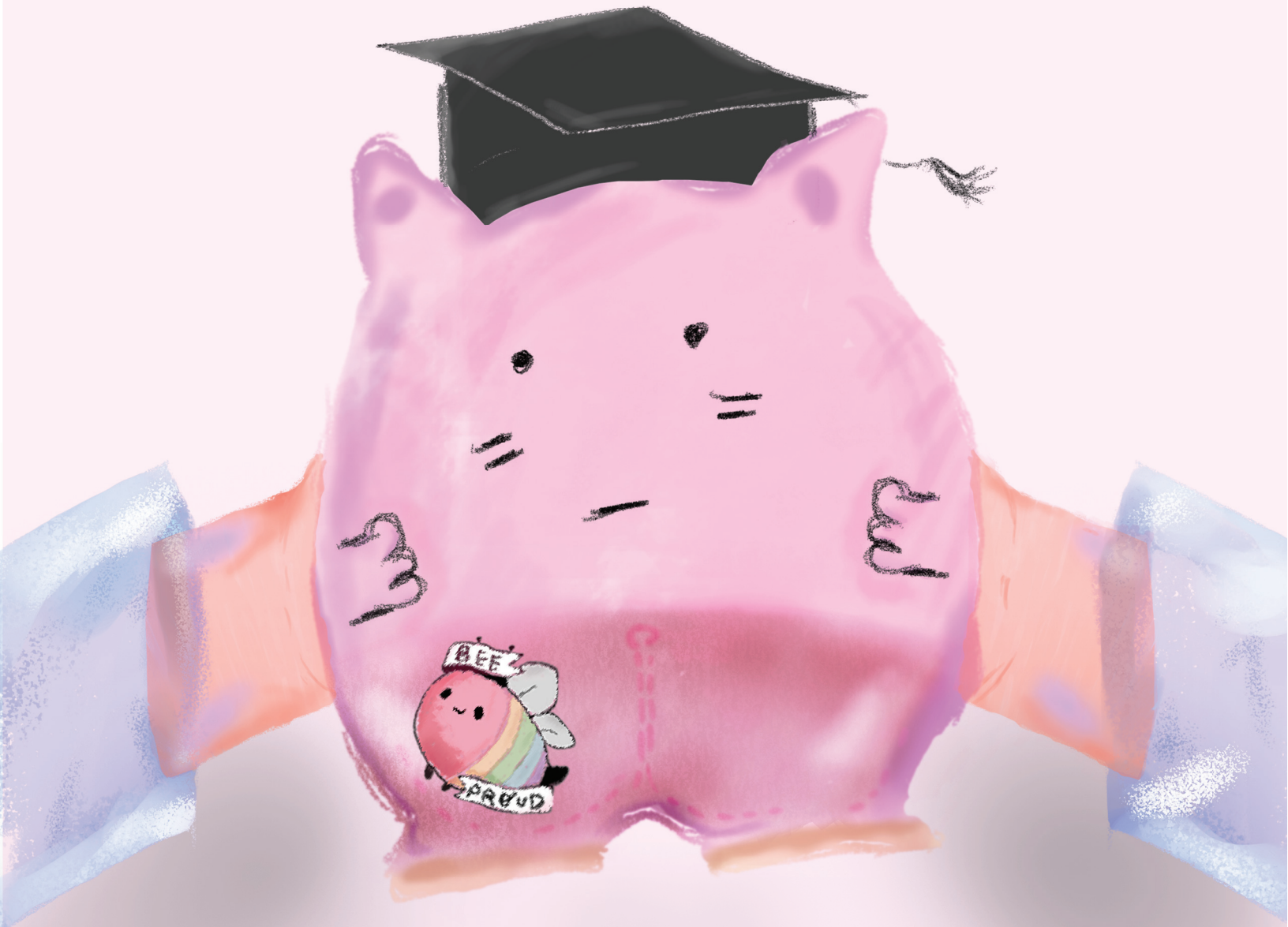


The Shishukunj Gazette

JULY 2021 JULY 2021 JULY 2021



Feelings, Farewell and Food.

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FOOD WITH MANAS

by Manas Pandey, XI-G

Lockdown has changed every aspect of human beings. Therefore it's not surprising that we've all been trying to find numerous ways to divert ourselves from these changes.

For example, cooking and baking have become all the rage over the past year. We've all seen the social media posts filled with the pleasing aesthetics of cuisines. People started committing more time to food than ever, not only to satisfy their cravings but it also became a fun family activity. Family members started bonding while cutting fine pieces of onions to make butter paneer. It was the time that everyone came together to experiment and try something new for dinner every day.

Of course, enjoyment may not be the first word that comes to our mind: mess might be more like it. But that mess just highlights that the entire family is involved (way too many cooks if you ask me). However, this family time gave us enough time to communicate and get to know each other better.

My own comfort zone has also been food. I remember tasting apple pie for the first time: its crust was as crunchy as a butter cookie, so brittle that it would crack audibly when you pressed it with your fork, grains of cinnamon sugar would bounce off the surface as it shattered. While it's easy to focus on taste, when combined with smell, the two senses can produce emotions, feelings of nostalgia, and involuntary memories.

Food is a mixture of elements and in Indian households, we generally use two important elements- that is crunchiness and spices. Being an amateur cook, I can tell you that balancing this mixture is quite complicated. But there's also a lot of room to learn. We can all start from baby steps, using simple elements and experimenting with them. We can discover weird combinations and name them after us (that's what we all want!!). A food clock can be used to track your meals and simply to evade boredom. I've mentioned below my food clock as an example and I hope it inspires you to track your own meals. None of the recipes are named after me, sadly.

8:00 A.M.

Oatmeal with strawberry and add some chia seeds to fulfil the nutrients required/ plain or masala omelette with crusty edged white bread toast

- pasta with veggies or steamed broccoli with wheat pasta

- Brown rice with black beans and if possible, flavour it with salsa, cilantro or avocado

10:30 A.M.

If you're having a late lunch, you definitely want to squeeze in a mid-morning snack that is going to pack the greatest punch. Keep your meal small and healthy! A good option is yogurt or greek yogurt with added fruit: in summers this meal will cool you out.

With that, I've rounded up my diet for the day and you can feel free to experiment out new stuff with food. Cooking has been an integral part of my life, it has not only taught me about the kitchen or vegetables but enlightened me with a more creative part of me. I've learned to experiment with different kinds of food combinations and how to aesthetically present my food onto a plate (yes just like on MasterChef). Cooking or food is not only a meal provided to me but a hobby that I enjoy.

2:30 P.M.

I would recommend veggies as they are full of fibre, which will fill you up and keep you energetic throughout evening

- veggie of any kind(whatever your mom provides you with)

- Add ons- curd, green bowl of salad, garnish it with feta cheese (I always stack up feta cheese)

- Lentil dal would do fine with rice and get some papadam (the crunchiness!!!)

5:00 P.M.

Afternoon snack is a must. Coffee isn't always enough.

- I cheat my diet and get anything that is crunchy and goes hand to hand with coffee.

- Chips/khakhra/pakodi

8:30 P.M.

Try to build dinner around your vegetables and if possible, mix it up from what you had at lunch to give your taste buds a change.



PRIDE AGAINST PREJUDICE

*by Anwesha Ghosh, XI-G and
Vidhi Dev, Alumnus 20-21*

LGBTQ+ is an acronym for the lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans and queer community. The LGBTQ+ community has been censored in books, film, and media for decades, especially in India. We aren't going to sugarcoat or censor here. Just present the truth loud and clear, and hope that you listen. We have shied away from LGBTQ+ issues for way too long. If you don't want to talk about it, you are a part of the problem. Young people deserve to know that all kinds of love exist. If we deny them representation and information, we deny them the right to be themselves. Because the bottomline is: love is love.

Who is an Ally?

Acceptance shouldn't be an opinion. Who gets to decide whether who you identify as is valid or not? Humans get to have opinions on a lot of things— whether they like coffee or tea, prefer cats or dogs, like sweet or savoury food, but, the one thing we do not get to have an opinion on is whether someone's existence is valid or not. The ways to support this movement aren't complicated— all you need to do is be an ally.

All students are at risk of being bullied, harassed or called names at school, but LGBTQ students may face particularly hostile school environments. Visibly supporting your LGBTQ+ friends and peers goes a long way in making a safe space for people of all genders and identities. After all, in the end, don't we all want a world where everyone is equal?

How to be an Ally?

It is never too late to start learning, and be a good human.

So here's a mini guide on how to be an effective LGBTQ+ ally.

In Class

- There are LGBTQ+ kids in your class whether you know it or not. And they are just as deserving of respect as any other person. Be sensitive.
- Treat everyone with kindness and decency. Don't use words like "gay" as insults. If someone is being teased for their identity, try to speak up for them. If not that, then tell an adult you trust.

With Your Friends

- The most important thing you can do to support your LGBTQ+ friends is also the easiest: listen to them, believe them, and stay by their side. Nothing has changed. They are the people they always have been, and they simply trust you enough to share an important part of themselves.
- Being an ally means you will often find that you need to challenge any bias, stereotypes, and assumptions you didn't realise you had.
- Check your humour. Anti-LGBTQ+ jokes may not seem like a big deal to you, but they affect queer kids more than you think. It's okay to be unaware, don't be afraid to ask questions and do your research.
- Remember, LGBTQ+ people do not choose to be LGBTQ+, it is something they are born with, only realise later. Their love is not a choice, but your love is the answer. Love your LGBTQ+ friends and family just as you loved them before.

On Social Media

- Again, something very standard but very important: be nice!!! Don't leave hurtful comments or anonymous messages.
 - Try to boost LGBTQ+ voices and share and listen to their stories. Keep an open mind and listen to new opinions.
- Being an ally is an action, not a label. To be an effective ally you have to try to be consistent in your support of LGBTQ+ rights and support LGBTQ+ people against discrimination. It takes all members of society to form an equal society: your open and consistent support will lead as an example to others.

Dear LGBTQ+ kids,

Whether you are questioning, closeted or even out, I want you to know that you are not alone. You are valid. Take your time to explore your identity. There is a whole spectrum of colours out there, be you. Because there is nothing wrong with that.

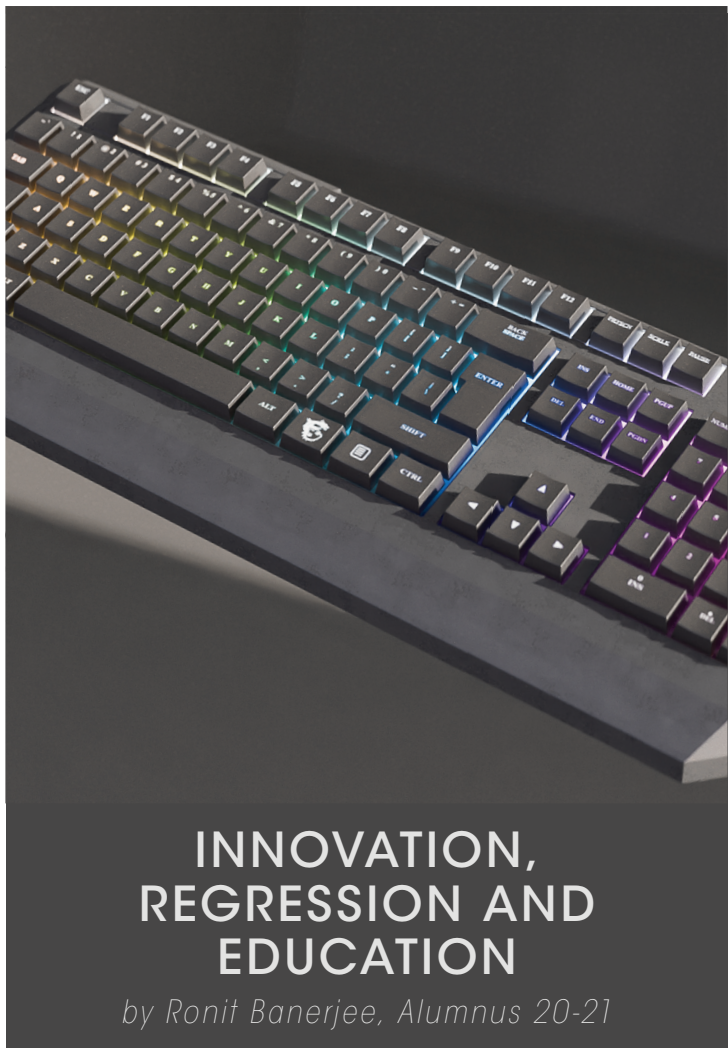
Pride month is all about letting people be who they are, proudly and unashamedly. In that light, I encourage you to look deep inside you, and ask yourself what it is that you want.

It won't always be easy. The people around you may not support you, or understand you, but I hope you hang in there. You will find your home, a family that will support you, friends who will love you, and a life of freedom.

You know who you are, don't let anyone invalidate that. Remember, help and comfort is always there for those who ask— don't close yourself off.

I know it's hard right now, I know you feel suffocated, I know you are scared— I promise you that you will be alright, you will find your people. You will be okay. And on the bright side, at least you have amazing fashion sense because of all the time you spend in the closet. Till then, I hope we can be a shoulder for you to lean on and a friend to talk to, please feel free to contact us. We'd love to talk to you and help in any way :)

@vidhiidev and @anweshaghost on instagram



At the beginning of the year New York Times published an OpEd by the well-known radio personality Niles Misra namely - Do Children Really Need to Learn to Code? His criticism, as acknowledged by the headline, is specifically of advertisement targeted towards children and in a context where the business hubs of India felt that investing in e-learning applications will be a logical step during a pandemic. Beyond the argument that he makes, there is still a need to dig deeper into the consequences of these recent developments and their controversial nature. The developments in question are: a) the

problematic promises of the e-learning industry and b) what innovation in education really means. We will take the help of the book *Failure to Disrupt: Why Technology Alone Can't Transform Education* by Justin Reich, who is an educational researcher at MIT, to be informed with the latest knowledge the field has to offer.

Let's first read the following excerpt from the article:

"Relentless advertising campaigns are telling Indian parents that coding is critical because making children code will develop their cognitive skills. Storytelling does all that too. And singing songs."

The mentioned ad campaigns are the ones that have become a routine in every television programming, national newspaper and internet. The trope is that young kids need to realise their potential quickly in this fast-paced job market and e-learning applications will provide children with the niche they need. India's new breed of EdTech follow the path created by outlets such as edX and Coursera which are co-created by Harvard and MIT to democratise their resources to a larger audience. These are called MOOCs or Massive Open Online Courses. Justin Reich notes an incident in 2011 when Stanford announced an online course on AI for a group of engineers by two acclaimed professors Peter Norvig and Sebastian Thrun. The university expected a couple of hundred people to sign up, but received over 1,00,000

registrations. This sparked an interest in the demand for such courses. Since 2008, educational technologists and entrepreneurs have had a charming rhetoric regarding them. They promised, much like Indian computer scientist Sugata Mitra, that in a few years schools won't exist and will be completely digitised.

In *Failure to Disrupt*, these people are playfully termed as EdTech Evangelists. Many of these entrepreneurs and technologists promise complete disruption and radical open sourcing. Yet their solutions have not caught up to their promises in more than two decades. For example, in the book's research we find 6 years' worth of data for enrollment, intention, and completion. 52% of enrolments never enter the courseware, second-year retention rates have declined with every cohort, from 38% in the first cohort to 7% in the second cohort. In 2012 to 2013, 80% of learners came from countries rated with high or very high United Nations Human Development Index ratings. That proportion grew slightly through 2015 to 2016, so that the majority of new registrations and certifications came from the world's most affluent countries. Rather than creating new pathways at the margins of global higher education, MOOCs primarily became complementary assets for learners within existing systems.

Sal Khan, founder of Khan Academy, professed similar charismatic intentions in his famous TedX Talk. But behind the scenes during an interview with an American State

media outlet he confessed how he later realised that those online educational solutions don't come near countering the challenges that education systems possess when he ran his own charter school. He also remarked that while technology can help students make a few of their routine tasks more efficient, they cannot replace educators in regard to the effective conveying of concepts. It is also important to notice that the incrementalist solutions that entrepreneurs such as Sal Khan profess to have pioneered have been discovered, tried, tested and commercialised in the 90s. The book challenges the high valuation of such EdTech enterprises, given that their services are already public knowledge.

For India, while nothing can be said too soon, the trend will almost certainly continue. But it doesn't need to. Rather than being suffice with the minor incremental solutions limited to tech, we can also focus on experimenting with education as an experience. The book notes how teachers in a class sometimes improvise minor distractions to make children pay attention to the subject. Stickers, stamps, word-games etc. : aware of how they will only work for a fixed time, and they'd need to re-innovate.

We should be paying far more attention to such organic and dynamic innovations and not be afraid of experimenting in the real experience that educators and students face.



A WOOFERFUL ENTOURAGE

*by Ananya Saggi, XII-D
and Manas Pandey, XI-G
(through the eyes of their pets)*

Ever wondered what the furry friends living with you felt when the pandemic struck? Why did everyone suddenly stop going to work, school, just going outside at all? Surely it would've been confusing for them. Well, here we have two pet owners exploring the pandemic from the perspectives of their pets.

“Kaiseee!”, a shrill voice echoed from the kitchen. My senses on high alert, I scanned the room for refuge. Under the table maybe? Except that I couldn't fit in like I used to five years ago. So I discarded my futile attempt and went back to sunbathing in the living room. Not before long, my hoomans (humans) piled

into the room, busy chattering and giggling. As I had foreseen, Ananya (the youngest and the most annoying of them all) scooted to my side and started playing with my ears. Six long years have passed and she still doesn't understand that most German shepherds prefer to have their space.

We dogs want nothing more than for our hoomans to stay home all day. Little did I know that this would actually happen. What started as a week filled with extra hours of play in the garden and dozing away the afternoons under the air conditioner, became a nightmare of a year of scoldings. Whew! Welcome to 'Quarantine from Your Pet's Perspective'.

Once this 'lockdown' began, I noticed shocking changes in my daily routine. Dogs are creatures of habit: we like to take out time transitioning from one change to another. At 10 a.m , as usual, I trotted to Ananya's room and prepared for my late morning siesta. To my surprise, no one tied my leash to the bedpost! This meant that the maid would not come today, but most importantly, it meant Freedom! I walked nonchalantly to the balcony, ready to scare away all those unwanted visitors who spied around the colony. To my dismay, there wasn't a soul in sight. The whole day passed without any excitement, till dad took me up to the terrace in the evening and we enjoyed a sunset full of barks, play and cuddles.

But all in all, once I got used to this, life became all that I had dreamt it would be. Early morning walks, sometimes with Ananya, mom and dad, extra treats and lots of tummy rubs became convention. Needless to say, regular baths, ear cleaning and paw cleaning sessions, daily dose of vitamins and a lack of meat were added as extra 'perks'. I saw my pack worried, happy, silent and working hard at different times of the week. I felt that I was more in tune with their emotions, and so were they with mine. Occasionally, I used to and still get a whiff of what was "cooking".

So what has changed after one year into this new normal you ask? Sadly, not a lot. Meat has made its return but the maid still hasn't, newly fashioned "muzzles" (renamed to masks) are back in vogue, and they sit atop the noses of all hoomans nowadays! They surely seem glad to wear them, unlike us canines. Mom and dad have started to go to work again, leaving me with Ananya, but I'd say she's learnt a bit of social distancing herself. Everyone calls mom and dad warriors of some sort, that being a doctor is being a soldier nowadays, but I always believed they were fighters in life.

A New Pawspective

Something was off that day. I had a perfect afternoon nap, refreshed and ready for a walk. I couldn't locate my family. They were probably upstairs. As I yawned and stretched out my body, mum ran downstairs, picked up her keys and stormed off. I couldn't stay behind and followed her. "Stay here and I will be back," she said. After that day, she never stepped outside

from home. And neither did I.

It was very weird for a couple of weeks. Going out was forbidden, evening walks were cancelled, most of my daily movement to the office was scratched out, woooooof! I couldn't adapt to this nuisance and to add fuel to the fire, Manas would annoy me all day. All day. At first, I was very active. I used to run around (burn off those extra calories) and after strict thirty minutes of cardio I used to be awarded my favourite delicacies and then slumber off. This has become my daily routine. But only for a couple of weeks. When I realized that Manas was sluggishly lying in bed all day, sedately daydreaming and playing video games, I couldn't resist doing the same. I started sleeping all day under that cooling breeze, I used to feel every wave gushing on my body and when it would hit me the chill would cover me with happiness. Sometimes they would call out for me and I used to rush to them, moving myself from under the damp, cool den. The callings were useless. Nevertheless, I enjoyed every bit of that year. It was wonderful, everyone used to be at home, prepare dinner, and conclude our day by rubbing my belly (I do love the tickling).

It has been a year since the day I was forbidden to go out. What has changed for me? A lot. Manas is busy with his online classes and my brother is in college. And I'm here stuck with these thoughts.



The Batch of 2021 is going to miss Shishukunj. A lot. In fact, we've been missing school for the past year. So we asked our outgoing Shishyans about their beloved memories of school, and here are some of their responses.

Eating Rajma-chawal on Saturdays, roaming in school during CCA and zero periods and making a thousand memories with my teachers and friends.

- Tanisha Agrawal

Everyday was filled with fun and some memories which I will surely cherish in future. I will be missing all my teachers, my classmates who entertained each other and yes the list goes endless. My school/ my second home.

- Prama Pahwa

Years and years pass by, hundreds of students graduate every year. Truly said on the very first day of school you cry for being forced to join the school and on the last day for leaving the school

- Vani Jain

One of my favourite memories from school has to be the bus ride home at night after rehearsals for Anugoonj. I always enjoyed looking out the window, thinking about the routine with very few students in the bus.

- Nandini Bohra

Apart from memories, one thing I realised is that school life is the key for the room that we all want to enter in our lives. Very very short, simple. All problems/stress is temporary. Appreciate it while it lasts.

- Arnav Sharma

Saturdays for Rajma Chawal, the vibe on Utsav nights, Anugoonj rehearsals when the entire school is empty but for us, taking 4 pkts of biscuits, the art room always your safe space to hide in, I could go on forever.

- *Gargi Maheshwari*

Back in Class VIII, during the short break, half of the class would gather and sit in a circle. Annirudha played the guitar and everyone used to sing at the top of their voices. Mam would come and scold each time but this always continued. This itself was a whole mood.

- *Ronit Shah*

My favourite time spent in the school was walking around the empty campus with my friends, especially when we went there on a holiday to work on something. The sandpits never failed to take us down the memory lane and think about all the years we've spent in the school, our home.

- *Ananyaa Jain*

My favorite memory of the school has to be the numerous preparations for various MUNs, Bal Vigyans and Inter School Competitions. Though, the stress used to be there but the fun and learning experiences are unmatched. The second memory will be when the council was called to record the pledge for the Republic Day.

-*Aditya Rathi*

One of my hundred favorite memories about school would be: in class one, after our final exams, the students who finished their exam early would get to go to the sandpit, and the amount of fun we had, and the friends I made there were absolutely the best.

P.S. if you were one of those who completed the exam faster for the sandpit than to check your answers, you're a winner already.

-*Sanika Ghodke*

Gazette Recommends

THE BOOK THIEF MARKUS ZUSAK

by Ananya Saggi, XII-D

'It amazes me what humans can do. Even when streams are flowing down their faces they stagger on, coughing and searching, and finding.'

Under the alternating dark and light layers, woven into the story of an eleven year old German girl, lies the tale of Rudy Steiner. A supporting character in 'The Book Thief', Rudy

lived life to the fullest, such that even Death felt that taking him away 'felt like robbery'. Liesel Meminger's enemy, partner-in-crime, confidante, and ardent supporter, Rudy keeps the readers at the edges of their seats. An athlete at heart, he was always up for a game, unaware of how the War was shaping the lives of millions of Germans like him.

Rudy had his own battles to fight. Be it stealing potatoes from farms, taking a stand for his friend at Hitler Youth meetings, helping Liesel with her book-collection, or pursuing his passion in sports, his life was a roller coaster of adventures. But what never left him in the darkest of times, was his sheepish grin and his eye for mischief. One may be inclined to assume that the boy was ignorant of the incidents constantly drowning the spirits of the townsfolk, but it would be to think too less of his brave little heart.

He kept the cheerful little spark of optimism burning, even when food seemed a bleak opportunity and survival was upon him. His constant source of happiness were the events of the day, a fight there, a giggle here.

Rudy stole the limelight with his bold humour, his determination and his thirst to prove himself: a boy so full of life, it broke death's heart to see him lifeless and to carry his soul in the covers of his robe. He was a boy who should have lived on. He was a boy not supposed to die as he did. He was one of the few to whom death did injustice.

Rudy is an inspiration to the child within us. He is the call for strength: a strength of optimism, which is difficult to summon, but is here to stay.

‘One was a book thief, the other stole the sky.’

We asked our readers which such characters do they relate with, and here are some of the responses:

Tintin - Tanya Dhakad

Jake Peralta - Aditya Rathi

Chandler Bing - Lavanya Agarwal

Alec Lightwood - Anahita Malviya

Harry Potter - Ayush Mundra

Greg Heffley - Juhi Baghel

Masao - Asmi Manudhane

Stana Katik - Disha Gupta

Hermione Granger - Nirali Mahajan

Itachi Uchiha - Sannidhya Mundra

Rudy Steiner - Ananya Saggi

Interpreting Masterpieces



by Anwesha Ghosh, XI-G and Vidhi Dev, Alumnus 20-21

“I think you have something inside of you that is worth a great deal.”

I was 12 when I first heard the term “Carpe Diem”. More specifically, I saw it written in big colourful graffiti, on the walls of a school I’d gone to for a competition. I looked it up later. Carpe diem: used to urge someone to make the most of the present time and give little thought to the future. To seize the day. Be the main

character in your life, if you care for Gen-Z language.

Dead Poets Society is carpe diem personified.

Mr. Keating is the new English teacher. He comes to Welton Academy to replace a retired teacher and changes the lives of his students. On numerous occasions throughout the movie, Mr. Keating’s nontraditional methods inspire his students to think freely, pursue their passions, and not to conform. He balances being commanding, with compassion and empathy, and the boys come to not just respect, but like him as a person.

The type of students in Welton Academy are boys whose entire lives have already been written for them. They live a life of convention and are afraid to venture into the world on their own. Mr. Keating encourages these students to have courage and self-confidence. Neil Perry is one of these students. An obedient son, he’s been destined to be a doctor ever since he was born, but he’s not sure that’s what he wants to do. Not just that, but he’s always been too afraid to think deeply about what he wants to do. With the help of Mr. Keating and his lessons, he was able to try acting for the first time, something he had wanted to do for a while but never could. Mr. Keating gave him both confidence and his freedom to choose. If it weren’t for Mr. Keating, Neil would have never been able to go against his father and do something he enjoyed so much.

enjoyed so much.

The impact that Mr. Keating has on his students is accounted for throughout the movie. So now, let's talk about (what I find to be) the most striking moment from it. Mr. Keating asks every student to write a poem to be recited in class. For days leading up to the deadline, we see Todd Anderson writing and rewriting and ultimately, tearing up all his attempts. "I didn't do it. I didn't write a poem," Todd timidly answers when asked to recite his poem. Now any other teacher might have left it at that, or given him an F. But Mr. Keating wasn't any other teacher. He senses Todd's reluctance and makes him come forward. Mr. Keating believes in Todd, but doesn't matter how confident the world is in you, it is you, who after all has to stand up. He knows and he tells Todd "I think you have something inside of you that is worth a great deal." but this doesn't seem to change Todd's hesitance to recite a poem.

The next scene shows us, perhaps, one of the best examples of what a teacher should be. All students are made of light, glowing in all directions, everflowing. It is the teacher who knows which angle to shine the glass at, so it forms a rainbow. And that is exactly what Mr. Keating does.

He realises Todd is a person who isn't affected by words, but by emotions. Poetry doesn't flow through pretty words, it rushes like a flood of raw emotions. He also realises that Todd's emotions are locked, hidden, tucked deep within him. Mr Keating tries to provoke him.

He makes Todd say a fairly ridiculous word—not say, but growl. "Louder, louder, louder," Mr Keating says, "come on, louder—" Todd growls. An emotion— not a ridiculous word anymore, it's an emotion.

Mr. Keating doesn't let Todd go yet, he points to a portrait of the 19th century poet, Walt Whitman and asks, "What does he remind you of?" And he doesn't let go till it's pouring out of him. Covering Todd's eyes, to distract him from the rest of the class, he doesn't let go till the words flow through him. They wash over the class like a tide.

There are no words I can say that will provide justice to the brilliance of this scene. It doesn't feel like a movie, something that is scripted. It feels like life.

*I close my eyes and this image floats beside me.
A sweaty-toothed madman with a stare that
pounds my brain.*

*His hands reach out and choke me.
And all the time he's mumbling, mumbling truth,
like a blanket that always leaves your feet cold.*

*You push it, stretch it, it'll never be enough.
You kick at it, beat it, it'll never cover any of us.
From the moment we enter crying to the moment
we leave dying, it'll just cover your face as you
wail and cry and scream.*

Poetry. That is the only thing that comes to mind when we listen to Todd Anderson's words. Words that had been dying to pour out of him. Words that he had been deathly afraid to say out loud just minutes ago. The entire class revels in his words. Until the silence is broken by applause. "Don't you forget this," Mr Keating says. And Todd doesn't. And neither do any of his classmates. Nor do we.

This breath-taking film ends on several notes— like life. Not sad enough to never be happy, not happy enough to not let the tears roll down your cheeks. And, just like life, the future remains uncertain. Dead Poets Society challenged the definition of happiness that we have been taught for so long to believe as the only one. Happiness is not success. Happiness is those fleeting moments you steal where you can truly be yourself and do what you want to do. Throughout the movie, we place our hearts among the boys of Welton Academy, but we never get to know who they grow up to be. Whether Todd Anderson became a famous writer, or whether Charlie Dalton ever escaped the life he hated so much --we don't know. I believe that this was a way to amplify the message of "carpe diem" and living in the moment, and how it doesn't actually matter if they succeeded or not, but that they lived and were happy -- perhaps briefly, and probably not all the time: but in the grand scheme of things, they were happy.

STUDENTS' CORNER

Haiku Edition

Man, what is courage?
It's not the absence of fear
but conquering it.

Walking in the rain
my lonely and carefree soul
enjoys leisurely.

-Koshika Jhavar

Sea breeze blows ahead
The book flows and the sun glows
Perfect summer day

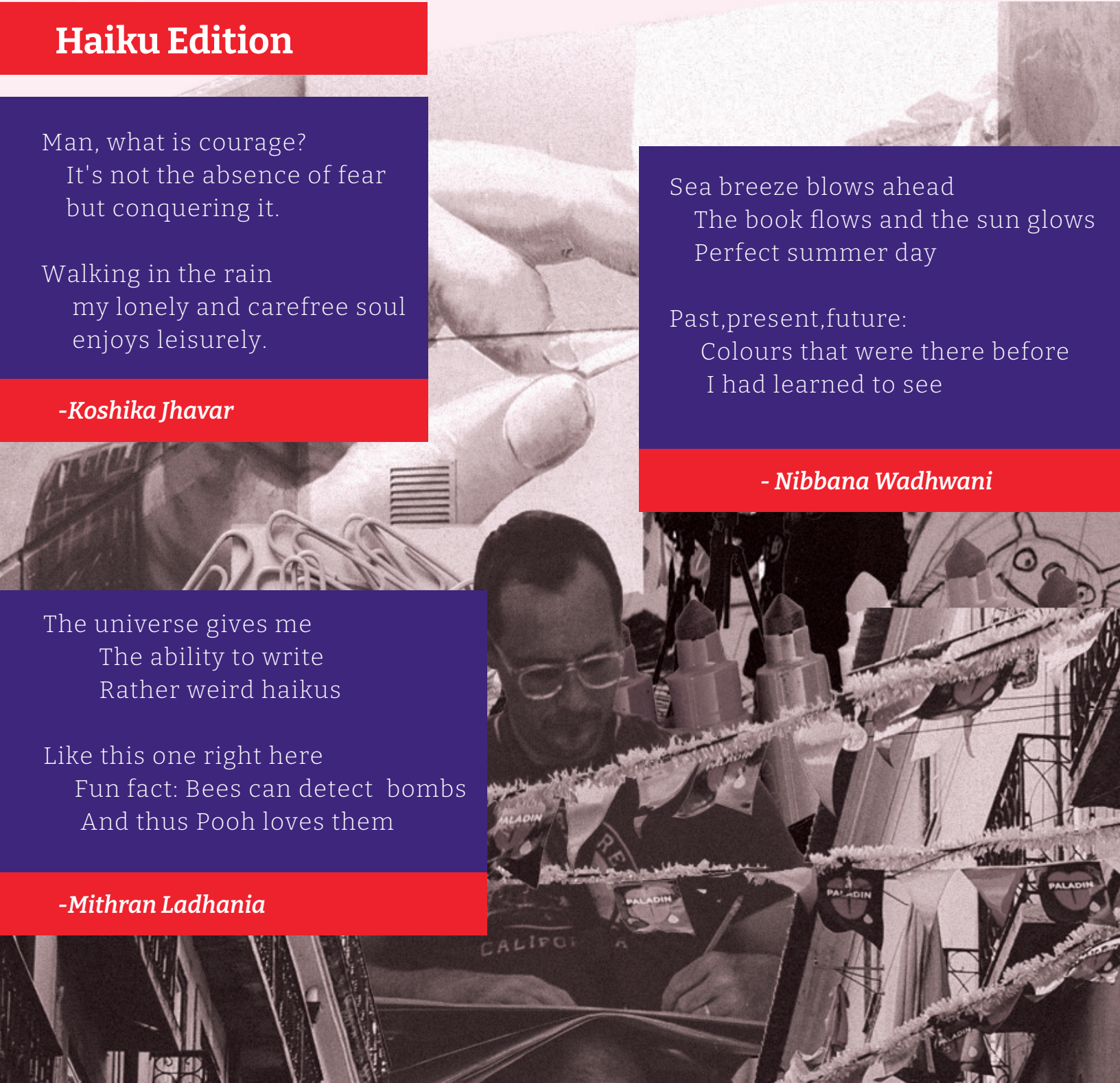
Past,present,future:
Colours that were there before
I had learned to see

- Nibbana Wadhwani

The universe gives me
The ability to write
Rather weird haikus

Like this one right here
Fun fact: Bees can detect bombs
And thus Pooh loves them

-Mithran Ladhania



Having gratitude
Is pretty underrated
I Wonder why so !

-Avika Vaid



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