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WRITERS:

Aurelia-Maria Popescu

Alexandra-Maria Zaman

Maria Bogdan

Sara-Maria Tudosie

Delia Cojocariu

Andrada Vari

Neaga-Budoiu Ioana

Sarra Cruceru

Ekaterina Dmitrievna Popova

Andrei Alexandru Mihul

Alessia Columban

Daria Miruna Isacov

Rusu Horia

Teodora Elena Costea

Dragoş Constantin

GRAPHICS:

Maria Alexandra Voicu

Aurelia-Maria Popescu

Alexandra-Maria Zaman

Ana-Maria Gazdaru

THE VOICE OF TEENAGERS

Aurelia Popescu, X G

One thing I hear we keep being told while in high school is that we, as teenagers, are still too young to make important decisions and, even if we may seem mature, we need the guidance of adults. But we still dream big and want to change the world through our voices. We do have the power, as recently shown on many of the social platforms we use. And there are people out there willing to listen.

At first you, dear reader, may not believe me. But through the many organisations or projects initiated online this can be proven: fundraisers, travel guides, personal shops and so on initiated by a handful of hardworking teens. And these small "businesses" do work. Even this magazine you are reading right now is an example of a few high schoolers wanting to express their ideas and views on the world. And I think I speak for everyone when I say we probably are or know someone who is working in at least one of those many organisations led by teens and we know that every post we write on Instagram or website matters and can reach many people out there.

Another way in which this can be proven is even through the school's internal organisations which only have to do with the proper functioning of the institution. From the President of the School Council of Students to the simple class representatives, we work side by side with the adults, from parents to teachers to even people of the Ministry of Education. We may still be like Charlie Brown and his friends from "Peanuts" among these older people and their trombone-like way of speaking, but we do step up when needed to and make things work.

Teenagers have the dreams, the ideals and the motivation of wanting to make a better world from the one we were given. And now we have even the power and the means through which we can do it. We have a voice and now our aspirations can be heard.

THE BRIGHT SPEAKERS EXPERIENCE

Dorina Enciu, teacher

Public speaking is an art, prized, taught and practised as such since Ancient Greece. We had a handful of daring students who in these dire straits of the pandemic plucked up courage and entered the Bright Speakers Contest organized by Liceul Teoretic Internațional de Informatică București-Colentina and Inspectoratul Școlar al Municipiului București. To our great joy and pride, we have a First Prize winner in the Romanian language speech section, DARIA URSEA, who gave a heart-felt answer to the question asked by the organizers: What have we learnt about our power to adapt during the crisis?

Well done, Daria! Keep up the good work all of you who were bold enough to enrol in the competition!

Daria Ursea, IX G

Winning the public speaking contest, "Bright Speakers"... It all started when I attended a webinar about public speaking made by two amazing teachers, Emi Popescu and Alina Cîrjă, a Spiru Haret National College alumnus and a former pupil of our Romanian teacher, Mrs. Angela Turculeţ, under whose coordination I took part in this competition. Luckily, I took some notes then, because, two days after, our Romanian teacher told us about the contest. If that was not a sign, I don't know what it was! I had the speech structure written from the webinar and it helped me a lot when I wrote the speech. That was the easy part. After that, I had to film it. A friend of mine who is a vlogger helped me with the filming part, because he owns a good camera. Then, I had to deal with the tough part: doing public speaking without the actual public. At first, it was really funny, but if you think about it, it's sad the fact that you cannot see the people's reactions to the things you say, you cannot feel if they vibe with you or not. For me as a social being, speaking to a little red light, but acting like it was a person was hard... So that was the making process, I filmed it, I sent it to my teacher and last week I found out I was the winner of my section. And here comes the "why?". Talking to people who watched my speech, I realised that I managed to offer emotion and a clear message through it. This could be the reason why I won. Or, maybe, the fact that I depicted the situation sincerely? If you didn't watch it, you can do it now, it's not long. And if you do that, I'll be happy to hear your opinion about it, now that you also know its story.

Sarra Cruceru, IX G

Me and the camera. The camera and I. Only we were bound by an important agreement- I promised not to end up with one hundred different takes on the same presentation, whilst the camera had to make sure that it didn't lose the focus on my face, the clear image or the luminosity while filming. More precisely, I was there to sparkle in giving my speech and the

camera was there to capture it. So what could go wrong?

Well, things never turn out as planned. By having to talk before an imaginary audience, I was introduced to the weird factor, because I literally couldn't receive any feedback on the spot. No facial expression or reaction was there to help the flow of my presentation. So, I had to be my own judge and that became extremely tricky, taking into consideration the fact that I was never completely pleased with the way I was presenting my speech.

There was always a shy smile, some seconds of unnecessary pause, a stutter that caused the inevitable to happen- I ended up with a bunch of clips. Eventually, I realised that I was trying too hard to reach perfection, when I was just supposed to enjoy the whole process and be relaxed. That is the point of every contest, isn't it? Having that in mind, with a low battery percentage, I took a deep breath and I made one last clip in which to go for genuineness.

Of course, it still had some weaknesses, such us the short moments in which I forgot to gesticulate, but I was there to learn, so giving a speech alone in my room was a good way to start. I sent the clip and I was beyond happy to find out that I was chosen for the next phase. Moreover, I was delighted that I signed up for this contest which turned out to be a marvellous experience, that provided me with the keys to holding a remarkable presentation.

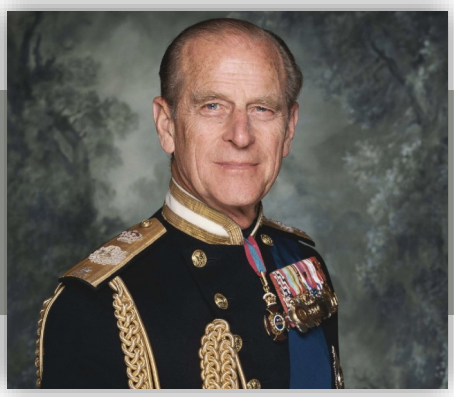
Ekaterina Popova, IX G

The Bright Speakers Competition was educational from many different perspectives. When I first heard about it, I thought to myself that it would be a fun activity, and it would help me improve my public speaking and presentation skills. Fortunately, it did involve both aspects, but I suppose I was not entirely prepared for the hard work and late nights perfecting all I could.

It became a part of my routine for a couple of days. Sitting in front of my laptop screen with the lights out, eager to keep on typing, with every click of the keyboard entrancing me until I filled with black letters the once blank page. I felt complete, filled with joy to infuse every word with meaning and symbolism to the best of my ability. But this enjoyable moment came to an abrupt stop when I remembered the most important part of this whole competition: the presentation. I felt enthusiastic to try out this new experience that awaited me. I took some time to familiarize myself with speaking in an empty room, to a camera. Not only that, but I also had to be expressive with my gestures, voice, and face, whilst extensively trying to recall all my ideas. Time management was also an issue at first, as my speech could not exceed three minutes. The pressure of keeping in mind all these at once highlighted how I never really had the opportunity to learn about public speaking. But I could not give up. Thus, I tried and tried again, every mistake aiding me in making the perfect speech.

I must admit, although it was stressful at first, I appreciated every second of it, as I ultimately had fun, and it grew my confidence. I became better along the way at conveying my ideas freely, but also my emotions. It was a wonderful experience, and I would completely recommend it to anyone wishing to understand more about what it takes to be a public speaker.

THE 9TH OF APRIL 2021



Andrada Vari, X G

Prince Philip, consort of Queen Elisabeth the second, died on the morning of 9 April 2021 at Windsor Castle, just two months before his 100th birthday. He was the longest-serving royal consort in British history and remains a figure for future generations to look up to. His life cannot be described in one word. Believe me, I've tried! It was neither happy nor sad, it was peculiar, not regular. Maybe you can call it something else, but that is up to you to decide. I am just going to try to give you a quick insight into almost 100 years of his life.

First things first: Philip was born in Greece on the dining room table in Mon Repos, a villa on the Greek island of Corfu on 10 June 1921. He was the only son and the fifth and last child of Prince Andrew of Greece and Denmark and Princess Alice of Battenberg. Since birth, he had the titles of prince and inheritor of the throne of Greece and Denmark, both from his father's side. He was baptized in the Greek Orthodox rite, which caused him a bit of a problem when coming across the opportunity of marrying the future queen of the UK, having to give up his own religion for her. After the war between Greece and Turkey, the royal family was banished from Greece and little Prince Philip found his new home in France, in the Paris suburb of Saint-Cloud in a house lent to them by a wealthy and generous aunt. Because he left the country at such a young age, the prince never learned how to speak Greek, though, in 1992, he said that he "could understand a certain amount."

Philip's childhood wasn't as delightful as you might think, but it wasn't certainly as troubled as his youth years. He studied in many prestigious institutions, such as Kensington Palace, Lynden Manor and even Schule Schloss Salem, a German school that he attended mostly because of the situation in his family (his four older sisters were all married to German princes). In 1937, one of his sisters, along with her husband and three children, died in a plane crash.

Philip served in the British navy in the Second World War, fighting against his own family for a country that had not accepted him yet. Just before the war, he had met young princess Elizabeth. She was 13 at the time and he was 18. It is told that they liked each other and that the young princess even fell in love with him, her cousin. They exchanged letters all throughout the war and upon the girl's 21st birthday, he proposed to her and they got married on the 20th of November 1947,

but not before he became a naturalized British subject and was given the titles of Duke of Edinburgh, Earl of Merioneth, and Baron Greenwich, to fit his new status.

Thus began the last 74 years of his life, his marriage and, I believe, the biggest issue of his time on this earth. From this point on he was no longer a man of his own, a prince, a father or any other status you may possibly think of. From then on he was the Queen's husband. Everything he did, everything he was, everything that happened to him had to do with his wife. He was her right hand, her consultant, her husband, but, from now on, he wasn't anything of his own. When disputing the name of his children he said "I am nothing but a bloody amoeba. I am the only man in the country not allowed to give his name to his own children." And that is just an example of how powerless he must have felt.

As a royal figure, his life was filled with social and charity events, as part of his duty. When talking about him, it seems that no one can refrain from saying those two key things: how his life, and now death, reflected on the queen. His resume, though, is impressive. He had almost 100 years to complete it and unlimited resources. It is also said that he was a strong and spirited man: he was charming and humble and a pleasant presence altogether. He was known for his bluntness and his readiness for joking. During a state visit to China in 1986, in a private conversation with British students from Xi'an's Northwest University, Philip joked, "If you stay here much longer, you'll go slit-eyed." From the British point of view this was received as a racist joke, but the Chinese authorities did not take offence. He was also criticized for practices such as fox hunting and shooting game birds.

Even though he led quite a long life, the prince was not keen to advance in years. In a 2000 interview (when he was 79) he remarked that he was not enthusiastic about living an extremely long life, saying that he could not "imagine anything worse" and had "no desire whatsoever" to become a centenarian, saying "bits of me are falling off already". And, as it turns out, he had then no less than another 21 years to live.

He retired from his royal duties in 2017, making only brief appearances from then on, participating exclusively in important events. About the same time health issues appeared, and he visited several hospitals for a number of problems. He died on the 9th of April, this year, four weeks after getting out of his last visit to the hospital. His death was peaceful, and it was described as: "...so gentle. It was just like somebody took him by the hand and off he went."

He was a man with a full life. He had his strengths, his flaws, but I believe he lived it well. He may not be remembered as anything more than the queen's husband, but, as his duty was, he served her well.

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Photo credit:

ABC News

ON FRIENDSHIP

Ilinca Maria Dima, X G

There is no such thing as a definition for friendship, for it is something you feel. Remember when you were little and you looked at another human being, someone you barely knew, and casually said "From now on you are my friend!"? And that was it, no explanations needed, and it was absolutely wonderful!

We are now going to look in depth at the concept of friendship, with a more complex and profound approach, but remember the simple way you used to make a friend throughout your reading because that very trust and faith is the glue that keeps any friendship together.

The philosophical approach

Aristotle once said: "most necessary with a view to living ... for without friends no one would choose to live, though he had all other goods." So in ancient Greece, friendship or *philia, was viewed as something indispensable. From Aristotle's perspective, a friendship included a voluntary relationship with mutual caring, intimacy, shared activities and utilities.* Others say that a friend is just another part of yourself, a way to discover and learn who you truly are, like in the *Essene Mirrors: everyone is a "mirror" held in front of you, showing what you cannot see on your own.* And, of course, we also have the sceptical and pragmatic ones that stick with the *"humans are social creatures; it is in their nature to form bonds with one another in order to preserve the species*". All of these people are right, or at least, they can't be proven wrong, for this is purely theoretical; your truth lies in your perspective. Personally, I find myself at peace with a mixture of concepts, believing it is a unique experience from person to person – different eyes see different things.

The neuroscientific approach

Besides the psychological benefits of having friendships and downfalls if not, there are biological ones as well, and pretty important to say the least. Usually, when making a friend we look for someone similar to us- same interests, values and mindset. But what if I told you that, subconsciously, we develop friendships with people who are similar to us down to genetic level? The genomes of two friends at the level

of single nucleotide polymorphisms tend to have a positive correlation, they are also homophilic (= tendency for people to maintain relationships with people who are similar to themselves, as characterized by age, race, gender, religion, or profession). The genetic similarity in comparison with such strangers is analogous to that of cousins in the fourth degree.

Part of the reason you are feeling good while spending time with your friends is that your brain releases endorphins, oxytocin, serotonin, dopamine and adrenaline. This is a wonderful molecular cocktail: endorphins make your pain go away, oxytocin is the molecule of affection while serotonin is responsible for happiness, dopamine makes you look forward to plans and, well, adrenaline makes you feel alive. But what happens when you stop a certain friendship, especially an almost co-dependent one? You go through a withdrawal period, where cortisol levels rise. The brain state is almost exactly the same as in the case of a drug addict in rehab. It is definitely not an enjoyable experience, but nonetheless an important one we all go through at least once or twice in life; this is the beauty of friendship: it teaches you some of the most valuable lessons even in its absence.

The most important friendship

I think it is quite well established that friendships are important, even mandatory. But keep in mind that you need to spend some time alone for the most detrimental friendship you'll ever have to grow: the one with yourself. Remember that you cannot and will not know nor love someone more than you already know and love yourself. Remember that if someone is alone, but has a wonderful friendship with themselves, they are far from being lonely. Numbers don't hold any power in this discussion, as I said in the beginning: friendship is something you feel and you cannot count feelings.

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THE CRAVE FOR POPULARITY AMONG TEENAGERS

Ioana Neaga-Budoiu, X D

For nearly every person, but mostly for the young ones, acceptance from the people around is indispensable. When one is young, they need to be praised by as many people as possible, so they can feel good about their own person. And so, the crave for popularity is, in the greater picture, a crave for acceptance, a way one can feel worthy.

There are very many people in every domain that want to show the others how great they are, want to be known and talked about. Social groups, for teenagers, are usually created in educational institutions, that is why school relationships are so often portrayed in media. In every group, there are different characters, but, usually, the social, outgoing one, is the most liked one, and, at the same time, the most envied. They are the center of attention, they have a name and, so, they gain some power. At an age at which one starts feeling the lack of power given to them in relation with adults, power among one's peers has its significance. The popular kid is the celebrity of teenagers, they are an important figure.

Of course, there are teens who have a tendency to be more sociable, who just enjoy being around many people. But, the crave for popularity, the desire to be liked by many, comes from the need to throw away insecurities. One can feel appreciated only by being shown acceptance by others. Being always surrounded by people that want to be like you, that want to spend time with you, makes you feel good. As long as there are people who feel insecure because they are not you, you will feel powerful.

At the core of it, this need of popularity is the very need to build confidence, an advantage that will help you in so many different situations. You can't just feel good about yourself without ever having somebody saying that you are great, that you are doing something right. And a teenager, being at the time when their character is at the peak of development, has to hear that not only from their parents and educators, but also from other teenagers, because this is also the time when the need for interaction starts hitting hard.

THE OBSTACLES OF FEELING ONE LIGHT YEAR AWAY

Sarra Cruceru, IX G

Long-term goals. They are the guiding light to which we are enthusiastically heading, being given a certain purpose that prevents us from wandering aimlessly throughout our lives. Everyone sets themselves a long- term goal, even if without realizing, so, whether we are longing for getting a promotion from our boss or making it to NBA, we build up the determination and confidence we need to achieve our target. However, not all of the people gain motivation after setting such a goal, therefore, some either join this journey with a lack of understanding of what is truly ahead of them, or they give up from the first.

The motto of a long-term goal is: "Get going and keep going", and, even though this might sound as a piece of cake, when it comes to putting it into practice, two categories of people are suddenly formed. The first one refers to the persons that underestimate how hard it will be. Choosing a new goal is easy, but sticking to it is tough. Misjudging the problems that you will probably encounter can be considered a kind of self-sabotage, because it leads you to the astonishment of feeling unprepared for the reality. It's true that you should be optimistic and confident beforehand about your chances of achieving your objective, but, simultaneously, you need to be down-to-earth and realise that, in order to accomplish what you put your mind to, you have to surpass the terrible obstacles of a long and demanding path. In other words, you need to know what you're truly up to, in order to fulfill your full potential. This requires a sense of great responsibility and strength, so these represent two keys to success.

On the other hand, the second category includes the persons that face an instant discouragement when seeing what an endless road comes before them. In fact, they consider everything so threatening, that they renounce immediately, abandoning the good of just trying. But, actually, here's the trick: no matter how far away you seem to be, you have to always keep in mind the fact that you are going to reach the end of your journey someday. And it is one hundred percent in your power to decide if you do it successfully or not.

Indeed, "long term goal" suggests a target which isn't going to be accomplished sooner than twelve months, but here intervenes perseverance, the ambition of continuing, despite all fears, doubts or possible roadblocks. Perseverance will be your only ally against the wrong vision that failures are definitive defeats. It will provide you with the strength and desire to take every single obstacle as a welcome challenge, that, once passed, can propel you ahead on the progress path. This will happen because you will come to develop a positive mindset, which will consider the failures as some good and inevitable friends that help you get diverse experiences, vital for obtaining self -evolution. Additionally, patience will be a significant quality that will go hand in hand with the ambition, owing to the fact that it will constitute the power of going further, no matter how much of a distance is between you and the finish line. If you fall, you get up and continue... this is the only pattern that can make a dream come true.

So, remember: even though you feel being one light year away and everything seems too difficult and impossible, you need to stop giving up on your dreams, but shoot confidently for the moon. Even if you miss, you'll land among the stars.

WHAT DO OUR CLOTHES SAY ABOUT US?

Ekaterina Dmitrievna Popova, IX G

Clothing has been a daily part of our lives since the day we were born, almost like our second skin. We associate our outfits with our personalities. Because of that, most people will believe that you reflect the kind of clothes you wear. But that's not always the case. At one point in our lives, we have mistakenly chosen clothing that does not spark our interest, for the only purpose of fitting in with a specific social group. As a teenager, this is a recurring wish, like a sickness that hits you in the face, startling you with the reality that people judge you based on your appearance, which in the end, influences your choice in fashion. It's important how we utilize attire. So, let's talk about different fashion styles.

Photo credit: www.instagram.com/vicdeangelis

The rockers are probably the most numerous types of teens, as it's a guilty pleasure to put on your favourite rock band t-shirt and blast their music through your headphones. It is a mood booster, increasing your confidence, because rock music is intended to be liberating, making you feel as if there were no worries in the entire world. As such, it's not a coincidence that the age group that wears rock-and-roll merchandise is adolescents because they are at a point in their life when they want to become independent and carefree. As you can see, the rock band t-shirt says a lot about the confidence of the person wearing it.

Skaters are known to be spontaneous people, who do not respect the rule enforced by society and who just want to have fun. This style has its origins in the growing popularity of the skateboard, which has always been an outdoor sport, so you can expect to see these people in breezy outfits, perfect for nature. The skater look is also quite practical and minimal, just right for these easy-going people, who just want to have fun and take risks, as they feel the adrenaline in their veins every time they go outside.

Photo credit: Pinterest

The athleisure look is an undeniably comfortable one, yet it comes with many great attributes. Although this type of sport-inspired clothing is casual, it definitely makes everyone seem serious, as if they are devoted to a goal they truly want to achieve. Being a look associated with sports and hard work, it's only natural that one could think that you are powerful, in control of your life, and on your way to prove to somebody they have committed a grave mistake. In case you ever do need attire for the latter, you might consider putting together some athleisure clothes. Besides being practical, they fit perfectly into an urban environment, where you are always busy and on the streets. As such, coming into contact with strange substances and dusty benches is not a rarity. Clothing that does not stain easily, like a tracksuit, is a great option.

Photo credit:fashionarrow.com/preppy-style-secrets-you-probably-didnt-know

Preppy fashion has had a long history in the teenage world, from the mandatory children's uniform and rebelling against it because of the constraints it presented, to the up-and-coming student look, even being associated with the antagonists in teen's movies. Perhaps it seems as if it is a style that requires much effort or that it is unnecessary for adolescents to put together, but it will even help you with school work and much more. It's a classic youthful style, recognizable to any age group, a feature that comes in handy when wanting to appear relatable to anybody. Not only that, but it's the closest look to business attire for teenagers to wear, automatically forcing you to act as a leader in your class, because of the feeling of empowerment that comes with this kind of style.

These were some traits linked to several popular styles with teenagers. Knowing this, we can use it to our benefit, and better understand what role clothes have in the social dynamics. Clothing preferences do reflect our personalities and interests, but also our persona, what we want others to think about us, the environment we spend our time in, and beauty standards. Knowing how they influence our lives is key to understanding how to dress. To quote Shakespeare, we do "wear our hearts on our sleeves"

Fashion in the Georgian Era

Alexandra Zaman, X G

A century passed since the Elizabethan trends died out and here we are again! This is the longest fashion era that bears the name of an English monarch, lasting for more than a hundred years! It saw the reign of George I (which started in 1714), George II, Frederick (who didn't actually ever rule because he died before his father, but was the parent of the next king, so I guess he at least deserves to be named), George III and George IV, while some historians also include the brief reign of William IV in the Georgian era. There is also a subcategory, the Regency era, and if you have no clue what I'm talking about, then most likely Jane Austen and her famous novels do tell you something! It was the last part of George III's official reign during which his son, who was still a prince of Wales (this is the title given to the firstborn son of a king), undertook his duties since he was mentally unstable.

Now that we are ready with the historical context, let us dive directly into those wide panniers and Macaroni wigs!

The shape of the dresses slowly modified from decade to decade. While the Elizabethan dresses were perfectly (or at least, almost perfectly) round, people seem to have developed a preference for wider hips during the 17th century, hitting the climax around the 1750s-1760s. At that point, dresses in many Western European countries grew to extreme breadths that we find both funny and very uncomfortable nowadays! But they had to be kept in that shape somehow, right? That's where the panniers or hooped skirts come in handy! A dress worn without this understructure would be awfully long and the delicate embroidery wouldn't be properly displayed!

This is also the period when different types of dresses received names that reflected their origins (examples: the *robe à la française*- the French dress, the *robe à la polonaise*- the Polish dress, the *robe à la creole*- inspired by the fashion of the people from the Latin American colonies, the *robe à l'anglaise*- the English dress. The 1800s revived the Greek dress (*robe à la grecque*), but this will be discussed in a different paragraph.

Just like in later fashion eras, we see that the men's silhouette barely changed over these years. Transitions were small and not that obvious since men did not have to bother that much about their appearance; for the head of a family, money was better kept for the future than spent on costly clothing! Dressing in good taste and most importantly expensive did have its perks, though, so what would a fine gentleman request his tailor? It was all about straight lines, which is reflected in the design of the waistcoat, the sleeves, the breeches (which were the very tight pants they wore in the Georgian era); even those famous hats you see in a lot of movies, the tricornes, where shaped like a triangle! However, depending on the preference and budget of the said gentleman, the waistcoat or undercoat could be embroidered with colourful patterns. In England, we see rather plain clothes. People did dress elegantly, but this elegance didn't come from a crazy mix of patterns and colours or the overuse of accessories. The standard was bolder choices such as bright red, blue, yellow and green for men and a more pastel, but similar colour scheme for women. Do not expect to see the same simple clothes being worn by royalty and nobles, though. Their DUTY is to shine, so you may see portraits of British rulers dressed quite extravagantly. For them, it

would be absolutely normal. Hairstyles are often exaggerated in modern depictions. Both women and men wore wigs, but in certain contexts. Women mainly used white or light gray powder to colour their own, natural hair (Queen Elizabeth, is that you again?), so wigs were only used by the highest of the high society to show that they belong to... well... the high society! It's hard to believe, but some of the extravagant hairstyles of the 18th century were achieved using only the wearer's hair! Also, the wigs that people like Mozart wore, with many rolls, were called Macaroni, and they were braided with a nice, tiny bow, which therefore means that wearing bows wasn't only a girls' thing! As for the hats, one amusing invention is the calash, an enormous bonnet made to fit the enormous hairstyles!

Out of all the accessories people had, it is worth mentioning that the choker necklace was a common choice in the Georgian era. Still, bold jewellery in the form of necklaces, bracelets or rings wasn't that popular anymore.

King George III was showing signs of mental incapacity in the late 1780s and things only got worse. Britain suffered a lot politically! First, the American colonies said 'bye-bye' after taxes were increased in the New World and everyone was bored of serving a king that was literally one ocean away. Knock-knock! What now? Oh, the French are revolting! And they seem to love chopping people's heads like salami, so other monarchies try to do something about it. Guess what! The King is already dead and so is all the monarchist spirit. And after only 20 years of republic, looks like a French guy, named Napoleon Bonaparte, wants to rule the world, including Britain and its colonies, and crowns himself Emperor! No wonder the king wasn't really sane anymore. So that's when his son took all of his responsibilities and the kingdom had a period of regency.

The start of the 19th century brought something completely fresh. Westerners went back to the ancient ones: the Greeks and Romans. Europe needed to be rebuilt and people wanted to find new meanings of democracy and get rid of the extravagant tendencies of the 18th century, so they returned to the origins. Soon, ladies adopted a simpler dress, with high waist, that was mostly white and golden, while the men's jackets raised their waist as well and transformed into the grandfather of what we know today as "tuxedo". The men's collars were high, sometimes even touching the cheeks, while the women's dresses had a V, square or even off-shoulder neckline. Sleeves were long for daywear and short for evening gowns, but the arms still had to be covered with long, white gloves. These short sleeves grew puffier and puffier and reached epic proportions between 1832 and 1835.

The accessories were various: fans, headbands, shawls and bonnets for the ladies, top hats, gloves and walking sticks for the gentlemen. To embellish their hair, some women wore a kind of diadem that you will notice in the Roman mosaics and sculptures; the most common hairstyle included front curls, with the rest of the hair being tied in a bun. Wavy or curly hair was considered a fashion ideal for both women and men!

With the death of the king's only child (princess Charlotte) and his younger brother, another heir was needed. The luck fell upon a girl, Victoria, who was King George IV's niece from his third brother. She managed to avoid a regency, since King William IV (another uncle!) died when she was considered major, and was crowned Queen of the United Kingdom in 1837 when she was just 18 years old.

Party like the 16th century!

Alexandra Zaman & Aurelia Popescu

X G

Even if the origins of the story of the famous play "Hamlet" by William Shakespeare are hard to track down, scholars managed to link it to a Norse legend composed in Latin by Saxo Grammaticus in about 1200 AD. It is well known that the High Middle Ages were harsh, Europe not only going through a long-lasting plague, but also many wars and crusades. Therefore, balls were not very common and there is scarce evidence of their existence. Moreover, Shakespeare was influenced by current events on the political stage during his life, so accuracy wouldn't be exactly on point. For this very reason, we will be placing this fictional ball in the second half of the 16th century. We now welcome thee to the grand coronation of His Grace King Claudius of Denmark!

First of all, where would such a celebration be taking place? As mentioned in the play itself, the choice would be the royal castle of Helsingør, Kronborg. Initially a stronghold, the castle was radically modified during 1574-1585 by King Frederik II, so that it would match the popular Renaissance aesthetic of that time. The gigantic ballroom was built above the already existing chapel and it could be accessed by the queen through the Queen's Gallery directly from her chambers.

But what are the requirements for attending the ball as a guest? Well firstly, you have to be part of the foreign royalty, nobility or at least the gentry and have a good relationship with King Claudius and his family. If you are less lucky, you would come only as a luggage-carrier and sit with the other servants, away from your master or mistress and basically the party itself. You could still enjoy it though!

As you look around, you realize you are surrounded only by the richest of all. This means that they cannot be dressed like ordinary peasants, so how would they display their origins and wealth? For the coronation, the king would wear the traditional red cloak trimmed with ermine, while solemnly receiving his crown. Afterwards, however, the ceremonial attire needs to be put back into storage, so you will observe that his clothes are similar to the ones of other nobles: a ruffled collar, doublet and jerkin, puffy trousers that reach above the knee, stockings to ensure that the legs are fully covered and shoes of the best quality! The queen would choose a multilayered Elizabethan dress with a standing collar, supported by a hooped skirt, and would pick accessories like a beautifully crafted fan. The crown prince, young Hamlet in our case, would wear similar clothes to the other gentlemen. The Danish guests would follow the latest fashion set by the royal couple, but the foreigners will wear the clothing in their countries' styles. This is because the fashion was not yet universal and you will spot certain differences in style across

Europe. As the newly crowned king enters the ballroom, epic tunes are played by the court musicians. It may sound different to some of the guests, including you! And when it comes to music as a whole, this was a transitional period. Overlapping the beginning of the Baroque era, an important shift in the musical structure can be noticed. Before, music was heavily inspired by the traditional biblical stories as a result of the pain caused by the Black Death. However, Burgundian and Venetian composers decided to change that. The northerners of the bunch had started introducing the balanced polyphony to their pieces, this being the base of what we would call a modern choir or orchestra. Meanwhile, the Italians had decided to go back to the roots, to Aeneas' Hellenic origins, and to restore the music of the ancient Greeks. With Vincenzo Galilei (father of the illustrious Galileo Galilei) and Giulio Caccini as leaders, the monody was created, which would later become the opera. Furthermore, the transition to the Baroque era also meant the growth in popularity of the tonal music rather than the modal one that was used before.

And now, for the last part, the actual food! In the West, especially England, people were obsessed with sugar! Even salads contained lemons, oranges and sugar among the veggies! Meat was the most important part of every meal, being a symbol of power and wealth. Common beverages in the Elizabethan era were the never-dying wine, ale and beer, since water was unsafe. Unfortunately, Mads Mikkelsen won't be there to whisper 'Probably.' as he hands you your beer....

You know there is tension between the king and his nephew....or step-son? No one really knows, but you and us are here to party, so enjoy these 16th century Untold vibes!

DUELS THROUGHOUT HISTORY

Andrei Alexandru Mihul, IX G

Young age and hot temper, hot temper and fight. When words fail to quench the fire, conflict between youngsters may escalate to physical confrontation. While most well educated teenagers nowadays regard violence as unacceptable and degrading, in Shakespeare's time this was the customary way aristocratic offspring squared disputes: the one-to-one fight with swords, the duel. This method of settling personal feuds became so widespread that prohibitive measures had to be enforced in order to prevent bloodshed or even untimely death. Mercutio duelled Tybalt and died, Tybalt duelled Romeo and died, Romeo was banished from Verona and lost Juliet.

Getting back to real life, along the centuries the weapons of choice evolved technologically from swords to pistols and rules were established such as the presence of two seconds, one for each party involved. Their duties were first to try reconciliation then serve as witnesses to the confrontation. Duelling, originally reserved for the nobility, extended to the upper classes generally and the military.

Now, from the duels I have been researching, what really caught my attention was that the last duel in history took place in 1967, when men were exploring space and rock and roll was taking the world by storm!

Here are a few of the notable duels in history:

Ladies' duel:

Duels came to be not the exclusive privilege of men. In 1892 an argument arose between Princess Pauline Metternich and the Countess Kielmannsegg about flower arrangements at the Vienna Exhibition. To avoid legal problems, they agreed to meet in Liechtenstein. In the sword fight both ladies were injured, the Princess on her nose. Before being tended to by a Polish woman doctor they embraced, kissed and made friends! Not surprisingly, both seconds were women too!

Greek Duel:

Two young Irishmen, Richard Grantham and Norton Fitzgerald, who were actually great friends, argued over the spelling of a Greek word. The duel took place in London, in 1721. After a brief sword fight, Fitzgerald died of his wounds and Grantham was badly injured. The press described the argument leading to the duel as a 'philosophical question'.

The most famous duel:

Alexander Pushkin, the great Russian poet and novelist, found his death after meeting the Frenchman George d'Anthès in a duel. Rumours had been circulating in Saint Petersburg about an affair between the poet's beautiful wife Natalya and d'Anthès, who had been pursuing her in public even after marrying her sister Ekaterina. The duel took place on 27 January 1837, in the absence of a second for Pushkin. The Frenchman fired first and his bullet hit the poet in the hip and went deeper into the abdomen. Pushkin's shot barely scratched the Frenchman's arm. The great writer died of peritonitis two days later.

Photo

Photo credit: www.lavenir.net/cnt/dmf20170421_00992471/le-dernier-duel-a-l-epee-il-y-a-50-ans-entre-deux-elus-francais

Last duel:

Or at least, the last publicly recorded in France. It took place in 1967, between two members of the National Assembly, Gaston Defferre and René Ribière. Defferre yelled 'Taisez-vous, abruti!' ('Shut up, idiot!') at Ribière so in return Ribière challenged Defferre to a duel. The weapon chosen was the épée (the largest type of sword used in fencing). Fortunately, the conflict resulted only in a few wounds on Ribière's arm.

Well, after two world wars and two atom bombs, you'd have thought that mankind knew better! As I said, our generation perhaps does!

THE IMMORTALITY OF HAMLET IN TODAY'S MEDIA

Aurelia Popescu, X G

When William Shakespeare wrote the play, I don't think he expected it to be such an important piece of writing in the universal literature. The phrases "To be or not to be: that is the question", "There is something rotten in the state of Denmark" and "Get thee to a nunnery" have become some of the most famous quotes in the world, many people knowing at least one of them. Thus it is obvious to see how "Hamlet" has influenced the writing of the modern characters we now see in movies, books and other sources of entertainment. But how much do they relate to the Shakespearian character of Prince Hamlet?

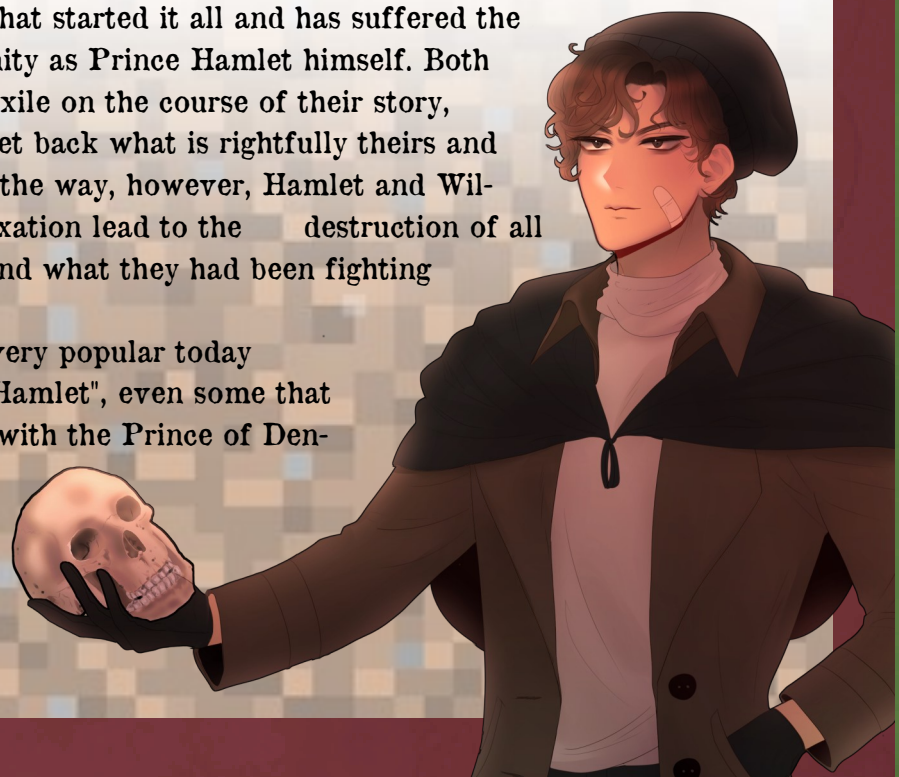
Kylo Ren in "Star Wars: The Last Jedi"

"Star Wars: The Last Jedi" is definitely one of the weakest movies of the franchise because of the subplot through which the Resistence fighters go. However, this forces the audience to pay closer attention to the protagonists of the film: Rey and Kylo Ren, formerly known as Ben Solo. The latter shares many traits with Prince Hamlet, all the way from his origins to some of his decisions during the story. They are both royalty, Kylo Ren being the son of Princess Leia Organa and Hamlet prince of De mark, and they are both haunted by their father's ghost. The weight of their father's death makes them both lose part of their sanity, a parallel which is presented in a scene where Kylo Ren smashes his mask against the walls of his battleship, his position also imitating the one Hamlet has during the famous monologue starting with "To be or not to be".

Wilbur Soot in the Dream SMP server

As surprising as it may be, the well-known Minecraft server's lore shares similarities with a play written hundreds of years ago. What has all started as funny improv back in August has now turned into an actual plotline for all the members of the SMP thanks to the idea of the streamer Wilbur Soot. His character is what started it all and has suffered the most, going down the same path of insanity as Prince Hamlet himself. Both leaders of their country are forced into exile on the course of their story, that fuelling the rage inside of them to get back what is rightfully theirs and to take revenge on their enemies. Along the way, however, Hamlet and Wilbur lose themselves, letting their hyperfixation lead to the destruction of all that they loved, including relationships and what they had been fighting for on the course of their character arcs.

In conclusion, certain characters very popular today are based on the Shakespearian drama "Hamlet", even some that we don't expect to share the same roots with the Prince of Denmark. It doesn't matter where they are cast, either in a galaxy far, far away or in a block game, but by the looks of it, they won't be going away anytime soon.



Text without a title

Dragoș Constantin, XII F

"This is a long drive for someone with nothing to think about".

This is the last album title I see as my cellphone battery dies. I pull the earphones out and place them into the pocket of my jacket. I stand up and stretch my arms. The road home is a long one. The small train booth I'm in is reflected in the dark window. The train is empty at this hour and so is my water bottle. I had to leave early in order to get home in time for my friend's anniversary. A song pops in my head and I can't recognize it, I've never heard it before, but I cannot write it down before it fades away. The window is still dark so I close my eyes to get some sleep. I dream about days buried in my memory spent at my grandparents' house. The dust lifts off the ground as I run around playing

catch and blends its golden color with the intense green of the chestnut trees and the flaming sky. The soft dirt comes up my naked feet. I open my eyes and look at my watch. Many hours left. The first rays of the sun hit the moving landscape behind the window. I think to myself: "Maybe now I'll be able to come up with an idea, I have plenty of time". The deadline is approaching fast for the creative writing contest. I wanted to write an authentic experience, one that I would be proud of. The story I began writing was one about the main character moving through the world and finding his "destiny", but it had no substance, no context, no places. It had a beginning and an ending, but no journey. I write down in my travel journal the fleeting memory of the dream I just had and then I take another look out the window. Blurry fields of trees and sunflower stay behind *as the shape of the colors constantly changes*. For a second, I thought that the world was passing by me, not that I was moving through it. Everything stops for a moment and I am able to clearly see what I am looking at. This makes me look around myself. I write down everything I see. Five more hours left... I check my journal again and I get an idea. I start combining it with the story I wrote. Countless memories and landscapes flow into my story, giving it a life of its own: an empty train and the sounds of its wheels hitting against the rails, burning ember skies behind dark tree bark, a white veil covering the neighbouring houses. All these images I just glanced at before, now revealing themselves and their energy, their importance. After a while, everything gained motion again, and just as fast as I reached this state, it simply faded. It left me startled, as never had I been one to pay attention to details. I used to think that only the goal was important and that only I moved through the world, but the truth is, sometimes, it's better to leave the world pass you by and just look at it for a minute.

As the train stops and the brakes make a loud, screeching sound, I grab my bags and get out. I take one last look at the train station and remember the feeling I had when everything froze....

Maybe this is what I was missing, seeing

instead of looking.

THE ARCADE

Alessia Columban, X F

There is a history behind any piece of art because every piece of art represents a piece of the author's soul. I am a piece of one too. I express emotions and feelings that could not have been described in words. My author chose to write me in colours and symbols, in metal and flowers, in lightness and darkness.

I am an arcade, but I would like to think about myself as THE Arcade because I am the representation of her destiny. She, the girl who created me, is not an artist, but she was sad when she imagined me. She wanted to see some light in the deep dark. For her, I am the one who sustains her life, her genetic part and also the one who protects her soul. I am not beautiful, but I am strong and I can sustain all her flowers. Those buds wish to bloom and to become what she foresees they will become. I do not shine because I am not apparently significant, but in essence I am. I will always be the light's guardian, I must be brave and if she wants more flowers, I must be strong enough to keep them in the sunset light. It is due to the fact that the flowers are her ideas and feelings on her way through life. In essence, they are her realisations and consequently, her power. Thereupon, I am the guardian of her power.

I will always be there to maintain a balance between her past and her future, between my own two arches and to mark the cyclicity of her life.

Neaga-Budoiu Ioana

X D

You are a cloud

That is blinding my vision

You are a god

A sparrow

And one of my deadly hallucinations.

I wish on you all the gold

But gold always melts in fire

And so

I burn for you.

Why can't you love me?

But

So much

I do.

So still

Could be the reflection in the water

So wide the lake

Our whole life happened inside of it

It was set for us to meet at 4

But we parted so silently

That none of us came

Just hoping the other will somehow remember.

The lake watched our lives falling apart.

Daria Miruna Isacov

X F

6.10 a.m.

Just another hour on the clock

The time you hear the singing of a cock

But you know that it meant more.

It was the time you came knocking at my door.

The time my whole face lit up with joy

Just because I got to see you, a silly boy.

You'd ask me every night "tomorrow at 6.10?"

And I'd reply with "as always man"

It was the time we'd see the sunrise

And the sparkles in each others eyes.

However, every fire and sparkle has to burn

And it seems it was our turn.

You used to hug me on a daily basis

And we ended up hating our faces.

How did we go from being so enthusiastic

To only being hateful and sarcastic?

That I can not answer

But if you can

I'll ask you one more time

Tomorrow at 6.10 a.m.?

INCEPTION

Tudosie Sara-Maria, X G

I was drowning.

The library sank at midnight, as if it were related to Cinderella or something else, magically bizarre, that I just had to happen to be in the midst of.

It was about time I took off into the unknown. Yet again. So up the carpet-covered stairs I went, knocking over a parchment or two, running as fast as my feet would carry me. Glancing at the emerald-tinted walls as I ran by, I nodded "no" to myself. Certainly, more Pocahontas, if you ask me.

The rustic, majestic library of—which god-entity was it this time? Poseidon? Gwildön? ...it matters not—was sinking. The library was sinking. And here I was, looking for a way out.

Go out the way you came in, right?

Wrong.

I simply cannot recall how I came to be here.

So, with a final huff, I stopped. Leaning forward, hands resting atop my knees and breath hitching every now and then, I took my surroundings in. How did the candles flicker still as, each night, they lay beneath deep curtains of water? How did the books survive? ...how will I survive?

The thought struck me, knocking me aback and forcing me against a bookshelf. Trembling, I laid against it. Trembling, the library sank further and further into the abyss of the Mediterranean Sea. Trembling, my eyes searched an exit. Where, where, where?

Sealing my honey-tinted orbs shut, I breathed in. And out. In. And out.

I need to get out.

Thump!

My hazel lamps snapped ajar. "What the-"

Thump!

Books were falling. The rumbles of the waves were getting quiet, a mere whisper, unlike their deafening chants from hours before. The dim-lit candelabra atmosphere was no longer alluring. The ever-floating scent of melted wax and sea salt all of a sudden hang heavy in the air. All around me. Claustrophobically, even. I was getting dizzy. Fear was drifting in my eyes, from one side to the other, maddeningly persistent, looking for a place to settle. I closed them and shook my head.

Inhaling, I stood up.

Left, left, right and up we go again. Up the spiral stairs. I loved them so. Auburn light wood, polished and delicate, yet sturdy enough for me to grasp when I wanted to go too fast and my legs gave out.

I ran. I ran and ran, and ran I did. Desperate, I stumbled, fell on my hands and climbed like a scared child, on all fours, up to the frosted glass ceiling. ...Huh. That's something you don't see every day.

Looking back, none of this is.

The pulsating light of the air-filled world was barely visible. It's now or never. Jumping on the spot, I prepped myself. "You can do this, Ash. Come on. Come oooon!" I slapped myself, rendering shock and terror to disappear and melt into the Mediterranean, along with all the other secrets that laid there.

In doing so, my gaze darted to a petite hatch.

Hand quivering, I grabbed it tight and took my final breath of air.

Utter silence.

Then, the wall of water hit me.

...

My hands, tired, flew. My limbs collided with the water, becoming one with the wet world around me. I swam and swam and went up. Or, I hoped, at least, that I was headed away from the library. To where, I knew not. Just away from the sunken library.

I swam in the dark, in the stillness of the sea and up, up I reached. My sore figure held its breath, held its hopes in, not to let them spill and get lost in the madness of the marine. The lanterns of the night were beating down on me.

I drew a gasp of air in—from where, I knew not—and my fingers grazed the lid of the other world. They softly touched the air and I pushed for my head to come out.

But it would not.

And I sank, sank deep below. The feathery air which danced around the tips of my fingers now stood—still, pointless, unnervingly hopeless—above me.

I sank.

I fell into the abyss of the sea. And, weightlessly, I plunged back towards the library.

I breathed out. I forced my eyes open, looking fate in the face.

This was the inception of me.

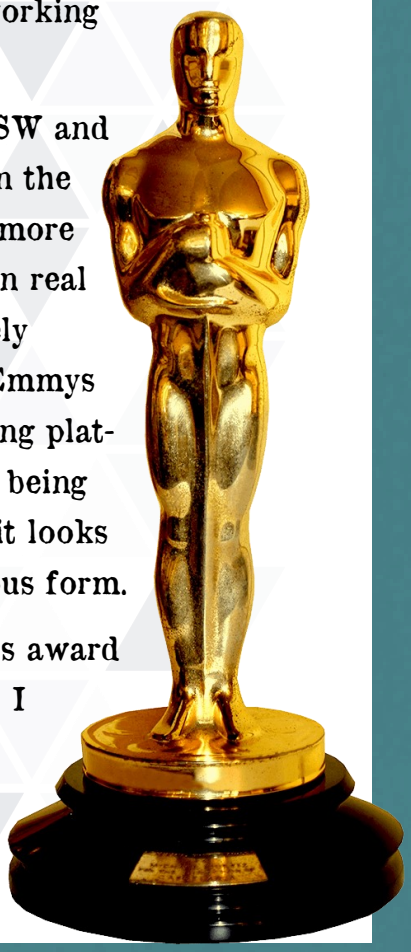
CORONAVIRUS ODYSSEY IN THE MAKING

Rusu Horia

Colegiul National "Mihai Viteazul" Slobozia, Ialomita, IX B

Most people love watching or attending events related to entertainment. It gives them the liberty to walk and breathe amongst their favourite celebrities and artists and even interact with them. These gatherings can take the form of award shows such as The Oscars, The Emmys, or even The Golden Globes, whilst the experience can even become the equivalent of film festivals such as TIFF or Cannes. But what happens when a worldwide pandemic hits the industry with a hard punch? Are the world's most anticipated award or festival seasons completely destroyed?

For over 90 years, awards shows and film festivals have been venerated by the general public for showcasing amazing motion pictures, with many impacting pop culture as a whole! Although award shows tend to only let celebrities and fellow nominees participate, film festivals, generally, are more open to audiences, letting them view certain projects that will be released to the public months later. Unfortunately, in the year 2020, the filmmaking industry has experienced a huge gut punch with the highly dangerous coronavirus spreading all over the world. This sort of threat to humanity has not been detected in the timespan of award shows and film festivals, so their way of working has forever been affected tremendously.



In the first months of the pandemic, film festivals such as SXSW and Cannes have either been cancelled, pushed back, or even organized in the online world. To this day, film festivals are still experimenting with more ways of organization, with TIFF in 2020 being able to be held both in real and virtual settings, while even Sundance in 2021 was held exclusively online. This has also made a huge impact on award shows like The Emmys or The Golden Globes, even nominating projects released on streaming platforms, rather than in theatres. With the upcoming Academy Awards being pushed back 2 months so that online participation won't be needed, it looks like the movie industry is slowly starting to get back up to its previous form.

Looking back, it was very interesting to see the metamorphosis award shows and film festivals are experiencing to survive the coronavirus. I think this unfortunate situation is going to go down in history as a much-needed experiment, even if everyone seemed to have had it rough with it.

To adapt or not to adapt

Maria Bogdan, X G

Adaptations are everywhere. On the television and film screen, on stage, in musicals, on the internet, in novels, comic books and in video games. The Academy Awards even have a specific category honouring screenplays that are adaptations from books. You could say it is only a matter of time before something popular that was published is adapted into another art form.

This is not to say that the adaptations have no flaws. After watching the film adaptation, I often hear the comment that the book is better than the movie. Movie versions of books tend to frustrate readers for the simple reason that they are not just a replica of the book. But that is not a valid reason to dislike the cinematic adaptation. For example, a movie that accurately mimics a novel may be too long for most viewers, so some content must be omitted. Readers use their imagination to visualize the story. While reading, a person is creating his own movie; he or she decides how the character speaks, his appearance and the surrounding environment. So when the movie comes out and the main actor doesn't look the same way as the reader had imagined him when playing they character, the viewer gets disappointed.

But I don't agree with this rhetoric. I think that an adaptation should not be just a copy of the book on screen, it should have a personality and give a new, fresh perspective on the original material.

Some of the biggest and best known book to movie adaptations are The Harry Potter series, The Maze Runner, The Hunger Games, The Lord of The Rings. Some book to tv series that I would recommend are The Handmaid's Tale, Westworld, Game of Thrones, Outlander, Hannibal and The Queen's Gambit.

I believe that a good adaptation is one that never forgets its' base material and honours the fans of the original material. Infamously, the last two seasons of "Game of Thrones" are not well liked by fans because they strayed from the books and the creators of the show didn't wait a few more months for the new books to come out and created their own mess of a narrative .

Adaptations should be the best of both worlds. The movie that you played in your own head so many times while reading the book put up on the big or small screen from a new and exciting perspective. An adaptation should elevate the original material and give a flare that only real life experiences can offer. Because after all, why recreate something if you don't have anything new to add to It?

SIGHTSEEING IN PARIS VIRTUALLY!

Teodora Elena Costea, IX G

LIBERTÉ, ÉGALITÉ, FRATERNITÉ.

Just saying these three words, you know exactly what country I am talking about. France is one of the leading countries in Europe, with a long and eventful history and a rich cultural life, with a capital that is considered to be the headquarters of romance, all these turning it into a must-see on every tourist's to-do list.

I was quite young when I first travelled to France and I have to admit that I was completely fascinated by everything in Paris. I remember I was walking down on the Champ de Mars's alleys. The Eiffel Tower looked bigger than life. I climbed it and the view was absolutely breathtaking! I remember the bustle on Champs-Élysées and the mysterious smile of Mona Lisa in the famous painting hosted by the Louvre Museum.

Last year, as I was looking through old photos I stumbled upon the set taken on my family trip to France. I suddenly felt the urge to go back to the place I had fallen in love with eight years ago. A few days later, my parents booked a flight to Charles de Gaulle Airport and a six nights' stay in a charming hotel in 11^{e} Arrondissement in Paris. We almost had our luggage packed, but Covid-19 had something else in store for us: lockdown, restrictions and limitations to international travelling. No way could we take off for Paris! But my soul was longing for the City of Lights, so I started to plan a virtual trip, and

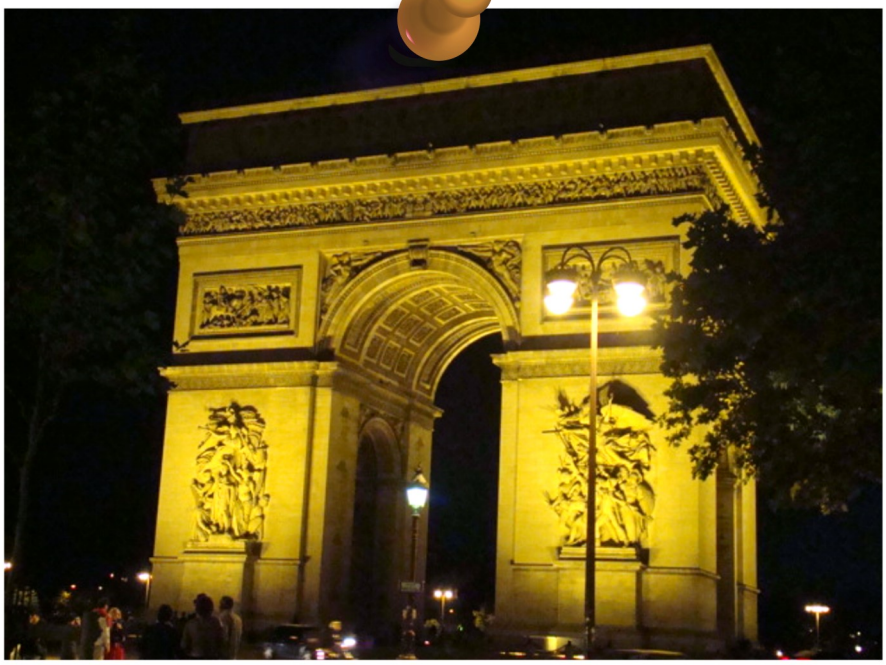
scheduled a weekend dedicated to the French culture and to Paris.

Here I was, one week within the lockdown, listening to Edith Piaf, enjoying an absolutely delicious croissant with chocolate while deciding which virtual tour I should take first. I have to say that the decision was not that hard to make because I could not wait any longer for the lovely view of Paris from the top of the Eiffel Tower. It was just like I remembered it. Thousands of tiny architectural jewels, the narrow silver ribbon of the Seine, green grass here and there and, shining in the sunlight, the Louvre Pyramid. This led me to my next virtual tour - the Louvre Museum. As I was stepping farther and farther into the halls of the museum, I was completely fascinated by the multitude of masterpieces - wonderful paintings and impressive statues that have conquered the centuries. And suddenly, there it was. The painting I was craving for - Mona Lisa. Compared to the crowd that surrounded the wall where the painting hung eight years ago, there was nobody there in the virtual tour and I could admire its beauty in peace.

Shortly after I finished the Louvre Museum virtual tour, I decided to take a look into the Versailles Palace. Home to the kings of France, starting with Louis XIV - le Roi Soleil, the building is as impressive as a royal residence can be. I started with the tour of the gardens. The flowers were just about to blossom and the leaves were turning the trees from brown to green. I entered the palace and I fell in love with it again. Enjoying a delicious ratatouille while admiring the novel exhibitions was an experience I could not even express!

As the sun was going down, I walked down Champs-Élysées, admiring the beauty of the city via a YouTube video. Couples deeply in love were enjoying a glass of champagne in a cozy bistro, children were riding bikes laughing and some businessmen were going home after an exhausting day at work.

Even though the allure of Paris, the vibe of it and the whole experience were not exactly the same as actually going there, I had a really good time and I highly recommend you to dedicate a day to virtually dive into Paris or any other city you love!



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Coordinating teachers: Dorina Enciu, Ana Maria Georgiana Muşat

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Colegiul National
"Spiru Haret"
Bucuresti