30-minute break.

MORE (b) ANSWERS: Feynman technique: Select a topic that is difficult for you to understand. Then, try to teach it to a person who is not familiar to the topic, using simple language and examples. This will help you identify the gaps in your understanding

MORE (c) ANSWERS: Leitner system: Asking yourself questions is the best method of studying for you! You can use this advantage by creating flashcards to memorize information. In order for them to be effective, you will need to repeat the process frequently.

MORE (d) ANSWERS: Mind mapping: In order to learn new thing more easily, you need to try this method! What you have to do is to make a small diagram for any topic you like in order to convert it into visual information.

MORE (e) ANSWERS: Technology-based learning (TBI): Your schedule makes it difficult for you to find an easy way to study. You will need to include technology in your studying to make it effective. Watch videos, research topics and even solve online exercises.

John Athanasiadis, A2'

The Hidden Heroes of Pierce

Every day at Pierce is unique. We host our wonderful events in our theatre, enjoy an unlimited number of photocopies and are always blessed with a clean and safe environment. But who is responsible for all these luxuries we often take for granted?

To bring recognition to our school's staff, we interviewed our school's "Hidden Heroes", the people who take care of us students daily.



Mr. Stefanos Pappas, aka the Xerox king, is responsible for printing every school document and providing teachers, classrooms and offices with office supplies.

S.D.: What is your role and what are your duties in the school?

I am mainly responsible for printing all documents emailed to me by the teachers, as well as organizing the quantities of photocopies and distributing them accordingly. Also, I provide the multiple departments in Pierce with office materials.

S.D.: What is your daily schedule like?

Most of the time, about twenty emails packed with documents await me. So, I make sure to finish printing these out, in order to begin preparing for next day's workload. About once or twice times a week I also have to refill the printer's ink and check out that the machine has no malfunctions.

S.D.: Which is the hardest part of your job?

The hardest part of my job would probably be the pressure! Some days I must make an average of 15.000-20.000 photocopies, so making sure that the teachers have them in time for their exams or lessons is crucial. I also happen to work in a very hot and closed environment, so this can be exhausting at times.

S.D.: What could we, the students or the teachers, do to help you out?

It is important that teachers send me their requests in advance, so I can deliver their papers in time and be organized overall. When I receive "last minute" requests I always make sure to deliver them, but an overwhelming amount of them could result in responsibilities piling up. As for the students, I would highly respect if they followed the rules of not entering the office, as I keep a lot of exams that should not be viewed by them.

S.D.: Could you tell us some things about yourself? What do you do after your work is over?

Before coming to the school, thirty years ago, I used to be an aircraft engineer in the military. Right now, my main hobby is Music! As you can see, I have decorated my office with multiple rock and heavy metal vinyl covers, as well as many of the tickets from the concerts I have been to.

S.D.: So, what's your favourite rock band?

My favorite rock band is Iron Maiden.

Mr. Panagiotis Antalidis, aka the man behind every event that we host in the Theater, who prepares the sets – and more than that...

S.D.: What is your job and what are your duties?

I am in charge of the Theatre. I help with cleaning and provide the sound technicians with whatever they need. My other duties involve events that require a set, which we carry... anything that the children need. We are always here to help the students.

S.D.: What's a typical day at work like?

I don't only work in the Theater, but also in the school's Church. I am a member of the technical services, so I go there whenever I am needed. Otherwise, I might clean up before and after the school events here in the Theater, prepare the sets... I also know the basics for the technical equipment, although that is not my specialty.

S.D.: Do you feel respected by the students at Pierce?

Of course! I love how, after events, we meet each other in the hallways and we say hi to each other, we really bond through the organisation of events, we interact.

S.D.: What is the most difficult part of your job?

I find it difficult when there is a lack of organisation in some events, and we have to prepare everything needed last minute. This gets us very stressed. If we do know what the students and teachers need, we can have everything in perfect shape.

S.D.: What is your favourite part of your job?

I love the Open House, I'm really happy to see the work of the children come to life, even when I have already seen them in rehearsals. In general, I love the student-organised events.

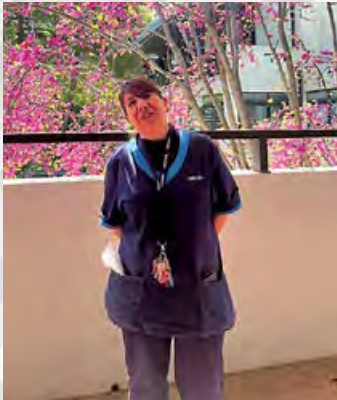


S.D.: What can we, as a community of teachers and students, do to make your life easier?

You should all be yourselves and keep creating. And whenever you come here to the Theatre you should know what you want from us and tell us, don't be afraid to ask things from us, we're here for you! I can't picture the school without High School students here and all the great events they organise, if they were to leave and go to the East Campus, this makes me a bit sad.

S.D.: Could you tell us about your life outside your work?

I have studied in Ecclesiastical School, that is why I also have duties in the Church. I help as a chanter too. I really like this, as I have been doing it since I was a child. I also take my own children to the Church every Sunday. We do so many activities with my children, like Football, Swimming or going to the playground – most of my life is about my family. They really like coming to the Theatre to see my work and they fight over which one will come to work with me. I hope they can also come here as students.



Ms. Vasso, aka the magical force behind that ensures our clean classroom in the morning. We really wanted to hear her opinion on the school, especially after the recent damages in her facilities.

S.D.: What is your role in the school and what are your duties?

I'm responsible for cleaning the school in the morning, in places like bathrooms, common areas...

S.D.: What is a typical day in your work like?

There is no standard schedule. We get new duties coming up all the time, especially with damages that happen every so often – although these only come from a few kids.

S.D.: Do you feel like you get respect from students here at Pierce?

Yes. I have been here for twelve years. Most children not only do not make damages, but also help us. I want to be very honest. When they see me carrying a heavy bag, there are always children that will come and help me – from out of nowhere! This is something that didn't use to happen in past years. Most are also careful in the bathrooms. The ones that do damages, follow elaborate plans. After I see some, I wonder if these kids are up-and-coming plumbers. Once, within ten minutes of me having unplugged a toilet and going to get paper, they had managed to plug in again, as I left. This happens over and over again and takes me far behind in my schedule.

S.D.:What is your favourite part of your job?

The contact I have with children and teachers, them saying “Good morning” and smiling at me, make my day! There’s nothing better.

S.D.: What can we, as a community of teachers and students, do to make your life easier?

See the person that does the damage and tell them “What are you doing here?”. In a nice and polite way. They should respect you too and not do the damages, that also harm you. When they waste all that paper, this is significant environmental damage, so a direct harm to your future. You should tell them that what they’re doing is wrong, but in a polite way, not in a way that makes you a target to them.

S.D.: What is the hardest part of your work?

When a damage happens, this takes us completely off schedule. And then we have to stay at work even longer, to clean up everything else. Also, I dislike the professors that are difficult to work with. Usually, teachers are all very polite, but there are a few that have been openly rude and provocative to me.

S.D.: What are your interests outside of work?

For the past ten years I’m vegetarian and my daughter is vegan. I also love animals. I have two cats, both strays, Loukoumas and Bougatsa. I had another one, that we had found in the garbage and raised. I called him Rasputin, and that was a very well-suited name! He loved me, although he was very naughty. Loukoumas is a lot sweeter, like his name. I didn’t intend to keep him, but I couldn’t let go of him. We found Bougatsa in Milos. Once, the technical services had found another cat in our school, so I took care of it and I couldn’t resist taking it home too. My daughter raised this one, called Sputnik – like a Russian spy found in the American College of Greece, but then my son took him with him in Brussels, where he lives.

(Note from the interviewers: We did see pictures of the cats, and they are, indeed, adorable!)

We hope this article has given you an idea of what happens behind the scenes (whether literal or metaphorical) of things we take for granted! Now let’s think... can we do anything to make the lives of the people who help us a bit better? How can we give back to them and thank them?

Marianna Argeiti, A1

Petros Kokkalis, IB1

The Hague International Model United Nations Conference



THIMUN is the largest Model UN conference, so we were honoured to have been given a position as delegates of Guinea in the Historical Security Council. We studied a lot to be prepared for the rigorous discussions on the Yom Kippur war and conflict in Sub-Saharan Africa. We were amazed by the passion all the delegates put into the representation of their country. We also had a chance to create alliances with interesting people and learn more about viewpoints people have from across the globe. We also consider the knowledge we got from experienced guests to be very valuable, or, as one could call it “living history”!

Amazing company, amazing food and long-lasting memories is what characterizes our six days in The Netherlands outside the conference. We got to bond with our fellow classmates with whom we spent these six days and challenge ourselves internationally. As the honorable director of this Model UN conference speaks “If you can make it in the Hague, you can make it anywhere!”. Throughout the trip, we visited Amsterdam and the museum of Anne Frank which was an enlightening experience taking into consideration how much history it holds and the little part we got to know about it. We spent the rest of the days in the Hague. Every night we visited different restaurants and got to see a different part of this beautiful city. Learning how it is to be away from home, even for such a small period is character developing speaking from many perspectives.

(MUN Advisors: V. Milliaresi, M. Petropoulou, Z. Pissari)
Christina Antonakou & Marianna Argeiti, A1

Yale Model United Nations Europe (YMUNE), Brussels

The members of The PR Club got the chance to attend the Yale Model United Nations Europe conference hosted in Brussels, Belgium. The conference, which had a span of three days (March 15th – March 17th), gave the attending students a chance to debate on pressing world issues, put their creativity, diplomacy, and problem-solving abilities to the test.



Furthermore, attendees got to socialize and meet people from across the globe as the conference had delegates ranging from Australia to the US, from Greece to Mexico and from Venezuela to its host country, Belgium. All of the participants took away something from this immaculate experience and left a bit better from the heart of Europe.

(The PR Club Advisors: C. Babouris-Smith & V. Giannopoulou)

Student Testimonials:

“Entering my committee room for the first time I had very low expectations of myself. Not only had I never been to an MUN conference before, but I had also never been to an advanced committee. In the first ten minutes of the session, I heard many words that were unknown to me and I was terrified. By the end of the first session, I became very excited. I fell in love with debating and talking with the rest of the delegates. After three days, when it was time to finally leave, I told myself that I would definitely be coming back. Visiting Brussels was a beautiful opportunity but participating in this conference was an experience of a lifetime.”

Alkmini Farmaki, A10

It really helped me improve my research and information-filtering skills. From the moment I arrived at the conference venue in Brussels, I started feeling more comfortable and I made new friends. During the committee sessions, I quickly gained confidence in public speaking. In conclusion, YMUNE was a great experience that I would definitely repeat.

Katerina Magkou, A4

“Attending this conference was an astonishing opportunity, I learned how to collaborate with people who I’ve never met before and made some great friends. The conference staff were very friendly, helpful and accommodating. I also got to broaden my knowledge on issues that are highly important, like immigration in Europe and sustainable standards.”

George Machairas, B5

Harvard Model Congress Europe (HMCE), Majorca



In B’ Lyceum, students are offered a unique opportunity to participate in a special English course, one that is dedicated to the preparation for the Harvard Model Congress Europe (HMCE). Organized by Harvard students, HMCE simulates the function of the U.S. government, featuring various committees representing both domestic U.S. affairs and international organizations. Over the past six months, under the guidance of Mr. Tatsis, our HMCE class of twenty students prepared and conducted thorough research for the conference, which took place in Palma de Mallorca, Spain, from March 8th to 11th. The experience of HMCE left all the delegates with a profound sense of empowerment, enlightenment, and inspiration. It has instilled a deeper understanding of the complexities of global affairs and cultivated invaluable leadership and communication skills. HMCE is an unforgettable experience for all those who have been a part of it.

(HMCE Advisor: K. Tatsis)

Katerina Kateli B3

The European Youth Parliament (EYP), Denmark



The European Youth Parliament (EYP) is an international conference where young people gather to discuss and debate current issues, develop skills, and build cross-cultural connections. Through debates and resolution drafting, delegates develop essential skills such as critical thinking, public speaking, and

teamwork. EYP conferences provide a platform for cultural exchange and international networking, offering delegates the chance of creating lasting friendships and connections across Europe. In 2023, I had the opportunity to attend the 45th National Selection Conference of the European Youth Parliament in Athens. It opened the way to new EYP experiences and was the reason I was able to attend another EYP conference. From February 16th –18th the 6th National Selection conference of Denmark took place in Vejle. It was a special experience that not only helped me with my personal growth and understanding of European affairs better, but also led me to making friends from all over Europe. EYP is an experience I will never forget, filled with so many fun memories that I still reminisce about today.

(The PR Club Advisors: C. Babouris-Smith & V. Giannopoulou)

Katerina Kateli B3

Eurasian Schools Debating Championship (ESDC), Istanbul

I must confess that when I received the email that I had been chosen in one of the two teams that would represent Greece in the Eurasian Schools Debating Championship, I actually screamed. This is one of the major tournaments our national team competes in, one that all of my debate idols from Greece have competed in before me.

Two weeks later, preparation for the tournament had started. We found out the motions for the prepared rounds on Sunday and then we started prepping, non-stop. The motions seemed very difficult: "Banning TikTok, Preferring a Unipolar over a Multipolar World", "Setting Punishment Based on Rehabilitation Status".

Before we knew it, prep was over, and we were off to Istanbul. The hotel was close to the city center, so first thing in the morning we took a bus that drove us to Robert College. We were very stressed when we arrived at the campus. The only thing calming us down was the presence of adorable cats all over the school. We played our first round against Team Turkey, who were very good. Our confidence rose a lot when we ended up winning the round.

The more we progressed in the tournament, the more trust I gained in my teammates, who we became close friends with. Although the topics varied from



social welfare to the arts to developing countries, I soon understood that the key to winning any round was the cooperation between us.

The night before the semis, we had a chance to go out in Istanbul, discuss strategy with our coaches and even gossip a bit with them. We are really grateful for our coaches' help and hope we have made them proud.

After a fascinating semi-final against Team Italy, we found out the shocking outcome of the tournament! The final would be us, Greece Green, against the other members from the Greek National Team, Greece Blue. Never before had there been a Greece vs Greece final in a major international tournament! We were so excited that we had brought the win to the country that it didn't matter to us which of our teams won. The plane ride back home was a complete celebration.

All in all, winning the Eurasian Schools Debating Championship is one of the experiences that I will surely remember for the rest of my life. Debate in general is one of the activities that I love the most and I believe that everyone in our school community should try it, no matter what their English level is! It might look intimidating at first, but the bonds you make with your team and the fun you have in rounds are truly worth it.

(Pierce Forensics Advisors: L. Niadas & N. Colasanto)

Marianna Argeiti, A1

PFAT or “Why you should join Forensics”



This year's Panhellenic Forensics Association Tournament truly was special. It was the first year since the pandemic, that the tournament happened in Thessaloniki. This meant all of us got to go on a trip! My friends and I supported each other in our performances, and I was truly amazed by some of their work! I was really proud to see how both my and their work had developed over the year. This might have also been the first year that I realised the work and passion put into tournaments from our coaches, even though they don't work in the school and don't see us every day.

But there is another reason why this year's PFAT was so special. We had an unusually

small delegation, of six people... as opposed to the forty or more students from other schools – including our own the previous years.

I personally can't even begin to describe the friendships I've made in Forensics over the past years, or the excitement one gets after each performance. I know, it sounds kind of nerdy at first, but I'll try and give you my best sell:



If you're into theater, maybe the theatric events are for you! Oral Interpretation of Literature is an event in which you read a text you have prepared and make it come to life with your voice! Otherwise, you can try Duet Acting, and act out a scene with a friend, using only two chairs as props. Both of these come in comic and dramatic, so you can choose whatever suits you!

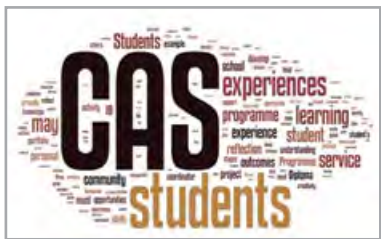
If you're an excellent speaker and have great ideas, you should fascinate audiences with an Original Oratory, you have prepared throughout the year. If you're a bit lazier, like me, you should get into Impromptu. Just be ready for the adrenaline rush you get when you are given a minute to prepare a small speech on a topic you find out on the spot! Others like Group Discussion better, in which you'll work in a group to find a common solution to a problem.

But I have saved the best one and my personal favorite for last! If you're really competitive, a good listener... but also maybe think you're right all the time, you should do Debate! Debate has really changed my view of the world, made me see there are two sides to every discussion and has given me a unique community of friends and teammates from all over Greece.

Did I do it? Does Forensics seem a bit intriguing? If so, you really should join the afternoon club, no matter what your level of English is, or even if you're intimidated by public speaking. If you give it a try, your coaches and teammates will help you become a great speaker!

I really hope to meet you in next year's Forensics club and hopefully go to next year's PFAT with you!

(Pierce Forensics Advisors: L. Niadas & N. Colasanto)
Marianna Argeiti, A1



PIERCE C.A.S. EXPERIENCES

C.A.S. (Creativity, Activity, Service) is one of the core components of the International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme, that Pierce offers since 2016. Students are expected to participate in a range of experiences in each of the three strands, and demonstrate collaboration, planning, problem-solving and critical thinking skills, as well as challenge themselves by participating in experiences that are out of their comfort zone. Students are also expected to organize a collaborative CAS Project, through which they can inform their school community and raise awareness on issues of global significance that are close to their heart and interests. Let's take a look at the amazing projects our students got involved with this year.



Raising awareness for Veganism (25/10/23)

The IB2 students Angelo Karamanis-Bratis, Georgio Georgiadis-Gatzic and Andreas Mouzakitis invited Mr. Panos Chaloftis, one of the founders of the NGO Vegan Life which is a non-profit organization aiming at spreading the vegan lifestyle in Greece. After the speech, the IB students treated their classmates with vegan pizzas, and burgers, donated by Pizza Fun.



Volunteering at the Authentic Athens Marathon (12/11/23)

IB students and faculty volunteered at the 40th Authentic Athens marathon, where they were positioned at the Panathenaic Stadium and their role was to usher the spectators at the stands and ensure a smooth and safe flow of spectators.



Kids Save Lives (8/11/23)

IB2 students George Dimitriou, Georgia Kalavrytinou and Marialena Kiamou, invited the humanitarian organization Kids Save Lives, which is targeted towards all age groups and develops national life savings systems. The organization offers classes that educate people as first responders in emergencies until the arrival of an ambulance. Kids Save Lives are also responsible for the dissemination, installation, and cataloging of automated external defibrillators in schools and public areas.

A representative of the organization talked to the students about the importance of knowing the steps for CPR (cardiopulmonary resuscitation) and demonstrated the method using a model plastic human.





ELIX/EΛΙΞ (15/11/23)

IB2 students Nefeli Yiannoudi, Sofia Lindhe and Eleni Kamoulakou collaborated with ELIX (EΛΙΞ) a civil, non-profit organization that has been active for over 30 years. ELIX aims to promote volunteerism in Greece by guiding volunteers to a number of actions in different regions of Greece. In addition, ELIX design and implement their own programs. Their goals include protecting the environment, preserving the cultural heritage, promoting non-formal education and strengthening social cohesion. Ms. Katerina Antonakou, a representative of ELIX, presented ELIX's work and the many programs they organise or take part in, inviting IB2 students to participate in a tree-planting session.



The IB Talent Show (29/11/23)

IB2 students, David Aspridis, Melina Rachcovsky and Nikoleta Vassilopoulou, organized the 2nd IB Talent Show, where IB students of both cohorts were given the opportunity to demonstrate their dancing, singing, poem-writing and... juggling talents! The audience were asked to donate clothes and food that was offered to The Home Project.



The IB Christmas Bake Sale (23/12/23)

IB1 students organized the Christmas Bake Sale on the last day before the Christmas break. The students prepared baked foods at their homes and

also participated in some baking session in our School's kitchens. Oreo truffles, brownies, cookies, cakes and cake pops were on sale and all proceeding were offered to the organization Together for the Child (Μαζί για το Παιδί).



Let Them Live Again (24/1/24)

IB2 student Yiannis Papanikolas invited Mr. George Kazatzopoulos, the founder of the organization Let Them Live Again, which is a non-profit sustainable organization aiming to reuse as many materials as possible. Using non-recyclable materials and sourcing mainly from banners used for events, the organization creates sustainable products, managing, thus, to create new functional products from items that would have been thrown away. Moreover, Let Them Live Again collaborate with refugees with experience in crafting clothes and promote sustainability with refugee empowerment.



Boroume (Μπορούμε) (31/1/24)

One of the founders of the organization Boroume, Mr. Alexandros Theodoridis, was invited by the IB2 students Evgenia Kafka, Melina Nter Krikorian and George Volanis, to discuss with the students the importance of reducing food waste but also of the value of volunteering. The students also organized collection of different types of food to donate to the local social grocery.





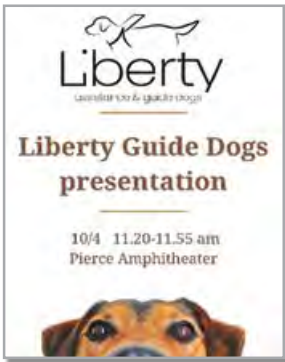
We Need Books (28/2/24)

Ms. Ioanna Nisiriou, the co-founder of We Need Books was invited to give a lecture to IB students and to students of the Lyceum Volunteering Club, on the work of this non-profit organization. We Need Books have put together a multilingual library in Kallithea, which people of all ages, languages and cultures are able to visit. They also organize various cultural activities to bring people together in a friendly atmosphere.



Liberty Dogs (10/4/24)

IB2 students Natalia Dandoura, Carlos Abravanel, Lampros Gavalakis and Alexandra Kanaki invited the organization Liberty Dogs to our school. The representatives of the organization were accompanied by guide dogs and gave a very interesting lecture on how the dogs are trained and how they are assisting people with impaired vision in their everyday lives. What followed was an experiential workshop on what it feels like to be visually impaired with tips on how to walk about with eyes completely closed and how to use a cane or a guide dog.





Pierce

