



**E-ZINE**  
**2018**

*Semper Juvenis*



# HEADMASTER'S WELCOME

Five hundred years ago it would take Henry VIII a week or so to get a message to Scotland while for Philip II of Spain getting a letter and receiving a reply from the most far flung corners of the Spanish Empire could take the best part of a year. Given the difficulties of communicating there was not much junk mail in the sixteenth century. Today, technology means that we can communicate with virtually all parts of the world simply by tapping a few keys on a board and pressing a button; something that would have amazed even Henry VIII and Philip II.

The next stage in this technological revolution is to reduce even further the involvement of human beings and at present there seem to be increasingly few areas of human activity which cannot be undertaken by technology. Given these developments, an edition of the E-Zine focusing on the development of artificial intelligence seems entirely appropriate.

The development of artificial intelligence has led to many discussions on what it means to be human. I am sure that communicating with other humans will remain a basic need of all of us and this edition of the E-Zine allows us all to communicate with Aston as it is today and to share in activities which it is hard to imagine being undertaken by artificial intelligence.

As ever this edition of the E-Zine contains items to make us reflect and think as well as the more whimsical, all expertly brought together by Mr McBrien and his team. In a fast moving and ever changing world the certainty of the enjoyment that the E-Zine brings is greatly welcomed.

**C. Parker**

**Headmaster**

**April 2018**



# E-TEAM 2018



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# A NOVEL IDEA

'A Novel Idea' is the Aston Key Stage 4 book club and this year we have read a wide range of books.

We have been transported to a dystopian future with 'Ready Player One' by Ernest Cline, experienced the battlefields of Passendale with 'All Quiet on the Western Front' by Erich Maria Remarque and enjoyed the glamour of the 1930's with Agatha Christie's 'Murder on the Orient Express'.



While the books have all been very different, they each brought out lively discussions and interesting insight from the various readers.

So far, the favourite book has been 'Murder on the Orient Express', scoring an impressive 10/10 from the students. A lot of time was spent debating the ending **\*\* Spoiler Alert\*\*** they all did it!

Future books include 'A thousand Splendid Suns' by Khaled Housseini and 'The Girl with all the Gifts' by M. R. Carey.

Anyone from KS4 is welcome to join us, we have good discussions, great fun and CAKE!

## **Mrs Baizon – School Librarian**

*"I really enjoy the book club as it makes me feel happy to see people so interested in books. Personally, my favourite book so far has to be Ready Player One due to the story and how it could be the outcome of our world if we aren't careful enough".*

**Hassan Yawar – Year 9**

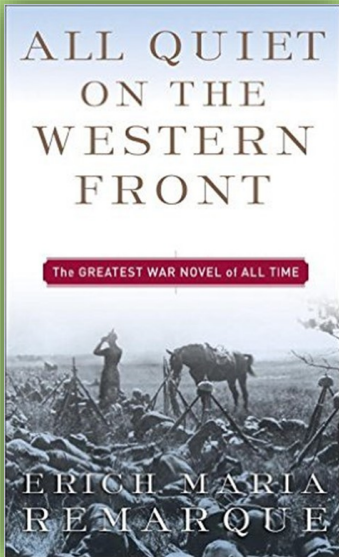




# A NOVEL IDEA

## Ready Player One

In the year 2044, reality is an ugly place. The only time teenage Wade Watts really feels alive is when he's jacked into the virtual utopia known as the OASIS. Wade's devoted his life to studying the puzzles hidden within this world's digital confines, puzzles that are based on their creator's obsession with the pop culture of decades past and that promise massive power and fortune to whoever can unlock them. When Wade stumbles upon the first clue, he finds himself beset by players willing to kill to take this ultimate prize. The race is on, and if Wade's going to survive, he'll have to win and confront the real world he's always been so desperate to escape.



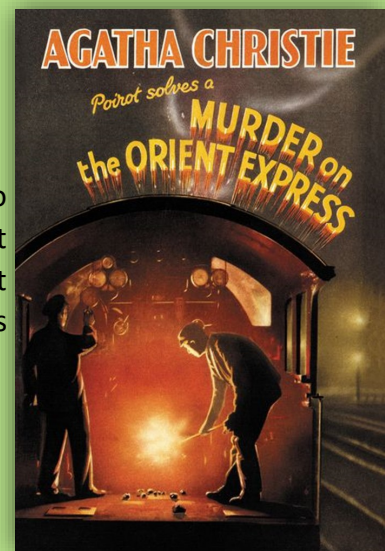
## All Quiet on the Western Front

Get ready for one of the most searing, upsetting anti-war books you'll ever read.

*All Quiet on the Western Front* is narrated by Paul Bäumer, a young man of nineteen who fights in the German army on the French front in World War I. Paul and several of his friends from school joined the army voluntarily after listening to the stirring patriotic speeches of their teacher, Kantorek. But after experiencing ten weeks of brutal training at the hands of the petty, cruel Corporal Himmelstoss and the unimaginable brutality of life on the front, Paul and his friends have realised that the ideals of nationalism and patriotism for which they enlisted are simply empty clichés.

## Murder on the Orient Express

A lavish trip through Europe quickly unfolds into a race against time to solve a murder aboard a train. When an avalanche stops the Orient Express dead in its tracks, the world's greatest detective, Hercule Poirot arrives to interrogate all passengers and search for clues before the killer can strike again.



# INTERVIEW WITH JULIE WALTERS

BAFTA winning actress and writer Dame Julie Walters answers some quick fire questions from an Aston Harry Potter fan:

**1. Did you always want to be an actress?**

Yes.

**2. What is the secret to longevity in the acting world?**

Doing work that means something and is generally of some quality.

**3. You've performed Shakespeare. Is that different to other acting? If so, why?**

It's different in that you have to interpret archaic language and verse but otherwise it's the same as any acting, in that it must be based in truth.

**4. Have you any advice for students who are interested in pursuing a career in acting?**

Make sure it is definitely what you want. Believe in your own uniqueness. When you audition, don't do the usual stuff e.g. Juliet/Hamlet, surprise them and whatever part you play, own it. Don't take it too seriously or too personally, but be truthful.

**5. Did you draw from experiences in your own life to play Mrs Weasley in Harry Potter?**

No not really, but all proper acting comes from within so Mrs W relates to my life somewhere.

**6. Did you get any tips from JK Rowling about the character and are there any hidden plots in Harry Potter that were never revealed?**

No and no.

**7. What are your favourite 'twoooo soups'?**

My own butternut squash and sweet potato soup and chicken soup!!





# HAWLEY HOUSE

The school house system was introduced at Aston back in 1908 with each house being appropriately named after the school's early Headmasters. From the beginning of this academic year, the current houses (Brandon, Floyd, Manton and Temperley) have faced fresh competition from the new Hawley house named after the fifth headmaster of the school. In order to commemorate the inauguration of Hawley house, Mr Hawley's daughter personally presented all the new Hawley students with their ties in the first ever Hawley house assembly conducted by its first house captain (James Burnham) and Head of House (Mrs Lally).

## Aston's first 5 Headmasters

**John Temperley** : 1883-1894

**Ernest W. Floyd** : 1894-1912

**Joseph Manton** : 1913-1936

**Leonard G. Brandon** : 1937-1970

**Dennis W. Hawley** : 1970-1984



As Hawley students will be introduced one year at a time, currently we only have a Year 7 class, so we are not yet able to compete in many of the competitions open to older years. That said, we have made a good start and have won a number of Year 7 competitions including the Chess Competition and the Christmas Song Competition.

Being a Year 7 is a bit of an adventure as we are still learning about the school, but being the first Hawley House form class means that we will be representing the name of Hawley for the first time though out our time at the school. We intend to continue to make good first impressions.

# CYBERBULLYING

Cyber bullying is the use of electronic communication to bully or harass someone. This may include sending messages or images of an intimidating or threatening nature, in other terms "sending bare hate snaps to man". None of us like being talked to in a way that is hurtful or insulting, but for some people it's much worse. It goes beyond the bounds of a joke or throw-a-round insult but into something that can cause unhappiness, mental health issues, and sadly in some cases, suicidal thoughts.



Like traditional forms of bullying, cyber bullying can be hard to detect if the person being bullied does not speak up. However, where as in the past, bullies would generally have to pick on their victim face to face, the online factor enables bullies to reach others at any hour of the day, from any corner of the planet. It is also much easier to include an audience by sharing comments or photos electronically. For the bullied, the effects can stay with them for life. For bullies there can be consequences too, their actions can affect job opportunities, university applications and social status later on in life. As we hear all the time, our actions online are permanent. Even when reported and removed, traces of your online actions still exist. As the oppressor or the oppressed, cyber bullying will leave permanent marks across your life. Here is Hope's story:

'Hope Witsell was a 13-year-old who grew up in Sundance, Florida. Unwisely, she sent a revealing photo of herself to a boy she liked. Another girl borrowed the boy's phone, found the image and forwarded it to herself and some of her friends. Rapidly the image spread to students in her school and in other schools in the area. The result – taunting and bullying from her peers, with insults such as "whore" and "slut".

## STOP SPEAK SUPPORT



...when you see online bullying



# CYBERBULLYING

Hope wrote in her journal. "Tons of people talk about me behind my back and I hate it because they call me a whore! People hate me". School authorities found out about the photo and suspended Hope for the first week of Eighth Grade. When she returned to school, a counsellor observed cuts on Hope's legs and had her sign a "no-harm" contract, in which Hope agreed to tell an adult if she felt inclined to hurt herself. The next day, Hope hanged herself in her bedroom.

On Sept. 12, 2009 Hope wrote in her journal: "I'm done for sure now. I can feel it in my stomach. I'm going to try and strangle myself, I hope it works."

Of course, such extreme and saddening circumstances are extremely rare but we cannot belittle an issue which is estimated to affect 43% of young people once, and one in four multiple times. But what can you do? You may never have been a victim of cyber bullying in your life, but when a further 70% of young people have witnessed repeat cyber bullying take place online, it is not okay to just ignore this. "Yes, but *I* couldn't do anything to help" is what we often say to help ourselves, to make us feel better for not acting, for standing by and watching someone get bullied, to pity our selfish existence whilst allowing another to pursue their intentions of making another person's life a misery. Don't make excuses, ACT.

When the banter turns bad, here's what you must do: **Stop, Speak, Support.**

The first stage of helping yourself or another is to **Stop**. Take time out before you get involved in something, and obviously don't like or share negative comments and posts. Make sure that you also get a full overview of what's really going on because it is easy to misinterpret something with several viewpoints behind it. If you're still feeling uneasy about something that you see then check the social media sites community guidelines page to see if it should even be online.

After you've taken some time out then you really must **Speak**. Ask a parent, a friend, a teacher or a carer for advice on what to do next. Remember that you are never alone in what you are facing or helping someone to face but, it can be difficult for adults to find out what's going on. Older generations may have less of an understanding of some social media platforms, but they will understand bullying. Be proactive in seeking their assistance!



# CYBERBULLYING

Speak to the online platform as well, by reporting what has happened. They will help you to shut down the posts or comments that may be causing so much pain. If you really don't know what to do, and you feel too afraid to speak to someone close then speak to Childline. Their friendly workers and volunteers will help you to resolve your problems.

Finally, **Support**. It's always nice to get a positive message from someone, so if you think that someone is being bullied then make sure to send them a nice message to help them out. As well as this, we all know it's hard to talk to people when we're struggling, so encourage them to speak to you (who can report it then to a teacher or responsible adult) or to their teachers and carers. If you feel able to do something more then maybe invite them out to do something that'll distract them from what's going on. Go to the cinema, invite them over to play on your x-box or meet them in town for a bit of window shopping.

We can all do something to stop and help a victim of cyber bullying. The only thing we shouldn't do, is nothing.

[www.childline.org.uk](http://www.childline.org.uk)

[www.internetmatters.org](http://www.internetmatters.org)

[www.keaston.thesharpsystem.com](http://www.keaston.thesharpsystem.com)

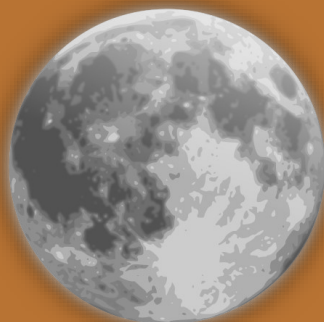


Q: Why did the sun go to school?

A: To get brighter!

Q: How do you know when the moon has enough to eat?

A: When it's full.





# BMX CHAMPION ALEX TALBOTT

**When did you start BMXing and what got you interested in the sport?**

I started riding a bike when I was three years old. My family were really into mountain biking so I always used to ride my mountain bike at Redditch BMX track. When I was seven years old someone mentioned to my dad that he should get me a race bike.



**How often do you train, where do you train, what sort of thing does the training involve?**

I train twice a week on the race track and five days a week off the track.

**You recently won a pretty big competition, tell us all about that.**

So I won the British championship the second time in a row and to be honest, I was as shocked as the first race I ever won because there are some tough completion in my class but I pulled it out of the bag.

**What is the most important skill you have to possess to succeed in this sport?**

Probably the manual (a manoeuvre where you ride on the back wheel) because it is fast and if you get it precise it pays off.

**Tell us about your bike, what makes a BMX bike different from other types of bicycles?**

My bike is a speedco carbon. What makes other bikes different to BMX bikes is that they are a lot larger and heavier than BMX race bikes and they are probably significantly cheaper than race bikes.



## BMX CHAMPION

### Have you ever had any accidents/injuries?

Everyone crashes now and then. Last September I went over the bars and broke my elbow.

### Would you recommend the sport to other students? If so, how would they get involved?

I would recommend it to other students because it is awesome and to get involved, just go to Perry Park race track.

[www.birminghambmclub.com](http://www.birminghambmclub.com)



### BMX Facts

- BMX stands for 'Bicycle Motocross' (the X being the cross).
- The sport originated in Southern California in the 1970s when children inspired by motorbike motocross stars of the time started to ride their bicycles on dirt tracks.
- The wheels on most BMXs have 36 spokes.
- BMX made its debut as an Olympic sport in the 2008 games held in Beijing.
- Olympic BMX riders have been known to reach speeds of 35 mph.
- A wide eyed creature from a distant galaxy managed to make a BMX fly in a 1982 movie!



Q: What do you call a tick on the moon?

A: A luna-tick





# THE IT CROWD ON AI

**Assuming AI (artificial intelligence) is inevitable, are you looking forward to it, would you buy it?**

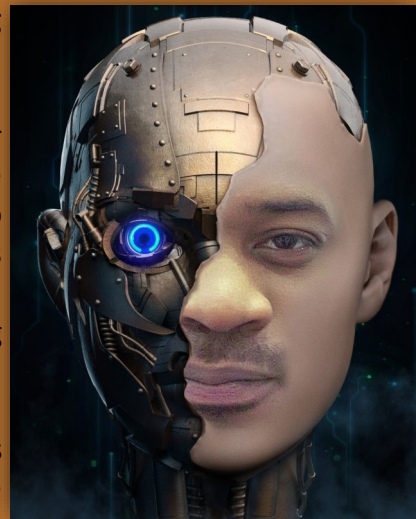
**Mr Billings** - If it keeps me safer whilst I'm driving or flying for example then, yes. There are some tasks which computers are better at performing than humans and that's what we have to accept. The only issue for me would be when the computer does more than it needs to and then makes us lazy. Think about it, a machine brushing your teeth because you're too busy checking social media!

**Mrs Lally** - Yes, definitely!! Dismissing or ignoring the rise of AI is denial of everything that we know about the technological change in today's digital age. We should not continue to rely on old ideas, principles, concepts and experiences.

**Mr Tamber** - This is a very exciting phase. Having grown up where there was no internet and then seeing how it has developed, has been amazing. I believe we will see similar rapid growth in the adoption of AI and we will begin to see it become a part of our everyday life, with decisions being made by software to help us improve the way we live our lives. Whilst I may be sounding a bit lazy I look forward to purchasing my first driverless vehicle as I find driving pretty mind-numbing, in fact, I would actively pursue the purchase of technology that would mow my lawn, paint my fences, weed the garden, Hoover the floors and iron my clothes.

**Do you think AI 'beings' would deserve rights?**

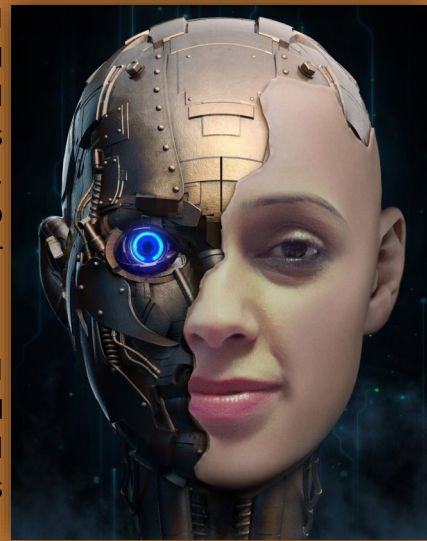
**Krishan Patel** - I believe that AI is created to be subservient to humanity and it is therefore immediately lower in status. We may try to create AI that mimic our behaviours and appearance as we are more comfortable with relating to our own species but they would be treated as lesser 'humans'.



## THE IT CROWD ON ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

**Mrs Lally** - It is interesting to see that you have used the term AI “being” rather than “bot”. I am pretty much clear about the role AI should have in our lives - to extend human abilities and capabilities and to help us achieve our goals. Based on that, AI bots shouldn't have civil rights of voting, owning property etc. Nevertheless, it might be useful to have some secondary rights to discourage their mistreatment and encourage us to think about our responsibilities towards these smart, highly useful AI bots.

**Mr Tamber** - A discussion I recently had on a Facebook group boiled down to a single phrase “consciousness breeds rights”. If AI “beings” have a conscious knowledge of what it is going on around them, then they have to be given rights. However, what rights would give them, would we have any limitations on them?



**Harveer Matharu** - At this current point in time AI has not evolved enough to be given rights. This issue will only arise when AI becomes self-learning, self-aware and are able to realise that they want certain things to change. AI may become advanced enough to create new AI on their own, which they may program to feel pain as their instinct is for their own “species” to survive. I do not believe that AI deserve the same rights as humans, we are the ones who will create them, so in theory we have the right to control them.

**Mr Billings** - Did you say rights for AI? Rights for machine code, you're kidding me right? There is no need for a computer to have rights as smart and lifelike as they may seem. We have human beings in the world that currently don't have basic rights, so let's move on from that question.

**Does it concern you that respected figures such as Elon Musk and Stephen Hawking are expressing concerns about AI?**

**Mr Tamber** - I was intrigued at the hype raised by Facebook shutting down a couple of chatbots during the summer of 2017. The idea began with the chatbots being taught how to negotiate with one another, a human trait that involves interpreting: tones of voice, the type of strategy being employed, the body language displayed; all of which I thought two chatbots would find difficult. When left unsupervised, they began to create their own more “efficient” way of communicating in an effort to negotiate more effectively. The way the chatbots interacted was outside of the parameters which the Facebook researchers thought had been set. It was noted that they were trying to imitate human speech.

## THE IT CROWD ON ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

**Mrs Lally** - I wouldn't say, I am concerned but I will agree that use of AI systems raise huge ethical, legal, moral, technical and social and safety concerns which need to be addressed carefully. At the moment, we are still in the development stage, but the various technological, ethical and security issues surrounding these new technologies will be solved soon hopefully and solutions will be accelerated by the development of other related technologies. We need to remember, AI will create an opportunity to change the mind-sets and allow us to embrace the new possibilities associated with artificial intelligence.



**Krishan Patel** - The ethical considerations of AI generally revolve around their interactions with humans and their ability to replace humans. Do humans have the final say with the AI as a sort of advisor or do we put the final decision in the hands of the AI, this is especially important in high pressure situations or when the question does not have a clear, obvious answer, such as making a decision between doing a risky surgery or not to. Another more prevalent ethical consideration of AI making decisions in self-driving cars, if the car is going to crash where does the AI instruct the car to swerve to minimise the potential consequences and how does it decide this, and then who is held responsible for that decision.

**What are your opinions on privacy in the future, will individuals be able to 'opt out' of technology?**

**Mohammed Morshed** - In all honesty, I think privacy stopped being a thing a long time ago with the advent of companies such as Google or Facebook that store terabytes of your personal data that advertisers or other nefarious forces can acquire for next to nothing. The "opt out" options that are present today are more from privacy laws forced on companies rather than goodwill and these options are all together pointless in a day where all of your data is literally out there so it'll probably be even more pointless in the future where literally every bit of tech everywhere can see and hear what you do.

**Mrs Lally** - Although some people might feel it is better to opt out of using technology in order to protect their privacy I think it is increasingly hard to do so. AI and technology has the power to change our lives for the better so rather than cutting off from it, we should be aware of how to use it safely. By stopping using the technology we will disadvantage and deprive ourselves of huge benefits of these technological advancements which is the sole reason for their exponential growth.



## THE IT CROWD ON ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

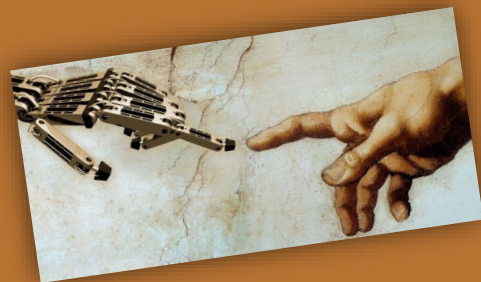
**Mr Tamber** - Privacy, even now, let alone in the future, is a big concern, but are people really worried about it when they share all manner of private data when signing up to apps or on social media platforms. How many people post pictures of themselves that provide clues about where they work, where they live, how many post about which schools they have attended, where they have been on holiday, how many children they have, which schools their children go to? We live in an age where we generate a vast amount of data: the online transactions, our GPS locations, our heart rate when we exercise, the numbers of steps we take etc. Our data is collected by organisations and analysed to identify trends, patterns and associations. How many of you have noticed that we appear to be targeted with adverts showcasing products that we have recently searched for, or given recommendations on Netflix based on programmes and films that we have watched? This process is described as Big Data and will be one of the key features in what is believed to be the “fourth” industrial revolution that we are currently in.

**Do you think that widespread implementation of AI would put a strain on the economy due to job losses?**

**Mr Tamber** - I believe it will lead to a change in the types of jobs available. AI is already being used in many facets of industry. Many companies are already using Big Data and robots to run 24 hour 7 days a week operations where the quality of the work remains at a consistently high level with very few errors. There used to be a belief that humans could safeguard their career against the threat of AI if they focussed on something that involved dexterity, creativity or collaboration, but this is no longer the case. Current research suggests that rather than replacing the human, the robot would complement the way tasks were carried out, taking over some of the more repetitive tasks saving the human from carrying them out in an un-ergonomic way thus reducing the health risks.

**Mrs Lally** - AI is more likely to change how employees work in creative industry than to replace them. In some cases automation may actually increase the number of jobs for humans. Analysis suggests that almost every new wave of technology in the past has raised unemployment, only to end up creating more jobs than were destroyed. Human testing and human judgment are needed upfront in terms of preparing AI platforms for the real world and determining when they are ready to go live. Once live, AI platforms will need continued training over time to increase their capabilities which will require human intervention and intelligence. At the moment, AI at its very best, will be a very effective and generally reliable workplace assistant, but we do need to carefully think and plan to prepare our workforce to be ready and willing to take up high skilled jobs.

**Questions by Rafay Mahmood and Ajay Abraham**



# BEES IN DECLINE

To many people, bees are just fat furry wasps, little yellow and black insects that have the potential to STING! When they hear that familiar buzzing sound, there is often a frantic dash to get as far away as possible. But, how much do we take these little critters for granted?

When was the last time you saw a bee buzzing by? Chances are that you may have seen some in the recent good weather, but in the near future you may



not be seeing bees at all. Bees are at risk of extinction because of excessive use of pesticides in crops and blood-sucking parasites that only reproduce in bee colonies. They are slowly dying out, and while some people, who find bees annoying, might be glad to see them go – a world without bees could actually spell the end of humanity!

If bees were to become extinct, the end of honey production would be the least of our worries. Bees keep plants and crops alive by pollinating them. The fact is one third of the global food supply is from plants that are pollinated by bees. Bees make their honey using nectar from flowers, when bees land on a flower their furry legs slip into a little sac that holds pollen. When the bee flies away it carries this pollen with it to the next plant it feeds from. These little insects are critical pollinators: they pollinate 70 of the around 100 crop species that feed 90% of the world. Honey bees are responsible for \$30 billion a year in crops, and that's only the start. We may lose all the plants that bees pollinate, all of the animals that eat those plants and so on up the food chain. So many people may starve.

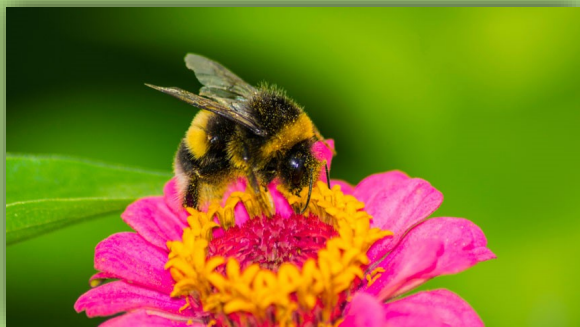
 **BEE HAPPY**

# ENCOURAGING BEES

So there you have it, the demise of bees and their pollinating powers could spell the end of humanity. As there will be world wide famine and you will probably die as a result of it...that is much worse than a little sting.

## How to encourage bees and other pollinators

- Providing nectar and pollen rich flowers throughout the year and encouraging them to nest in your garden.
- Avoid using pesticides wherever possible.
- Provide nest sites for bees.
- Provide water for pollinators.
- Become a beekeeper!



For more information visit:

[www.bbka.org.uk](http://www.bbka.org.uk)

Q: What sort of music do planets sing?

A: Neptunes!

Q: What's a light-year?

A: The same as a regular year, but with less calories.





## MANDARIN DEPARTMENT

# ASTON MANDARIN DEPARTMENT

The Mandarin department was introduced to King Edward VI Aston School in September 2017. Mrs Yang and I feel very privileged to be the first teachers to set up the department. We received a very warm welcome from all the staff and students.

We have been working with all year groups since we started. Students' enthusiasm and passion about learning Mandarin really inspires us. Our mandarin students can now introduce themselves, greet people, talk about what food they like/dislike and order food in a restaurant in Mandarin. They can also recognise about 40 Chinese characters! We are very proud of what they have achieved and looking forward to working with them in the future.



### Mrs Liu

This term the Mandarin department has been focussing on Chinese New Year. Chinese New Year is an essential part of Chinese culture just as Eid, Diwali and Christmas are for others. The Chinese New Year starts with the new moon on the first day of the New Year and ends on the full moon 15 days later. The 15th day of the New Year is called the Lantern Festival, which is celebrated at night with lantern displays and children carrying lanterns in a parade.

In 2018, Chinese New Year fell on 16<sup>th</sup> February and we marked the occasion with an artistic demonstration from Mrs Yang's mother who had been visiting from China. We were taught about different Chinese painting styles and expressions. During Chinese enrichment lessons we have also been learning about Chinese New year traditions like the importance of the colour red (which is associated with good fortune and celebration) and Chinese food. We also learnt how to make Chinese lanterns and other paper artefacts. Eating fortune cookies was definitely an enjoyable part of the session.



# CHINESE NEW YEAR

Mrs Liu and I presented assemblies to both upper and lower school, informing students about the Chinese New Year and its importance. Students who attended said that they learnt things that they had not known previously about Chinese Culture. During Lunch time the Mandarin department also ran sessions where students could learn more about Chinese New Year, make lanterns and also try a variety of Chinese food such as Rice Cakes.

**Syed Gillani – Year 12**

## Tips for beginners to learn Mandarin

- **First of all, learning Mandarin is easier than you think.**

You do not have to worry about verbs! There are no verbs, no plurals, no tenses, no subject-verb agreements, and no conjugations. So believe in yourself, do not be afraid to try a few lessons. There are plenty of good YouTube videos to get you started.



- **Practice, Practice, Practice!**

Remember practice makes perfect. Once you have learned a few phrases try it out with your Chinese friends, or go to Chinatown and eat at the local restaurants there. Speak to the staff in Chinese, they will be very impressed and willing to practise with you.

- **Watch Chinese movies and shows or learning Chinese songs.**

This is one of the best ways to continually hear Chinese being spoken. There are plenty of good Chinese movies around. You might learn some martial arts as well.

## MUSIC PRODUCTION BEHIND THE SCENES

People often wonder what a music producer does. The answer is not always straight forward, as different genres of music require varying levels and styles of production. That said, a producer's job in its most simple terms is to turn the basic creative idea of a song into a finished product; a listenable and potentially sellable track. The way music production has changed over the years is driven by advances in recording techniques. The very earliest recordings would have been done in one take and recorded through a basic microphone straight to wax disc. The sound quality was poor and certain instruments were hard to hear as there was no way to control the separate sounds. Later tape recordings enabled producers to record instruments individually and mix them together after they had enhanced the way they sounded. Musicians could have several 'takes' until they got the perfect performance. There was much more control over the music. In the modern digital era, high quality recording software is available on a laptop so anyone can try their hand at being a producer.



The style of music can have a huge influence on the role of the producer. A producer on a Classical track would have different approaches to the way a producer on a Trap track would work. Some producers concentrate on capturing a live sound while others create and manipulate electronically generated sounds with the help of computer software. Any one song could be produced by several different producers and the end tracks would all sound very different.

In early commercial recordings the producer's job would be to capture the raw song and vocals to tape, while recording various instruments and merging sounds together. They would encourage the performers to perform to their best ability and often made suggestions regarding



# MUSIC PRODUCTION

musical direction. Another element of their work is to lyrically and artistically piece together the song, recommending keys, pitches, and tempos whilst also managing the record's budget, approving mixes and tapes through to coaching singers and instrumentalists to get the best possible performance from them.

As time moved on, producers were given the opportunity to add their own tones and sounds to instruments and were able to alter the track more. Expensive kit and software tends to have more buttons and gadgets, which will offer more variety of sound and musical range. It is still common to see modern music producers working closely to a traditional method in the studio and rather adding and extending to the work of people before them, instead of making up new ways to make music. For example let's take the global phenomenon Drake. One of the music producers he works with is called Noah James Shebib. They have both put as much work into the track as each so this means that Drake and Shebib are both wealthy men but Drake is famous because it is his voice. It is worth noting that many artists rely on the producer to make a good song sound great!

I asked some people around the school for their opinion on tracks that they like the production on, so why not have a listen and see what you think.

## **Pop, Electric pop, Modern pop**

Tell Me You Love Me [Demi Lovato] - Cameron Dews

Dua Lipa [Dua Lipa] - Saied Dakak

## **R&B, Soul**

Lemonade [Beyoncé] - Adaam Fazal

Trilogy [The Weeknd] - Sarbaz Bangash

## **Hip Hop/Rap**

Gang Signs and Prayer [Stormzy] - Muhsin Mehmood

Views [Drake] - Shumon Ahmed

## **Modern Folk**

Helplessness Blues [Fleet Foxes] - Miss Laventine



# CONSOLE GAMING VS PC GAMING

This infamous debate has been around for a long time!

The PC gamer's argument: With a powerful PC, the graphics can be a lot better as the console's frames per seconds is limited however with an amazing PC you can double, or in some games, triple the frame per seconds.

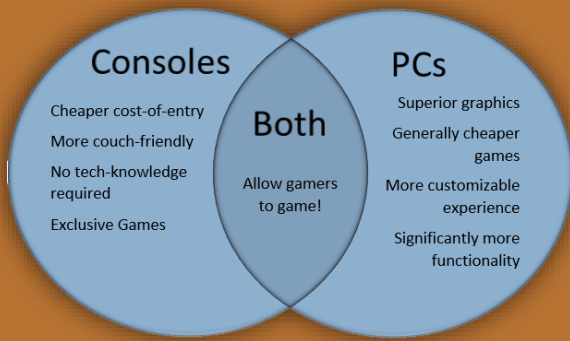
The Console gamer's argument: To find a PC that can double or triple the fps (frames per second) you must spend around four times the price of a console which generally cost around £250 for a new one. New gaming PC's or gaming laptops start at around £849.99 for decent quality machines.

The PC gamer's argument: Building a PC makes the PC far more personal and makes it feel like truly your PC because of the blood, sweat and tears you put into finding the right products. The PC's value is instantly increased for you because it was your journey and you feel like you have accomplished something after building it. Also, once it is built, you can upgrade the parts for newer parts with ease and getting the latest technology becomes instantly easier.

The console gamer's argument: Many people don't have the time to build a PC and just want to enjoy their games at a cheaper price on something that is readymade. Console gamers also argue that they buy skins for their controllers and consoles giving it a personal feel. Console gamers then also argue that they enjoy playing games sitting on their couches rather than being at a desk.



# GAMING



The PC gamer's argument: You can purchase laptops that are easily as powerful as computers and be able to play with a controller or even use HDMI or a steam link to connect your laptop/computer to a monitor/TV where you can enjoy playing from a couch, sofa or in bed. The PC gamers can have tailor made chairs for PC gamer which were made to be comfortable. You also don't have to pay to play online.

The console gamer's argument: The console gamer understands that you must pay £40 a year to play online but despite this it is still cheaper in total having a PS4 simply because of the buying price of the gaming PC. Also, on PC you can get a load of hackers who can ruin many games.

The PC Gamer's argument: On consoles you can't add mods, and mods can make guns a lot more fun and can improve graphics. Many players enjoy the mods that you can install for the game, it means you get more value for money.

In conclusion, it is all about personal preference. It depends on how we feel on PC and on the console and which one feels better for you as an individual. Personally, PC Gaming is more enjoyable due to the increased high-quality graphics which enhance its performance. However, the argument for the console is that it is overall cheaper and easier for casual gaming but it is all down to preference.

Joshua Berrow, Asif Rahman & Robert Sloan





# DEBATING SOCIETY

Upper School Debating Society was established due to popular demand and because we wanted to increase the school's representation in the field of debating. The fundamental idea behind the debating society is to provide a platform for students to share their opinions and critique ideas, in order to form stronger well balanced arguments.

We hope to prepare several teams who will represent our school in debating competitions such as the Solihull Sixth Form Debating Competition. Furthermore, we hope to take part in national competitions such as the Oxford Union Debating Competition. We will be practicing many debating styles, though the main debating style will be the British Parliamentary format. This is also the style of the English Speaking Union, an organisation that we hope to work alongside to host debates and participate in regional debates.

Our first debate took place on 28th February 2018. The motion of the house was 'This house would ban the military from advertising'. We formed teams of four and debated both sides of the argument. The purpose of the debate was to introduce students who haven't debated before to the formality and style of the British Parliamentary debating style. There was no clear winner as both sides debated well and the debate was just an introductory debate. In the coming weeks we will be working on our debating skills one week and will be holding a debate every other week. As the weeks go on the topics will become more challenging in order to further develop our debating skills. By the end of the year we hope to have one of the strongest debating teams in Birmingham, who will proudly represent our school in competitions both local and national.

**It is better to debate a question without settling it than to settle a question without debating it...**  
**Joseph Joubert**

# TEACHERS' HOBBIES

Have you ever wondered if teachers ever leave the school premises and if they do, how do they spend their free time? I've interviewed some of those who were willing to give us a glimpse at what they get up to after the bell goes at 3.35. You may already know some of these facts, but some information here may be new to you. I can guarantee that you will no longer view teachers as simply homework giving machines but instead, interesting people!



**Ms Norris**

**Hobby: Knitting**

Ms Norris has recently take up knitting and rather enjoys it. As you would expect, being a history teacher, she enjoys going to museums, and visiting historical places, and just exploring. She also enjoys walking.

**Miss Laventine**

**Hobby: Weaving**

Yes, the subject leader for German has a soft spot for weaving. In fact, she has a shop dedicated to it called **White Wave Weaving**. White Wave comes from her name, which is a Cornish form of Guinevere (meaning white wave). She also sells vintage style clothing from the 60s and 70s, and her shop for that is called **Liebchen Vintage**. The word 'Liebchen' means darling in German, and she got it from a German novel she read when she was in the 6<sup>th</sup> form .



## TEACHERS' HOBBIES

### Dr Clitherow

#### Hobby: Running

This Geography teacher likes to get out and explore the lay of the land. The furthest distance she has ever run in one go is 44 miles, which she ran twice in the summer over a mountain in the Lake District. She also runs with the Bourneville Harriers. The photo is of her during the Grand Tour of Skiddaw ultra-marathon. The race was 44 miles and took her 11 hours 33 minutes. She finished fourth, despite getting lost and falling in a bog! She's now concentrating on shorter distances and trying to get her 5km time to below 22 minutes.



### Mr Wright-Smith

#### Hobby: Cooking and a good game of Clash of Clans

Although he is a PE teacher, it doesn't mean he cannot enjoy video games! He also enjoys a bit of cooking, but doesn't really have a specific type of food that he likes to cook. He also likes learning about the history of sport.



### Mrs Demetriou

#### Hobby: Cinema and Spotify

Mrs Demetriou's favourite genre for movie is comedy, and her favourite director is French director, Jean-Pierre Jeunet Amélie. She also enjoys listening to R 'n' B, Pop and even classical music with her favourite musician being Ed Sheeran currently and her favourite band being Red Hot Chilli Peppers. Mrs Demetriou enjoys listening to music alone as well as with family and friends; moreover, she enjoys attending concerts and is planning on going to the Ed Sheeran and Script concert in the summer.





## Miss Pierce

### Hobby: Photography

While her main hobby is photography; Miss Pierce also enjoys going to the gym, watching live sport and attending live music events. Photography costs her the most though, as she is always looking for new lenses or a new accessory for her camera. She enjoys trying out different approaches to taking photographs in the photography enrichment sessions and takes her camera with her EVERYWHERE.



## Mr Russell

### Hobbies: Circus skills and playing Go

As many of you may already know, Mr Russell is very fond of Go and Circus skills, so much that he has his own enrichment session every other Thursday.

Mr Russel specialises in the diablo and unicycle (which he often uses to ride to school). He runs the school Go Club and attends an external Go Club every Sunday. He also plays online on occasions.

Looking for something to fill your spare time?

[www.discoverahobby.com](http://www.discoverahobby.com)



# 2018 BLOCKBUSTERS

This year, there are so many sequels, spin offs, remakes and new films scheduled to be in cinemas. Here is an overview of four of the biggest titles that are scheduled to hit the big screen in 2018.

## Black Panther

Certificate: 12

Release Date: 12.2. 18

Cast: Chadwick Boseman, Michael B. Jordan, Lupita Nyong'o.

This film is already very popular. It is a Marvel superhero film set in the fictional African country of Wakanda. Every monarch of this country is given the powers of the said "Black Panther".



## Solo: A Star Wars Story

Certificate: PG

Release Date: 25.5.18

Cast: Alden Ehrenreich, Emilia Clarke, Donald Glover

This film is a spin-off/prequel of the "Star Wars" franchise based on one key character...Han Solo. The story is set between episodes III and IV, Around the same time as "Rogue One: A Star Wars Story" was set. This film explains some of the iconic things about the character, such as meeting Chewbacca, his future co-pilot.



# 2018 BLOCKBUSTERS

## Avengers: Infinity War

Certificate: 12A

Release Date: 27.4.18

Cast: Robert Downey Jr, Tom Holland, Josh Brolin



“Avengers: Infinity war” is the third film in Marvel’s “Avengers” Franchise. The heroes of the Marvel Universe must come together to defeat the evil Thanos, who wants to collect Infinity Stones. This film includes characters from the Avengers, The Guardians of the galaxy and Spiderman.

## Fantastic Beasts: The Crimes of Grindelwald

Certificate: TBC

Release Date: 16.11.18

Cast: Eddie Redmayne, Johnny Depp, Jude Law



This sequel to Harry Potter’s spin-off “Fantastic Beasts and Where to Find Them” is set just after the end of the first film. In this story, Magizoologist Newt Scamander tries to stop dark wizard Gellert Grindelwald from taking over non-magical society, with help from his school transfiguration teacher, Albus Dumbledore.

### More films out this year:





# BLUEBERRY MUFFINS

This is a great recipe for adapting and making into your own speciality. The following measurements can be used to make eight large muffins or up to twelve smaller ones.

## Basic recipe:

### *Dry ingredients:*

250g Self raising flour

100g sugar

1 teaspoon baking powder

100g blueberries or chocolate chips

### *Wet ingredients:*

200ml milk

100ml oil

1 egg

## Method:

- Pre heat oven, gas mark 5, 190C
- Place required number of paper cases into a cake tin
- Put dry ingredients into a bowl
- Measure wet ingredients into a jug and mix the egg in with a fork
- Pour all of the wet ingredients (Jug) into the dry (bowl)
- Mix together with a metal spoon to form a batter
- Carefully fill each paper case 2/3 full with the mixture, taking care not to spill onto the tin
- Bake for 15 to 20 minutes until risen and firm to the touch.



My favourite idea is making this recipe into Christmas Muffins by adding a teaspoon of cinnamon to the flour and instead of using blueberries stir in two tablespoons of mincemeat (or sultanas) and 50g of chopped cherries. Once cooked and cooled drizzle with icing and chopped cherries or nuts.



## RECIPE DEVELOPMENTS

Here are two recipe developments, chosen from many fantastic ideas that our Year 9 pupils generated:

Patrick reduced the sugar content to 50g, used skimmed milk and fresh blueberries. But also added rolled oats (porridge oats) in the batter and sprinkled on top of the muffins before cooking to give a rustic appearance. Each muffin was the most perfect size and shape.



To make the muffins healthier Roop used 100g of wholemeal flour and 150g self raising flour, Roop reduced the sugar content to 50g but added in 30g of golden syrup to add sweetness. He also used raisins and oats to give an additional flavour to his muffins. Roop's muffins were all perfect and looked very professional.



# SYRIA RELIEF

This year, I delivered a speech in a whole school assembly to raise awareness about my homeland Syria and to express in the clearest way, the truth about what is going on there today. Afterwards, many students and members of staff spoke to me personally and reflected on how important our fundraising day on Syria was.

As a race, we tend to accept that war is just a natural part of life. We have become so focused on

becoming momentary masters of this temporary world that we have forgotten the meaning of humanity. Sadly, people suffering in faraway lands have become nothing more than statistics to many politicians. We can watch these people's lives explode on TV, feel sorry for them and then simply change the channel. I am fortunate to have been raised in a country where everyone possesses the right to life, the right to freedom of speech and expression, the right to health care and education but back in Syria, this isn't the case.

The more the people of Syria yearn for freedom, the more they are silenced. This silence is covered with a cacophony of bangs, crashes, screams and cries as children grow up accustomed to the sound of bombs. We are currently in the seventh year of the conflict in Syria and yet the humanitarian situation is deteriorating at a heart-breaking rate. Over 470 thousand people have been killed and 6 million imprisoned throughout Syria - all for what? Syrians have witnessed their homes collapse before their eyes and are being denied urgent healthcare because of international laws. Over these years I have seen the incredible hope of the Syrian people transform into an unimaginable anger and later to a feeling of resignation and surrender. We live in a world where war is a computer game for our children - or five minutes of entertainment for ourselves in the UK when we watch the news.





# SYRIA RELIEF

“Where are you from?”

This used to be my favourite question; because I used to hold my head high with the upmost pride and say “I’m from Syria”, I used to wait for that look of envy and jealousy that was bound to come because I’m from such a beautiful country, but all I ever got was a look of pure confusion - the blank look in their eyes that a person has when they don’t know what to say.

Imagine, please just imagine - you have a close relative. He went out to school one day, completed a test, and when going out to recess he was eradicated by a bomb and so was his school, this story may seem like imagination, but the boy’s name was Omar, he was 14 years old, and he was MY cousin, and we will never see him again...

What was our everything, has been burned to ashes, and when I think the situation can’t get any more saddening, I think of what is still happening in Syria, the situation is truly heart-breaking, for all the innocent angels dying on a

daily basis. I long to go back to my Syria, to the moment where I could smell the scent of sweet jasmine on my grandmother’s balcony and hear children laughing in the street below.

The children of Syria are being denied the most basic of human rights, the right to live, and the withholding of food is being used as a daily weapon of war. This is a hunger war against the innocent children of Syria- and it must stop now. Thirteen point five million people are in dire need of your support. They need our help more than ever.

I am going to pledge to Syria Relief, to stop innocent children from suffering.

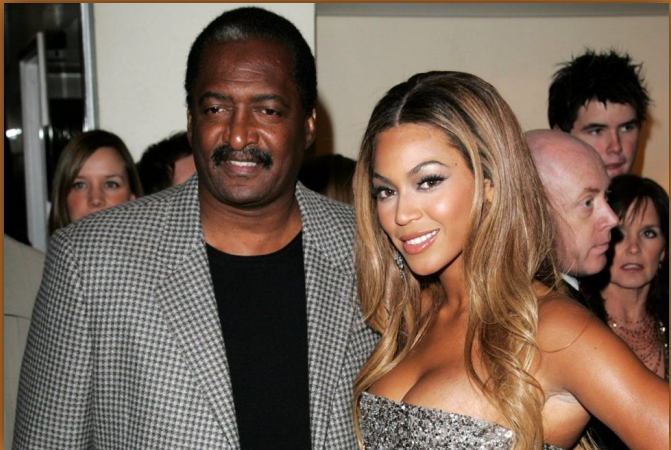
“What are you going to do?”

[www.syriarelief.org.uk](http://www.syriarelief.org.uk)



# DESTINY'S CHILD

Originally formed in 1990 in Houston, Texas under the title 'Girl's Tyme', the first incarnation of Destiny's Child consisted of six members: Beyoncé Knowles, LaTavia Roberson, Kelly Rowland, Támar Davis, Nikki Taylor and Nina Taylor. Believing they had bright futures ahead of them, they entered the most watched talent show on TV at the time - Star Search. Unfortunately, instead of singing they decided to rap and were knocked out of the



competition. After this event, Beyoncé's father, Mathew, decided to manage the group and started by auditioning new members in 1993. It was now: Beyoncé, LaTavia, Kelly and its newest member, LeToya Luckett. The group practised everywhere - at Beyoncé's mother's salon, in their backyards, at church, local gigs and a summer boot camp set up by Mathew to help improve their abilities. The hard work began to pay off and they began opening for acclaimed 90s R&B artists like Dru Hill.

During the early years in their career the group went through further name changes such as Something Fresh, Cliché and The Dolls. Finally, they settled on the name Destiny. Things looked good for Destiny when they signed with Elektra Records in 1994, but sadly they were dropped several months later before they could release an album. Undeterred, the group soldiered on and Mathew Knowles helped negotiate a new record deal with Columbia Records. The name was changed one last time to Destiny's Child.

Destiny's Child released their first self-titled studio album on February 17, 1998 and it peaked at #67 on the Billboard 200 and #45 on the UK Albums Chart. The album earned a gold certification in the UK and produced the hit single - No No No, which reached #5 in the UK. The song, With Me also charted highly, #19 in the UK.

## DESTINY'S CHILD

In the same year, they were asked to perform the song *Get on the Bus* (featuring Timbaland) for the film *Why Do Fools Fall in Love*. This charted at #15 in the UK. Destiny's Child were certainly rising in the UK, with a surprisingly good debut. Could they come back stronger?

On July 27 1999, their second studio album was released - *The Writing's On the Wall*, and was a breakthrough album for them, charting at #10 in the UK, #5 in the USA and #2 in Australia. *Bills, Bills, Bills* (the lead single) shot up to #1 in the



USA and #6 in the UK; *Bug A Boo* (the second single) rose to #9 in the UK; the classic third single of the album, *Say My Name*, reached the Top 10 in ten countries which boosted sales and became an anthem of 1999/2000. The last single was also a firm favourite - *Jumpin' Jumpin'* and was one of the most popular songs of 2000.

While their first headlining tour was an arena sell-out, there was controversy within the group. LaTavia and LeToya wanted to change their manager, Mathew, because they felt he favoured Beyonce and Kelly by giving them bigger wages. They never intended to leave the group, but while they were looking for a new manager, the upcoming '*Say My Name*' video was filmed and released with two new members - Michelle Williams and Farrah Franklin. LaTavia and LeToya went on to sue Mathew for inviting Michelle and Farrah to the group without their knowledge. Five months after the arrival of the two new members, Farrah decided to leave the group, due to stress. This now left the group as a trio and it was with this line up that Destiny's Child were to have the most success.

In 2000, they were asked to perform the soundtrack of '*Charlie's Angels*' - *Independent Women*. It was to be their biggest single reaching #1 in five countries. It stayed at the top spot in the USA for a whopping eleven weeks.

### **Destiny's Child - Top 6 songs in their career:**

- 6 - Bills, Bills, Bills**
- 5 - Bootylicious**
- 4 - Lose My Breath**
- 3 - Survivor**
- 2 - Say My Name**
- 1 - Independent Women (Pt.1)**



## DESTINY'S CHILD

Their third studio album, *Survivor*, was released on May 1, 2001 and sold six million copies in just three months. In 2002, the group embarked on a World Tour, visiting all the major cities in Europe, America and Asia - a concert album titled 'Destiny's Child World Tour' was released (in 2003), showing the Netherlands leg of their tour.

Tour done, the girls decided to go on hiatus for a while, to embark on solo projects to ultimately garner more fame for Destiny's Child (according to Mathew Knowles). Michelle released two gospel albums, of which topped US Gospel Chart and then went on to star in a Broadway musical - *Aida*. Kelly was featured on Nelly's 'Dilemma', which reached #1 in the UK; she later released her debut album, which topped the UK charts. Afterwards, she pursued various acting roles in movies/sitcoms. Beyonce starred in two films; featured on the hit single '03 Bonnie and Clyde' alongside Jay Z; released her chart-topping album, *Dangerously In Love*, which spawned two #1 singles (*Crazy In Love* and *Baby Boy*); went on two headlining tours; and performed the national anthem at the Super Bowl XXXVIII.



After the solo successes, the three singers reunited to record their last official studio album, *Destiny Fulfilled*. When it was released on November 15 in 2004, it reached the Top 10 in more than ten countries and sold almost half a million copies in its first week worldwide. Another headlining world tour followed, during which they announced their official break-up was fast approaching. In 2005, a greatest hits album was released to commemorate their discography and in April 2006, they formally disbanded.

These R&B icons are referred to as one of the best girl-groups of all time, leaving a massive legacy behind them. Destiny's Child have shaped and influenced many of the stars today.

**Anonymous and somewhat obsessed student**

# STUDENT COUNCIL

Aston student council has an incredibly important function in the school. One that enables student' ideas and opinions to be heard and acted upon.

All representatives in lower and senior school are voted in by their peers in their form groups in a fair way. Similarly, the 'Chair' and 'Deputy Chair' are nominated through a democratic process. This year candidates for the chair position had to submit a manifesto, outlining their credentials and plans. They also had various opportunities to campaign before a vote was held. The students elected Yahya Saif and Syed Gillani as their lead representatives. The senior leadership team were appointed by the chairs from all senior council members. These roles included, a secretary, treasurer (to handle the budget) and a public relations team. Last academic year saw the introduction of leadership roles for the sixth form students.

We feel transparency has been key to running an effective student council body that represents our students. We publish minutes after every meeting which are publically available in order to show staff, students and parents what we are doing. Furthermore, the senior team work extremely hard to make sure everything runs efficiently and effectively.

This year's standout achievement would have to be Scribbles, Aston's very first stationery shop. The idea was spearheaded by Firaas Akbar following approval by the Aston students. Scribbles is currently opened every Monday and Thursday lunchtime and raised over £50 of sales on the opening day.



Another noteworthy achievement would be the first ever student council conference, which brought together all the schools in the King Edward Foundation. In addition, we have held many successful fundraising days, raising thousands for charity.

At the start of each academic year, students are given the opportunity to select the charities they wish to support for the year. Charities are usually suggested by students and then voted upon via Moodle. So far, Aston have raised money for: Toilet Twinning, MacMillan Cancer Support, and most recently Syria Relief. The generosity of the school body has raised thousands of pounds.

We have big ambitions for the council moving forward. We hope to run more exciting fundraising events for students where we can raise more money for charity. We intend to have regular conferences with other schools discussing what we have achieved and how we can improve, in order to better serve the student community that we represent.



**Tinashe Zengeni and Muhammad Da'wud**

*Public Relations of the Student Council*

Q: Why did Mickey Mouse go to outer space?

A: He was looking for Pluto.



Q: Does R2D2 have any brothers?

A: No. Only transisters.



Q: Why was the robot tired when it got home?

A: It had a "hard drive"





# ANGRY MAN WITH A BASS

## When did you start playing the bass?

When I was at the tail-end of Year 9 my best friend became a drummer in a covers band. At the time my only musical prowess was singing along to Guns N Roses in my bedroom with a hairbrush but as I was a friend I was asked to join on bass guitar. It didn't seem to matter that I didn't know what a bass was. I tried out the bass in school, and would practice at home on the first few strings of my sister's six-string acoustic guitar. I needed bits of blutack along the fretboard to show me where to put my fingers.

## What attracted you to the instrument?

Once I realised what the bass guitar actually was, I realised it was the thing I often loved about some of my favourite songs. I wanted to graduate from following blutack and get good, so I begged my mom for a bass guitar of my own so I could practice at home on something with the proper heft and sound of a bass. I love the bass's raw ugliness, and enjoy playing shows like the one I did at school where I have only the bass for accompaniment. Not many singer/songwriters do bass only shows, it's almost always a guitar or a keyboard. One day I just said: well, this is how I write the songs and they sound fine as demos, why not perform them this way too? So my attraction to the bass at first was one of circumstance, but it developed quickly into a deep and true love that has lasted for decades now.

## Why so angry?

Because there is too much stupidity in the world. If you're not angry, you're not paying attention, as the saying goes. My musical awakening came through punk and hip hop and to me, music was always a means of expressing yourself. I was angry when I started to play, and I'm still angry now. My Ph.D was on anarchism and my MA was on war. I became a teacher because I wanted to do something to actively combat the growth of stupidity in the world because I deeply believe no one is really stupid, but we can all be so easily manipulated into



stupidity unless we have some intellectual armour with which to defend ourselves. Music was my intellectual armour at first, and it led me to philosophy and critical thinking.

**Why did you choose MacMillan cancer support as a charity?**

We chose the charity because a majority of students voted for it. It turned out to be the perfect choice for me as in 2013 my mom died of Multiple Myeloma, an aggressive blood cancer for which there is no cure. Macmillan put her in touch with a Myeloma charity which really helped her get through some very dark days. That's why I've participated so much in this particular cause, not only doing the bass gig but offering to shave off all my hair if we raised £2517 (£3 from everyone in the school).

**WE ARE  
MACMILLAN.  
CANCER SUPPORT**

**You organise many fundraising events in the school, what can students do to get involved?**

To get involved they simply need to get involved. The most effective way of giving money to the various charities we support each year through the Student Council is simply to give as much money as possible through the envelope in your form. It really is that simple. By now it seems fairly clear that any kind of food sale will be successful, but I like the weirder events like when Mr Northcott sold pieces of tape to stick him to the wall on the courts, or Ruben in Year 11 led sponsored rap battles. Deep in Year 10 managed to do a sponsored silence last year and still participate in a lunchtime club and a classroom debate through Google translate. This year, Aryaan in Year 13 brought back a long dead television quiz show from the 1980s to raise money for Macmillan! It's that sort of thinking outside of the box that I think should be celebrated and encouraged. If people want to organise something for future fundraising days, they just need to speak to me about their idea so we can ensure it won't clash with something else already happening. Our basic philosophy is to say yes to everything unless there's a good reason not to – so just get in touch and do it! The weirder and wackier the better. Teachers too!

**Top 5 bassists?**

Rob Wright (No Means No) – His Mr Wrong EP remains the sole bass and vocals only release I have heard that comes close to the sort of nonsense I do.

Mike Dirnt (Green Day) – Throughout his work with Green Day there are just these beautiful little twangs and twiddles he adds that make their music come alive.

Fat Mike (NOFX) – A lead-singer bassist who plays fast and complicated bass lines that do more than simply keeping rhythm and offering some low-end.



## ANGRY MAN WITH A BASS

Matt Freeman (Rancid) – “Maxwell Murder” is the definitive Freeman bass solo, but all of Rancid’s work is made distinct by this insanely good bass playing.

Chris Wolstenholme (Muse) – All the previous four were formative influences and inspirations, but this is the guy who has blown my mind the most as an adult. The bass intro to “Hysteria” is one of my favourite things in the world.



### Top 5 angry men?

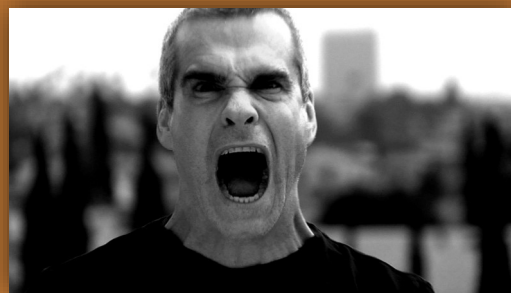
Henry Rollins - all round hero, singer for Black Flag and Rollins Band, writer, adventurer, actor, spoken word artist...and angry in all of them.

Noam Chomsky - Radical intellectual and vocal critic of American foreign policy; still fighting the good fight as he approaches his nineties.

Jello Biafra - lead singer of Dead Kennedys and Guantanamo School of Medicine, and host of What Would Jello Do? Youtube series in which he continues to document the rage at injustice he has been shining a light on since the early 80s.

Mark Thomas - Activist, comedian and storyteller. Some of the greatest stage shows and comedy sets I have ever seen, always fuelled by a deep sense of social justice and anger at those in power abusing their position.

Braun Strowman - A wrestler who has somehow got over by doing nothing but yelling his own name and being furious all year. The personification of anger, he will throw you through a table as soon as look at you





# DIARY OF A FOOTBALLER

**Chisom Afoka recalls his experience of playing for England Under 15's at St Georges Park:**

## **Day 1**

After checking into the hotel I went straight to have my medical. When this was done we got to relax in the social area while other players arrived. A workshop on reconciliation and connection followed and then it was down to training. Due to the freezing conditions and lying snow we had to train on the astro turf. Afterwards, we went to the pool for a recovery session, there was an ice bath but I didn't risk it! Back at the hotel we dropped our stuff off in our rooms and went for dinner. In the evening we had a workshop with a coach who had worked with last year's World Cup winners. We were in our rooms by 22.00.



## **Day 2**

As soon as I was up and ready I went straight to the medical room for a wellness Q&A. Breakfast followed and then two hours of education. There was some free time before lunch and then professional footballer Joleon Lescott came to speak with us. An eighty minute training session followed with the usual recovery session after that. Dinner back at the hotel was followed by a quiz (sadly my team didn't win).

## **Day 3:**

Finally, match day!!!

I woke up around 7.00 to get down for breakfast at 7:30. We had some free time after that and then went down at precisely 8:39 to the changing rooms. We got kitted up and went to warm

up. We got back into the changing rooms and put on our match day shirt then lined up to go down. This was then followed by the National Anthem and a quick photo.

## 10:00 - Kick-off

The game was a very good one and we ended up getting the result in the first game winning 2-0. Then some players who would be part of the second team waited outside whilst the second team got ready. The other players went back in.

## 12:00 - Kick-off

We were very unlucky to lose 1-0 as we conceded last minute but we got over it. We all went back down to the changing room after the game and got changed back into our England tracksuit. We then went to dinner which was followed by a workshop where we analysed the game. Statistically, we were the better team in both games. After a five minute break all the parents came in to join us for the final workshop.

All in all, it was a very good experience and I would like to have more opportunities like this.



Q:What do planets like to read?

A: Comet books!



## KARATE KID

# DESTINATION 1<sup>ST</sup> DAN BLACK BELT

Finally, after six years of intense training and grading including a written assignment in the final two months, I had almost reached my goal of achieving a black belt in karate. The intensive final year black belt course consisted of three hour sessions every weekend alternating each week with the usual classes – in order to take the



final exam, it was compulsory to complete each and every single session. Yes, it was a challenge but I surprised myself at how committed I was to complete this. In a way, the fundamentals of karate teach you to be disciplined and focused and this helps you during training and sparring matches, however I think, this has also helped me stay focused to complete the challenging final year.

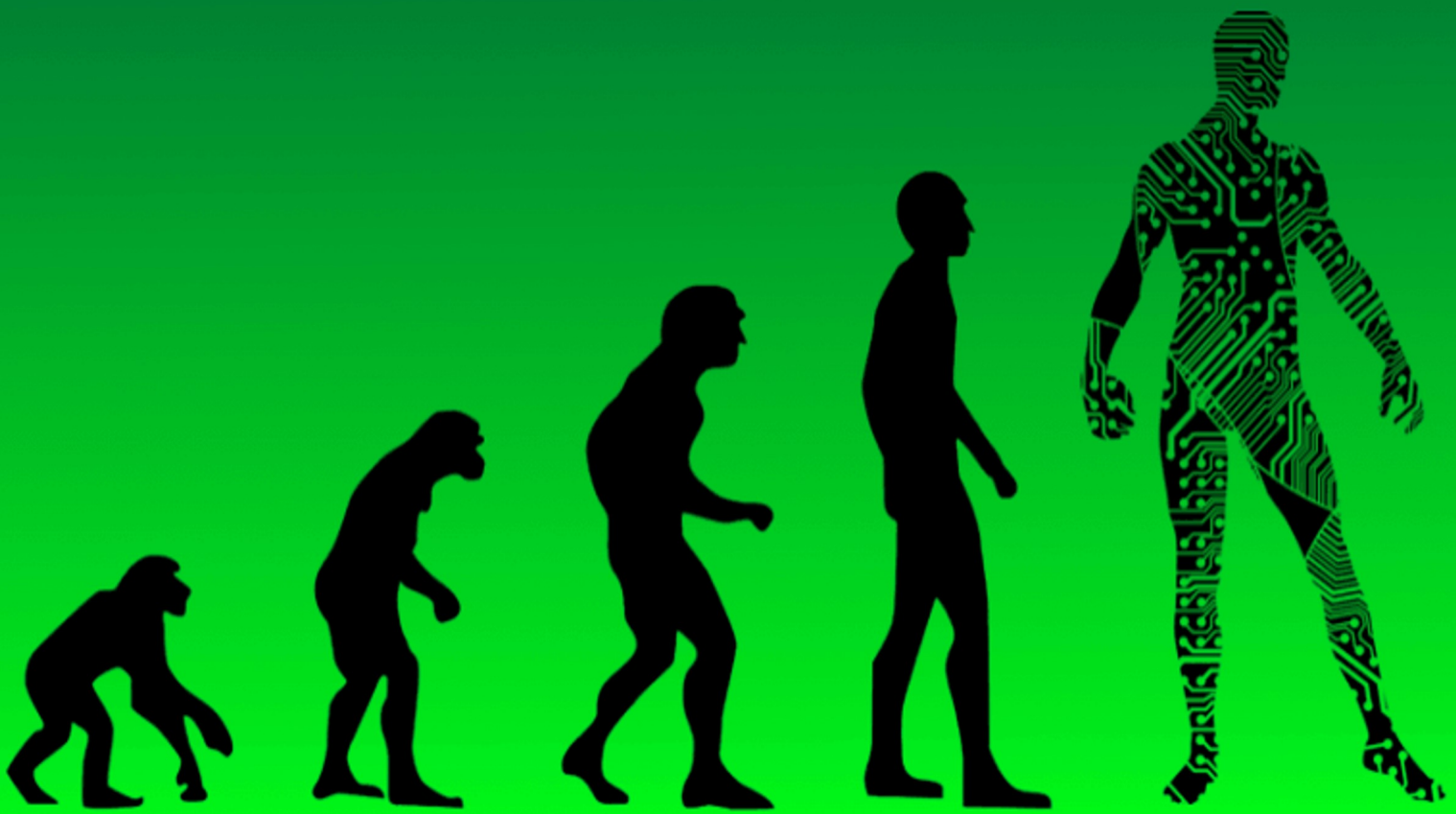


Me with one of my instructors, black belt in hand.

The final exam lasted six hours and we were closely observed by a renowned sensei (karate master) from Hong Kong. No room for any slip-ups here! But the years of practice and endurance had paid off, I had correctly completed all my katas and I was overjoyed when I heard my name announced as having successfully achieved my black belt.

What next? I'm not stopping here. I am carrying on and hope to get to higher black belt level and take part in some tournaments in Hong Kong!





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