



SCHOOL

For students, by students

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The Editorial

Team:

Miles Bardsley

Elinor Morgan Bailey

Kyra Crawford

Heidi Crapper

Rosie Cartwright

Emily Keelan



Released: Term 4 2025

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Why is Space Exploration Important?

Written by Aimee Velle Yr 8

Since the beginning of time, humankind has been fascinated by what lies beyond our planet. We have been wanting to know about this for as long as we can remember. Now, we have everything we need to go out into the universe as well as make astonishing discoveries and find out what secrets they hold.

Now, I know what you're thinking: what has space got to do with Earth, and why are we wasting so much money to make a tiny discovery a week? Well, that tiny discovery could have a massive impact on the world we live on, like learning about how to stop some of Earth's greatest problems, e.g. climate change, or possibly finding another Planet like Earth. How mind-blowing would that be? Another reason is, why not, we have already found so many interesting facts, why don't we find more? Without going into space, we wouldn't have found all these planets and the (roughly) one septillion stars in the Universe (that's a 1 with 24 0's after it). That is a lot of stars! We also wouldn't have a lot of the technology we use in our daily lives e.g. television - to have a TV you need a satellite in space to get your favourite programmes beamed into it.

We in this generation are so lucky to have this freedom to see what some people in the past would have said was impossible. There are so many benefits: improving health care, protecting our planet and the environment, creating scientific and technical jobs, improving our day to day lives, enhancing the safety on Earth, making scientific discoveries, sparking the youth interest in science and cooperating with countries around the world. These achievements would be a lot harder to complete if we didn't have space on our side.



Image from Pixabay by Wikimimages

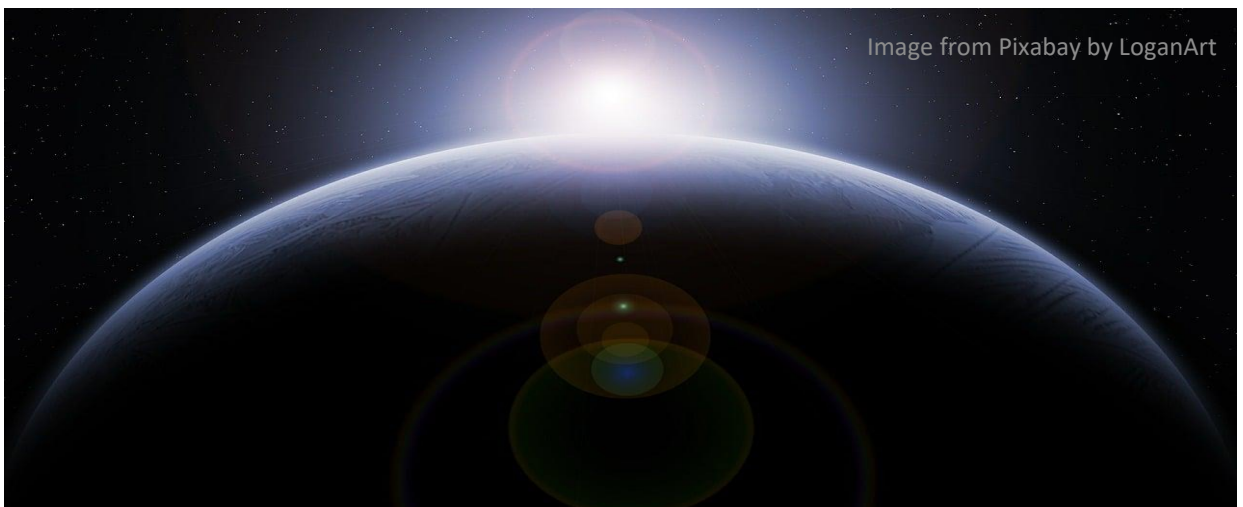


Image from Pixabay by LoganArt

Dog people and cat people - what the difference means and a guide to getting a pet

Ever wondered what it means to prefer dogs or cats? Well, if you have then you're in the right place. Read this to understand more.

Usually, dog lovers enjoy having dogs because of two main reasons: they're adorable, fun to play with, and they enjoy their fluffy companions respecting them and following them around without having to put any effort in. The reason why dogs are so dependent on humans for everything is because they are domesticated. Originally, dogs were animalistic wolves that didn't depend on humans for anything. But, (gradually) packs of wolves would have broken up and humans would have found lone wolves, and over time, as the wolf began to trust the human, it would rely on them for more things until it saw the human as the leader of their own pack and followed them around, dependent on them for everything and not able to fend for themselves anymore, therefore becoming domesticated, evolving over eras and turning into the loyal pets many people have.

Written by Rhiannon Evett Yr8



Image from Pixabay by Mariamza

Cats, although domesticated, still like to hunt for food to eat (or once respect is earned, drop it as a present in a shoe). When someone gets a cat, they will find they must earn the cat's respect instead of it preexisting. This can be why people who are used to having dogs for pets might not choose a cat, as they think it is too much effort to develop a bond, but an established bond with a cat can feel so rewarding, especially as it shows you have put the time and effort in.

In conclusion, when you ask someone this question, think carefully about their response and if you're considering getting a pet, consider how much time and effort you're willing to spend with them.

Should homework be banned?

Written by Leo Parman Yr 8

Homework is a task or assignment that is given to students by their teachers to be completed outside of class. It is intended to reinforce what is learned in school, to help students practice skills, or prepare for upcoming lessons or exams. Homework can include reading, writing, problem solving, or completing projects. It serves as extra learning and helps students develop responsibility.

However, homework can have several negative effects on students. It often leads to increased stress and anxiety, as students feel pressure to complete work on time while trying to do other things. The excessive amount of homework can reduce the amount of time available for relaxing, socializing, and physical activities, which are essential for a healthy life. It can also contribute to fatigue, particularly when students are overloaded with tasks that feel irrelevant or too hard. Too much homework can create an imbalance in family life, with parents feeling the need to help their children with work, possibly putting a strain on relationships.

In conclusion, homework can often have negative effects on students, outweighing its intended benefits. It contributes to stress, fatigue, and no sleep, leaving little time for students to engage in physical activities, family time, or relaxation. Excessive homework can undermine students' motivation to learn, turning education into a task rather than a good experience. It affects students from less privileged backgrounds, where access to resources or quiet study spaces may be limited. While some homework may provide valuable practice, a balance of homework is best.



Image from Pixabay by LUM3N

Book recommendations

General reading

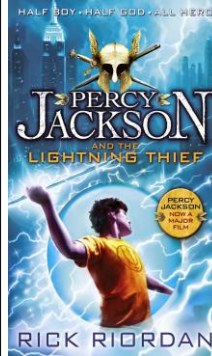
Looking for your next read? Here are some book recommendations from the Newspaper Team.

Fantasy



Six of Crows

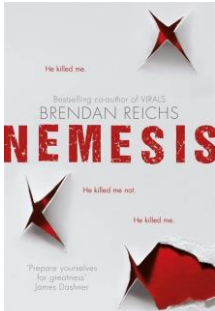
Kaz Brekker is offered the chance to win riches beyond comprehension, but he can't do it alone. With the help of five fellow outcasts, they set out on the most dangerous heist of their lives. But the stakes are high: can they trust each other, or themselves?



Percy Jackson

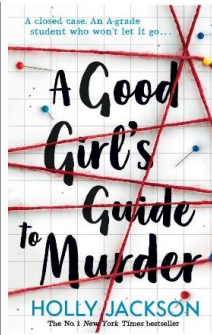
Percy Jackson is a normal kid, up until he finds out he's the son of the Sea God, Poseidon. Targeted by his vengeful uncle, Percy and his friends must set out on a quest to stop a divine war that threatens humans and demigods alike.

Thriller



Nemesis

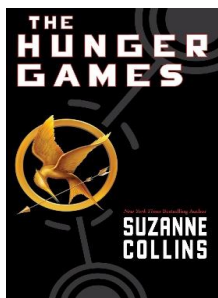
Every two years on her birthday, Min has been killed by the same man in a black suit. But every time, she'd wake up hours later without a scratch. After finding out she is not alone in this whole ordeal; it becomes clear she's been caught up in something sinister.



A Good Girl's Guide to Murder

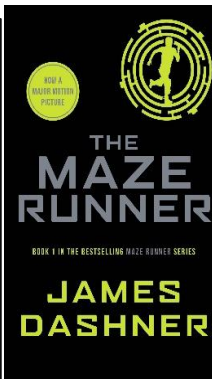
Pip always believed Sal Singh never murdered Andie Bell. So, with the help of his brother, Ravi, they set out to uncover the truth. But the pair soon realize the mystery goes much farther than they first hoped. So, how far will the real killer go to keep this case closed?

Dystopia



The Hunger Games

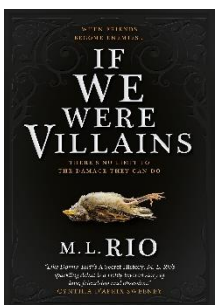
Every year, a boy and a girl are selected to compete in The Hunger Games; a fight to the death where the survivor is rewarded with glorious riches. Katniss Everdeen knows taking her sister's place in the games is a death sentence, but she's been close to death before. Can she survive the ultimate test?



The Maze Runner

Thomas has no memory of his old life. The only thing he remembers is his name. When he wakes up the lift, he meets other boys, all once in the same situation. Beyond the enormous stone walls that entrap the Gladers is a limitless ever-changing maze. It is their only way out, but no one's ever made it through alive.

Mystery



If We Were Villains

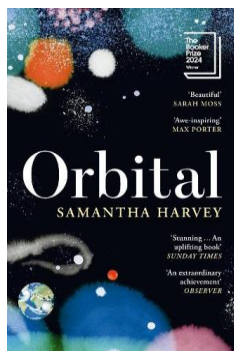
Oliver Marks has just served ten years for a murder he may or may not have committed. On the day of his release, he is greeted by the man who put him in prison. Detective Colborne is retiring, and he wants to know what really happened a decade before.



One of Us Is Lying

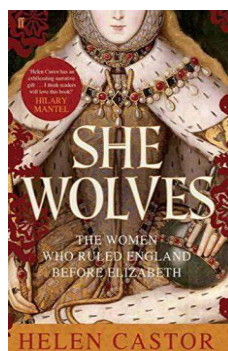
A seemingly normal detention turns deadly. Five students are known to have gone in, only four came out alive. When they all become suspects for the murder of Simon Keheller, the unlikely group must prove their innocence.

Older years



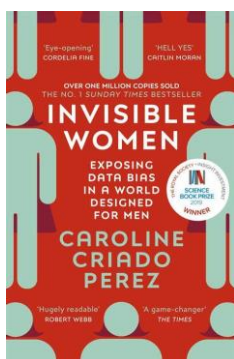
Orbital

In this book, everyone and no one is the subject, as six astronauts in the International Space Station circle the Earth observing the passages of weather across the fragility of borders and time zones.



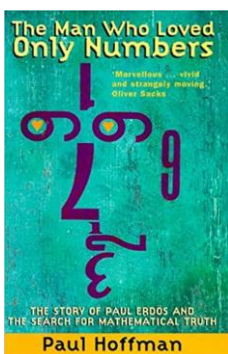
She Wolves

Helen Castor brings forth the fascinating true account of how royal power came to lie in female hands. This is thanks to the efforts done by four women: Matilda and Eleanor of Aquitaine, Isabella of France and Margaret of Anjou.



Invisible Women

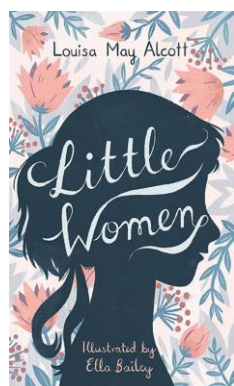
Author Caroline Criado Perez highlights exposes how, in a world largely built for and by men, women are often excluded. The book reveals the biased data that excludes women, from government policy and medical research, to technology, workplaces, urban planning and the media.



The Man Who Loved Only Numbers

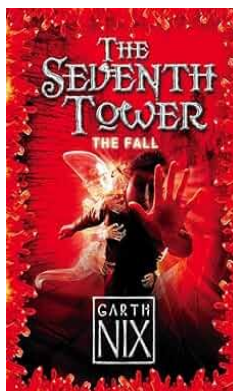
The biography of a mathematical genius, Paul Erdos; a man who raced across the world to prove as many theorems as possible. With a daily routine of 19 hours of mathematics a day, seven days a week, Erdos was one of the most extraordinary thinkers of our times.

All year groups



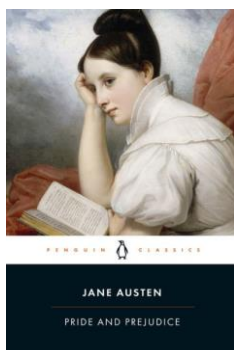
Little Women

This story takes place during the American Civil War, where a father is deployed to war. The four daughters, Jo, Meg, Beth and Amy look after the home, but at the same time, they must come to accept their journey into womanhood.



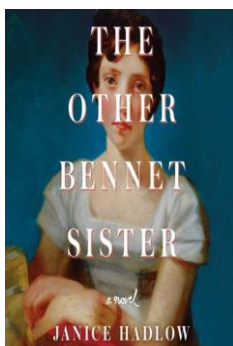
The Seventh Tower – The Fall

All his life, Tal has lived in darkness and has never left his home, the Castle of Seven Towers. But when danger strikes, Tal must reach the top of the Red Tower to steal a sunstone. However, with one slip up, Tal plunges into a strange world, soon meeting an enemy who holds the key to his future.



Pride and Prejudice

A timelessly classic novel by Jane Austen, *Pride and Prejudice* follows the story of Mr. Darcy and Elizabeth Bennet, and the love that blossoms between the two.



The Other Bennet Sister

What if Mary Bennet's life took a different path than that of *Pride and Prejudice*? For Mary, she must learn that she can only find joy once she accepts who she really is.

The Kuiper Belt

Written by Elsie Paton Yr 8

The facts:

So, the Kuiper Belt is not the asteroid belt if that's what you're thinking, it's actually the bit of space that stretches for 50 AU (astronomical units) which is roughly 7.5 billion kilometers!

On February 28th, 2021, a mysterious meteor hit Earth. Living in the age of surveillance has its advantages, as scientists used everything from CCTV to doorbell cam footage to calculate the meteor's trajectory and figure out where it came from.

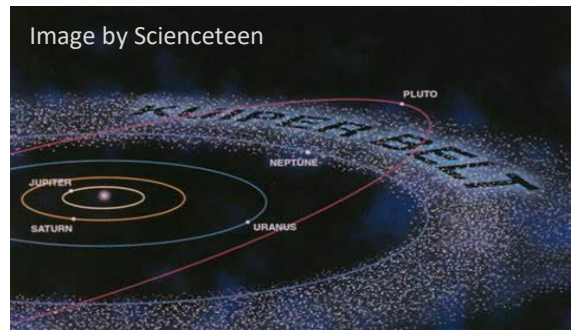
Triton, Neptune's moon:

Neptune has 16 moons and is -200 degrees Celsius but let's zoom in on one in particular: Triton, coated with pale nitrogen ice. But somehow even though it is 4.4713 billion km away from the sun it is still an active world with 8km tall geysers which funnily enough flatten at a 90-degree angle. It did not form alongside Neptune; it is not from the asteroid belt it is from the Kuiper Belt.

Triton and Pluto formed in the same vast frozen realm; Triton belongs to the Kuiper Belt. It is thought that Neptune formed a lot closer to the Sun, and then gradually moved out over billions of years as the gravity from the Kuiper Belt slowly moved Neptune closer and closer towards it.

Ceres, The world of water:

Ceres is almost perfectly spherical and peppered with bright white crystals. These crystals are salt (yes, table salt. The stuff you put on your fish and chips.) Ceres is a world of water; it is thought salty subterranean lakes 40km deep exist beneath the surface today. But how did the salt end up on the surface?



The answer lies in Ceres' location, these big asteroids from the Kuiper Belt can punch through the surface straight through to the lakes below. When exposed to space, the water vaporises instantly leaving its cargo of salt behind and therefore giving Ceres a dusting of salt. The discovery of water beneath the surface means that Ceres is now a candidate in the search for life.

Phobos, The exploding planet/ Mars with rings:

Phobos, Mars' moon, a moon with no wind, and no rain, is from the Kuiper Belt. The one thing that has puzzled scientist for decades is the strange grooves on the surface of it. Did you know that these marks are in fact stretch marks? Phobos is actually descending towards Mars, it moves at about 1.8m per century. The tidal force on Mars is getting ever stronger and will eventually rip Phobos apart, causing havoc on neighbouring planets, destroying half of Jupiter and the whole of Earth. The earliest theoretical time that this could happen is c. 800 years, but most scientists agree that 30-50 million years is more likely.

Well sadly, our Kuiper Belt journey has come to an end. Now you know what an amazeballs solar system we live in and such an interesting place too, as well as how close we are to finding life out there.

This information has been sourced from 'The Solar System' By Brian Cox on BBC iPlayer and NASA <https://www.nasa.gov/>

General knowledge quiz!

Made by: Kyra Crawford Yr 12

(answers at the end of the newspaper)

- Where will the 2028 Olympics be held?
- What is the percentage of Earth covered by water?
- What was the most listened to song in 2023?
- What is the name of the place where Sikhs gather to worship?
- Who was Henry VIII's fourth wife?
- During an interview, which British Prime Minister claimed the naughtiest thing they did as child was 'run through fields of wheat'?
- True or false: 'A' is the most common letter used in the English language?
- Where would you find the smallest bone in the human body (specific area)?
- Which Harry Potter film is the longest? - BONUS POINT: How long is it?
- What age is the oldest living person in the world?
BONUS POINT: Which country are they from?

How does music affect your happiness?

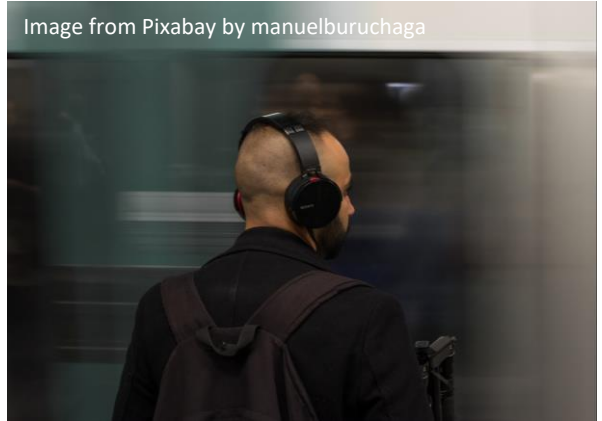
Written by Rosie Hazlewood

I don't know about you, but when I feel a bit down or upset, listening to a bit of music gets me feeling so much better. So, it got me thinking: why?

What does it do?

After doing some research, I found this: music not only boosts your mood and mental alertness but also helps reduce stress and alleviate pain. It suggested that a 'happy' song has a tempo of between 140 and 150 bpm (beats per minute). One song said to improve your mood is Queen's 'Don't Stop Me Now' at 156 BPM.

Image from Pixabay by manuelburuchaga



How?

Listening to music releases dopamine. Dopamine is a neurotransmitter and chemical messenger in the brain that plays a role in motivating you and making you seek reward. It is sometimes called the 'feel-good' hormone. The release of dopamine makes us feel happy and motivated. Furthermore, 98% of (older) adults stated they benefited from listening to music.



Image from Pixabay by chapay

Who agrees?

"Music has healing power. It has the ability to take people out of themselves for a few hours." - Elton John

"Music was my refuge. I could crawl into the space between notes and call back my loneliness." - Maya Angelou

"One good thing about music, when it hits you, you feel no pain." - Bob Marley

"Music does a lot of things for a lot of people. It's transporting, for sure. It can take you right back, years back, to the very moment, certain things happen in your life. It's uplifting, it's encouraging, it's strengthening." - Aretha Franklin

"If music be the food of love, play on" - William Shakespeare

So, in conclusion, what are you going to do the next time you feel upset? Are you just going to sit there? Or are you gonna get up and listen to some music? I'll leave that decision up to you.

The impact of dogs on a person's mental health

Written by Isla Hadley

We all know man's best friend, the fluffy creatures that sleep, eat, and play. But is that all they were made for?

Dogs have scientifically been proven to reduce stress, anxiety and depression with their kind-hearted nature and love for all they meet, being surveyed as the most caring animal in the whole world. Many people that have a cuddly friend have an excuse to get up in the morning and go on long walks, exploring the beautiful world that surrounds them. This dramatically impacts on their wellbeing as it gives them something to focus on other than what is bothering them, and it clears their mind.

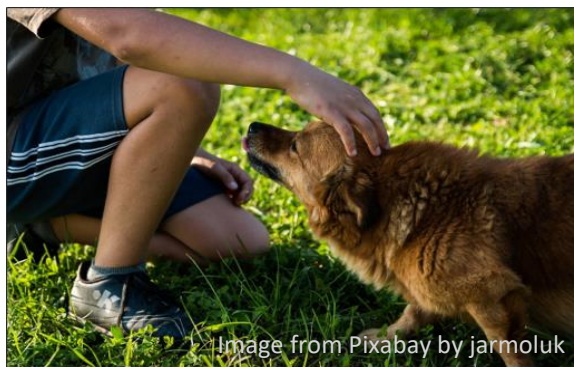


Image from Pixabay by jarmoluk

Additionally, the tactile experience of petting a dog can trigger the release of endorphins, the body's natural mood lifters, contributing to an overall sense of well-being. Labradors, golden retrievers and poodles are among the dogs that offer the most change, with up to 87% of people feeling better about themselves.

So, overall dogs are the gateway to a positive mental health, happiness and a long, healthy life.

Is AI really a friend or a foe?

AI. I'm sure you have heard of it. I have. You have. We all have. But today, I'm going to be exploring whether AI is really a friend or a foe. So, let's get started. AI, also known as Artificial Intelligence, is a very important part of today's society. You have probably used it in your day-to-day life before. It may have been for school, for work, or maybe even just for fun. When someone mentions AI, people may think of a dangerous robot. Some may think of a chatbot app they have used. But the point is, there are many different AIs in the world, and they all have different uses. But how are some of these uses affecting our society? One way that AI can be dangerous is the way that it is causing so many job losses. Industries such as manufacturing, healthcare and marketing are all adopting technology to help complete certain tasks.

Written by Lottie Strange Yr 8

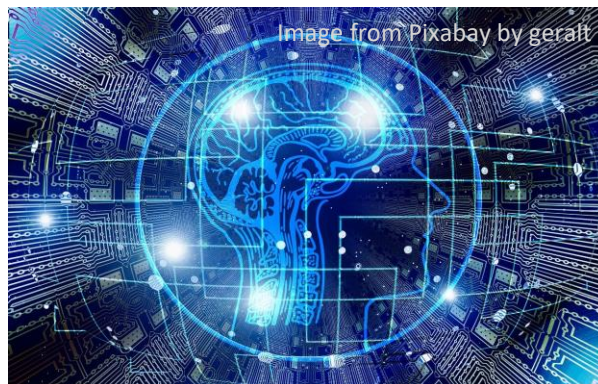


Image from Pixabay by geralt

By 2030, tasks that account for 30 percent of jobs in the US economy could be completed by technology and AI instead. Also, AI is becoming smarter and more dexterous so the same tasks will require fewer humans.

(Continued on page 9)

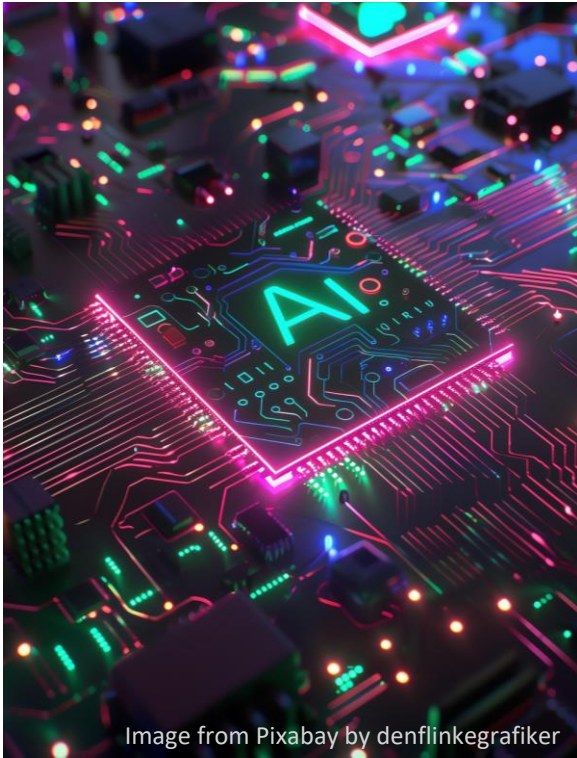


Image from Pixabay by denflinkegrafiker

Another risk of AI is a lack of creativity and emotion. Yes, AI can complete certain tasks much faster than humans, but there is something it cannot quite do. It lacks a certain human ingenuity. It can follow the basic creative process and is a way to express your creativity but cannot replace humans and *be* creative.

However, whilst AI does have its flaws and dangers, it is important to look at both sides of the argument. AI can have its uses and upsides. These upsides include the fact that it is there to help you and answer your questions all day, every day, whenever you need help. In conclusion, I believe that like everything, AI has its dangers and if not used carefully it could be a threat, but it is not all bad as it does bring significant benefits.

Extra-curricular activities

Written by Elinor Morgan Bailey Yr 12

Debate Club

There are two debate clubs for those who are interested in exploring big questions about politics, philosophy and society in general. The debates can be in the form of a Socratic discussion (a more informal discussion of ideas about the statement), or a parliamentary style debate (two teams with various roles who debate the statement in a more structured way).

Previous questions included:

"This house believes that preventing the spread of misinformation is more important than protecting freedom of speech"- 6th form

"This house would ban social media for under 16s." - Y10/11

Sixth form – Meetings in the three-storey maths corridor after school on Mondays.

Year 10 and 11 – Meetings in the same place during Wednesday lunchtimes.

If this interests you, do drop by if you can for some in depth debates.

The School Production

If you have an interest in singing, dancing or acting, the school production is the perfect opportunity to get involved in. Additions normally start up around Term 1 of the school year (these can be for the main cast or ensemble). It is an experience you won't forget. So, if you are planning to take part, we can't wait to see you next year.

Tickets for this year's production of *The Addams Family* are now available so get them before they're gone:

<https://www.ticketsource.co.uk/whats-on?q=king%20alfred%27s%20academy>

Dates:

Thursday 20th

March **7:00pm**

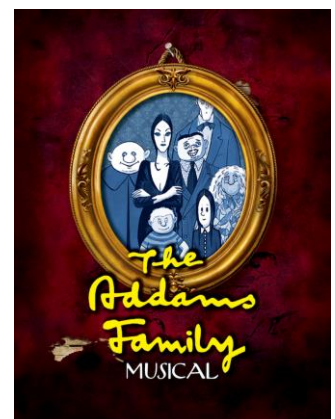
Friday 21st March

7:00pm

Saturday 22nd

March **1:30pm**

and **7:00pm**



Interview with an orthopaedic surgeon

Written by Annabel Alder Yr 8

Interview with Professor Tim Bishop – Consultant Orthopaedic Surgeon

We all know that doctors and nurses working in the NHS look after millions of people every year and save lives. But did you know that there are over 350 careers over 70 different professions in the NHS? Here, Annabel Alder interviews Tim Bishop, a Consultant Orthopaedic Surgeon about his job and why he chose it.



Q: Thank you for agreeing to be interviewed today. Who are you and what's your job?

A: I am Tim Bishop, and I am a Consultant Surgeon at St George's Hospital in London. One of the biggest hospitals in London. I specialise in Orthopaedics (bones and joints) and more specifically in Trauma (broken bones) and spine surgery (neck and back).

Q: What do Consultant Orthopaedic Surgeons do and why is it important?

A: Orthopaedic surgeons look after problems with bones and joints.

Often after injuries, sports accidents, or car crashes. I mend their broken bones, often by doing operations to fix them with plates , screws or special nails , not the ones you get from B&Q!

We also look after conditions like arthritis, where joints can become worn out and need replacing, hip and knee replacement for example.

We are really important as we look after people of all ages who have injured themselves or have painful conditions that stop them working or doing the things they enjoy and help them get back to normal life and activity.

Q: Why did you choose to become a surgeon?

A: It is an interesting and rewarding job. Every day is a bit different as even if the problems are similar, the people with them are different and have different needs and expectations. Surgery (doing operations) is quite a practical and challenging job but really rewarding when everything goes well, and the patients get better.

Q: Is it difficult to become a surgeon, how do you do it and how long does it take?

A: It is quite difficult. The training is long. 5 years at medical school (university) and then 10-15 years of further training as a junior doctor, learning how to do operations a bit like an apprentice, before you become a consultant. There are lots of exams along the way. You need the eyes of an eagle, the heart of a lion, and very steady hands!

Q: What is your proudest achievement in your career?

A: Getting my Consultant Job at a major teaching Hospital , it was the culmination of lots of years of training, focus and hard work.

I have also been featured on TV on '24 Hours in A&E' and 'Trauma' which was pretty cool.

Q: What was your longest ever operation?

A: About 12hrs. If we know it's going to be much longer than that we stop and do another stage the next day. It gives us and the patient a bit of a rest!

Q: What do you think is the biggest issue facing the NHS today and if you were Prime Minister what would you do about it?

A:I think it's the lack of Social care to look after people at home when they need it and after they are ready to be discharged from hospital. They stay in hospital much longer than they need to which blocks space for others who need to be in hospital, is expensive and not the best place for them to recover.

General Knowledge Quiz

Answers!

Question 1: Los Angeles

Question 2: 71%

Question 3: Flowers, Miley Cryus

Question 4: Gurdwara

Question 5: Anne of Cleves

Question 6: Theresa may

Question 7: false (its E)

Question 8: The middle of your ear

Question 9: The Chamber of Secrets (Bonus point: How long is it? - 161 minutes/ 2hrs and 41 mins)

Question 10: Japan

Well done if you got them all right!