



SCHOOL

For students, by students

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NEWSPAPER

Released: Term 1 2025

Metal

Written by Leo Johnston, Year 10



There are lots of different types of metal. There are 28 genres, with the top 9 most popular types of metal being: heavy, thrash, power, black, death, doom, avant-garde, gothic/goth, and nu/alternative metal.

Heavy metal is a genre of rock music that developed in the late 1960s and early 1970s, largely in the UK and US. with roots in blues rock, psychedelic rock and acid rock. Heavy metal bands developed a thick, monumental sound characterized by distorted guitars, extended guitar solos, emphatic beats and loudness.

During the 1980s, glam metal became popular with groups such as Bon Jovi, Mötley Crüe and Poison. Meanwhile, however, underground scenes produced an array of more aggressive styles: thrash metal broke into the mainstream with bands such as Metallica, Slayer, Megadeth and Anthrax, while other extreme subgenres such as death metal and black metal became – and remain – subcultural phenomena.

Since the mid-1990s, popular styles have expanded the definition of the genre. These include groove metal and nu metal, the latter of which often incorporates elements of grunge and hip-hop.

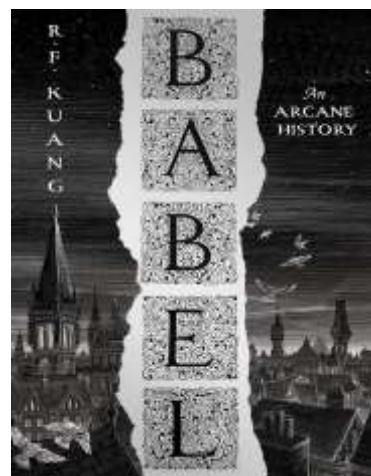
Babel by R.F Kuang – Book Review

Written by Anonymous

'*Babel*' by R. F. Kuang is a Fantasy book that is set in an alternate reality and comments on Britain's colonialism and economic supremacy. The magic system is extremely clever; it involves silver bars which are inscribed with two words from two different languages that have a similar but not identical meaning. The meanings that are "lost in translation" create magic which is captured in the bars.

The strong friendships, the beautiful writing style and the thought-provoking ideas and concepts that are explained and delved into in amazing detail really capture and hold your focus and interest.

R. F. Kuang was only 19 years old when she wrote her debut award winning novel "The Poppy War" and has continued to produce amazing novels since. Her writing gives a different cultural viewpoint through fictional interpretations on historical events. I strongly encourage you to read this book.



Student Photography

By Harry Burdett, Year 11



Messages from the Editorial Team...

"Very majestic looking dog." - Miles

"My favourite photo was the wide shot of the stadium. It looks really cool!" - Emily

"Great Photos." - Kyra

"The lighting in the final photo is admirable." - Elinor

How to Rule Your Own Country – The Weird World of Micronations

By Daniel C, Year 10

People often talk about what they would do if they ran the country, and children create imaginary kingdoms to be pretend royalty. But, in reality, none of them have a chance of ruling over a sovereign state... or do they? Because there is a way to technically become a ruler of your own country, where you can have your own citizens, government, and even passports and currency, and sometimes in a way become nearly as famous as leaders of real countries. The way to do this is to create a micronation! A micronation is a self-proclaimed country that claims it is independent from a real sovereign state, but it is not actually legitimate, and lacks legal status and recognition to be a proper country. Micronations are usually quite small, hence the name 'micro-nations', and may occupy a single building, property or even only a room. They can range from being a social experiment and question the concept of countries to being a bit of fun or a joke. Many have quite serious operations, with currency, citizenship applications, and even online parliamentary meetings.

Others are created by politics and geography fans who simply find it fun running their own country. People take time to recruit citizens, organise a parliament and implement an ideology. As doing this to the standard of real nations is not possible, micronationalists have come up with creative ways to create their countries, which makes them all the more unique.

Although they seem obscure, micronations are a widely known concept. One of the most famous micronations is the Principality of Sealand, located on a disused offshore platform off the coast of Essex. After being used by Paddy Roy Bates as a pirate radio broadcasting station in the 1960s, he got bored of this and declared independence as the Principality of Sealand. Another micronation that inspired many micronationalists is the Republic of Molossia, founded in 1977 and located in Dayton, Nevada. It famously pegs its currency to cookie dough and bans onions on its territory.

Some people take the opportunity to create a micronation where territorial disputes arise. A well-known example of this is the Republic of Liberland, located between Serbia and Croatia along the Danube. Both claim different borders around the river, which means some small areas are unclaimed by both. This led someone to declare it as the micronation of Liberland. Lots of micronations also claim territorial anomalies like Bir Tawil between Sudan and Egypt and Marie Byrd Land in Antarctica. Some micronations even decide to claim extra-terrestrial areas, like planets, the moon or space itself.

There are thousands of other micronations all around the globe, both famous and completely undocumented. Even Wantage has its very own Kingdom of Danbrosika. The world of micronations is a strange but fascinating one – many groups of people just decide to create their own tiny nation, being creative and having fun at the same time as experimenting with real world politics.

Video Game Recommendations

Here are favourites from the Editorial Team



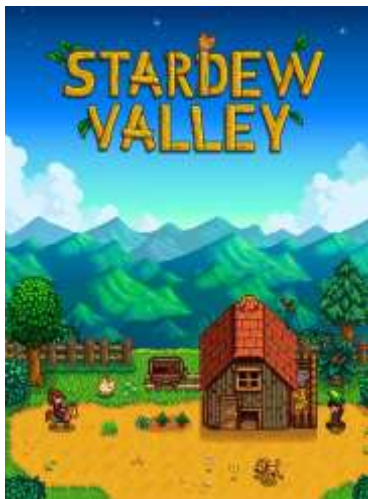
The Legend of Zelda –
Breath of the Wild



Life is Strange



Animal Crossing



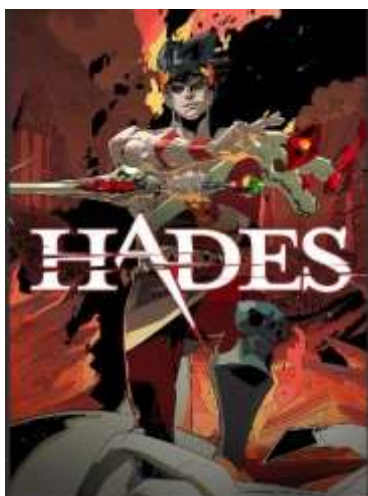
Stardew Valley



The Sims



Portal



Hades



Untitled Goose Game



Mario Kart

Physical Game Recommendations



Dobble



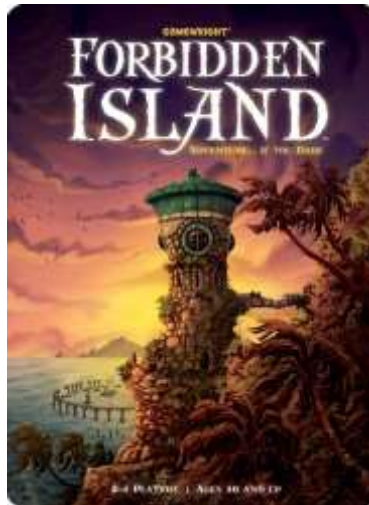
Uno



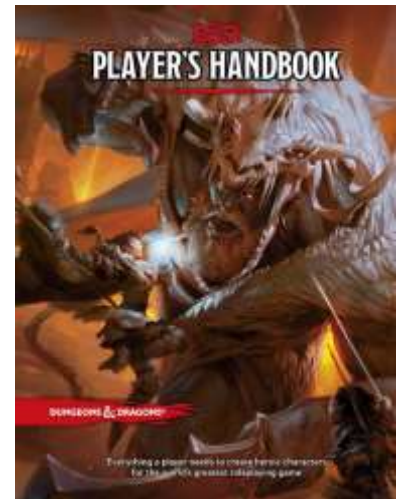
Mancala



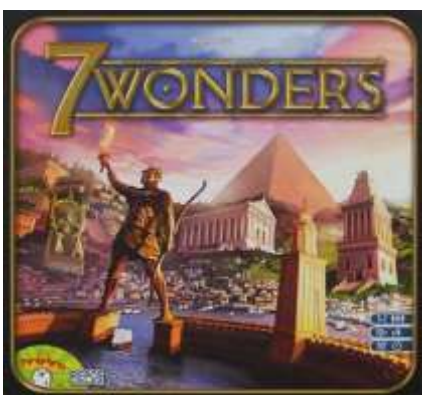
Pandemic



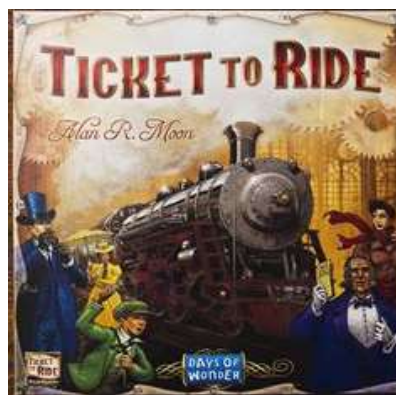
Forbidden Island



Dungeons and Dragons



7 Wonders



Ticket to Ride



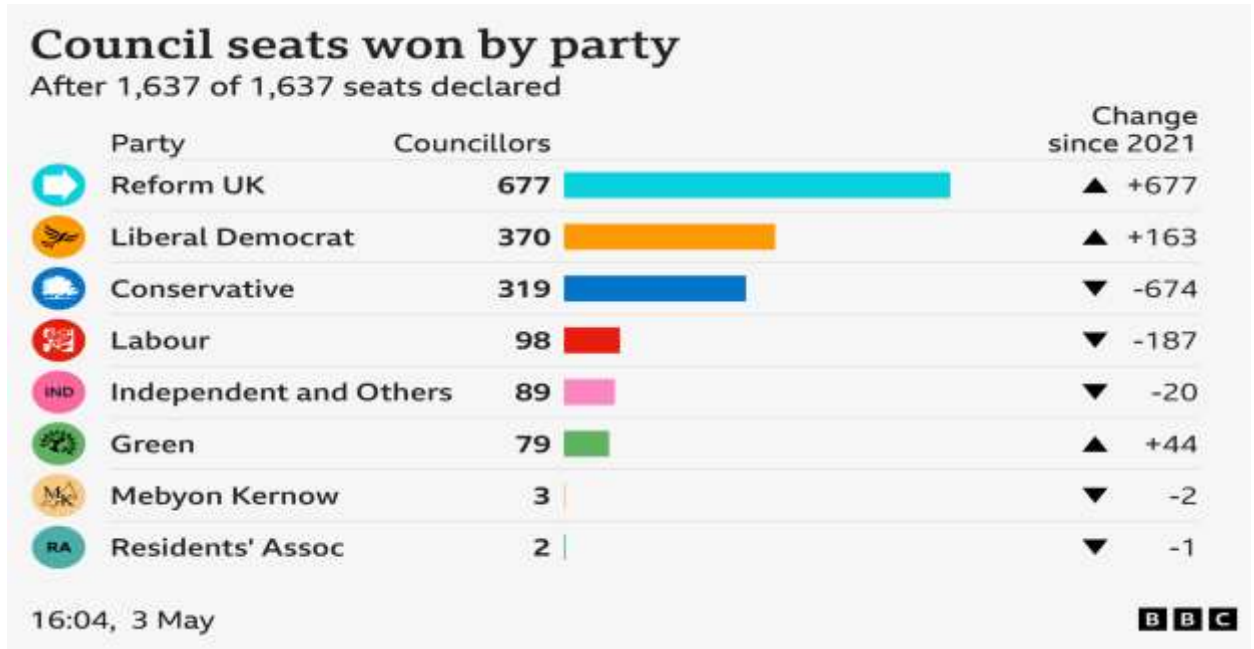
Hand to Hand Wombat

General knowledge quiz!

Made by: Kyra Crawford

(answers at the end of the newspaper)

- 1) Which activist recently set sail on a boat heading towards Gaza?
- 2) Which country won the 2025 football nations league? A: Germany, B: France, C: Portugal, C: Croatia, E: Spain
- 3) True or false - the actress Zendaya has been confirmed to be in the cast of Shrek 5 in 2026
- 4) From what series of novel written by Arthur Connan Doyle is the character 'Irene Adler' from? Hint: 221b
- 5) Which country is the band AC/DC from? A: UK, B: Australia, C: USA, D: New Zealand, E: Republic of Ireland
- 6) What is the name of the French dish that is made from minced raw beef topped with an egg yolk?
- 7) What is the strongest metal on Earth?
- 8) True or false - Chelsea is the oldest established football club in London
- 9) Which Southeastern European country in 1967 officially declared itself the first atheist state? Hint: The main colour of the flag is red
- 10) What is the name of one of the most famous indoor areas in the world, it has hosted the NHL, NBA and is named after the 4th US president



The local council elections that took place on Thursday the 1st of May 2025 highlighted the changing nature of UK politics. The Labour and Conservative parties lost a substantial number of councillors: the Tories lost 674 councillors and Labour 187. Meanwhile, the Liberal Democrats gained 163 councillors, the Green Party 44 and Reform UK secured 677 councillors from nothing, some being taken from Labour strongholds. Source: **BBC news**

So, what caused the Conservative and Labour parties to be annihilated by a Reform party soaring in popularity and what does this reveal about the nature of politics? People in the UK seem dissatisfied with the current Labour party over many decisions the government has taken, such as: cutting the winter fuel allowance, introducing the family farm tax, not controlling illegal immigration (which the previous government also struggled to get under control). Many of these issues have caused controversy, but it is the issue of immigration that right-wing parties like

Reform UK have weaponised and used to their advantage in the political debate.

I will discuss this after I outline my thoughts on why the current government have become unpopular.

Labour won the general election with a huge majority (174 seats); I think this was mainly due to people's dissatisfaction with the Conservative party rather than a love for Labour.

However, during the early days of Labour coming to power I believe many were optimistic about Labour and hoped they could bring positive change. I think it would be unfair to suggest that all of their proposals have been negative; in my view they have made some positive change. For example, the breakfast clubs which aim to help primary school children living in poverty, improving workers' rights - introducing the Employment Rights Bill which has increased the national minimum wage to help many low paid workers and they have delivered 4.2 million NHS appointments which exceeds their target of 2 million.



Furthermore, PM Starmer has recently proposed a deal with the EU which I think will be a major step to re-building Britain's relationship with the EU after the damage caused by Brexit. This could include a youth mobility scheme which will allow under-30s to work, study, or volunteer between the UK and the EU for a limited period. I can't see why anyone would have an issue with this: it gives young people the opportunity to get to know different cultures, explore different countries and it will boost the economy.

With the current disapproval for the Labour party, you'd think many would switch their support back to the Conservative party, but this has not been the case. Badenoch, the new Tory leader, has been somewhat successful at challenging Starmer in front of the media but, despite this, due to the terrible reputation the Conservatives have built up for themselves over the years, Starmer's counterargument of: "you can't talk: just look at the state your government left the country in" always seems to have a profound effect. During a recent Prime Minister's Questions session, he even described the Conservative party as a "dead party walking". However, I think it also comes down to the leader: despite her attempts, Badenoch simply won't be as popular with the right-wing of the public as Nigel Farage.

From my perspective the two main political parties have shifted towards the right in recent years; one of the causes of this being Nigel Farage's right-wing propaganda.

In the past, the Conservative party was quite liberal (excluding Margaret Thatcher - the 'Iron lady' - who was famous for her traditionally conservative ideas). David Cameron for example, who legalized same-sex marriage. Theresa May also had some quite liberal views - she wanted to modernize the Conservative Party and make it socially progressive: May promoted policies that addressed social issues, such as tackling modern slavery, and remaining in the EU. However, in trying to keep up with the growing popularity of Reform UK, The Conservative Party is growing closer towards them on the political spectrum. For example, Robert Jenrick, a member of the shadow Conservative Cabinet, promoted to cap immigration due to people with 'alien cultures coming into the country'. While some Middle-Eastern countries such as Afghanistan, who are ruled by the Taliban, have extremely backward views on women, this shouldn't be generalised. This is how the weaponisation of immigration has been used by my Nigel Farage to contribute to his party's increasing popularity.

The Labour Party has also seen a large move to the right recently, proposing to scrap the winter fuel allowance for millions of pensioners, and being forced to do a U-turn on this due to the unpopularity of the proposal.



The winter fuel allowance is an annual payment provided by the government for state pensioners. To qualify you must also receive another means-tested benefit (where eligibility depends on income, savings, and other assets). It makes sense not to give the winter fuel allowance to elderly people who are wealthy because they don't need it, so it's a way the government can save money. However, there are many older people not in receipt of benefits who nevertheless live in poverty and who find this allowance essential. Following immense pressure to retract this proposal, the Government have since relaxed the eligibility criteria to increase the number of people eligible for it.

Another example is Labour's sudden focus on cracking down on illegal immigration, fueled by the surge of success Reform UK received in the local elections. The Labour Party are losing their identity as they are shifting towards the right of politics.

There is a huge debate at the moment in politics about immigration; you hear it everywhere in the news. In particular, the number of undocumented workers illegally coming into the country. While I completely agree that illegal immigration should not be happening, this has been taken too far by parties like Reform. I feel the issue on immigration for some has been used to legitimise racism towards certain ethnic groups. I must emphasize that I am not saying that every Reform voter is racist or holds far-right views, however there are some that make claims backed by little evidence such as: "the immigrants are taking all our jobs and homes, and I feel like a stranger in my own country". However, many Reform voters are simply people who feel they are not represented effectively by politicians and lack a sense of purpose in life.

So, it is important not to assume that every Reform voter holds extreme views that can't be changed - a recently re-elected county councillor for the local area whose campaign I helped with during the elections, convinced a man who seemed adamant on voting Reform to do otherwise. I strongly believe that people should be able to vote for whichever party they choose, but I also see the importance of people having access to reliable transparent information before making their decision. For example, Reform UK often use populist rhetoric providing over-simplified and quick solutions to complex issues which is one of the reasons many people turn to them. For example, this is pasted directly from Reform UK's manifesto: 'Strict limits on immigration are the only way to relieve the pressure on our housing, public services, increase wages and protect our culture, identity and values. Essential skills, mainly around healthcare, must be the only exception.' They don't say how they plan to do this and choose to only talk about the negatives of immigration so those who may be struggling to find a home or get a GP appointment think that immigration is the main reason to blame for that. Going back to my previous point, I think Farage is fueling hate within some who are looking for an excuse to stigmatise certain groups; I think phrases like 'protect our culture' are becoming harmful.

There is nothing wrong with feeling patriotic and proud to be British, but immigration isn't threatening this, nor should people oppose people immigrating to the UK retaining their culture. Integration is vital for society to work but I hold the view that we need to ease off imposing British culture as though it was synonymous with 'British values'.



Image from Euronews

To conclude this article, whilst change can be overwhelming for some, there are complex issues like housing shortages, employment, long GP appointment waits where it is important to remember that there are many reasons at work, and we should not resort to blaming a certain group of people. We may want to hold on to our national British identity, but we should also respect those that have a different one. To end here is a quote from the late Labour MP Jo Cox: "We are far more united and have far more in common with each other than things that divide us".

I hope you enjoyed reading this article and if you want your voice heard or hold a different opinion, don't hesitate to write your own article for the King's Herald.

Film Reviews

Milla Gray and Izzy Higgins (Year 11)

Rain Man by Barry Levinson (a review by Izzy Higgins)

Rain Man, starring Dustin Hoffman and Tom Cruise, is a comedy-drama film that explores themes of brotherhood, psychological struggles, and how love can overthrow greed. When money-loving car dealer Charlie Babbit receives the news of his father's passing, he is surprised to find out he received nothing from the inheritance, and he wants to find out who did. Upon the discovery that his long-lost, unknown brother has an extreme talent for memorising numbers and equations, Babbit wants to use this to his advantage, but as his brother becomes more and more stressed due to the change in routine, he realises that family is something to be cared for and respected.





La La Land by Damien Chazelle (a review by Milla Gray)

The movie *La La Land* is a colourful and emotional film about love, dreams, and the cost of ambition. Emma Stone and Ryan Gosling star as two struggling creative artists trying to make it in Los Angeles. The music is great, the dancing is fun, and the story is a mix of classic old Hollywood musicals (taking inspiration from films like *Singin' in the Rain*, *Casablanca*, and more) with a modern spin. It's visually stunning with bright colors and beautiful camera work. It has a unique plot and features many famous cameos from actors like John Legend and J.K. Simmons. Ultimately, it's a great watch for anyone who enjoys musicals or great cinematography.

General Knowledge Quiz

Answers!

Question 1: Greta Thunberg

Question 2: Portugal

Question 3: True

Question 4: The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes (Double bonus point, A scandal in Bohemia)

Question 5: Australia

Question 6: Steak Tartare

Question 7: Tungsten

Question 8: false it's Fulham (have a bonus point if you got that)

Question 9: Albania

Question 10) Madison Square Garden

Well done if you got them all right!