

THE GREEN ISSUE



E-Zine 2019

Semper Juvenis

Headmaster's Welcome

Last term a significant number of Aston pupils joined the global movement of young people to protest about the lack of positive action being taken to tackle the increasingly obvious environmental challenges which now confront us individually, as a school community, locally, nationally and globally. It was reassuring to see the engagement of Aston students with an issue, which is arguably the greatest and most important currently facing the world but which in Britain has been marginalised by the Brexit debate and the woes of our main political parties.



This green edition of the E-Zine is an attempt to join this debate; to raise greater awareness of the issues with the whole school community and to energise all students to get involved starting with the school site; the place where students spend a good amount of their time for five or more years.

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, May 2019

E-Team

The grEEn-zine Team 2019

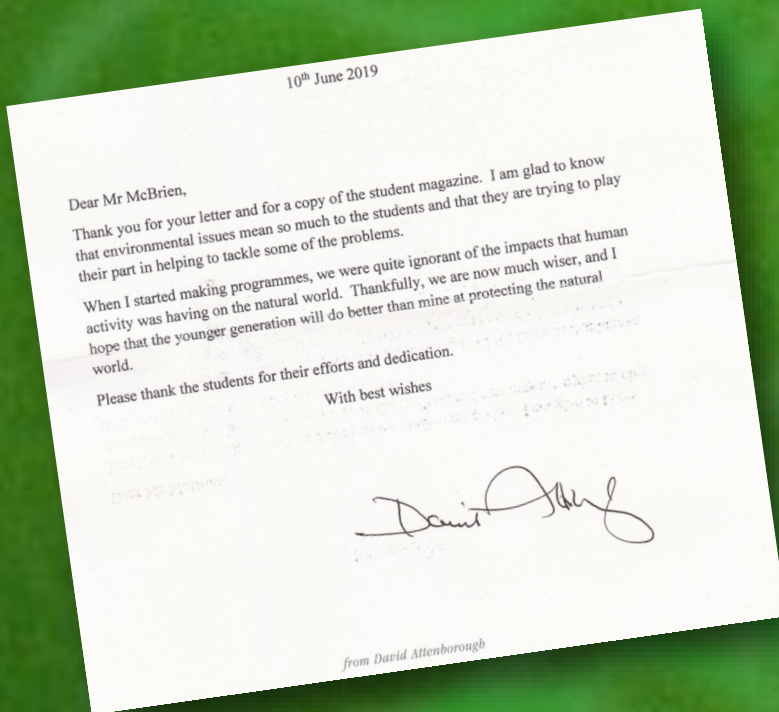
Editorial : Aaron Smith, Zuben Adjei,
Saied Dakak, Aadam Fazal, Joshua Riviere

Graphic Design : Philip Organ

Student Editor : Emile Lecointe

Special Thanks : IT & Art Departments

Staff Editor : Mr McBrien



Fantastic but Drastic Plastic

This miracle material has made modern life possible. But more than forty percent of it is used just *once*, and it's choking our waterways.

WILL YOU DO YOUR BIT?

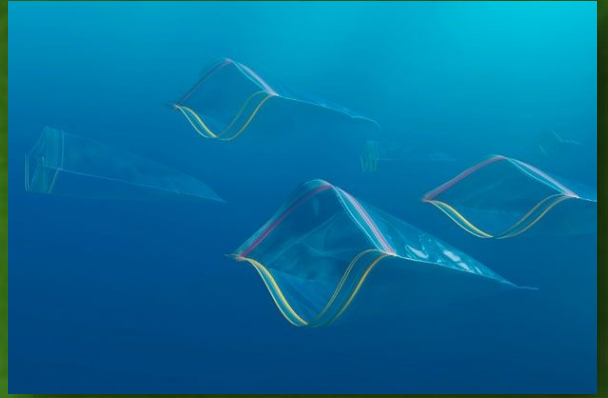
By the end of the school year, you could have implemented some small, but hugely beneficial eco-friendly changes in your life. How many of these could you achieve? How much less plastic waste would exist in the world, or even just on our school grounds, if we all made these small changes?



Your homework, due 2nd Sept 2019:

- Stop buying bottled water or drinks and buy a re-usable (ideally stainless steel) bottle. Use the water fountains! Water is the best way to stay hydrated and healthy – and it's free! If you do buy a bottle or a can of pop, what do you do with it once you've drunk it? Could you take it home and recycle it, rather than filling the school bins (which, by the way, are not recycled)?
- Encourage your family to take their own shopping bags to the supermarket to minimise your use of single-use plastic bags (which cause untold damage to marine life), and visit local markets for produce as much as possible.

- Avoid cling film – store or wrap your lunch in cotton napkins, paper bags, baking paper or wax wraps or re-purpose old jars to transport fruit/ snacks.
- Support plastic-free business and ventures (check out The Clean Kilo in Digbeth for inspiration!)
- Do you have a family member or friend who loves Costa or Starbucks? Encourage them to buy a reusable coffee cup, or suggest it as birthday or Christmas present.
- Finally, ask yourself: do you think about where your waste goes? It's all too easy to turn a blind eye - but anything you do to minimise your own plastic use is a step towards a healthier planet.



Please click [here](#) to read why this homework is so important



By 2050 there will be more plastic than fish in the ocean.

5

Mrs Laventine-Lee

Laughter is the Best Form of Medicine

A quick look at the virtues of giggling, chuckling, guffawing and splitting one's sides:

History of Comedy

The origin of comedy came a long way away from Greece. Starting from 425 BCE, a man called Aristophanes started to teach people to “discover the comedy within themselves.”

How to perform

To perform like Michael Rosen or David Walliams you need to practice lots. Do some research on the internet for advice from your favourite comedians and take part in school comedy/drama clubs to help build your confidence. If you are serious about being a professional comedian, you need to audition for lots of local events to get yourself noticed.

Developing your style

Once you are “famous” in your neighbourhood you need to focus on getting “your own style” which will set you apart from other comedians. Most comedians have certain subjects that they cover and spend many hours observing in real life. They often jot them down first before developing them into something that can be performed to an audience. Even some of problems in society can be turned around into something funny, something such as politics.



Jokes to use

Politics:

- 1) Q: What US state is the smartest? A: Alabama—it has four A's and one B
- 2) Q: On Election Day, what did Delaware? A: Her New Jersey.
- 3) Q: What is the capital of Washington? A: W.
- 4) Q: Where did the politician take his wife for something sweet?
A: On a candidate

Knock-Knock

Knock-knock

Who's there?

Howard

Howard who?

How would you like it if I made you stand in the cold!



Knock-knock

Who's there?

Luke

Luke who?

Look through the window and you'll see



TV and Movies

Why should you not give Elsa a balloon?

Because she will LET IT GO!

How many actors does it take to change a light bulb?

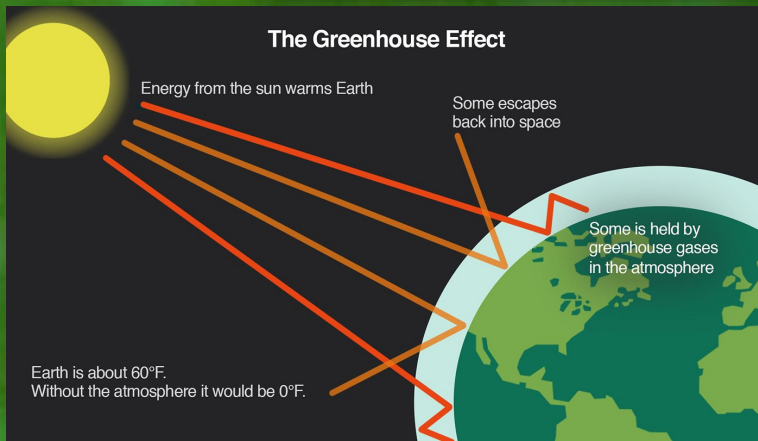
100, 1 to do it and 99 to say "I could've done that!"



The Environment

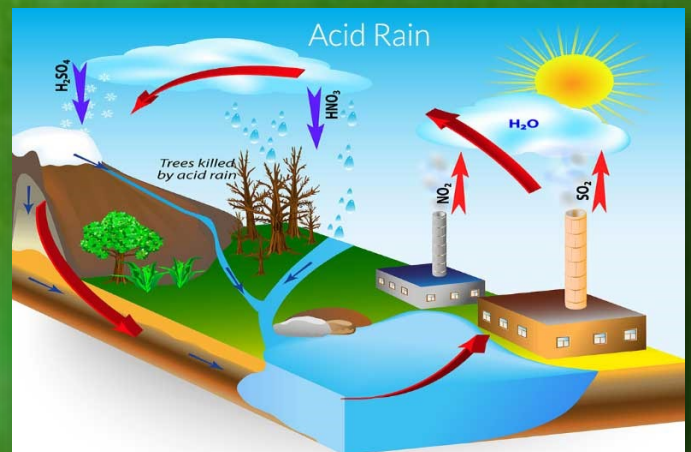


Click on a picture for the facts



10 TIPS FOR REDUCING YOUR CARBON FOOTPRINT

1. Carpooling at least once a week.
2. Go one week without using disposable cups given to you at coffee shops.
3. Try turning off the lights in an empty room at home or in your dorm.
4. Instead of eating lunch on campus try packing a waste-free (meaning no plastic) lunch.
5. Unplug your computer every night for one month if you have a computer.
6. Use only cold water to do your laundry for one month.
7. Try skipping a trip to the store and shop online.
8. Try reducing your printing a little bit each day and only print what is absolutely necessary.
9. Cut your shower time by two minutes for one month.
10. Reduce your bottled water consumption for seven days.



Speed Skating Chinese Marathon

"Fancy racing a marathon in China?" is the type of question you don't hear that often. Even though I trust my coach more than most people, it took several conversations for me to be sure I wasn't being played. After all, if someone told you that a Chinese government department was paying speed skaters to participate in a marathon, wouldn't you be hesitant?

With a month to cram in as many training sessions as possible, my legs seemed to be in a constant state of numb pain. Every week, five sessions would cover a distance of three marathons. That's 126.6km to try and prepare myself and drop speed like it was going out of fashion. The glutes would have to go lower to give the thighs maximum power output, my



core would have to be strong enough to stop back pain and as the skate touched the floor it had to hit the outside edge of the wheels first. Winding back a little, I only started speed skating 27 months ago, managing to go from a minute long lap (200m) to 21.7 seconds. The Duke of Edinburgh is much to thank for this as I originally took an interest in the sport in an attempt to complete the physical section of my DofE.

9



SAVE
PANGOLINS
.ORG

Back to the story...the training was coming on well but I had to brush up on my Mandarin, after all, Google Translate is blocked in China! Luckily, last year I completed Ms Liu's Mandarin course in Enrichment. This opportunity provided me with some key phrases and pronunciation tips when reading Pinyin. Dropping in at lunchtimes I would learn how to order vegetarian food, greet people, introduce myself and familiarise myself with everyday phrases that I might encounter. Thanks to the generosity of Mr Parker, I was also given permission to take four days off school to allow for travel and some pre-race organised events. Unfortunately, I had to miss Speech Night as I was flying over the Himalayas at the time.

The month came and went and before I knew it, we were on our way to Shanghai. Upon arrival we were transferred to the train station where I met other athletes from across the world - Taiwan, France, Portugal, Belgium, Australia and beyond. A couple of interesting things I noticed were boiling water taps are available everywhere as it is seen as unlucky to drink cold water. Also, train stations operate much like airports in that you need a national identity card or passport, your bags are scanned and the platform doesn't open until the train has arrived.

After a well-deserved sleep we woke up to an interesting breakfast selection including noodles (面条), chicken feet (凤爪), pork trotters (猪蹄), seasoned green beans and Chinese melon (中国瓜). We were then treated to a tour of the Wuyishan Mountains (武夷山) which was incredible. A vast array of waterfalls, mountains and pools combined to make this the most beautiful place I've ever seen. In the afternoon some of us went for a trial skate along the roads which was brilliant experience, if slightly terrifying. This outing gave us a chance to get a feeling for the real China.



Then the day of the marathon came. I was the youngest person to participate in the full marathon so I was determined to complete it in good time. Shortly after the start the world champions quickly disappeared in front of me but for around half the marathon was I able to stay with a small group of Chinese skaters. As I crossed the half way line my ankles gave way but I had no option but to push through. For my final lap my coach, who had just finished, took me around which gave me the mental energy to push through. I managed to complete the marathon in 1hr 40mins, a time which I am happy with but will be looking to further improve.



For our final day we had the chance to look around the amazing sights of Shanghai which I had heard so much about in Geography classes. The Bund is the famous area by the river which is characterised by the Opal Tower, HSBC Tower and more. Along with this, we visited the best market in the world for fake goods, the underground station of the science and technology park. Surprisingly, one shop keeper knew about the University of Birmingham and was reading Pride & Prejudice to enhance his job opportunities. I must admit I was happy to be able to buy some western food at a Subway, this was a welcome break from noodle and rice dishes.

Sadly, before it had all sunk in our visit was over. Special thanks go to the wonderful Angelina S Wong, Mr Parker, Ms Liu, multiple Chinese government agencies, my club, parents and others working behind the scenes.

If you are interested in having a go at speed skating check out the website www.bwrsc.co.uk

Speed skate, walk, bike, or use public transportation to get around whenever possible, this cuts down on fuel usage and saves you money.

Aaron Smith

11

Alternate Thursday

'Alternate Thursday' as the name suggests, runs every other Thursday. On these days after lunch, regular lessons are replaced with a range of clubs and interesting activities that students can take part in. Currently we have sewing, basketball, football, circus skills, cookery and many more.

Who runs this? Well that would be Mrs Sagheer. She puts a lot of time into organising the different clubs so everyone can enjoy trying something new instead going home and slouching in front of the TV. In many cases the

clubs are active so it is definitely a better option for keeping you fit and healthy. The spaces are limited and parents have to reserve a place for their son.

Currently I attend the sewing club. My friends and I have a lot of fun there. We made a donut shaped pin cushion and at the moment we are starting to make our own pillows using the sewing machines.

**THURSDAY
IS THE
new
FRIDAY**

**Q: What is the
biggest moth in
the world?**

A: A mammoth.

Rishik Pochammel

12

Improvised Comedy

I've been actively involved in improvised comedy since 2002, when I joined an 'improv troupe' at University and we put on a run of two-hour comedy plays made up entirely on the spot, based on audience suggestions. Improv is a form of comedy which lends itself to short sketches and longer, character-based narratives, as you basically work as a pair or a team to develop something out of thin air, building on each other's offers and ideas until the hilarity is found. It is probably the art form your favourite comedy actor first experimented with to get funny, especially if they are from North America.



I first got into it as a child, watching a TV show called *Whose Line Is It Anyway?* (I recommend you check it out on YouTube!), and then through improvised movies like *This Is Spinal Tap* and the films of Christopher Guest, such as *Best In Show*, as well as the excellent, mostly improvised, *Curb Your Enthusiasm*, but improv is best seen live and in person for an experience like no other. Simple principles, such as “yes, and...”, “heighten and explore”, and “don’t block” allow improvisers to invent entire worlds on stage from something as simple as a single word.

My own improv group performs regularly around Birmingham, and helped found the Birmingham Improv Festival, now entering its fourth successful year. If you are interested in learning more, look out for the workshop I usually run on the basics of improv at the Festival of Cultures each year, or see if you can find some of the workshops for beginners on offer around the city. Improv changed my life – even taking me to the Edinburgh Fringe Festival. Why not let it change yours?



Q: What did the environmentalist get when he sat down for too long on an iceberg?

A: Polaroids!

Dr McKee

14

Switzerland: What's Going on There?

Switzerland is the home of Toblerone, ski holidays and the CERN hadron collider which I had the pleasure of visiting last September but it is so much more than these stereotypes. After spending five days in Geneva (or Genève), I was left feeling rather intrigued at a number of things. Firstly, there is the almost seamless transition between majority French western Switzerland, which is home to Geneva and Lausanne to the majority German east, home to the often wrongly presumed capital of Switzerland, Zürich.

How does it all work? How can one country have not 2, not 3 but 4 official languages? How is Geneva still 25C and sunny in September while we languish in the rain? How were we blessed with such a country? In order to understand how Switzerland came about one must understand 13th century German politics – and no, I'm not going to explain it fully – where the German-speaking Holy Roman Empire, who succeeded the ancient Roman Empire, was divided between a multitude of different “princes” all scattered across Germany, the Netherlands, the Czech Republic, Austria and Northern Italy.

At this point, three “cantons” which were in the empire decided to form a “loose confederacy.” Uri, Unterwalden and Schwyz then called the *Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft* first signed their Federal Charter in 1291 forming the basis of Switzerland. The alliance was rather loose and added Zürich amongst others over the next century until its independence from the Holy Roman Empire was recognised after defeating them on multiple occasions.



The confederacy reached its current size in 1815 after invasion and liberation from Napoleonic France and the current federal constitution came in to law in 1848 which reformed Switzerland into 22 unified cantons which all have their own councils with their own representatives. Each canton is seen as equal and this meant that legally none of the cities of Geneva, Zürich or Bern are capital – yes, Switzerland has no capital! Bern is widely used as the meeting of the government thanks to its proximity to the French, German and Italian speaking areas but was never signed into law as capital.

The linguistic peculiarities lie in the fact that “Swiss” only became a national identity in the 18th century by which time there were German, French and Italian cantons or dependencies within the confederacy. The cantons all maintained their own customs and more importantly their own religion which was a source of instability when Protestantism rose to prominence. Today cantons and municipalities in Switzerland all have their own official language whether it be French, spoken in the areas closest to the French border (called Romandie or Welschland) or German in the majority of the central and east portions of the country. Italian is spoken in the southern tip of the country and Romansch is spoken in the Eastern portion of the country by a diminishing number of Swiss people. Children are educated in this tongue preventing the complete Germanisation of Switzerland.

There has been a long sense of division between the dominant Germans and the French who are referred to as Welsch which has the same meaning as our name for Wales – foreigner. Every citizen is expected to be fluent in a second national language which as a consequence means that most Swiss people can speak German or French. However despite their linguistic differences, Switzerland has mainly achieved harmony between its 4 national languages with each canton having its own official language – Graubunden on the border with Austria is officially trilingual with German, Italian and Romansh sharing equal footing. As a result all notes of money have all 4 languages printed on them and coins use the Latin name of Switzerland: *Confoederatio Helvetica*



Romansh, the least spoken after Italian (8%) is spoken by 0.1% or approximately 100,000 people mostly living in Graubunden. The language is believed to be the closest living language to ancient Latin yet over centuries has been victim to Germanisation, however with the cantonal system, Romansh is taught as a first language in various areas of the canton.

Switzerland is unusual as three of the largest European powers all have people living in Switzerland who speak it's language yet Switzerland was never divided between them despite all of the former principalities of the HRE (except for Lichtenstein and Luxembourg) being absorbed into a linguistic union like Italy or Germany. The reason is the famous Swiss neutrality which was ratified in 1815 by world powers. Their independence was guaranteed and as such they have been at peace since 1815, the longest period of peace for any country in the world. They haven't been invaded since.

This has also let Switzerland flourish as an economic powerhouse. With 50% of the world's watches made in Switzerland, it is the world's nineteenth largest economy. When compared to the UK at ninth, it further highlights the wealth in Switzerland whose economy is rated at number one in competitiveness. A soft drink will set you back £5 and a fast food meal £25. All of that in country with fewer people than London.

Switzerland is incredibly diverse with only 64% of Swiss residents being citizens, home to a large Portuguese minority. It's the lowest percentage of home born residents in Europe (UK 85%). The country is a model democracy, with each canton having their own rights and referenda on a range of issues ranging from EU membership to gun laws. Switzerland also has military conscription for 18yr olds, and having 200,000 conscripts in the army at any time but the most significant result of this is that they have more guns – most of which being government issued – per head than the United States yet they have one of the lowest homicide rates in the world, an example some may want to follow.



It truly is a wonderful place to go with beautifully snowy mountains in the winter and pleasant summers. Whether you love French and the hustle and bustle of Geneva, the German metropolis of Zürich or the deep valleys and quiet living of the Italian valleys or anywhere in-between, Switzerland is a country of diversity, rich history and best of all, in case you have forgotten....Toblerone!



www.lonelyplanet.com/switzerland



1 million plastic bottles are bought worldwide every minute.

Big Bread Ballot

It's the event of the year! After pleaful demands AiP (the company in charge of the canteen) held a bread tasting session so that students could choose the new breads to be used for baguettes/sandwiches etc.

A range of breads were on offer with some softer, crunchier or darker than other, as well as wholemeal options available. Would it be the crunch or the softest interior that was to win it? A fibrous wholemeal or the tried and tested white loaf?



After tasting a variety of breads on display, students were invited to place a raffle ticket in front of their favourite. As expected, the results were mixed but overall students preferred a slightly crustier white baguette as well as a wholemeal option. Going forward these breads will be used in all the AiP ranges.

Thanks must go to AiP for putting this event on and working closely with the student council this year.



Animal Trafficking

For pet owners it is a sad reality that pets run away, get hit by cars, fall ill and grow old. I'm sure a handful of us have had to be told that our beloved, treasured animal, whether it be a feeble goldfish or a giddy puppy, has gone to a "better place". That said, the last thing a parent would expect to have to tell their child is that Buddy the beagle has been stolen by an illegal animal smuggling organisation and that Buddy could be halfway to Bosnia right about now – wait, or could it be Bangladesh?

The U.S State department lists wildlife trafficking as the third most valuable illicit commerce in the world. The top podium place in this race is quite achievable - if only drug smugglers and cigarette traffickers slowed down a little bit. With an estimated \$7.8 bn to \$10 bn of money generated annually by this trade, it is a surprise that governments across the globe are still scratching their heads to how or why anyone should care if Jose from Cancun in Mexico just lost one of his tiger cubs because Susan from Sutton wanted a new fur jacket...“leopard print is soooo last season!” When the media decides to throw the word trafficking around or if we hear it in passing can we actually picture the suitcases full of turtles being transported in Boeing A480s, ironically flying over the oceans they were stolen from?



The fact of the matter is not only do stolen animals face abuse and neglect, the habitats they are taken from suffer unreparable damage as their eco system is left unbalanced. As if the animal kingdom had not already suffered enough blows to leave it on its last hoof, a baseball bat made of cages and fur coats has swung at its collective knee, and species that once prospered face extinction as poachers fill their pockets. It's not as if we haven't attempted to tackle this issue however, with the governments of Australia, South Africa and Brazil investing more than ever into environmental protection. But is 'more than ever' a strong tag line when the figure is just 3% more investment in 2017 than in 2004?



In South Africa alone, rhino poaching has increased by over 7,700% from 2007 to 2013 and figures only seem to be increasing. Eight adult African elephants alone will have been killed for their ivory horns in the same amount it took me to write 400 words in this article – you do the math. The trade rakes in so much income for the traffickers but relies on

poor local families forced to poach out of desperation to bring food on the table. Not only does the importation of animals mean that ecosystems are irreversibly damaged, but we are also at risk of spreading severe diseases capable of causing pandemics across nations.



Like many environmental issues across the globe they don't just affect animals living in rainforests or farmers in countryside's miles away from our city centres but impact the lives of even the most urban areas. Problems that affect jungles in the centre of Africa can cause just as much damage to the concrete jungles that we call our home.



Combatting animal trafficking is not only about keeping innocent animals safe from the claws of poachers, it is a global time bomb that if left ignored risks sneaking up on the rest of the world with an ivory dagger and leaving us all wishing that we could have done something earlier. Animal trafficking is not an issue that we can put in our diary's and wait for a meeting of the world leaders of today to sit around a table and make false promises on about for the sake of

keeping good face, no – action that doesn't happen today will leave those who see tomorrow wondering why we didn't do this yesterday.



Please Visit: www.worldwildlife.org/threats/illegal-wildlife-trade

Charities estimate that up to 350 million specimens are illegally bought and sold on the black market each year.

Mohammed Hassan

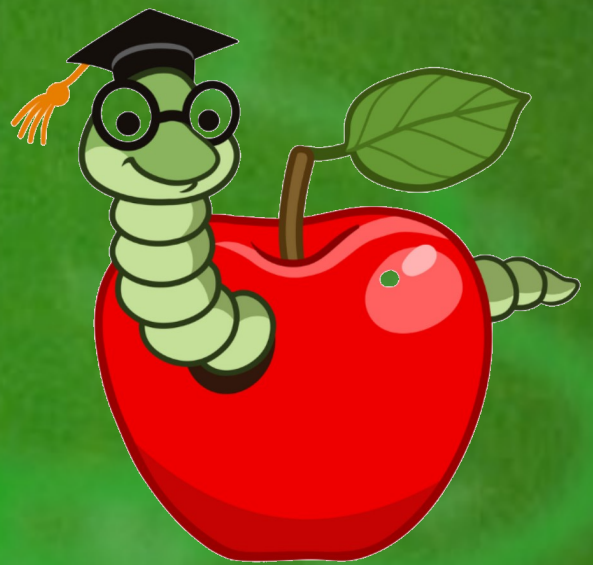
22

Bookworm Teachers

This year, Aston students have been doing a lot of reading. The e-zine thought it would be interesting to ask teachers what they read when they were kids and what books they recommend now?

Mr Laverty – He loved books like ‘Lord of the Rings’ and ‘The Chronicles of Narnia’ but once he discovered Stephen King, he was hooked. He strongly recommends Orwell’s ‘1984’ “it is referenced so much in everyday life that to not have read it leaves you culturally deficit!”

Mrs Ologunde – When she was at school she read the French version of ‘Harry Potter’, apparently it’s where she learned the French word for ‘cupboard’!



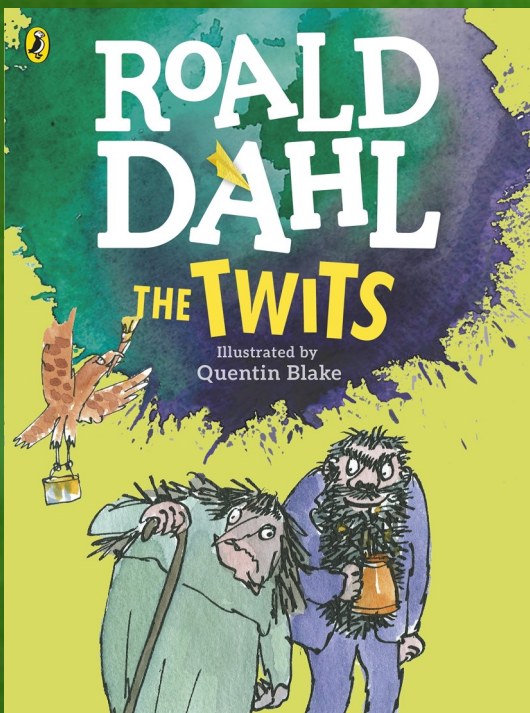
Mrs Boyce – Would have to recommend ‘Alice in Wonderland’ by Lewis Carroll. Fun fact: She shares her birthday with the author, Lewis Carroll who was also a Mathematician.

Mr McBrien – The Little Vampire series and Roald Dahl. As an adult he likes books with historical themes and would recommend Wilbur Smith for a good read.

Mrs Baizon – She enjoyed reading books by Enid Blyton as a child. She recommends a book called ‘Perfume’ by German writer Patrick Süskind as it’s “one of the most interesting” books she has ever read (being a librarian, we assume she will probably have read quite a few).



Mr Downing – He is a fan of JR Tolkien, ‘Lord of the Rings’ and ‘The Hobbit’. **Don’t just watch the films...read the books!**



Dr McKee – After reading Lewis Carroll and Roald Dahl in Year 6/7 he discovered Stephen King and books like ‘IT’ and ‘The Stand’ are some of his favourites. He recommends Clive Barker’s ‘The Thief of Always’.

Mrs Laventine-Lee – Now she loves the Tudor Series by Phillipa Gregory but as a child her favourite book was Roald Dahl’s ‘The Twits’.

Q: Why are recycle bins so optimistic?

A: Because they are full of cans.

Discord Server

Discord is a proprietary freeware VoIP application and digital distribution platform designed for video gaming communities but can also be used for schoolwork conversations or a normal messenger. It specializes in text, image, video and audio communication between users in a chat channels focusing on a specific topic.

I created one for 7M has 15 members so far and we post due homework and class issues and discussions on there. We have a staff system which are the most active members which make sure no bullying or swearing occurs.

Discord runs on:



7Manton: <https://discord.gg/xzTFugw>

7Temperly: <https://discord.gg/ZCRUBqc>

7Floyd: <https://discord.gg/9bKtjt5>

7Brandon: <https://discord.gg/3Ycrqsh>

7Hawley: <https://discord.gg/QFGhFVD>

25



DISCORD

The year 7 discord server is a way of students to chat and talk with each other without clogging up the school email, Your phone number is not required and it is a simple sign up process, listed below. It should not be used in school and is supposed to be used after or before school. Our aim is get as much as year 7 to join as we can to be able to start new servers and branches of the discord server.

Step 1. Enter your email

Step 2. Enter your password

Step 3. Go to your email inbox and confirm your account.

Step 4. Join the server with the code:

Year 7 Discord server

Discord is a proprietary freeware VoIP application and digital distribution platform designed for video gaming communities, that specializes in text, image, video and audio communication between users in a chat channel. Discord runs on Windows, macOS, Android, iOS, Linux, and in web browsers. As of May 2018, there are 130 million unique users of the software.

The server is not official it was made by me: Tanzeed and Suhaan for people to chat after school and discuss problems.



Suhaan Bhati

Tanzied Morshed

Sami Haq

26

Aviation

Deciding to be a pilot is a career choice that has many paths and a wide range of opportunities. Pilots are required to fly different designs and types of aircraft, such as helicopters and airplanes in order to transport cargo and passengers across the globe. They may work for passenger airlines and team up with another pilot, where one is a captain and the other is the co-pilot or first-officer or they may work alone in smaller light aircraft. Whatever they end up doing, becoming a pilot requires a certain skillset that the most do not see through a public eye. All pilots need to be able to make quick decisions, have analytical skills, be organised, speak different languages and most importantly be diligent and methodical in everything they do. There is a lot of responsibility in the job.

Although the pathway to becoming a pilot is a difficult and long one, the reward of such an exciting and active job is definitely worth it. Just imagine a job travelling the globe, seeing the world from above, and having a multi-million-pound plane of such intricate design at your control, ready for your command. This is what inspires many people to be a pilot. The ability to control such a machine and experience a life fulfilling feeling every day whilst getting paid is something that no other job can offer.



Having flown in a Grob 115E Tutor aircraft before, we would recommend the experience to everyone. To begin training as a commercial or airline pilot you need at least 5 GCSE's and A-levels in Mathematics and Physics. From here, there are various ways to begin your career that range from taking a university degree in Aerospace to getting an apprenticeship at an airliner company. Following this, you must obtain a pilot's licence through training which takes between two and four years, depending on what stage you are at. Alternatively, you can become a pilot through joining the Royal Air Force. Whatever path you take, the career as a pilot or any job working with aircraft is guaranteed to be an interesting and enjoyable career.

If you are interested in working with aircraft why not consider joining the Air Cadets? That way, you can hone your skills prior to taking one of the above options or before joining the Royal Air Force. The RAF Air Cadets gives you key individual skills and opportunities like no other organisation, from meeting important people, to flying in the back of a cargo plane or helicopter. If you are looking to join the RAF, this is a key way to learn some of the information you will need every day, when working in the RAF. Air Cadets also allows you to also build on key skills that you will use, even if you don't join up. Confidence and leadership is something that the air cadets allow you to develop, and if you are good enough, you may even be able to get promoted to a Cadet NCO.



Q: What happens when it rains cats and dogs?

A: You have to be careful not to step in a poodle.

Joe Barton

Dylan Sanghera

28

The Director's Cut

As long as I can remember, I've been a performer and I've always loved it. I never gave much thought to other creative roles that often run alongside the singing and acting but when the opportunity to try directing came up, I took on the challenge.

My friend and I had written down a concept; a story that we could perfectly picture in our heads. Everything we'd written was in place - the dialogue, the characters, the storyline, and everything else that we needed. Applying it to an actual film production however would demand a whole new set of skills.

In my head, all I had to do was communicate my vision to the people who'd be playing my characters and they'd get on with it. It wasn't that simple. Before any production could happen and before I even saw the cameras I'd be using, I must have had at least ten meetings with multiple groups of people to discuss everything from the set design and locations to the finer details such as how someone's hair should be parted in a certain scene. After intense negotiations, arguments, disagreements and a full pad of ideas that weren't going to be used, I got to meet the casting director.



She explained that I would need to write out the audition material, set up the studio space and run formal auditions to cast my production, in under three hours. Upon looking at my co-directors face, I couldn't help but laugh, but she was serious. What had we got ourselves into?



We convinced ourselves that two 13 year olds could pull off a stunt like this and not even look fazed... so that's what we did. In short, we'd turned an empty room into a professional space with scripts, cameras and lighting ready for the auditionees.

When everyone had performed their pieces, we conferred and after a unanimous decision, we chose our cast, who then were given the rundown of their shooting schedule.

This is when we finally got to the stage I'd imagined from the outset: shooting a scene. It turns out that a one hour slot wouldn't cut it for 16 actors (most of which were extras) for which I wanted to shoot my string of opening scenes. For what felt like forever, the whole team behind the clapperboard were setting up in the selected location. They were in charge of lighting, camera angles, sound, and many other aspects of production I didn't even know existed.

When we finally got to the acting, I was constantly making and giving notes to the actors and they were feeding back to me in turn. I really had to work on maintaining positive relationships with people so I could get the best out of them and so they enjoyed being a part of my concept.

All in all, the experience has changed my view as a performer massively and it's highlighted something I may have taken for granted having only a stage actor up until that point. My perspective has shifted in terms of creativity and I have learned important lessons on how to manage professional time, talk with important people, and do a pretty good job all at the same time. I strongly recommend taking any opportunities that emerge like this.

Anddddd CUT!



Oxford Schools' Debating Competition

Every year, the Oxford union run a national debating competition for students aged between 14 and 18. This format of each debate follows the British Parliamentary style in which four teams of two face off against each other. On Wednesday 23rd January, the West Midlands competition took place and our school entered two teams: Syed Gillani and Dillon Somia from Year 13 on one team, and Zakariya Majid (Year 9) and myself. Each team took part in two debates throughout the competition with the motion for the first debate being "This house would ensure 50% of parliament is female" and the second being "This house would legalise euthanasia". Both motions were excellent because they allowed the debaters to think about these issues in a critical way and analyse the problem. One key skill used was thinking about what may be said by the other teams and thinking of rebuttal for these points.

The debates were full of excellent arguments and the points made were conveyed confidently and clearly, meaning the competition was fun to take part in. The format of the debate meant that we could experience different roles, which allowed us to develop a range of skills. For example, the opening side needed to think carefully about the way they would make the motion work, but the opposition needed to think about flaws within the arguments made to support the motion.



After a long wait, we found out the unfortunately both teams will not be progressing into the next stage of the competition however this experience was an invaluable learning experience that allowed all of us to develop our debating skills. Furthermore, we learnt on the aspects of our debating skills that needed working on. Overall, the Oxford Debating Competition was a brilliant way to develop our debating skills and to go against some excellent debaters from all around West Midlands.



Debating Tips

Try to think as if you were the judge and not yourself. Remember, the only person whose opinion matters at the end of the round is the judge's, not yours!

Always think comparatively. Every argument that you make, at the end of the round, will be compared against something the other team said.

Always act like you're winning, even if you're not. If the judge doesn't think you believe in your own arguments, why should they?

Refer to your evidence whenever possible. Back up your points with facts, but be aware that statistics can be interpreted in different ways.

Speak Slowly. it is better to have a calm and mannered presentation than a rushed one which tries to cram too much in.

Q: What is the difference between weather and climate?

A: You can't weather a tree, but you can climb it.

32

Zain Ali

BBC Young Reporter

In March this year, eight Year 7 students were chosen to put together some news items for the BBC Young Reporter scheme. They had to film and edit interviews before uploading them online.

Click on the link below for reports on the 6 Nations, Knife Crime, Brexit and World Book Day. Among the pieces, Mr Sheergill and Mr Wright-Smith offer interesting insights, the former on the ethics of a second EU referendum while the latter dissects the tactics of the Wales v England game.

www.mixital.co.uk/profile/35t4ms2pk5



33

Year 7 team

Favourite Films



Mrs Moy: ハウルの動く城 [Howl's Moving Castle]

(2004, U)

Howl's Moving Castle is a story about a girl who befriends a wizard who lives in a flying castle. She ages prematurely due to a jealous witch's spell and the young wizard must battle the witch with all his power

With Christian Bale and Emily Mortimer

Mr Claughton: Star Wars Episode V (1980, U) and Toy Story 3 (2010, U)

Episode V: The Empire Strikes Back is the second instalment in the original Star Wars trilogy. Our Protagonist must seek the help of a Jedi Master named Yoda for advice to survive the dark side of the force and there's a really cool fight at the end.

With Mark Hamill and Billy Dee Williams

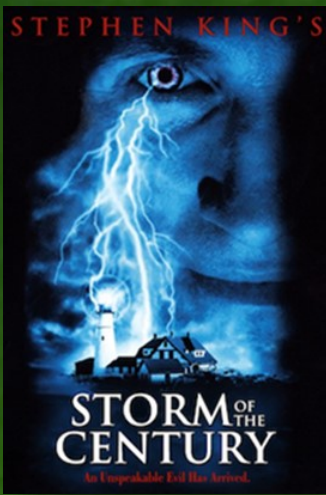


Mrs Hussain: Inception (2010, 12)

Inception is a Sci-Fi Thriller about a thief who is able to enter people's dreams and steal their secrets from their subconscious. But when he realises this ability will jeopardise all that he loves, he must succeed at a seemingly impossible task.

With Leonardo DiCaprio and Ellen Page





Mr McBrien: Storm Of The Century (1999, 15)

Storm Of The Century is a Stephen King film about a man who needs to save his town from a sinister stranger who is uncannily knowledgeable.

With Timothy Daly and Colm Feore

Dr McKee: Ghostbusters (1984, 12A)

Ghostbusters is about a group of scientists who are paid to capture ghosts using advanced technology after losing their jobs at a University.

With Dan Aykroyd and Bill Murray



Mrs Devaney: The Little Mermaid (1989, U)

The Little Mermaid is a story about a mermaid longing to live on land after falling for a human prince but is forbidden to.

With Jodi Benson and Samuel E. Wright



Mrs Moy: Casablanca (1942, U)

Casablanca is a romantic drama about a nightclub owner in Casablanca whose ex has asked to help her new husband escape from the Nazis by leaving the country.

With Humphrey Bogart and Ingrid Bergman



35

Zuben Adjei

Diary of a Cruise

Travel to the cruise and the first cruise day

Dear Diary,

My parents were having mixed emotions as they had to leave our pet cat with a neighbour for two weeks but myself and my brother were so excited we just couldn't stop talking throughout the journey to the port in Southampton. It is here that we get our first glimpse of the big ship Ventura. We park our car away and hand our luggage to the working officer before we enter border security. Security checks done, staff on the cruise give me a map of the ship and I start to explore.

Over the next few days at sea, I explored all seven floors of the ship and met some new friends through a rock school activity where we rehearsed a song called Valerie by Amy Winehouse, I was playing the guitar! I also took the chance to play some cricket on the top deck.



Lisbon - Christmas eve

As we were sailing into Lisbon, my father pointed out an oil tanker that was anchored away from us. This was the first time I have ever seen that type of ship, one of the heaviest vessels ever due to its cargo. We disembark and head into town to see the castle and some of the many ancient markets. Lisbon is famous for its diverse background so the markets were very interesting indeed. Once we finished the tour, we went to a café and tried the pastries. We then decide to head back to the ship and rest for the rest of the day as it was nearly time to leave the port.

Sea Day - Christmas day

I headed directly to a workshop for the kids. This was led by 'Santa' and involved all sorts of challenges, such as horse shoes and beanbag contests. Those taking part could earn prizes such as water bottles, speakers, board games and fun quizzes. When I realised that Santa was giving out free cameras for teens I rushed and got one.

Lanzarote

We take the shuttle bus service to the town centre and then take the tour round the Lanzarote volcanoes (did you know that Lanzarote are going through drought and the only way they get water is by desalinating the water). Lanzarote has a square mile of land and has an average population of around 100,000 people. We are shown volcanoes ash crops which was crops fertilized by volcanic ash. We are then taken to the national park where we are shown different blocked volcanoes and many wine houses as Lanzarote is noted for its wine and cheese.

Las Palmas

After we disembark, we meet a taxi driver who would drive us round the Northern side of the island. We were shown a statue of what another island called the Gormeros had left once they took over the island and then returned to theirs. The driver then took us to the national park where we got to take a hike around the mountains and see some of the different habitats.

Tenerife

Once we reach the beach, I go for a swim around the lagoon and then decide to pick on my brother by burying him in the sand, we then lie in the sun and when we feel that it is starting to rain we go to a restaurant for some shelter and food. Before leaving Tenerife, the ship made a Great British Sail Away where the passengers show their pride in Britain by shaking flags around and singing the songs from parts of Britain such as '500 miles' and songs from 'Ed Sheeran'.



Madeira - New Year's Eve

Madeira was the birthplace of Ronaldo so my brother was very excited as we walked to the Ronaldo museum. My brother took pictures with all the statues there and we saw the awards Ronaldo won for his team. My brother bought a Ronaldo water bottle and a wrist band as a souvenir. We then took a tour around the island by a cable car. We then returned to the cruise and I had lunch at the buffet, went to hang out with my friends and then went to the gym for a while. In the evening, I met my friends again and watched the New Year fireworks which was very picturesque.

The Last Day

My brother and I were sad that the cruise was coming to an end as we had a really good time. However, my parents were glad that it is nearly over as they miss our cat. I have breakfast as usual and then I go to the final



rehearsal of the band before the big concert. There were many performances such as the samba drumming and the adult band and then us. I guess they saved the best till last. I go and finish my concert see my friends and then hang out with them till the night where we do a farewell disco where we say goodbye to our friends and dance with them. This was a lot of crying involved (not me though) and then we got to sign on each other's books. All in all, this was a fantastic experience.

It's thought that between 50 and 80 per cent of the oxygen we breathe is produced by marine plants.

Ayan Ibrat

38

Cooking Competition-Winning Recipe

Sierra Leonean Fry Fry

Ingredients

75g Ground Rice

2 Ripe Bananas

60g Sugar

Grated Nutmeg

Warm water for mixing

1 sweet potato

½ scotch bonnet pepper

113g of Black Eyed Beans

Salt to Taste

1/3 Large onion and ¼ scotch bonnet pepper

Water for mixture if too heavy

1 Large Ripe Plantain

Pinch of chilli powder and ginger

Vegetable oil for frying

Method

Rice Akara

Peel bananas and mash. Put the mashed bananas in a bowl and add ground rice and water alternately, mixing with a wooden spoon. Beat well when all the flour has been added. Add sugar and nutmeg. The mixture should be as light as possible and just drop from a suspended spoon. Leave in a cool place for a while. Have a small deep saucepan of oil ready and heat. Drop a spoonful of mixture into the hot oil at a time and fry until golden brown. Drain on kitchen paper. Serve with 'Peppeh'.



Beans Akara

Skin and soak the beans for at least 1 hour or overnight. Liquidise or grind the beans. Beat well with a wooden spoon to trap in air. Add very little water if mixture is too heavy. Grind the onion and pepper finely and season the mixture adding salt to taste. Heat oil and fry a spoonful at a time as with the Rice Akara and drain. Serve with 'Peppeh'.

Plantain

Peel and slice the plantain diagonally into cm thick pieces. Season to taste. Fry until golden and drain. Serve with 'Peppeh'.

'Peppeh'

Finely chop/grind/liquidise the onion and pepper. Fry in a small amount of oil until golden. Mix in a small amount of water and leave covered in cling film for a short while. Serve to accompany street food selection.



Q: What kind of plant grows on your hand?

A: Palm tree.

We do not inherit
the **earth** from
our ancestors,
we borrow it
from our **children.**

— NATIVE AMERICAN PROVERB

40

Zuben Adjei

The Sad Reality of the Holocaust

While the Holocaust undoubtedly left one of the biggest scars on the history of humankind, today it can be somewhat difficult to visualise and relate to the sheer extent of misery and inhumane suffering that took place only eight decades ago. So when a group of Aston students from Year 11 and Sixth Form were invited to Solihull School to see an exhibition about Anne Frank, this was an opportunity to expand our understanding of what actually happened.



We started by learning about Anne Frank and her life. I was astounded by her profound contemplations and her tragic story. Anne and her family moved from Germany to Holland to escape the growing tension between the Jewish Population and the Nazi government. However, Holland was soon under Nazi occupation and Anne was forced to hide in an annexe with her family for two years. During this time she wrote a diary of her thoughts and experiences, this diary was her only source of comfort. It would eventually be published in 60 languages. Unfortunately, she was caught in 1944 and she and her sister Margot, were separated from their family and transported to the Belsen-Bergen concentration camp. They did not survive the harsh conditions and passed away within weeks of each other, at 16 and 19 years old respectively. Tragically they died three months before the camp was liberated. Moving on from the Anne Frank exhibition, our group got to watch the premiere of a Holocaust documentary called "No Asylum". It was haunting. We were regaled with tales of good people turning on their Jewish friends, calling them "Dirty Jew" and "K**e", and tales of hundreds of Jewish

people being forced to share two buckets as a toilet between them. The images of mass graves being literally packed with up to 2500 beaten and broken corpses was perhaps the bleakest moment of the excursion.

At the end, we had the privilege of meeting three holocaust survivors, some of whom remembered Anne. They told us about being in a constant state of malnutrition, the dehumanisation that they struggled through and the familiarity of waking up to discover a friend who had died in the night. Eva Schloss told her how trauma of it all forced her to re-evaluate her faith. Yet, it amazed me that out of this anguish, these survivors are still spreading a message of peace and unity; a message that is of paramount importance perhaps now more than ever.



So, it is our duty to remember the Holocaust and other atrocities as it is our responsibility to not make the mistakes of our ancestors. Instead, let's make our world one to be proud of. To end on a quote from the survivor Mindu Hornick, "You are the future, so make it a good one".



Eva Schloss—Holocaust Survivor

Scan the QR code to buy a copy of Anne Frank's Diary

42

Emil Lecointe

Climate Change IS an **EMERGENCY!**

Speech given to Birmingham Trade Unions Council

This February over 500 school children and university students attended a demonstration in Victoria Square, taking a stand in order to express their disapproval towards current environmental policies.

It's more than the well known facts of sea level rises, air pollution and global warming. If we choose not to act now, then the human race itself may become extinct, taking with it countless other innocent species. If we don't act urgently and meaningfully within the next 11 years then we will enter a point of no return. A positive feedback loop that will harm hundreds of millions of people. Famine. Disease. Mass migration. Frequent, extreme weather events. Ultimately death by our own making.



Right now we can act in a way that will protect, at the least, hundreds of millions of people. You may think that this is all up to wealthy, powerful NGOs, politicians, international collaboration groups and business people but you'd be flawed. The beauty of this issue and the very reason that we campaign is that everyone can make a difference. Your identity and place in society don't hold you back from doing your part.

43



Countless governments have chosen not to act, or done something to help only to have it reversed by later Parliament's. That might be how politics works, but the climate doesn't wait.

As for our aims, first and foremost we want Birmingham City Council to declare a state of climate emergency, something that Julien Pritchard has drafted the motion for and Labour Councillors have confirmed their support. We also want to see the council focus on cycling infrastructure, cheaper public transport and tighter building regulations. In Westminster, we need to see a National state of Climate Emergency as put forward by Caroline Lucas and Clive Lewis as well as a commitment by the Department of Education to further incorporate climate change into the curriculum. As young people we also recognise the problems in our schools. We need recycling bins, PSHE lessons, awareness days, vegetarian food in our canteens, empowered student councils and the promotion of "greener" modes of transport. If we don't see this soon then the further measures needed to prevent uncontrollable climate change will not become active in time.



That's where we come in. So far we've been on strike twice, and will be again on April 12th. We believe that in the midst of disruption, especially of things that we take for granted, CHANGE WILL COME. By going on strike we're making our voices heard, telling government that we won't settle for less, and informing the public of our cause. We hope that you can support us now and in the future to bring about Climate Justice for us all.

Us, our friends, family, children, lovers, school friends, colleagues deserve Climate Action.

Thank you.

Q: How do trees settle a disagreement?

A: They sign a tree-ty.

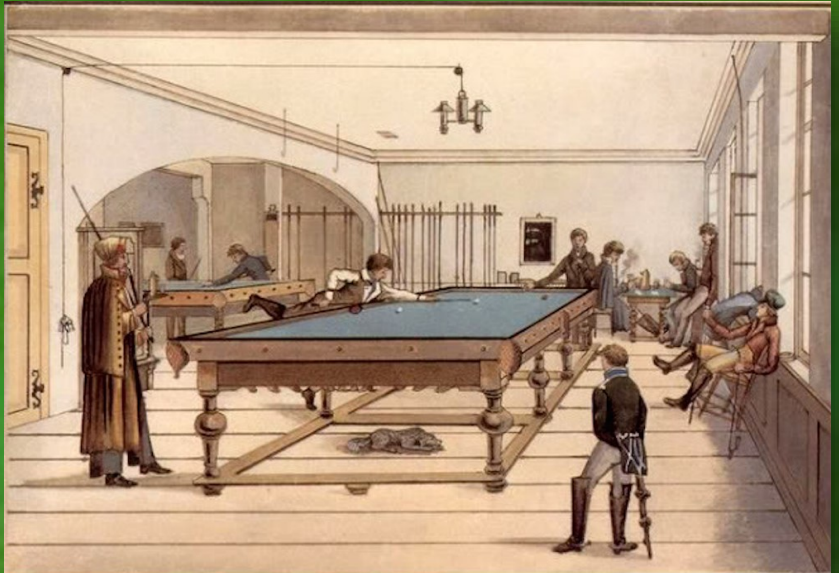
44

Aaron Smith

Snooker

Snooker is a cue game which was invented by British Army officers in India in the late nineteenth century. It is normally played by putting a green cloth over a specialised table, which has 6 pockets, one in the middle of each long side and one on each corner. You need to use a cue to hit the 22 coloured balls into the pockets, but only by hitting the white ball with the cue. Sir Neville Chamberlain finalized the rules in 1884. The word snooker came into light when one of the opponents of Chamberlain failed to pocket a ball and was called a snooker by Chamberlain.

In the professional era, the all-time reigning champion was Joe Davis in 1930s and continues to hold the record to this day.



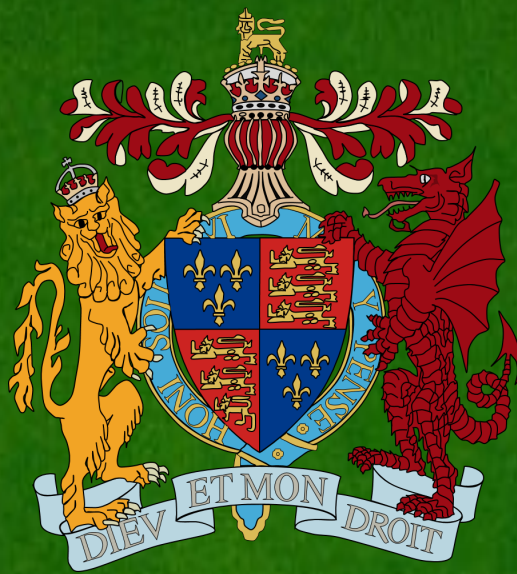
Davis was the world reigning champion for 20 years, with an unbeaten streak for 15 years, finally retiring in 1946. Other players have dominated the game, but none have done as much as Davis.

Snooker is known as a royal sport and is played in every part and corner of the world. Now every country has their individual snooker governing bodies to ensure fair play of this sport. Here are the countries the sport is very popular: England, China, Wales, Canada, India, Ireland and Scotland.

45

**9 billion fewer plastic bags
have been used in the UK
due to the 5p charge.**

Saad Ghani



Brought to you by the letter G

www.keaston.bham.sch.uk