

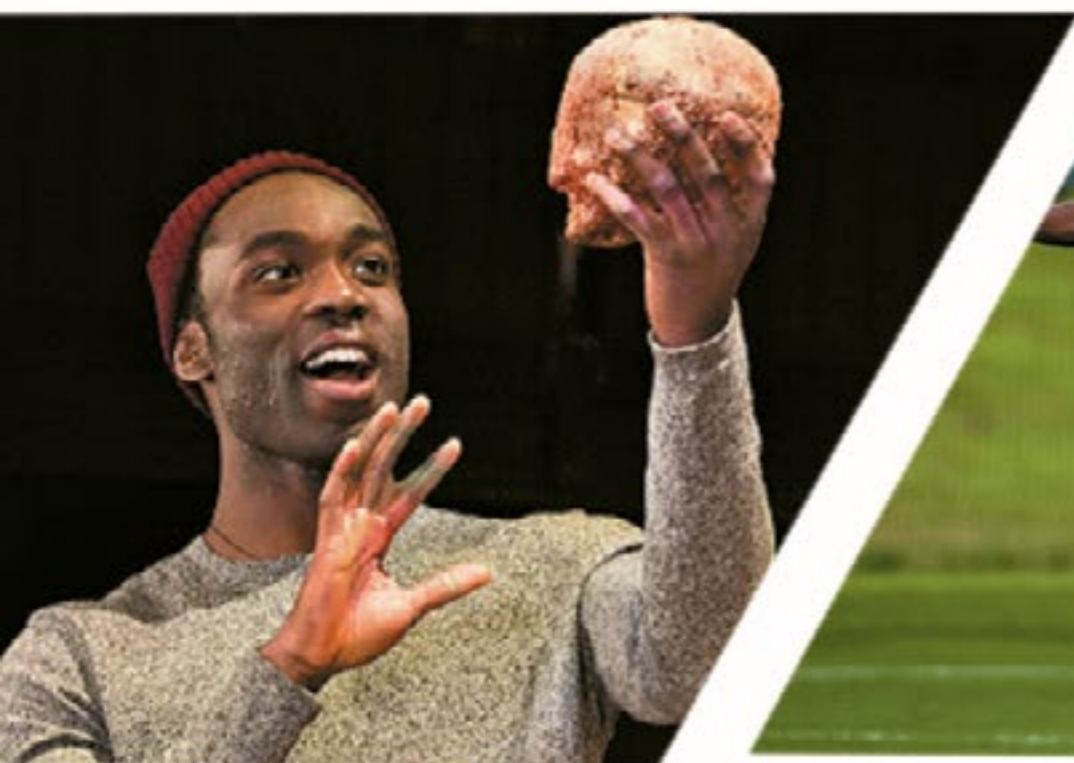
THE
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A G S B

R D

ONLINE



HEAD TO HEAD



Greetings and a Happy New Year to all readers of The Word. When referring back to last year, adjectives such as 'unprecedented', 'challenging' and 'extraordinary' have now become somewhat 'clichéd'.

Much work was done in the summer months to prepare for September and we faced the real possibility that the School would be closed almost as soon as it opened, and all the adjectives above certainly applied throughout the Christmas Term 2020.

Although it was 'unprecedented' and 'challenging', many positives came out of the last term at AGSB. It was clear that the students enjoyed tremendously being back at school. The work ethic across the school was outstanding and much progress was made. Staff also demonstrated great resilience and adapted extremely well to new timetables, new teaching rooms, face-to-face teaching, remote learning and blended learning. Although our extra-curricular programme was limited by our Covid procedures, year group music ensembles could be heard each lunchtime and the House System enabled participation in some excellent events in sport, art, photography, debating, chess, and a myriad of other activities.

The new teaching complex located in the North Yard is now complete. It is a really stunning resource for the school. The building gives us 7 English classrooms, 2 Geology classrooms, a library, a careers hub and a staff area.

On the evening of the 4th January, the Prime Minister informed us that Schools would be closed to all pupils apart from Vulnerable and Key Workers Children, and GCSE and A level exams would be cancelled. We are now in strangely familiar territory but, it is not the return to School that we were expecting when we broke up for Christmas. However, it is vital the AGSB community focuses on making the best of things (as we have before) in uncertain times.

Whilst we may not be able to return, physically, to AGSB for the start of the Spring Term 2021, however, it is important to remember: life is 10% what happens to you, and 90% how you react to it. ... let's all react to this situation with kindness, integrity, resilience and real positivity.

Head Master



Happy New Year All!

That break was definitely needed, 2020 was a strange year to say the least. It was a tough year for all of us in many respects. From the national lockdown to the cancellation of exams, 2020 is one of those years that we will never forget.

Now is the time not to forget 2020, but to leave it in the past. 2021, as clichéd as it is, is a *new start*. It gives us the opportunity to accomplish all those things we couldn't last year.

To our credit, last year we didn't let the restrictions hold us back. The House System stood strong with competitions in full swing, from football tournaments to the University challenge, the events just kept rolling.

Virtual assemblies meant that quite a few of us became film directors, producers and screenwriters all within a few weeks. Admittedly we aren't Oscar winning producers just yet, but what was important was that our videos enabled us to talk about mental health and racism in ways that assemblies couldn't. Everyone last year, despite the circumstances, did their best to put their head down and get on with it.

It's vital we keep this resilience in the forthcoming term.

A lot of us were and still are optimistic about 2021, so the new lockdown is both frustrating and worrying. COVID has taught us a harsh yet valuable lesson. We can't predict the future but we can prepare for it. We have a choice, albeit far from easy, to channel that frustration into determination, or to accept defeat and lose the motivation to work. I urge everyone of us to choose wisely.

Try whenever you can to check up on your friends and family and ensure you leave time to take care of yourself. We'll be back soon. Stay fit and healthy and whatever your plans are for this year make sure you relax!

Belema Briggs

"The work ethic across the school was outstanding and much progress was made."

BEING BLACK AT CAMBRIDGE

Former deputy head-boy, Success A, recently featured in a BBC video titled 'Being Black at Cambridge University'. The video explores the lives of 3 black students at the University of Cambridge, revealing the challenges they have faced and overcome. It also looks at institutional racism and the steps that can be taken to progress further. I asked Success a few questions about his experiences, not only at Cambridge, but also about his time here at AGSB. If you haven't already seen it, I highly recommend watching the video first at:

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/av/education-54437262>

Did you experience any racism or discrimination at AGSB?

Absolutely. At the time, I was still young and quite naive, and so I didn't properly register what I experienced as racist, but thinking back it absolutely was. The thing is I don't think it was ever out of malice, more ignorance. Some of the people who I got it from were some of my closest friends who didn't appreciate how serious something like that was. And honestly, neither did I at the time, which is why I used to let it go all the time. No shade to those guys; we were all young and dumb, and didn't really understand what it meant at the time. I've got no doubt they wouldn't dream of doing something like that now they're older and more mature. I have so much love for them, and we still sometimes talk and catch up now, but thinking back I definitely experienced my share of racism throughout my time at the school.

What was your favourite memory from your time at AGSB?

Wow, there's so many to choose from. I think one of my most favourite memories actually came after I left the school. It was A-Level awards evening and I was partway through my gap year, while most of the other guys in my year were at uni. I just remember the happiness I felt meeting up with those guys, seeing them again after what had felt like ages, and catching up on how life had been throughout the first year of uni. It felt so mad, because to me this was one of the first signs that we were actually growing up. Bear in mind I'd seen these boys practically every day for the best part of the last 7+ years; seen them all change and grow. This was one of the first times where I realised that wow, we're actually kinda adults now, with responsibilities and separate lives and stuff.

Do you feel the university has done enough to help black students (from your experience or from a general point of view)?

I feel like the university is in a transition state where we are not quite where we want to be, but we're working towards it. Go back 20 years and the support that we get today was nowhere to be seen, so I'm extremely grateful to the people who came before me and the work that they put in. That being said, there is absolutely still a mountain to climb to reach true inclusivity, but I'm hopeful because I've seen the progress that's being made.

Do you think anything else can be done to improve diversity or help those from minority backgrounds?

I think there is a lot to be done, so to talk about it all here wouldn't be feasible. One thing that definitely can be done is to include teaching and ideas into the syllabus from other cultures, not just the British. I think a greater appreciation for the arts, thoughts and ideas from other cultures will be invaluable in allowing different races to better understand each other and move towards a future where racism and discrimination based on the colour of your skin is a thing of the past.

How has lockdown affected you and your studies? How has the teaching changed and has this had any impact?

Lockdown has been tough. Really difficult. Because of the virus, they moved exams online and shifted them from May/June to late September, which initially seemed great (more time to revise) but turned out to suck because having exams loom over you for 4 months really isn't fun. Teaching this year is all online, with practicals as well being done on our uni site. Online lectures have their benefits and drawbacks, to be honest. On the plus side, it means I can roll out of bed at 9:58 for a 10:00 live clinical cases session (which I have done) and make it in time, but it also means we miss out on the social aspect of lectures, which is honestly the main reason why people go. Honestly for me, I think online lectures have been a blessing, because it means I can do things more in my own time, and it saves the time and effort it takes to cycle to and from town each day after 8 contact-hour days.

Do you have any advice for black/ethnic minority students who are hoping to attend Cambridge?

If there are any black/ethnic minority students (or anybody really) reading this who are thinking of Cambridge (or even Oxford), by all means get in touch. My Instagram is Success_Anyanwu, and I'm under that name on Facebook as well. I can try and give you guys some advice on how to go about your applications, though really the support at the school is already brilliant, and we're really lucky to have teachers who know what these top unis are looking for. If I have one piece of advice it would be don't be afraid to apply. Worst case scenario, you get rejected at the first stage, and you've had a valuable experience; best case you get accepted and have amazing experiences for the rest of uni life. For more specific stuff, and questions, you can message me privately on my socials and I'll do my best to answer your questions. For ethnic minority students, there are various schemes like Target Oxbridge which aim to get BME students into Oxford and Cambridge as well, which you can try. Also, if you know somebody already at Oxbridge, or another top uni, don't be afraid to get in touch with them and ask them about applying.

A Khawaja



BBC

Black History Month has been celebrated in the UK every year since 1987. As we work towards becoming an anti-racist school, we are continuing this tradition. As a school we are proud of the contributions made by people from all walks of life and so are celebrating successes and contributions of Black people.

We know that this does not deter from contributions made by anyone else. There have been questions this year about whether Black History Month has become a token gesture. At AGSB we are proud that this is not the case. During the month of October, we not only celebrated contributions that Black people made to the world, but we also enjoyed participating in this inclusive occasion.

AGSB's Black History Month theme this year was "Uncovering a Hidden Past". The aim across the month was to shed light on and celebrate hidden contributions that Black people have made to the world. We also asked all form groups to get involved by uncovering some of these hidden pasts.

During Week 1, we looked at John Agard's poem "Checking Out Me History". There are four significant Black people within the poem and students were challenged to find out about them. We also asked students to look at different Black inventors and find out what significant product they had discovered.



One of the benefits of lockdown from March 2020 was to give us all an opportunity to take stock and reflect. One issue at the top of the History Department's agenda was to consider whether our curriculum was as inclusive as it could be. There was a shared recognition that, whilst both our GCSE and A Level courses offered considerable breadth and balance, we could do more as a department with our Key Stage Three (KS3) programme of study.

As a result, we embarked on a wide-ranging consultation with some of our most talented Year 11, Year 12 and Year 13 History students to redesign our curriculum. The challenge was to think critically about how we integrate more effectively the study of non-white, female and LGBTQ voices into the programme of study whilst meeting the demands of the National Curriculum KS3 History Framework. This was no easy task, but our students responded magnificently. We were inundated with well-informed and carefully considered suggestions. To collate these wide-ranging ideas into a curriculum that maintains overall coherence has been a great challenge, but we hope the results will be rewarding for current and future AGSB students.

The new curriculum aims for far greater breadth and so, for example, it includes units on 'Migration to Britain pre-1066' and the 'Islamic Golden Age' in Year 7, as well as the integration of 20th Century Chinese History into Year 9. Within that broader curriculum, the importance of Black



BLACK HISTORY MONTH

Week 2 was all about music, particularly gospel music. We looked at the African roots of gospel music. We also looked at other "spirituals" and some of their double, or hidden, meanings.

In the final week, the students and staff were challenged to look into their own family history to see if they could uncover any interesting information. One student told us of his great grandfather, who was a king!

We also heard from another student whose grandfather was due an award and the family only found out through the research the student was doing! Some members of staff also shared some interesting findings from their ancestry.

Black History Month was an enjoyable month this year and we look forward to a time when we can welcome visitors in to celebrate in other ways.

R Chapman



A CHANGE OF PERSPECTIVE

British History is also far more pronounced. For example, as we entered Black History Month in October, Year 7 had already investigated stories of the 'Ivory Bangle Lady' and the Afro-Roman settlement at Aballava in Roman Britain and Year 9 had studied how the Egerton family benefited from the compensation package given to British slave-owners in the wake of the Slavery Abolition Act (1833) in their Local History Study.

KS3 History students now will have many more opportunities to deepen their understanding of the contributions of Black Britons as the year progresses and any student wishing to get ahead in their History studies could start by investigating the lives and legacies of John Blanke, Mary Prince or Clive Lloyd.

The task of developing a History curriculum which gives a voice to all of our communities is complex and will take time to refine, but we are thankful to our current and now former students for helping us to make a great start.

N Croxton



YEMEN CIVIL WAR

The Yemen humanitarian crisis is the largest in the world. Prolonged conflict caused by Western countries has finally taken its toll in a way where over 3.6 million people have been displaced from their homes. The homes where they brought up their children, the homes where they kept their belongings, the homes where they wanted to grow up. The homes that they thought were safe. In a way where almost 20 million people do not know where their next meal will be coming from. Since 2018, over 100 people have died or been injured every week and this number has only risen due to COVID 19. More and more violence has led to less healthcare, less schools, and less livelihood. COVID 19 is not the only disease that plagues this innocent country: Cholera, Malaria, Dengue Fever and so many other life-threatening diseases capitalise on the lack of hospitals and basic medical care. In August alone, the month where you and I ate out to help out, heavy rain unleashed lethal floods upon Yemen. Homes, health centres and sanitation areas were washed away whilst the blood remained on the hands of the West. It is estimated that over 259,000 people needed immediate assistance, due to these floods. The cost to repair this damaged country will be over two billion dollars, according to the Mercy Corps. However, the effects and damages will forever remain in Yemen. This human crisis has gone on for years, unnoticed. Yemen cannot afford to wait any longer. Lives are at risk and there is little sign of this conflict ending any time soon.

Yemen is an anomaly of the extremely rich middle-eastern countries and remains the poorest country by a huge margin. Since 2014, conflict between the government and private organisations has led to a spiral of decline. The fights which have occurred in hospitals, schools and even shops have wrecked public infrastructure for over 30.5 million residents of Yemen. Over 24 million of these are in desperate need of necessities including food and water. The conflicts of Yemen are the result of events that date back to much before the unification of the former North and South Yemen. Although the countries may have come together, the peace and tranquillity became much further apart. Decades later, violence has erupted even more dangerously for the control of Yemen. On top of these battles, the public who have suffered have begun to lead an insurgency against both forces.

Before the conflict even began, Yemen was a vulnerable country. Half the population were said to be living in extreme poverty and unstable governments meant famine, disease and death plaguing the country. At the end of 2014, former president Abdrabbuh Mansour Hadi failed to alleviate the pains of Yemen. It was at this time, when an armed organisation known as the Houthis took control of the capital city and of all government institutions. The Houthis are a Shia movement led by Iran and despised by enemies of Iran, Saudi Arabia. The Sunni and Shia divide between Saudi Arabia and Iran is astronomical. While America attempted to not cease the conflict under Obama, but to make it a level playing field, Donald Trump gave the Saudis full support

alongside allies UAE, Egypt and who all assisted Saudi Arabia in attempting to save Yemen's government whilst settling their old rivalry. However, the weaponry supplied to them was at the cost of millions of innocent civilians. Saudi Arabia claimed that Iran used the poor infrastructure of Yemen as an excuse for war against the Sunnis of Saudi Arabia. Regardless of what happened, the Yemen land became a warzone for the fight between Iran and Saudi Arabia. Hadi and other key figures fled the country at the time they were needed most. Shortly after this, a coalition of a dozen states launched by Saudi Arabia, led to a military campaign to regain the power lost by Hadi. As more political parties moved away from verbal discussion and towards horrific warfare, the conflict only heightened.

COVID 19 took the world by storm but for Yemen, it was an avalanche on an already unstable hillside. The close communities of Yemen meant COVID 19 spread like wildfire, and still does. The number of cases in Yemen are thought to be an extreme underestimate due to the lack of testing facilities. Over 50% of the country's health centres, which were previously in short supply, have been destroyed through warfare or during the immense struggle in handling the pandemic and the war, simultaneously. Whilst attempting to treat cholera, the dengue virus, malaria and the victims of war, COVID 19 was just another one of the many diseases hunting in Yemen. 80% of Yemenis are reliant upon humanitarian aid for their lives. COVID 19 further destroyed the help from charities and other organisations. The government issued notices on televisions and social media, but for the few who still had a home with electricity, these warnings were dismissed. The people no longer trusted a government who had lied time and time again. The restrictions of movement meant that aid organisations were further stuck, unable to help the suffering. The only aid received by some people, was through the small fragments of hope which remained.

The Famine Early Warning Systems Network measures the food security across countries around the globe. They found that over half of Yemenis were facing crisis levels or worse of food insecurity. This means that over 16 million people do not know how they will next eat. Yemen has been on the brink of famine for years and conditions have worsened, over time. Time has not healed but wounded the poor Yemenis population. After years of no income and nowhere to work, the savings of even the most successful in the Yemen population have become dry. The corrupted government has been united with the decaying citizens in that neither have money. The new currency of Yemen is bullets.

Approximately 90% of Yemen's food was imported from other countries. However, over time, warfare and COVID 19 have sealed the seaports and roads and left behind an almost isolated land of fighting. Food that is available is in such high demand that the Yemenis cannot afford it. Basic items like flour have accelerated to over 150% more than what they used to cost. To put that into context, if a bag of flour could not be bought before, it could not be dreamt of afterwards. Malnourishment soars across Yemen whilst food availability crumbles, alongside hope. Whilst only 36,000 managed to flee to other countries, millions remained trapped inside a twisted game of death. The lack of importing meant essential items like fuel, food and water were extremely limited.

Over 70% of Yemen's population lacked access to clean water because water systems and pumps were damaged and no one was, and still is not, there to repair them. While water has not flown through pipes for a long time, Cholera has taken over and made it into its new habitat. The simple hand sanitiser that you and I carry in our pockets is seen as an extreme luxury, in Yemen. Alongside the water system, power grids, communication towers and hospitals have been demolished alongside the livelihoods of the Yemenis. In 2017, the United Nations said that a child under the age of five was dying every 10 minutes from causes which would cease to exist in a western country. Conditions have only worsened, since then.

Charities and organisations have attempted to heal the wounds and bruises of this country, but the scars of horror will always remain.

T Arshad



DOUGLAS JAMES-TAYLOR

From starring in AGSB's football team, to impressing at Salford City, Douglas James-Taylor's burgeoning football career took another major leap forward when he signed for football league founding member and current Championship side Stoke City in September.

After leaving AGSB last year, Douglas shared his thoughts as he stands on the edge of a glittering football career. James looks back on his memories of AGSB and his football inspirations as he settles into life at the club famous for the skilful wing play of Stanley Matthews.

Do you feel that your time at AGSB has helped shape your prospective career, and if so, how?

Yes, massively, AGSB helped me so much in terms of supporting me with football at the same time as my A-Levels. My successful time at Salford City as a scholar was undoubtedly helped by the fact that I felt comfortable at school and backed up by all my teachers. The number of extra hours I spent in art or in extra lessons in maths and economics was huge for me as I wanted to succeed at both my schoolwork and also my football and if one slipped it often affected the other. Before this, my time under Mr O'Flynn, Mr Heathcote, Mr Birtwell and other PE staff for the school football team definitely taught me a lot tactically and leadership-wise, which again improved me as a professional as well as a player.

If you could join any club in the world right now and stay there for the rest of your life, which club would you go to?

Manchester United, 100%. I have always supported them, always will (even if we aren't great at the moment).

What made you want to pursue a career in football?

I know it sounds clichéd, but I guess it is always what I've wanted to do and so luckily for me finding what I wanted to do as a career was quite easy for me.

What do you want to achieve in your footballing career?

Again, without trying to sound clichéd, there isn't really a limit on what I want to achieve-what's the point in doing anything if you aren't trying to be the best? In more specific terms I always want to be top scorer so this season at Stoke will be a big step up for me so I'll need to improve all the time if I want to meet this goal.

How did you balance school work with football throughout your time at AGSB?

I touched on this earlier but as much as I would like to take all the credit for balancing my work at the same time as football, it wouldn't be true. The time invested by my teachers in particular Mr Hall and Miss Cooke was invaluable and made it so much easier to balance my workload and made it infinitely less stressful, this isn't forgetting the flexibility of all my teachers in economics and maths - plus a few extra maths lessons I cheekily sneaked into.

Who is your footballing inspiration and why?

Cristiano Ronaldo. His work ethic, skill, consistency, everything. Pretty much everything I see in him and what he's achieved is what I aspire to be when I look back on my career. More recently though, Marcus Rashford's charitable work is extremely admirable and has definitely opened my eyes to the effect I can have on the community so he is also someone who inspires me.

I Cooper



CYCLING FOR DEMENTIA

Four AGSB pupils (Aiyush G, Thomas W, Tom F and Mayek G) decided that we wanted to raise money to fund vital research into dementia. Dementia is a vile disease. It's a decline in mental ability severe enough to interfere with daily life as it gradually inhibits one's ability to think and move.

The three common types of dementia include Alzheimer's disease, Vascular dementia and dementia with Lewy Bodies. My grandma was diagnosed with dementia seven years ago and her rapid deterioration has been extremely upsetting. After reading extensively about the causes and prevention of dementia it became starkly apparent that there was a significant lack of funding for research into the disease and as a result no disease-modifying treatment.

To help resolve part of this problem, the four of us decided we would cycle the equivalent length of Britain from John o' Groats to Land's End, approximately 874 miles, between us, to raise money to fund dementia research. We chose this feat as it symbolised the resilience needed by those who suffer from the disease and their families who have to endure the turmoil caused.

I liaised with Alzheimer's Research UK, a charity leading dementia research. I also contacted acclaimed researchers in the field of dementia and explained our fundraising idea with them whilst asking them to discuss dementia with us.

Many scientists responded and it resulted in a senior researcher and lecturer Dr Tournier from Manchester University speaking to us about the importance of research. Dr Tournier also, kindly, recorded a video to support our

campaign and provided scientific insight. You can watch the video by clicking on the link to the JustGiving page below.

Working as a team enabled us to capitalise on our different strengths. Utilising our narrative, videos, pictures, scientific support, links, coding (thanks to Aiyush's technical insight) as well as Thomas's and Tom's unwavering support and integral commitment to the campaign. It culminated in an effective online platform which has spread awareness about dementia as well as our cause. The page has also allowed us to raise funds by accepting donations from supporters of the cause from across the world.

As of today, having recently finished cycling the equivalent length of Britain we have raised £2,611 for Alzheimer's Research UK, exceeding the target we set of £1000 by 261%. The initial target was surpassed within 24 hours of launching the page and we have received donations from across the globe. A week ago, the campaign also received a certificate from JustGiving as our fundraiser raised the most money (within the top 1%) of fundraisers on the platform in August. Serving, as a testament to the commitment, resilience and teamwork that has enabled us to spread awareness of the vital need to fund dementia research.

Despite this achievement, there is still a dire lack of funding and it's, for this reason, we would like our peers and their families to support this cause by visiting and donating to our campaign. So far, we have raised £2,711!

<https://www.justgiving.com/fundraising/cycling-for-dementia>.

Mayek G



Dr Cathy Tournier

You're a top fundraiser, Mayek

Your Cycling for Dementia page was one of the most successful JustGiving pages last month. Out of thousands of fundraisers, you were in the top 1%. Congrats on raising so much for Alzheimer's Research UK - you're an absolute hero.



LUNAR LOO CHAMPIONS

Artemis is NASA's program to land the first woman and the next man on the Moon by 2024. Humanity is going back to the Moon to establish a presence that will enable eventual crewed journeys to Mars. As NASA prepare for our return to the Moon, innumerable activities to equip, shelter, and otherwise support future astronauts are underway. These astronauts will be eating and drinking, and subsequently urinating and defecating in microgravity and lunar gravity. While astronauts are in the cabin and out of their spacesuits, they will need a toilet that has all the same capabilities as ones here on Earth.

NASA was calling on the global community for their novel design concepts for compact toilets that can operate in both microgravity and lunar gravity. These designs could have been adapted for use in the Artemis lunar landers that take us back to the Moon. Although space toilets already exist and are in use (at the International Space Station, for example), they are designed for microgravity only. NASA was looking for a next-generation device that is smaller, more efficient, and capable of working in both microgravity and lunar gravity. Getting back to the Moon by 2024 is an ambitious goal, and NASA is already working on approaches to miniaturize and streamline the existing toilets. But they were also inviting ideas from the global community, knowing that they will approach the problem with a mindset different from traditional aerospace engineering. This challenge hoped to attract radically new and different approaches to the problem of human waste capture and containment.

They wanted to encourage the next generation of space explorers, engineers, and scientists, and they knew that students may think about this design problem without the same constraints as adults. So in addition to the main Technical category, this challenge will have a Junior category. The goal of this category was to get our younger participants excited and thinking about STEM projects, and specifically about lunar toilets.

During the Summer holidays of 2021, this was an amazing opportunity from NASA that I knew we could have a shot at! After little procrastination I decided to create team Infinity Loop which consisted of Alex, Gautham and I.

To try and keep this shorter I am going to summarise the extensive journey that we undertook and explain how our Lunar Loo works. Submissions to the competition must have contained at least one of the following elements to be eligible for an award:

- A drawing of your idea for a Lunar Toilet
- A paragraph that explains how your toilet would work
- A 30-90 second video clip of you explaining your toilet design
- Eligible submissions will be reviewed by a NASA evaluation panel and one winner per age category will be selected based on the Judging Criteria listed below.

So not only did we have to design a Lunar Loo, but also create a 30 second video where we couldn't go to each other's houses due to the lockdown that we faced.

Although quite a challenging brief, we started by having zoom calls twice a week for 8 weeks where we outlined our initial ideas, created our own specification and a task analysis- all essential skills we learnt in DT. We hosted this all in a One Note document to provide a collaborative environment where we could all share our ideas.

We all had key attributes that allowed us to become one of the winners for the challenge and by utilising these skills from the very start we could speed up our workflow. Firstly, I we didn't understand how fluids interacted in space so I designed a fluid simulation that we ran in a 3D modelling program called Blender. After doing our research we each came up with 5 designs and settled on our favourite. From here we developed our idea, thinking about key aspects that allowed us to incorporate elements such as super-hydrophobic materials and acoustic mesh filters. Overall we managed to encompass bladeless fan technologies coupled with vegetative mycelium fungi for efficient, sanitary waste and air management to create the perfect solution to this problem.



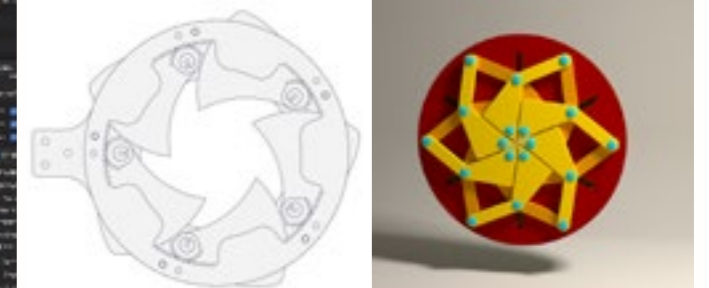
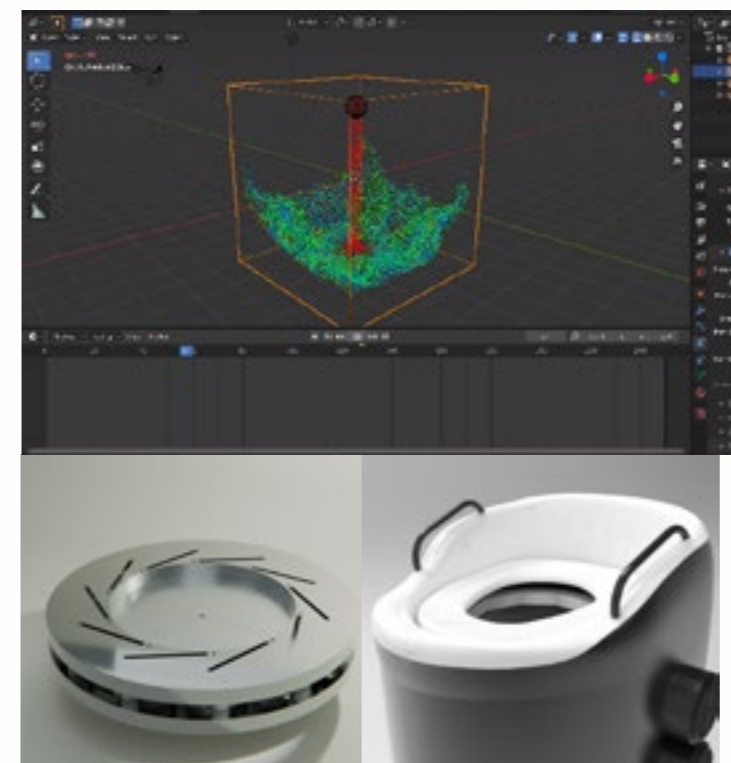
When did we win?

The deadline for the project was August 17th (we submitted on August 15th) and the judging took place from then through to October 7th. With over 4,000 individuals you can imagine why the judging process took a long time. On the morning of October 22nd I'd found out that we won! It was a great surprise, I quickly rang my other team mates who were similarly delighted. The same day we had a somewhat usual day at school and then were contacted by multiple radio stations and the BBC for interviews). This was a great experience, I also organised for a NASA employee to talk to our school about what his job is like at NASA and the competition, we were very grateful that he took the time out to talk to us.

A final thankyou to my team mates Alex and Gautham for without this project would not have been possible. And Mr. Williams for taking time out of his Summer Holidays to proofread out final entry and help organise all the media coverage afterwards!

One small defecation for man one huge mess for the ISS; the words uttered by so many astronauts. But every once in a while, a revolutionary product comes along- the Loop. Our team has been indefatigable. We have worked tirelessly day and night to revise, improve and innovate our design. We chose this project as it provided an unusual problem that at first seemed near impossible to solve, however, as we worked together our ideas developed and matured resulting in Loop. Our toilet design is highly innovative, building on the existing NASA toilet and incorporating cutting-edge Technology. It approaches the problem in a unique way, exploring different technologies and merging them e.g. biotechnologies and artificial intelligence. We are proud of the amount of detail and research we have done, resulting in a sleek and radical design.

A Gupta



Since being only six years old, it was clear Charlie W was a star in the making. His rugby journey started at Bowdon RUFC in Reception where my and Charlie's paths first crossed. Back then it was merely touch rugby, played for sheer enjoyment and a social occasion. Charlie developed through the years, becoming an extremely talented sportsman in not only rugby but many other sports. Our paths crossed once again in Year 7, where I had the pleasure of playing with him over the next 6 years. During Year 8, his talent was first acknowledged by Sale Sharks Academy, being selected for their Development Player Programme (DPP).

He then continued in this programme until Year 10 when he was then selected along with myself for the U15 Sale Development Group (SDG) whereby a select few players across the North West were selected to form an initial U15 squad. His unrivalled success at academy level put him on the national radar very early on. He continued through Sale Academy before being selected this October for the England Rugby U18 Development Camp in York. This is a momentous achievement for not just himself but the school, Sale Academy and Bowdon RUFC who have all helped his rugby development over the last 10 years. I look forward to continue to play with him at school and in the U18 Sale Academy over the next 2 years and wish him the best of luck for the camp in the October half term.

J Legg



ENGLAND RUGBY SUCCESS



On one of the Alumni Facebook groups, Mr Gallamore came across a gentleman called David Charles, who attended AGSB from 1946 to 1951. He had posted about presently being on end-of-life care in hospital due to a ruptured aneurysm and how he found enjoyment in the stories that other old boys posted regarding their time at the school.

Mr Gallamore mentioned his story to B Briggs, the Head Boy, and wondered if he would maybe do a short video or send some pictures of the school just to let David know that the school is thinking of him. As hopefully you have seen from the video, the boys have gone to town with this pulling out all the Year Books from his time here and putting together a few lovely videos which have made an Old Boy very happy.

Mr Gallamore is pleased to say David managed to get out of hospital and is presently at home under palliative care. Credit to Kai, Matty, Belema and the wider prefect team for putting this all together.

I think that this act by the prefect team shows that AGSB is not just a school but a community. The video was put together very well and overall was just amazing to watch. It was an extremely kind gesture and everyone who helped put it together should be proud of what they have achieved.

A Sadiq



SCHOOL TOUR FOR AN OLD BOY



On 12th November, the annual cipher competition began. The tournament, hosted by the University of Southampton, required students to crack codes and solve logical puzzles, as a tribute to the British Intelligence Service.

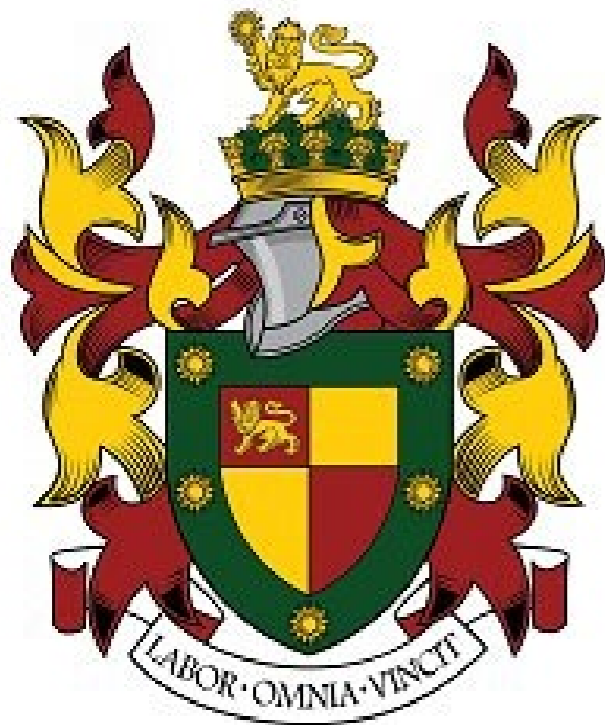
In the run-up to the Second World War, deciphering codes and messages was more important than ever as Nazi spies and sympathizers prepared to attack Great Britain.

Boys across all years of AGSB have succeeded in deciphering the weekly codes in this competition and we hope they continue to do so for the future codes.

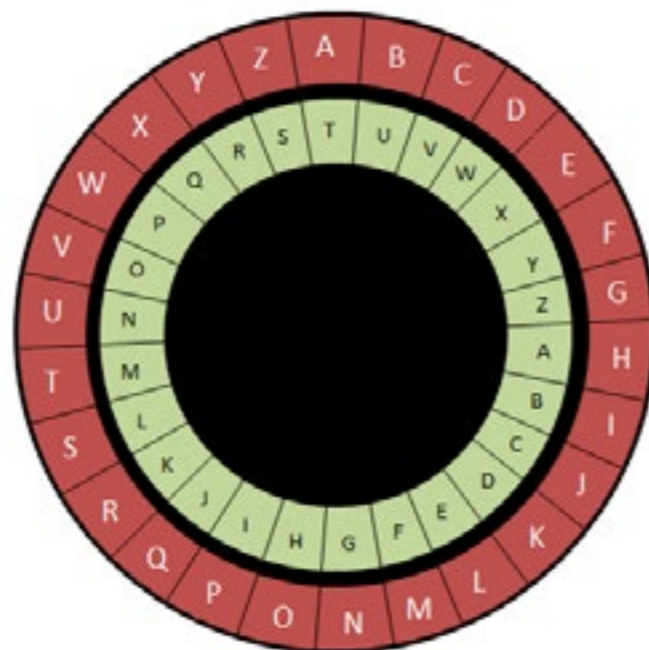
T Arshad



CIPHER COMPETITION



Caesar Shift Cipher Wheel
Set for a 19 position "T" shift.



Since the launch of the House System a year ago, I, along with several others had wanted to put on a University Challenge-style competition within AGSB. Finally, on Monday 23rd November, the inaugural Year 13 University Challenge competition was launched.

The first match saw Stamford house take on Bradbury. Stamford's team of Tom V, Prithvi M, Eesah A and Fergus M were quick off the mark to defeat Bradbury's team of Callum F, Will L, Alex M and Ben Q. Stamford won by a score of 80 points to 50, despite at one point suggesting that Mount Everest was in Western Europe.

Next up was the hotly contested match between Massey's team of Chris P, Kit F, Theo D and Saba M, and Tatton's team of Angus H, James M, Feran A and Matty C. Massey's combined knowledge was no match for the fast fingers of Tatton, who prevailed with 180 points to Massey's 130. In an attempt to achieve 3rd place, Bradbury house overhauled their team on Wednesday, with Alex T and Robbie M stepping in. Unfortunately, this was not enough to deny Massey's decisive victory of 305 points to 25.

The two victors from the first round, Tatton and Stamford (with Stamford's Tom W substituted in for Prithvi M) then clashed in the final on Thursday.



UNIVERSITY CHALLENGE



At first, Stamford looked like the likely victors, with their knowledge of musicals and chemical elements propelling them into a 50-point lead. However, Tatton's history and politics knowledge enabled their comeback, and they went on to win by 235 points to 135.

The contest attracted the entire year and several teachers every lunchtime and was a great success. I would like to thank all the contestants, my fellow hosts (Archie E, Ewan B, Tom V), Mr Murray, Mr Monument, the PE department for technical support, and all the question writers.

The final results were:

Semi-final 1: Stamford 80 - 50 Bradbury

Semi-final 2: Tatton 180 - 130 Massey

Third place playoff: Massey 305 - 25 Bradbury

Final: Tatton 235 - 135 Stamford

C Patel

POETRY DAY

When people ask me why I wanted to be an English teacher, I answer with one word: "Poetry". It was National Poetry Day on 1st October and once again the nation acknowledged and celebrated the strange power of verse. Poetry does not sell well in bookshops. Most households do not have any volumes of verse on their shelves. In some schools, there's a groan of disappointment when a teacher informs a class that today they will be reading poetry. Poetry is not popular. Poetry will never have the visual glamour of cinema, the competitive glory of sport, the seductive appeal of social media, or the comfy ease of TV.

And yet it is the oldest literary form and has endured through all ages, in all cultures. It's what we reach for at weddings and funerals. It's what we read at epic national moments, quote during global crises, and write in the darkness of despair. It's always there, just below the surface of our lives, in the songs we love, the scriptures we cherish, and in the words of protestors, politicians and prophets. If it's memorable, it's probably poetry. If it's beautiful, it's probably poetry. It's there when we sing to a baby, it's there when we fall in love, and it's there again on the gravestones of the loved and lost. From the womb to the tomb, it's the 'still sad music of humanity'.

The theme for National Poetry Week 2020 was "vision". We remember the great visions of verse.

Shakespeare's mythic vision of Britain:

This royal throne of kings, this scepter'd isle,
This earth of majesty, this seat of Mars,
This other Eden, demi-paradise,
This fortress built by Nature for herself
...This precious stone set in the silver sea.
This blessed plot, this earth, this realm, this England.
[Richard II, 1595]

Emma Lazarus' vision of America, displayed beneath the Statue of Liberty:

Give me your tired, your poor,
Your huddled masses yearning to breathe free,
The wretched refuse of your teeming shore.
Send these, the homeless, tempest-tost to me,
I lift my lamp beside the golden door!"
[The New Colossus, 1883]

Maya Angelou's hymn to dignity and resistance around the world:

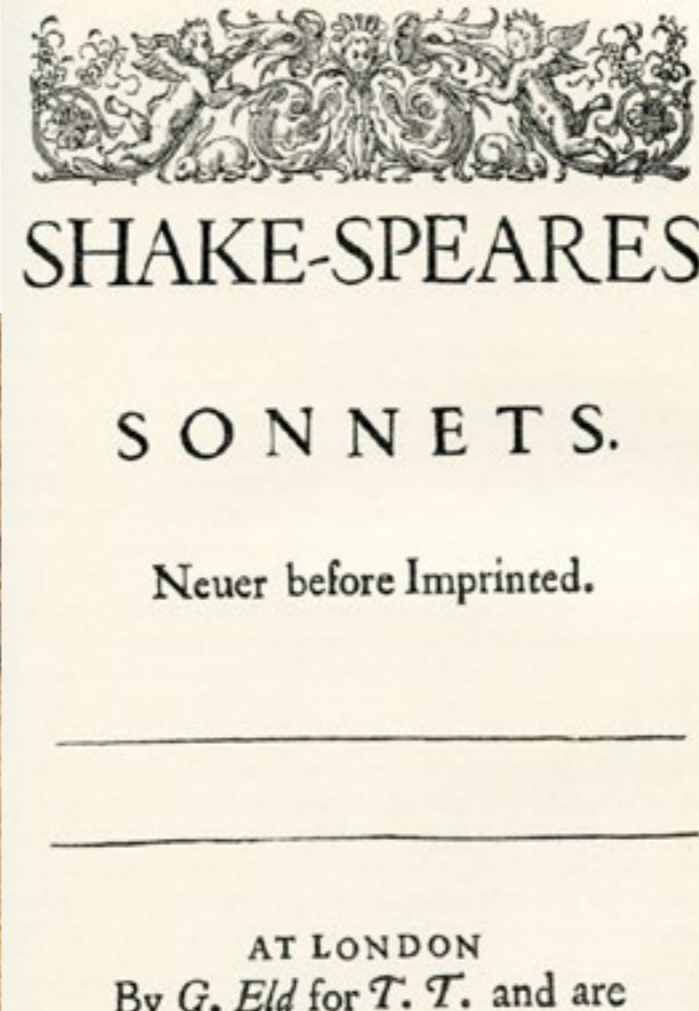
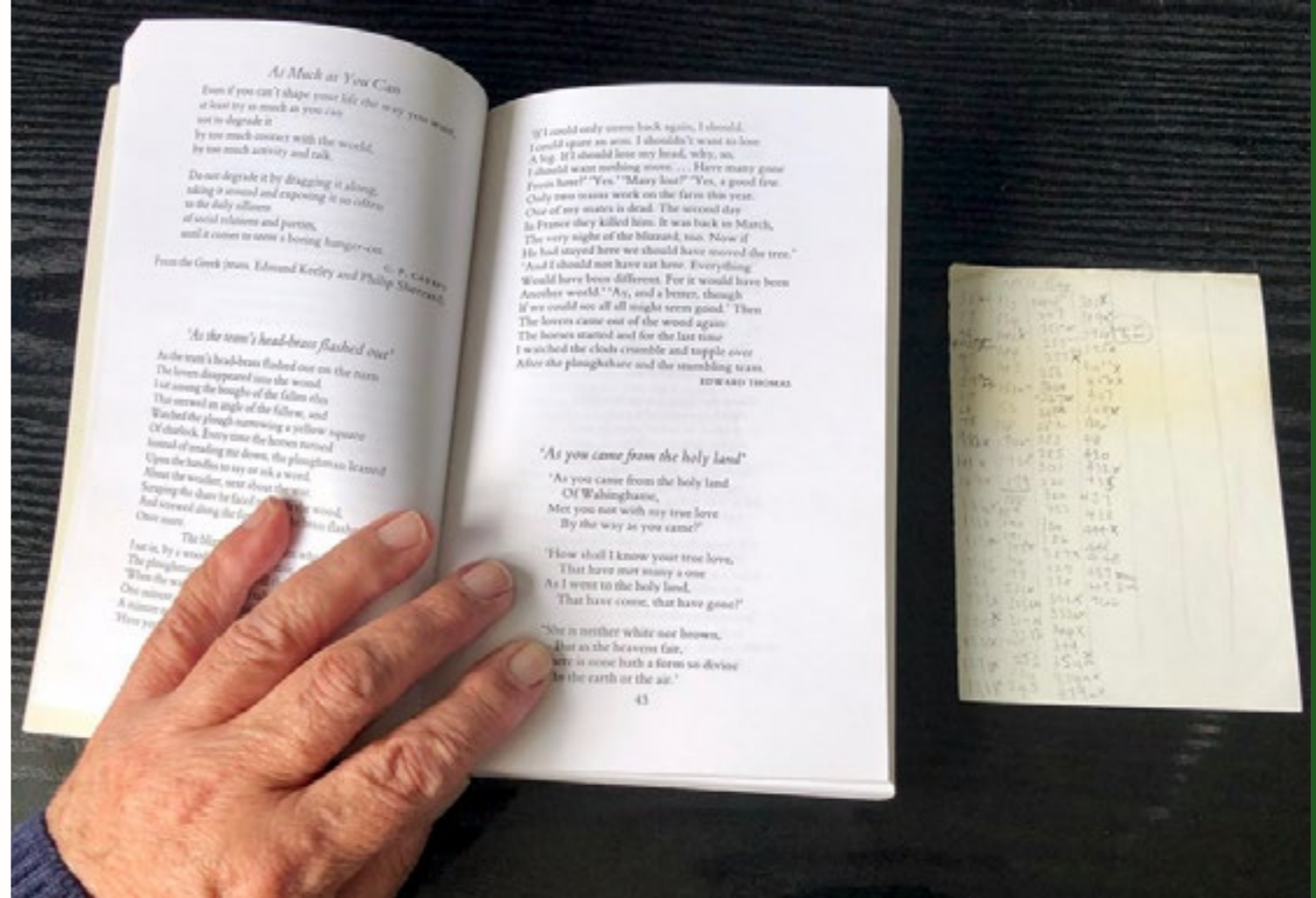
You may shoot me with your words,
You may cut me with your eyes,
You may kill me with your hatefulness,
But still, like air, I'll rise.
[Still I Rise, 1978]

And, closer to home, Simon Armitage's lockdown reflection:

So you're right here this minute being your best being.
And now you've hooked up
with the all-thinking all-feeling all-doing version of you
why sit in the future's waiting-room
drumming your fingers,
why lose the connection
when you could be your own greatest invention?
[Something Clicked, 2020]

The best words in the best order. The world may be churned-up with cliché, jammed-up with jargon, muddled-up with media, and screwed-up soundbites. But in its simplicity, brevity and wisdom, poetry will save us.

M Davies



Every year, in the week of 26th September, the MFL Department marks the European Day of Languages. Year 7 pupils entered our annual Hat Competition where they never fail to apply their creative skills to the design and wearing of a hat which represents the culture and language of a country of their choice. Each year we are amazed at the ingenuity of the students and 2020 was no exception.

There were Eiffel Towers, a spaghetti hat and even a fruit-basket hat, to mention just a few of the clever designs. The stories of shared family history, heroes and heritage were especially touching this year, making it incredibly challenging to select the best hats in terms of effort and creative flair.

Form Tutors had the task of recommending their top three hats. The winners then each earn 10 coveted House Points towards the end of year grand tally to determine the annual House Champions and all entries received a House Point. The different year groups enjoyed tailored quizzes and activities in MFL lessons to broaden the outlook of the boys regarding the importance of learning a second (or third!) language in today's world. We extend a huge 'thank-you' to all students and parents for their efforts in contributing to such an array of amazing hats and for bringing much enjoyment to staff and students alike.

G Gordon



YEAR 7 HAT COMPETITION



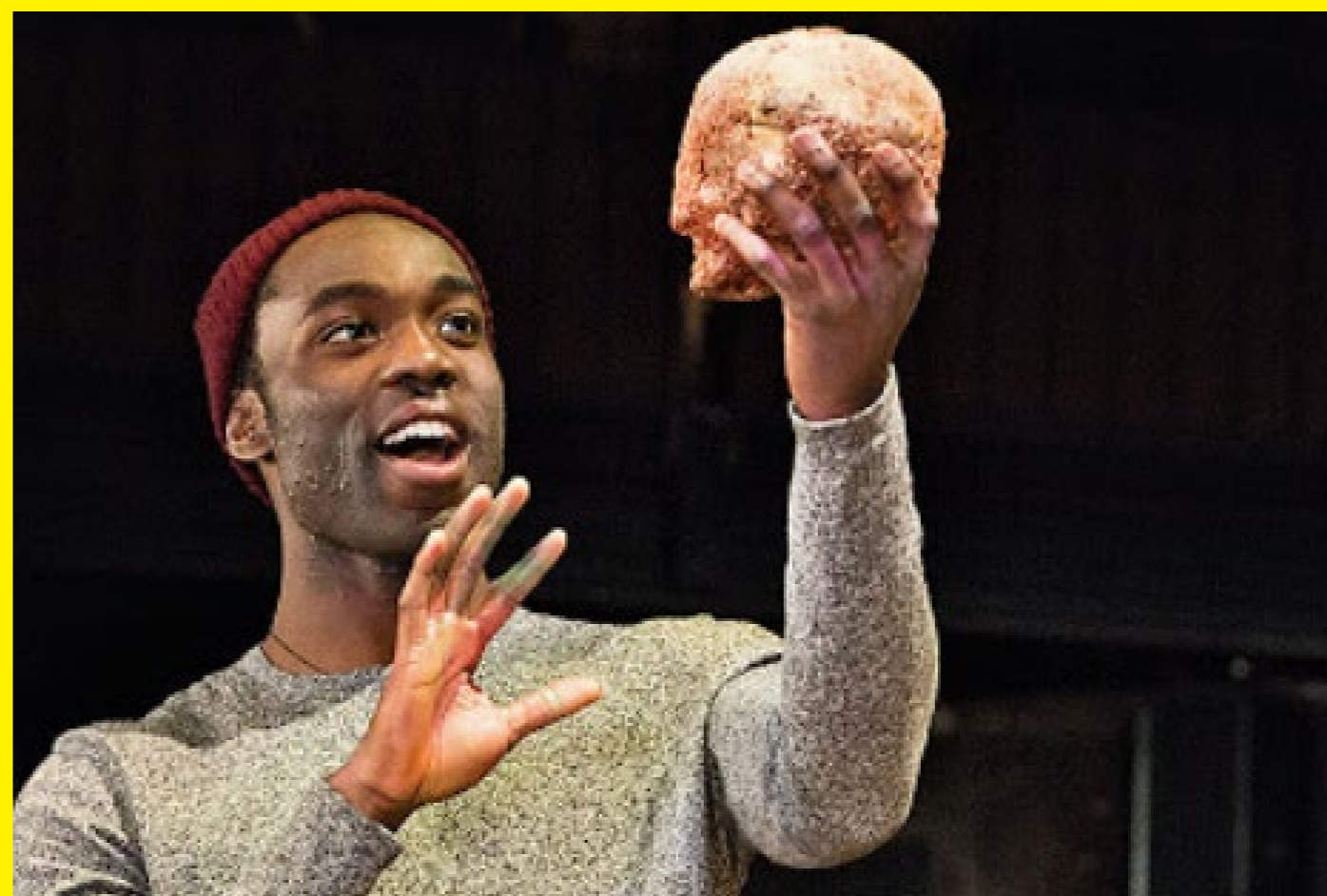
The RSC offered us a week's access to their 2016 production of Shakespeare's 'Hamlet' starring Paapa Essiedu in the lead role which we could screen in the classroom. Shakespeare himself was not averse to restrictions around pandemics - he was born four months before a plague outbreak and survived five more across his lifetime, which regularly closed theatres and public spaces. One sadly resulted in the death of his only son, Hamnet, who some scholars believe was the inspiration for this tragic play.

The play centres around the main protagonist, Hamlet, a Prince who at the start of the play is living a hedonistic and carefree life away at University when he receives the tragic news of the death of his father, the King of Denmark. When he is then visited by the ghost of his father who claims his death was not the accident believed but a plot by his own Uncle and mother to claim the throne, Hamlet does the only logical thing in that situation - feigns madness until the truth is revealed and he can avenge his father's murder. A play centred around madness and ghosts and revenge it also highlights the necessary power of drama itself through the players Hamlet uses to expose the truth. Until we can return to the theatres, we're sure Shakespeare would have approved of our work around to keep the performing arts a focus for Year 9 - after all, as Hamlet himself says "the play's the thing."

C Mahony



YEAR 9 THEATRE TRIP



The first House Blue Moon photography competition took place during the "Blue Moon" of October and November. This rare occurrence coincides with the full moon being on the 31st October and leads to the well-known term "once in a blue moon", meaning not very often.

The competition was open to all students and staff of the school and we received 127 entries from around the school.

Judging was completed by a select number of teachers, house sponsors, governors, and a number of select students. Judging was an extremely tough task as there were so many well-taken, high quality entries to look over.

The top 4 entries were as follows:

Manthan D (Y9) who took first prize,

Jonah H (Y7) who came second,

Henry M (Y13) in third place,

Hassan S (Y11) who came in at fourth place.

Manthan received his prize on Wednesday from the Headmaster and needless to say, he was over the moon. His photo was clearly taken with great skill and dexterity as it captures the view majestically.



BLUE MOON PHOTOGRAPHY



1 Many congratulations to Tatton, who were crowned the overall winners of the Blue Moon Competition with a whopping total score of 229 points, followed by Bradbury who finished with 145 points, Stamford at 65 and lastly, Massey at 60 points.

The staff entries were also of a very high standard with Ms Blaize snatching the winning spot with a photograph depicting a striking image of the moon.

Finally, a huge well done to everyone who participated in the competition, and good luck for next time!

F Ghafoor



OPPORTUNITY KNOCKS

Mr Gallamore, once a former pupil at the AGSB himself, is the Head of Careers in school and for the Hamblin Education Trust, providing a wide range of opportunities for students to learn about their futures in the working world through organising talks and publishing newsletters. I asked him a few questions about what his job entails and why learning about careers is important from such a young age:

How does it feel to be back at AGSB, having been a former pupil?

I'll be honest in saying I was very apprehensive about returning to the school due to leaving after Year 11 having not achieved brilliant grades and feeling reasonably downbeat about my experience here as a student. Having looked back over that period of my life I was dealing with my Mum's diagnosis of Multiple Sclerosis and I was only 13 at the time. I think that had a profound effect on the subsequent years in watching her health deteriorate and I can now possibly understand why my attitude to learning and overall success was slightly affected.

As a result, I never came near the school from the day I finished my last GCSE exam until the day I was interviewed at the School in May (A gap of 23 years), even though I moved to Altrincham with my family 7 years ago I didn't feel any desire to even come and look at the school from outside.

During my interview with Mr Wright and Mr Thomas (who used to be one of my teachers many years ago!) I felt a completely different vibe to being in the school and was impressed by their vision for the careers programme in the school and the wider Hamblin Trust. I have loved every single day in the role and feel so fortunate to have been given this opportunity to support such a wonderful generation of boys who seem to thrive within this environment and want to make the most of the opportunities given to them by the school.

I guess from this experience there is a very good lesson about not dwelling on the past and giving things a 2nd opportunity. I am so glad I did and hope that I stay in the school a lot longer than my first stint!

What is your role in school and within the Hamblin Education Trust?

My role as Head of Careers is to drive forwards the careers provision and my ultimate goal is to ensure that every learner who leaves this school has made an appropriate choice of their next step and goes onto have a fantastic career. Throughout a learner's time in school, they will see me both 1-1 and also in group work sessions, my job is to guide and support with appropriate choices and make learners aware of the opportunities that exist in the world of work. I link in with employers, Universities, Alumni and

apprenticeship providers to put on several presentations to showcase as much as I can about your options in the future.

Across the Hamblin Trust I work 2 days a week over at North Cestrian which is a very different school to AGSB and due to it not having a 6th form my work over there is very much currently about making sure all of the Year 11s are aware of their options and make an appropriate choice for their next steps.

As I become more established in the role I am hoping that some tasks I do will be transferable across both schools to make the role more valuable but presently this term it is in effect like having 2 separate jobs.

Why do you feel that it's important to discuss careers at such a young age?

As the average person spends over half their life working it is important to start being aware of career choices and thinking about all the different possibilities at a young age. I never have an issue with a Year 11 if they tell me they don't know what they want to be when they are older as the landscape is changing dramatically at present due to Covid 19 and Brexit etc. What I do want to know though is what they have a passion for, and which subjects they are enjoying at school and we can then start working towards making appropriate short-term choices which will bring both achievement and success.

Some of the best advice I ever received in my life came from Mrs Prentis who was my careers advisor in school, and she questioned my happiness and desire to want to stay in this school when it was clear both the career I was interested in at the time and the style of learner I was didn't fit what the 6th form could offer here. My opinion on education changed when I went to college and studied a subject I loved, and I have followed that ideology throughout my life in making sure my short-term decisions are appropriately chosen and if something isn't working out then to make a change and not become complacent.

What sorts of things are covered during some of the careers talks?

The talks I deliver personally tend to be quite general about options and the differences between colleges and 6th forms. One of my big agenda' is to get a variety of speakers from many varying industries to give the boys an insight into what the day-to-day jobs entail.

At present, due to Covid I am having to run these sessions over MS Teams and am populating them within the Careers Department MS Stream channel. Eventually I am looking forwards to getting speakers in person back into the school as I feel the impact is much more when people can participate face to face.

Examples of talks that have happened over the past few weeks included an ex-student who is now a Medic talking about his experiences of getting into Med school and beyond, the ITV Business Development director talking about the media business and the threats from Netflix and similar on-demand platforms as well as a talk by the Cancer Science department at Nottingham University about the degree course they offer.

In your opinion, what has been the most interesting careers talk and why?

Personally, I feel that the talk from Michael Thurm who was an old boy here talking about his experiences in medicine so far was very interesting and the boys really related to him know that he had been standing in their shoes a decade ago.

I feel the Alumni network is a very powerful tool we have in giving learners the exposure regarding their transition into University and work and I believe you tend to listen more closely to someone who knows what it's like to have come to this school. It's something I am trying to make sure we utilise to its maximum potential in the future.

What advice would you give to young students to be more interested in their future?

I think it's so important in this day and age to be motivated and realise that you will only get out of a career what you are willing to put into it. If you cruise through 6th form and university and expect a graduate job to land at your feet, then you are in for a surprise when you discover how competitive the world of work is and just relying on solid grades won't get you very far – There are no easy careers these days!

There are 1000's of different jobs available, so even if right now you don't know which one is suited to you, put the effort in to try things out, connect with companies and ask people about what they do in their jobs. Start with your family members as it always shocks me how few learners know in any detail what their parents do.

Knowledge is power and you have so many resources available to you to get the required information, so take ownership of your future and with hard work both in school and beyond you will end up in a career which is most importantly enjoyable and additionally gives you the financial rewards that most students crave!

I Jamal



AGSB Futures- A careers newsletter (edition 4)

Welcome to the fourth edition of the Careers newsletter.

I hope you are now well and truly in the Christmas spirit and looking forwards to a well earned break over the coming weeks. It has been a challenging and uncertain term and I have been picking up a trend amongst the learners I see regarding earring on the side of caution when it comes to considering their career choice and many students who had maybe been thinking about a couple of different career paths are now going with the one which they feel is future proof and not going to provide any risks.

With the abrupt end to the 2019-2020 academic year, life was turned upside down, schedules non-existent and lifestyles were left shaken. So many of us turned to our hobbies to keep occupied during the long summer days; some turned to writing, others to sport, and many to sleeping.

With the ample time having seemingly appeared out of thin air, the opportunities to learn something new were almost endless.

Undoubtedly many pupils did use this odd occurrence to add to their skillset whilst others may have chosen to relax and wind down-though somewhat earlier than expected-from the harsh school year.

In light of this major event an AGSB student, A Arif in Year 12, has been developing a mobile game over the past few months. Boredom got the better of him and he taught himself to code in a complex programming language; a bold action resulted in an impressive feat with tremendous results and he successfully released his app.

The game, 'Darkness Ahead', tests not only the player's hand-eye coordination abilities, but also their concentration and awareness.



DARKNESS AHEAD



This week, Darkness Ahead went live on the Google Play Store for the first time and received an overwhelmingly positive response. To succeed in coding a game to this degree, at this age, is an impressive feat of ingenuity and should be supported by us all.

A massive congratulations to A Arif for attaining an amazing and memorable achievement, it truly is remarkable.

If you want to play the game for yourself, scan the QR code and install to your device.

H Ali

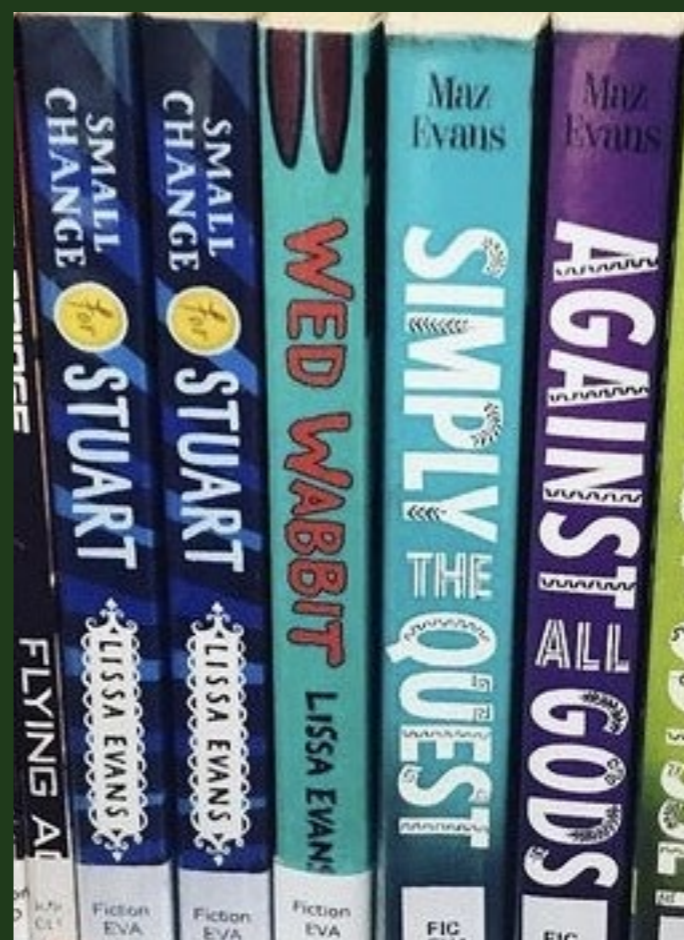
Before lockdown, in March, the AGSB library was an active student hub at break times and lunchtimes, where students would study, do homework or just unwind on the computers. However, due to Covid-19, the library and its benefits were taken away from us all. Even so, due to the creativity and enterprise of our library team, the library is still running, and you can still get your hands on that much coveted book or article.

During lockdown, the reading of fiction surged as people chose to escape into a good book. We know how important reading is to our pupils, but the temporary closure of the library posed a problem. It was almost Kafkaesque to start the year as new library co-ordinator with no library, but this was solved with the introduction of a Click and Collect service. Pupils can use Reading Cloud to search the stock and then order online, with books delivered to form rooms during the week.

We also created a virtual library with our Instagram account, **@agsblibrary**, so that new stock, news and reviews can be profiled. The service has proved so popular, that there was a competition before half term and a prize for order number 100. We have now delivered 175 books and recently opened the service up to the sixth form too. We love reading and an escape into a good book is needed more than ever. That's why we've set up a house competition to read a yard of books or complete the bingo card of reading challenges.



LIBRARY AFTER LOCKDOWN



We're also in the process of setting up an online reading club alongside the English department. Marcus Rashford's latest campaign is to keep young people reading, so if you want to Read like Rashford, please join us!

In the meantime, the new build and new library is progressing well, and we can't wait to show you the new designs and layout - as well as all the new stock we've been buying.

Most Requested series: Percy Jackson
Most Requested author: Rick Riordan
Books Ordered so far: 175 (at time of writing)
Most Anticipated book: Diary of a Wimpy Kid 'The Deep End'
Most steps walked by Mrs Mahony on a delivery day: 16,200

Overall, the system so far has been a huge success and we are hoping, as a library staff, that more students take advantage of this huge opportunity. Hopefully, we can welcome all students back to a new, vibrant, modern library setting and restore the former buzz that centred around the old one.

T Ariyo and C Mahony

In a year where Christmas cheer might be lacking, the ever-festive House Gingerbread House Competition allowed students and staff an opportunity to let their creative Christmas spirit flourish. The competition had two strands: Gingerbread houses could be made from either Cardboard or Gingerbread.

The entries were of an incredibly high standard from Year 7 though to Sixth form and Staff. The competition was also open to buildings and houses of all kinds. Some of the more unusual entries included a 'Little' Big Ben, a VW Camper Van, a Castle and even a macabre entry in the form of an Abattoir!

Houses were judged separately for cardboard and for gingerbread. The Headmaster and Mrs Gordon both judged. Miss Lee adjudicated the winners when the vote for first place was tied! The results were:

Cardboard House Winners

- 1st place: R Asif (Bradbury)
- 2nd place: Mrs Mahony (Tatton)
- 3rd place: I Ollite (Tatton)
- 4th place: G Ravisankar (Tatton)



GINGERBREAD HOUSE COMPETITION



Gingerbread House Winners

- 1st place: R Pogathota (Bradbury)
- 2nd place: J Foy (Massey)
- 3rd place: J Bendon (Stamford) & F Robertson (Massey)

The overall House results were:

- 1st place: Bradbury
- 2nd place: Tatton
- 3rd place: Massey
- 4th place: Stamford

T Ariyo and K Lee

Strange, Strange and Gardner

Consulting Forensic Engineers

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Noise
assessments

Road Traffic
Accident
reconstructions

Use of
machinery

Respiratory
Diseases

Slips,
trips, falls

Highway defect
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INTERVIEW WITH MR CARR

AGSB 9:41 AM 100%
Messages Mr Carr Details

Why did you shun the force of technology to go to the dark side of information communication technology?

I went into Design and Technology to promote STEM based subjects. But Design and Technology changed a lot over the 5 years I taught it. From welding, sewing, cooking and of course electronics; I enjoyed teaching it all. But I felt the promotion of Computer Science and Electronics became the best way to inspire students into an engineering career.

Where is the most interesting place you have travelled to?

I enjoy travelling and it has been a disappointing year for travel. Most interesting place is difficult to narrow down to one place. Hoi An in Vietnam, Jaipur in India, Mtae in Tanzania, Cusco in Peru, Chengdu in China, Hong Kong and Singapore are some of my favourites.



During your childhood did you have an inspiration/role model?

I would say there is no one person who has inspired me, lots of people along the way all added to the mix.

Which form group group has been your favourite?

I cannot possibly choose between 8CR, 7CR x 3 and now 9BM (also 7CR in 2018)! You all have great qualities; I couldn't possibly choose! Although 8CR quiz Fridays were memorable!

Do you think COVID-19 has affected the way we perceive technology?

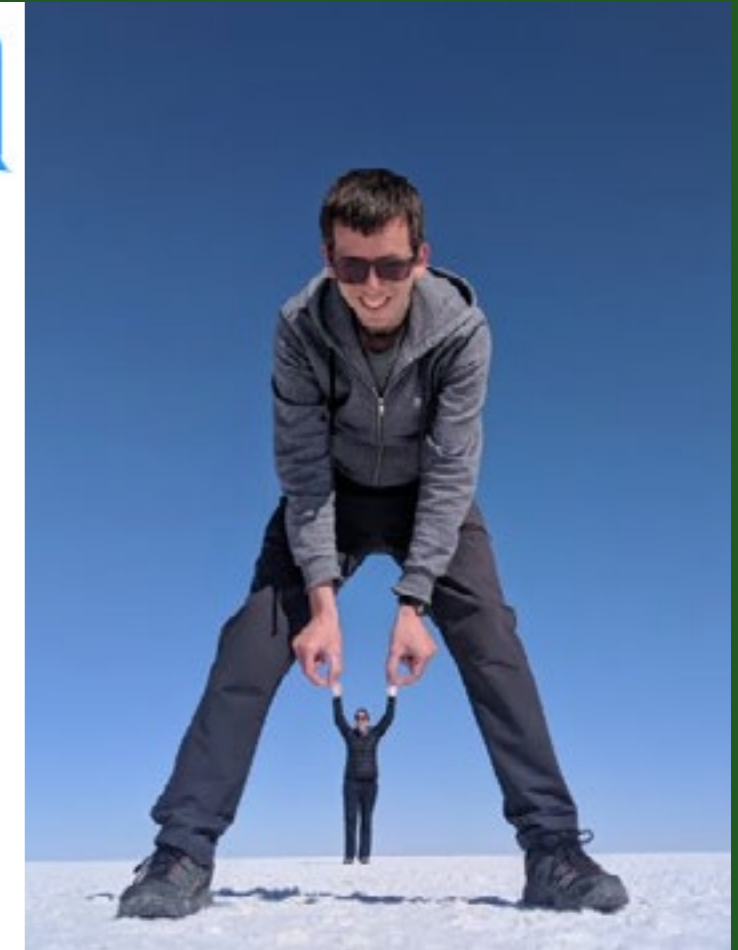
I believe it has had an effect in two ways. First the realisation for many what technologies can do. In Computer Science we have been using Microsoft TEAMS for over 2 years, it's nice to see the rest of the school catching up. Secondly, I think we need to think about how much technology we are using and use it correctly. Put down your devices when you can and get outside into the real world (if you're allowed of course.)

What has been your biggest achievement in your life so far?

As someone who didn't fancy university to start with, completing two Master's and a SENDCO qualification (2 of those, part time whilst teaching) isn't too bad. Maybe a third masters or a PhD next?

What do you like most about AGBS?

Students who aspire to be the best.



Can you describe your personal Lego collection that you have at home?

It's not vast, just a few key pieces here and there. Among the latest additions is the Nintendo Mario Lego game and a Bugatti Chiron. Maybe I'll add some more soon.





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