

# THE ENGLISH OFFSPRING

#3



**Spiru Haret National College**  
**Bucharest**

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## SOME THOUGHTS ON EDUCATION



Everybody acknowledges, I believe, the importance of acquiring the right education in order to lead a successful life. It is really a matter that I have found of particular interest lately and I think this is also the case of my classmates: with less than two years before the end of high school there comes a responsibility a lot higher than just graduating.

We can never underestimate the value of choosing the right college or university. Students need to feel a connection with the domain they choose to study in order to achieve good results and have a good career in the future. When I think about the people in my life who are passionate about their careers, I am sure that they have been the way ever since they were in high school. The same thing I have noticed about my teachers: they are really passionate about the subjects they teach and make us be interested in them. These are all people who, together with my parents, have made the biggest difference in my life.

Deciding on the correct college or university to attend to best fulfil one's interests is difficult because there are lots of choices to select from. I have identified, therefore, some aspects that have helped me make the best decision.

First and foremost, one needs to have a clear idea of the general field they would like to work in. Analysing their strengths and weaknesses and taking career-placement tests, if it is possible (maybe with the help of a career counselor or a school psychologist) serve students as a guide in determining what type of career they would like to pursue.

Some people also analyse the job market of their chosen profession, trying to find out the current status of its condition (the job availability).

Next, what students usually do is select a number of universities or colleges that specialise in their area of interest and compare them. They take into consideration aspects such as location, school size, tuition fee, internship opportunities, and the university's relationship with the job marketplace (especially abroad). Some people study school statistics like graduation rates and professor evaluations.

Finally, everybody needs to study the competitiveness of their chosen colleges or university. It is best to apply to institutions that are likely to accept you, as well as to a school that may be challenging to get into, with a higher competition rate.

This kind of analysis is very important because you need to know exactly what you are signing up for and investing your future into.

Good luck!

**Tiberiu Popescu**  
11G

## WE ARE PROUD OF OUR PREDECESSORS....

On the 19th of November we celebrated 90 years since Dinu Pilat was born. Dinu Pilat was a student in our school between 1932 and 1940 and later he became a writer and literary critic, but his destiny was shaped by his experience in the communist prisons.

He made his literary debut in "Vlastaru" (The Offspring) and we feel it is our duty to pay our respects to him and to his work and experience. Thus, on this occasion, we invited professor, Monica Pilat Șaufescu, the writer's daughter and also a writer herself, and Mr. George Ardeleanu, professor at Bucharest University and specialist in Dinu Pilat's literary work. Another guest was Mr. Adrian Pascu, former headmaster who supplied us with lots of precious information about Dinu Pilat. As time stood still we immersed ourselves deeper into Dinu Pilat's world: the injustice of being imprisoned just for writing a book. Yet, after days of contemplating the ordeal he had been going through, Dinu Pilat realized he was not actually punished, but taught redemption through pain and suffering. So, he was reconciled with himself and with everything around him. He came back from prison, as a new man, as Mrs. Monica Pilat might put it. Yes, everybody in the room sat in silence listening to the voices of knowledge and experience, not as children, not as adults, just as audience witnessing a story worth being known.

As Mrs. Pilat reached the core of her father's life chronicle, the tension and curiosity filled the silent room. Everyone's mind was sunning through different possibilities of what discovery he made in jail. And when she reached the culminating point of the story it was nothing we had expected, because her father unraveled and cherished a spiritual treasure few of us can appreciate.

It was God that he discovered there and that represented the sacred fountain of hope that kept him alive in jail while enduring inhumane conditions. Not only had he learned a lot in prison but he also came to inner peace and suffering was no longer unbearable; he accepted it as a trial: God himself meant to test him and to model him into a better person.

We were also told about the love story between Mrs. Pilat's parents, Dinu and Nell when they were almost our age; that love is kept alive through the letters they exchanged over the years until death separated them physically. The letters expressed the delicate yet strong and passionate love they nurtured for each other and it warmed our hearts just hearing it. The texts are to be found in a book called "The Triumph of Love".

With Ms. Monica Pilat's permission, we will publish one of the first letters written by Dinu Pilat where he described his feelings on his first date with Nell.

**Andra Hendea**  
**Alina Cretu**  
**10A**

Bucharest  
27th May, 1945

**Dear Nelli,**

21st May, Saints Constantine and Helena's Day, 1941

Today is my name's day. A day of a deeper significance since we first spent it together. The corner of the house on Dacia street, the pavement of the tram 5 stop. The tobacconist's with its frame for newspapers. And you, enchantingly fresh and young, coming with the surprise box in your hands. Your excitement before you could see my face. My bewilderment when I clumsily opened the box. And suddenly, in small size, in a childlike, but finally in a palpable way, the island we both had been dreaming of, like a miracle in my hand. And beyond the sand strip, beyond the white elephant, beyond the scaly palm tree with the little monkey hanging heavily, your large, serious eyes arched like the open wings of some water birds frantically enclosing the horizon.

I was as happy as Christopher Columbus. And the name of the newly discovered realm was yours, the little goddess of the island with the elephant and palm tree on and, since then, you have become the great goddess of this letter's sender.

Time has not ruined our realm because nothing can ever ruin it, I have felt the deadly step of time. Around us and sometimes inside us. But our great love, the contents of our secret island have stayed untouched. It would not sink like another Atlantis into the sea.

And every morning I feel like Christopher Columbus, discovering your novelty over and over again. And so, every single day of the year turns into a celebration of my name's day. It is you who makes this possible. How many words do I need to simply say "I love you"?

**Dear Nelli,**

Take this book, please,  
as a reminder of our winding friendship  
I dearly hope that some day  
a deeply harmonious understanding  
will release us from the present cage of our inner loneliness.

Diru Pflor

# Saint Spiridon, Bishop of Trimythous, the Spiritual Patron of "Spiru Haret" National College in Bucharest



Each year on the 12th of December, students, teachers, parents and graduates of our school celebrate Saint Spiridon's Day in respect of the saint who, through the power of his mind, made numberless miracles for the benefit of people.

St. Spiridon was a simple shepherd on the island of Cyprus. Since his youth, he was very humble and cared especially for the poor. He married a Christian woman and had a daughter named Irene. When his wife died, he patiently endured widowhood. For the goodness and purity of his heart, he was appointed bishop of the Cyprus Trimythus. However, his new status did not change the way to his humble lifestyle. He continued to grow cattle and to plough the land.

The purity of his heart and lifestyle of the humble shepherd-bishop can be seen from the following story, told by St. Nicholas: "Stealth thieves entered the pasture of Spiridon. After taking as many rams as they wanted, they tried to leave, but an unseen power nailed down, not allowing them to go. At dawn, he came to the pasture and, seeing the thieves, he gently rebuked and told them that in the future to seek living from their own hard-earned, and not from pilferage. He took a ram and gave the thieves, saying: 'Take it so your toil in this night hasn't been useless. Go in peace.'"

St. Spiridon started making miracles through his boundless humility, faith, and divine grace, such as: in times of drought he brought rain to the earth, and again, through his prayer, the rain stopped. He ended the starvation planned by the wheat vendors, by destroying the barns where they kept the wheat.

He turned the snake gold and, after easing the poor of his needs, he turned the gold back into a snake.

He revealed the sinful thoughts of a prostitute who dared approach him and made her confess her sin.

A woman asked a sum of money which she had entrusted to his daughter, who was dead long before. The saint asked his daughter where the money was, and finding out where it was hidden, he gave it to the woman.

He gave life to a woman's dead baby.

He rebuked the one who wanted to take a goat without paying and made the goat flee from him. After the man paid the price, the goat started to behave.

He healed the silence of a deacon who became dumb because of his vanity when saying a prayer. He reportedly converted a pagan philosopher to Christianity by using a potsherd to illustrate how one single entity (a piece of pottery) could be composed of three unique entities (fire, water and clay), a metaphor for the Christian doctrine of Trinity.

As soon as Spiridon finished speaking, the shard is said to have miraculously burst into flame, water dripped on the ground, and only dust remained in his hand (other accounts of this event say that it was a brick he held in his hand).

The silk shoes of the saint's relics become worn out because he is said to wander the world and help the poor. They are changed each year, and fragments of them are given to the Christian pilgrims.

Even now, Saint Spiridon does not stop from doing wonders. Through his kindness, he helps us discover God's goodness everywhere around us. Celebrated in December, Saint Spiridon is an exhortation to all Christians to mercy.

Saint Spiridon remains a model of clear and powerful thinking, of devotion and faith, of goodness and sacrifice for all of us.

# Graduate's Day

The  
9A freshmen took part in a quiz on culture and civilization .... It was both fun and educational.

People in 10 A and 12 A were represented by Carmen Papa and, respectively, by Radu Zidorescu in a delicate combination of ballet, music and Shakespearean sonnets, all under the name of A Winter's Dream.



9F graders guided by their older schoolmates from 12H staged a modern version of A Christmas Carol by Charles Dickens. The young spectators cheered at the funny characters and moments in the play.



Every 12th of December the Orthodox world celebrates Saint Spiridon's Day. This is a perfect occasion for us to wait for the graduates to come back to school and meet their former teachers and classmates. It is a time of memories and joy. The whole school celebrates the event.

## Impressions after the creative writing competition "Magic Words, Dream Worlds"


My passion and obsession had always had something to do with stories, with words, with the simple – yet meaningful truths that great men had placed into short phrases over the ages. As I grew, I'd discovered yet another, just as interesting, "ant" to place under the microscope of my curiosity: people, friends, family, acquaintances, colleagues, each and every person I met every day provoked a different reaction in me, which never failed to fascinate me. Put those two along with the English skills I've been honing since kinder garden and you have yourself a bona fide writer apprentice.

Since English was the only subject I had ever excelled at, I did everything I could to keep myself afloat. I don't think there was a year when I'd missed the Olympics, or any other English contest for that matter. You can never get cocky or arrogant enough, right? When both of my English teachers informed me of the creative writing contest "Dream Worlds", I didn't hesitate to sign up for it. The main reasons for that were the terms and rules of the contest, which were by far the most decent I'd ever come across. The deadline was so far away it seemed unreal (I for one found out at least two months before) and the subject itself was to be freely chosen by the contestants, if a bit vague. Imagination unbridled, unrestrained by time, a certain theme or absurd word limits, every contestant gave their very best. As far as I'm concerned, if more contests were organized as well and if people would actually care about talent more than formalities, there would be a lot more talented people known among us, and results would be a lot better overall. The contest itself is a rather pleasant experience. The fact that the winning works are actually published, allows the contestants to actually get to know each other on a level that's deeper than a name on a sheet of paper.

## The True Form of Freedom



Talent is a very rare and fragile thing. If it isn't nurtured, encouraged, it will fade... If talent is ignored for too long, its bearer will also ignore it, thinking it nothing more than an abnormality that holds him back from truly joining the ranks of society. It will be lost in the sands of time like tears in the rain, as if it had never existed. That is what "Dream Worlds" does. It nurtures talents, allows them to grow freely and without prejudice. It's one of the few contests in which one can truly uncover one's self. And I hope it will continue to be that way.



Popa Diana Ruxandra  
"Nicolae Iorga" High School in Bucharest,  
First Prize Winner of the First Edition of the  
Creative Writing Competition "Magic  
Words, Dream Worlds", Prose Section.



# EARTH-LIKE EXOPLANETS

A census of planets and stars in our galaxy has shown amazing things: that there could be a planet like the Earth in one of every four star systems. Our galaxy, the Milky Way, has between 100 and 400 billion stars. Researchers argue that there could be something like 50 billion planets like Earth and that about a fifth of them could have liquid water due to their position in relation to their star, neither too close nor too far away. The presence of water is something considered necessary for the emergence of life.

Astronomers have used a telescope located in Hawaii, the Keck telescope to detect exoplanets (planets outside of the Solar system). They studied the planets around 166 nearby stars. The technique used to discover a planet was to observe the star wobbling due to force of gravity of the planet. However, this technique can only show the existence of planets found near the star and much larger than the Earth.

33 planets have been discovered orbiting 22 stars. Researchers have found that their distribution depends on their mass: they became more abundant as they are smaller. Thus, through calculations they estimated that 23% of Sun-like stars (stars with a low mass) have a planet resembling Earth orbiting their planets, 12% have planets larger than Earth and 1.6% have giant planets like Jupiter.

Before the census was thought that there was a gap between a star and its orbiting planets. Andrew Howard, the researcher who led the study said, "We found several small planets close to stars, where our calculations say there should be nothing. This means that the model of formation of planets that you know is wrong." Despite these findings, researchers can not be sure that the planets are like Earth. Because they detected them based on mass and not size they can't know whether the planets are rocky, like the Earth or gaseous like Jupiter. The Kepler telescope is expected to clarify this. This telescope is looking Earth-like planets around 156,000 stars. Researchers who conducted the census expect this telescope to find between 120 and 160 Earth-like planets.

**Silvia Borlea**  
12F

## Having Ancestors who Lived in Cities Boosts Our Immunity?

The researchers at the University College London have recently discovered that people whose ancestors lived in big cities have a better immunity to diseases caused by bacteria than those whose ancestors lived in villages or isolated settlements. They have genes resistant to tuberculosis and leprosy.

Because of the large population of the city, numerous interactions between humans and easy spread a contagious disease, the population has developed, over many generations immunity against bacteria that cause tuberculosis and other fatal diseases. This is an example of evolution in action, because over the centuries those who had the relative gene for a specific bacterium, could heal without today's technology and scientific advancement in medicine and thus could have more children than those who died young because of disease, children survivors possessing resistance gene inherited from parents.

Also, it seems that the number of people genetically immunized is proportional to the age of the establishment: the older the city is, the greater the number of people who have the specific gene. This is due to the fact that an older settlement underwent several epidemics over many thousands of years.

Researchers at University College London and Royal Holloway have tested DNA samples from communities of people in Europe, Asia and Africa. The protective gene was found in almost all people living in the Middle East and India, but also in parts of Europe, especially in cities founded in ancient times. In regions where urbanisations are relatively new, for instance in some parts of Africa, the gene is almost nonexistent.

This study shows that evolutionary changes do not need millions of years to happen. It also gives us a better understanding of certain diseases and the resistance of them of different people from different continents.

**Silvia Borlea**  
12F



we care about

# TICHILESTI

a forgotten place

I would think that not many of you have heard about Tichilesti. It is a village in South-Eastern Romania, situated on the bank of the Danube Delta. What is it that makes it so special? You might just be surprised: it is Europe's last remaining leper colony.

Leprosy is one of the oldest recorded diseases in the world, also known as Hansen's disease. Gerhard Armauer Hansen was a Norwegian physician, famous for his discovery of the *Mycobacterium leprae* in 1873 as the causative agent of leprosy. This terrible disease first started in East Africa about 4000 years ago and then quickly spread all over the globe. There are four types of leprosy, the last one being the most serious. It is contagious, it affects the nervous system and causes a breakdown of tissues. Incubation time is different from one patient to another, but generally it spans between several months and, in some extreme cases, up to 40 years.

Tichilesti was really a forgotten place during the communist era in Romania. Nicolae Ceausescu had made sure that this place would disappear from the map. In 2010 a book came out with the title "Hansen's Children", written by a Montenegrian journalist, Ognjen Spahic, who remarkably described the life in the leper colony during communism, in Romania. The novel tells that lepers lived in awful conditions and they were rejected by family, friends and society. They suffered not only physically, but also mentally. Most of them used to consider suicide as an option, every single day. Death was an escape. Life, a burden. The narrator is one of those infected with leprosy and lives with another 11 sick patients in the sanatorium. He describes how the hospital was constantly hunted by despair, suffering and misery. The patients were not allowed to exit the isolated area and they were considered to be the devil's children, because of their unbearable appearance. The narrator describes them as being rightly mutilated by the illness.

Life during the Communism era was tough, but imagine how much tougher it must have been for those who were having such an awful condition. The food they had was scarce and they permanently needed medication in order to stop the evolution of the disease or relieve the pain. The book is emotional and very hard to read. Why? Because of its shocking and straightforward language. Also, this kind of subject is not for those who are faint of heart. However, it is interesting and fascinating to know these things and if you read this book it will make you better understand how sick people feel when they are rejected by other people. Being the way they are is not their fault.

Nowadays the residents of Tichilesti live in the village, but most of them have decided to remain between the walls of the hospital, because they receive there all the help they need. There are 23 lepers still alive at this moment and most of them are over 60. They are cured of the Hansen bacillus, but they are still carrying the sign of this unpleasant disease. Fifteen nuns are taking care of them. Also, the lepers can leave the area, but only upon doctor's permission. They are currently regarded as normal people and some of them are even married and have healthy children.

The end of these patients will mark the end of what has been called "the only leper colony in Europe", so the place will be transformed into a nursing home. At the moment there are over 200.000 cases of leprosy around the world, especially in Africa and South Asia.

In March this year, BBC reporters visited Tichilesti and made a reportage on the last leper colony in Europe. The coverage can be found on the internet.

**Simona Mocanu**  
12G

From: Tuca Nick <nickdunobruno@yahoo.com>

To: My friends

Subject: Ponies!

## Dear colleagues,

We are writing to inform you about the most awesome TV show ever to air...

*\*pause for effect\**

My Little Pony: Friendship Is Magic. (Yes, you are reading it correctly and no, we're not joking)

Known to be one of the most viewed cartoons in the States and UK, it has never failed to impress the general public, something you will all understand very soon (Muahahahaha...eh). Anyway...since we lack any sort of inspiration, we are going to cut to the part where you receive all sorts of links and stuff (they kind of explain what the fuss is about...)

An article that explains how it managed to attract the male audience (of all ages): <http://life.ironic.com/article/why-grown-ass-men-love-my-little-pony-friendship-is-magic-so-much/>

Two YouTube playlists that contains all of the episodes:

Season 1 - <http://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PL9BD438E16FA956DB>

Season 2 - <http://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PL6090262866CE48F4>

A (well-known) dedicated blog: <http://www.equestriadaily.com/>

The page where you can download all of the episodes:

<http://ponyarchive.org/index.php>

And of course, a publicity spot from our sponsors (yep, that's still us) where you can access a fanfic the two of us wrote, and some of our drawings:

<http://nickdunobruno.deviantart.com/>

<http://rinzlerabc.deviantart.com/>

Well, I guess that's all. Enjoy the epicness!

Your friendly neighborhood bronies,

N/A

TucaOvidiuNicolae (Nick)  
ArosculeseiBogdanCrislian (Aro),  
11 A

Considering I was  
essentially buffeted, it  
turned out quite well...



I never expected to  
draw this in a chemistry  
class...



It was  
drawn of horse, my  
sister helping me with the  
colors. We make a great big  
team :D.



I made this sketch during  
a Korean class.



# REVIEW

## Gone With The Wind

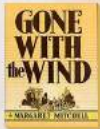
Gone With the Wind is one of the greatest novels of the American Literature. Written by Margaret Mitchell, the book was published in 1936 and shortly after became a huge success, being translated into numerous languages. It brought the author recognition and Margaret received the Pulitzer Prize.

The action is set in Georgia during the American Civil War and along the Reconstruction Era. The novel tells the story of a beautiful and proud woman named Scarlett O'Hara and depicts her experience of life during and after the war. At first, she is presented as a spoiled girl, but soon enough she becomes a cold and calculated woman. She cannot be blamed for developing into a person with no heart, because life subjected her to several hardships. The most difficult thing for her is that she must take care of everybody, because they consider her to be strong and invulnerable. She lives the illusion of love for Ashley Wilkes even after he marries another woman, Melanie. Scarlett does not want to admit to herself that Rhett Butler is the only man for whom she has true affection. Both are selfish, realistic and nonconformist. In fact, they seem to be the only characters who can survive the war and live a luxurious life soon after, unlike Melanie and Ashley who cannot find their place anymore in the postwar world.

The title of the book refers to the way of life of the South as having "gone with the wind". Even if it is a romantic novel, it does not have a happy end, neither a sad one, for that matter. I would say that the end is open and gives one hope for the better: "Tomorrow is another day".

Few books have had the 'honour' to enchant me as much as this one. I read it over four times and I still firmly believe that it is my favourite one. What I loved most about it was that it is the only novel in which I identified myself with the main character and this really happens once in a blue moon.

Gone With the Wind is a classic of its kind and still a best-seller, recommended to all ardent readers. If you haven't read this book, you have read nothing so far.



**Simona Mocanu**  
**12G**

## REVIEW

A Cuppa Tea and an Aspirin is written by Helen Forrester and is considered to be one of her finest works. For the author, Liverpool used to be home for many years, therefore this city reflects itself constantly in her writings, such as *By the Waters of Liverpool*, *Liverpool Mias*, *Liverpool Daisy*, etc. The novel was published in 2003 and received positive feedback from the critics and the readership, as well. The *Sunday Telegraph* described Helen Forrester as "a writer of such affectionate understanding and unsettling honesty".

The story is set in Liverpool during and after the Great Depression, a severe economic situation in the decade preceding World War II. The main character is Martha Connolly, a poor woman, married to a seaman and nine children to feed and clothe. She lives with them in the city's slums, in a house which hosts two more families, in the same poor conditions. Throughout the novel Martha struggles for a better life for herself and her loved ones. She is forced to use all her strength and ingenuity to face hunger and despair in order to survive in those harsh times. The constant misery, poverty and disease put her in difficult situations, as she watches her family fall apart. She ends up in a sanatorium where she has to abide by strict rules. Eventually, Martha is taken away from that awful place by the only child she has left, Number Nine.



It is a very powerful novel, it gives an honest insight into the society of Liverpool in the '30s. "Emotional" might be the proper word to define the whole book. Helen Forrester depicts a genuine picture of the terrible way of life which people had to endure in those days. Sincere, disturbing and warm-hearted, this book can have a great power of influence on readers. As far as I am concerned, not only did I learn some history, but it also convinced me that I should appreciate more life and the things I have got.

A Cuppa Tea and an Aspirin is to be read on rainy days, while you enjoy a cup of delicious tea.



**Simona Mocanu**  
12G

# MUSIC

For most of us music is a shelter from reality, or maybe just for me. I don't know if I can live without it, but I am talking here about a specific kind of music that is rock and metal.

I hear people saying "Yes, I listen to x. band or y band", but most of them just listen. One thing is to listen to the music, and another thing is to feel it, to ...live it; of course, there are bands that make music just because, and there are bands that put real feelings in their work, creating masterpieces. As I was saying, you just have to find the perfect genre for yourself, to feel it not just listen to it because some friends of yours do or out of any other reasons.

One of these soul bands is Nirvana. Nirvana is also one of my favourite bands. It was formed in 1987 by Kurt Cobain (singer and lead guitar) and Krist Novoselic (bass guitar). Nirvana went through a succession of drummers, but one of them really completed the band - Dave Grohl who joined the band in 1990. Their style is grunge, a subgenre from rock music. I also listen to other types of rock and metal but this is my favourite.

These three men succeeded in making very strong (emotionally strong) music. They put in feelings and worked hard. They managed to get to the top with "Smells like teen spirit" from the Nevermind album.

I can say that I simply love this band. And I have here another reason:

Kurt Cobain, in his young life went through some serious problems, difficult problems that may have challenged his way of thinking. I have been through similar problems as his and, in his music, he unintentionally makes references to his past, and to his thoughts.

This is why his music, Nirvana's music, is so special to me. They just send a message, about many things, as example Cobain's past.

We, as humans, have different states of mind. We are happy, sad, enthusiastic, angry, depressed, etc. The band has songs which encompass most of our states, and this makes it, for me, a soul band. Early in my essay I was saying that one thing is to listen to music and another is to feel it. Well, if you just listen to it, it's not worth anything.

Soul exploitation refers to shrouding yourself in feelings that come from music. Nirvana feeds me almost every day, amplifying my experiences with their songs which are full of energy.

I strongly recommend you to give a chance to Nirvana music, and also try to understand their message as I consider that music these days is worthless. "Artists" such as Justin Bieber, Miley Cyrus, Lady Gaga don't create real music, only noise. Real music is very rare now, but we don't have to lose our faith. There are some good bands but they are still underground, with small chances of becoming known because most of the people are influenced by minor artists, especially in our country. You know what I am talking about. Lack of originality is increasing in music and almost no one can create masterpieces now. But as I was saying, don't lose faith!

**Oprea Valentin**  
**10B**



# OXFORD

We don't know how time passed and in a few days it will be four months since we returned home. It was the greatest experience of our lives. From the first moment we got there we were amazed by the impeccable, clean towns with people who cherish every moment of its true value. When we arrived in the campus we were greeted by the Embassy staff and then went on a sightseeing tour. We were impressed to see how big and well organized everything was there. After the accommodation, we grabbed something to eat and then we took the initial test. Every evening we had some challenging activities, like watching movies or creative games, sports like softball, basketball and volleyball.

We started the first day by exploring Oxford on foot, which left us open-mouthed. Then we headed for Christwood Wildlife Park where we saw all kinds of animals, from reptiles to giraffes, zebras and rhinos.

On our first day in class we were frightened because we didn't know what to expect from the teachers and our foreign classmates. Even if we weren't in the same class, we soon made new friends among the Czechs, Taiwanese, Brazilians and French. Also the Russians and Spanish were really nice and friendly. We were pleasantly surprised by the teachers and their way to teach us new things, by games and interesting activities like role playing. It was great to be among so many people from so many countries, so different and yet so close!



Two unforgettable places were Stratford-upon-Avon where we saw Shakespeare's birthplace, house and graves and Christ Church College where the Harry Potter series were filmed. We were also impressed by Blenheim Palace, one of the most beautiful castles in Great Britain. One of the best parts of this camp was the one day trip to London where we saw Buckingham Palace, St James Park, Trafalgar Square and the National Gallery. We think we'll never forget the rewarding experience and maybe we'll return to England some day.

**Ramona Saleh  
Laura Moisescu  
10A**

## BASKETBALL ALL-STARS



### Basketball:

An enjoyable game usually shadowed by football but not existent. People everywhere take up basketball and some reach great levels in many championships. In a country dominated by football fans basketball strives to exist but just barely. It is almost impossible to live out of basketball in Romania.

### The importance of basketball:

It is a much more friendly and active game than football. Truly it cannot be played in any conditions but that doesn't stop people from taking it up. It is a good way to keep fit, a great way to get rid of boredom and counter smoking effectively as it is required that players go together on the offense and also come back to the defense of our basket as soon as our attack is over. It is also a game that trains not only the body but the mind as well as a certain degree of coordination is required in order to be a good player and if the person doesn't have such a degree already through training he/she can develop it and make use of it in any situation.

### The CNSH basketball team:

The team of CNSH is a perfect combination of players from all generations. Strong ties keep this team together allowing us to overcome any team while the good coach is always there to keep order and calm remembering us that the game is meant to be played for fun not for victories.

The ambience of a basketball game should always be friendly, calm and most important enjoyable and that is the one thing we know and apply to our game in order to defeat others. We welcome anyone from this high school to our games as long as they show interest and support our team in any way they see fit.

### Recent activity

The basketball team of CNSH is leaving behind a good streak of victories first against Lucian Blaga with a score of 69 to 29 and then against Carfermit Voda with the score of 57 to 47 in the aftermath of a striking turnaround of situation, being down by 14 points up until the last quarter of the game. On the 14th of December they are playing against the bilingual college George Cosbuc and C. A. Rosetti right after the rest of the teams aren't far behind but they will never be above us thanks to the calm, friendly way we play. We look forward to earning another trophy for our high school and prove our skills at this game in the high-school championship of Bucharest.

**Nisior Theodor  
10A**

# LEAGUE OF LEGENDS

- AN AMBITIOUS PROJECT THAT GREW INTO A LEGEND

Given the access everyone has to information nowadays and the low price of internet traffic it is no longer possible for any teenager to have never played an online game with his/her friends. Thanks to the limitless imagination of game designers we, teenagers, are now able to choose from a large variety of games, RPG (role playing games), FPS (first person shooter), RTS (real time strategy), TPS (third person shooter) being only a few of the incredibly large number of games existing.

A recent survey shows that the great majority of gamers prefer MMORPG (mass multiplayer online role playing games) and MOBA (massive online battle arena). Due to the fact that MMORPGs are everywhere around us and always spoken of, let's journey into the fascinating world of MOBA gameplay and by saying that, it's absolutely obvious that it's LoL (League of legends) which we will discuss.

This platform was first released on October 27, 2009 after a bold group of programmers decided to take the world of DotA (Defense of the Ancients) one step further. At the start it wasn't as popular as everybody was saying they were just copying DotA but soon after launching two battlegrounds, (The Twisted Trelene and Summoner's Rift), it differentiated a lot from DotA. It also felt a lot better balanced. Now cutting off the boring side of the game, let's introduce you to the gameplay of LoL. Players are divided into 2 even teams of Champions, 3x3 or 5x5. As of October 19, 2011, there are 85 different released champions. Each team starts at opposing sides of a map in an area called the "Tournament", near what is called a "Nexus". A match is won when either the opposing team's Nexus is destroyed or the other team surrenders. To destroy a Nexus, each team must work through a series of towers called "Turrets". Turrets are often placed along a path to each base referred to as a "Lane".

Along the way, each player gains levels from killing the opposing team's champions and "Minions", small NPCs (non-playable characters), that constantly spawn and attack the other team, and defeating neutral monsters (some of which grant both known as creeps upon death). Completing objectives rewards players with gold which is used to purchase items. In League of Legends, each player starts at level 1 at the beginning of the match and can obtain the maximum of level 18 with their champion, leveling 4 different champion-specific abilities.

Furthermore, starting on September 26, 2011, the third Field of Justice known as The Crystal Scurf is now available featuring a new game mode named Dominion.

Dominion brings faster action and tactical gameplay played on an all-new map, the Crystal Scurf, and features a new Capture-and-Hold playstyle. Players choose Champions, as in the "standard" Summoner's Rift games, but the inhibitors and Turrets have been removed. Instead, the map has five Capture Points. Capturing one of these points will turn it into a Turret for your team, and allow it to start spawning the minions that the Nexus spawned in Summoner's Rift and Twisted Trelene. Item availability is also different in Dominion, with some items not available in Summoner's Rift and Twisted Trelene disabled, while other new items have been added. Two Summoner's Spells available in "standard" games have also been disabled, with two new ones taking their place. The new game type is aimed to be much shorter than the conventional 45 minute Summoner's Rift games: most Dominion games average about 20 minutes in duration.

This phenomenon has grown to local (now host) championships all around the world with prizes which consist of cash prizes and sponsorship from well known brands from the technological industry (Intel, AMD, Alienware). League of Legends has experienced some moderate success in the competitive video game field. The 2010 World Cyber Games Grand Finals in Los Angeles hosted a competitive tournament for League of Legends. The competition came from around the world to compete, coming from China, Europe and the Americas. The victors were the Counter Logic Gaming team from North America and won a seven-thousand dollar prize.

Competitive play for League of Legends reached a new level during the Season 1 World Championships of Dooomback held in Sweden during June 2011. The European team Fnatic defeated teams from Europe, the USA and Asia to win the tournament which featured \$100,000 in prizes and won a \$2000 dollar prize. Over 1.4 million viewers watched the streaming broadcast over the course of the event with a peak of over 210,000 viewers watching a single semi-final match.

So, if you are eager to try a game that will keep your heart racing till the end, and if you enjoy designing strategies, or you just want to have a great load of good time with your friends, then you SHOULD at least try this game!

**Popescu Vlad - Radu 12A**  
**Zidareanu Radu - Mihai**



# BATTLEFIELD

## 3

Battlefield 3 is a first-person shooter video game developed by EA Digital Illusions CE and published by Electronic Arts. The game was released in the US on October 25, 2011 and in the UK on October 28, 2011 for Microsoft Windows, Playstation 3, Xbox 360 and EA Mobile confirmed a port on the IOS platform.

To me, Battlefield 3 exists as two different experiences: the visually-stunning single-player experience and the massive-scale multiplayer. For the long time Battlefield fan, combat on this scale isn't anything too different, but for gamers new to the franchise - welcome to a whole new world of strategy.



I honestly can't remember the last time I enjoyed a multiplayer experience to this extent. Shouting out enemy locations and coordinating attacks on a squad level is something unique to the Battlefield franchise and a welcome return to form. Battlefield 3 features the combined arms battles that made the series popular across single-player, co-operative and multiplayer modes. It reintroduces several elements absent from the Bad Company games, including fighter jets, the prone position and 64-player battles on PC.



For those who are obsessed with nice graphics, then Battlefield 3 is for you since currently, it is the best looking game ever made on PC. The PC version shines above the rest, but the console versions aren't too far behind. Overall, I'm extremely pleased with the finished product and highly recommend picking it up. Just don't forget to shoot, move, and communicate.



**Alexandru Clacol**

# MR. HYDE

INSPIRED BY MARY ZELLY'S NOVEL,  
BASED OFF ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON'S STORY  
"THE STRANGE CASE OF DR. JEYLL AND MR. HYDE"

The veil of light was sewing its borders to the thoughtful fog outside, drowning London's cold streets. A sort of deaf howl ran along with the house's eerie silence, as my steps sunk into the frozen steam rising from the old floor. Smoothing my white apron, I took the loaded tray and climbed the stairs with my heart tightly fastened by a red, nervous string of feelings. Standing in front of the silent door, I unknotted the string and lightly knocked, as if I were afraid of my own touch, thought that the door would crush under my withered fist. The voice beyond the doortep, sounding just like that creepy howl, invited me in. With mechanical gestures and a lowered head, I placed the tray on a table and gave a shy "good morning". The same voice answered in a warmer tone from between the canopyed bed's sheets. My rough skinned hands shook, as I poured tea into a cup, ignoring the painful hotness of the liquid. A reddish lock of hair rebelled and slapped my cheek. Clumsily, I stuffed it back under my bonnet, and pushed the little table with the tray on top over the bed, to the long, ghostly arms, patiently waiting beyond the bed's purple curtains. I felt cornered by his eyes, though I couldn't see them, so I quickly glanced outside the window and saw the fog sealing itself to the glass, giving me a strange feeling of not having enough air and light. I felt suspended, floating above the world, at the end of it. Milky hands, crowned by long, thin fingers, just like a woman's, were carrying the tea cup from free to free, to lips well hidden in the canopy's hemetic darkness.

"I believe there are locks that once unlocked, they cannot be locked ever again". He was speaking again in riddles. My master was opening his soul before a damned maid, too afraid to show that she understands him. "Why do you believe this, sir? Don't you lock with the same key you used for unlocking?"

The hands clenched on to the shangled tea cup. "I don't know, is it right to be like that? Sometimes I have the feeling I let wide open a door of my soul, a door that I was supposed to be cracked only, and let out a demon who broke my key in pieces. And now I cannot convince that demon to go back from where he came, even more, I think he wants ... me to go through that door".

I remained silent, just like gods do when you ask them for answers.

"Would you like some more tea?"

"No... I would, actually like to see you, this morning I failed to see your face, only that playful lock of hair".

I approached and moved aside the bed's curtains, timidly smiling to the troubled eyes, held up by dark circles, enraptured in the foggy figure of my master. The light grey hair sunk in the pillow's warmth. His lips were still wet and warm from the tea, and the cup remained prisoner to the fingers.

I left the room, he had sent me after a book from his library. Happily stepping through the shelves seeking of knowledge and science, the outside mist was still by the sun. With a heavy tome in my arms, I returned victorious, being glad I could help him. But my happiness and the light outside collapsed, breaking in pieces, mixing with the tea cup's shards resting by the bed's side. Near the window, he did not face me, he stood silent still, but he was not the same man.

The black, shoulder long hair, started at my appearance, and young, icy grey eyes were now wickedly smiling to me, together with a gaseous face. Its teeth uncovered themselves in an immoral grin, thrusting into my heart's rusty armor. Some lock of hair rebelled again, leaving the safety of the braiding. Heavy, dragging steps closed in, and the ghostly hands took away my bonnet, leaving fiery waves to crash on my shoulders and cheeks. Outside, the sun had died long ago. The fog spoke for my master:

"I don't know where the keys are..."

**Madalina Durgheu,**  
12 F

## BETWEEN REALITY AND DREAMS

One should never be the prey  
Of thoughts in a world in grey;  
Instead, colors waltz around  
Making you float above the ground.

White, crystal or diamond clear  
Makes the perfect gift for a dear.  
Have you ever watched the clouds?  
Up and above they flutter in pure shrouds.  
Did you notice the angry waves of the sea  
As the storm approaches and all  
You can do is watch and see?

Next comes the calming green  
Fading like an old sheen.  
Pine or not, the trees of the forest  
Shine, in comparison to the rest.  
As we move on to the next sight to see  
They seem to cease to be.

The queen of all, the royal blue  
Of a sapphire is always true.  
Be it the abyssal ocean or the never-ending sky  
This color makes all want to fly.  
Shades from turquoise to bleu de France  
Make us all want to dance.

Never close your eyes and mind towards the world  
For it is uncertain what mystery could next unfold.

Ionescu Ruxandra  
9H

# POEMS

## Best Friends

Best friends... two simple words which  
mean a lot

A little story with a great plot...

One day we met, I saw you, but you  
slipped my mind...

You were so shy, I was so blind,  
I still couldn't see.

It soon turned out to be a burning  
love

We were protected by the sky above,  
How happy we could be!

This is a story to be told

About our lives, now that we are old.

## You

You think I'm able to forget you

While I can see nothing but you.

I only see two hazel eyes in my mind.

You are somewhere, far away,

Yet not far from my heart.

I want to ask the moon to smile for  
you,

I want to coax the sun to shine above  
you.

## Pain

Simple words taught me how to love.

A simple love taught me how to live.

The sun taught me how to shine,

The weather taught me how to  
change.

The reason why I'm here is to teach you  
how to feel!

When you're scared and you're  
screaming loud

And nobody hears you,

It's only your soul suffering inside.

Don't be afraid because I'm here.

I'm here by you no matter what.

Don't fight with yourself, fight with him.

He is the one who deserves your pain.

Go there and teach him how to feel,

How scared you are,

How he ruined your life.

Make him be ashamed,

Make him cry and make him scream.

Andra Teodoreanu

9f

## BET YOUR LIFE

We are in high school. Before we graduate. In other words before we even know it, we will come of age and acquire the right to drive an automobile, the right to vote and, say it, the right to decide on our lives/lives. In the meanwhile we are just having our words getting ready for the Big Bet.

How does that work in a movie?

Recent European studies show that 97% of all teenagers enjoy music and research all kind of showbiz subjects on the internet or even watch some TV to learn more about their favourite artists.

This is how 20 talented teenagers from all over Romania and even Moldova got together and La La Band was born. Their goal: Take over the Romanian and, why not, the European music charts, and their incredible talent and charisma might just help them do that. Apart from singing and dancing, the band's been involved in PRO TV's newest project, *Pariu cu Viata*, a musical show "for the whole family" as they advertise it. The series also star lots of Romanian top movie celebrities, including Marin Maratu and Dan Condurache, and also younger artists who are thrilled to work along side these well-known names. The show is centered around 2 teenagers, Andrei (Dorian Popa) and Ioana (Alina Eremia), whose love is deeply put to test by their closest friends, family and teachers. The band makes its presence in the show as well, releasing more and more singles as the series progresses. Their first song, *Stage of Joy*, reached over a couple hundred thousand views on YouTube in the past couple of months, and *Lala Love Song* is expected to be their next breakthrough.

## PARIU cu Viata

*Bet Your Life (Pariu cu Viata)* had its premiere in early September, and has been running since then, every Monday at 20:30 on PRO TV, being its primetime show, with around 1.5 million viewers per episode.

The series is spiced with breath-taking, perfectly choreographed musical moments, funny parts but also some dramatic scenes and cutting-edge special effects that will raise your heartbeat in a second.

The show just aired its tenth episode on 14th of November and will reach its season finale in late November.

*Bet Your Life* is the number one most-viewed TV show and the first ever musical-series in Romania. It is definitely worth checking out if you're into music and TV, or just fun in general.



Popescu Vlad-Radu  
Zidarescu Radu-Mihai  
12A





## It's Christmas!

I really love Christmas! Christmas is the time when Jesus was born. It's when we should be happy and stay together to celebrate this very special day.

We decorate the Christmas tree with bright multicolored globes and we hang them on the branches. We also wrap the tree in a net of lightbulbs to make it even more beautiful. The star on top of the tree represents the one that led the three Magi to Jesus.

Under the tree, Santa will leave presents to make every child in the world happy. Santa Claus is the nicest, the most hardworking person I have ever met. He's always good to children and he will never be late for those who respect their parents. He will come down the chimney and lay the presents under the tree. The cookies and the milk you left on the table will give him more energy and then he will disappear just as fast as he came.

It's Christmas Eve when children go from house to house singing carols and, as a gift, people give them apples, nuts and pretzels. At midnight, we go to church to participate at the birth of Jesus. This night we all should stay with our families and be part of the Christmas spirit.

Christmas is my favourite day of the year because it symbolizes my very beautiful childhood. Merry Christmas to all!



### Dear diary,

I have finally created a dream world  
Where he is, forever, mine to be told;  
But "it's a fantasy", I have been told...  
Still I try to take hold of my memories- so did.

These memories - we built when you were mine -  
Memories raised under the ancient pine  
When, at day, the sun would shine  
And the night, the planets would align.

I still remember our first kiss  
That sent me soaring into bliss  
So I just sit and reminisce  
And I really start to miss...

And I remember the way you looked at me  
Making me think we were meant to be  
And I remember you saying you agree...  
So why did you change to such degree?

Leaving me here, all on my own,  
Parting with me, making me frown...  
Forsaken, I have to dream it all away  
Wishing it would have never ended this way.

Andrea Surdu,  
9 F

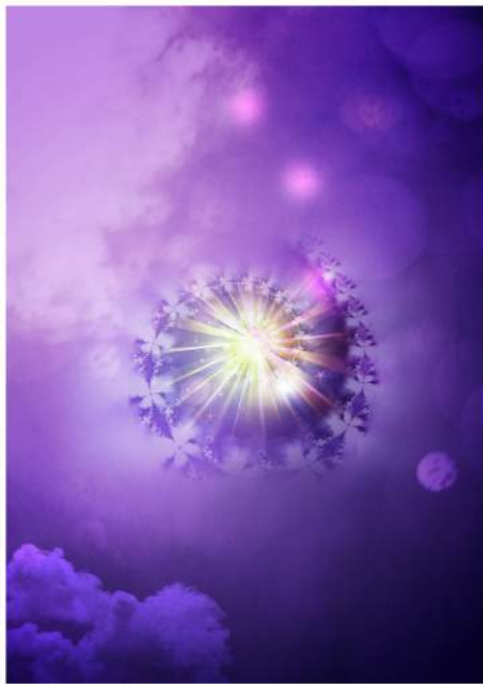
## "Beauty is in the eye of the beholder."

A capturing just a bit of it takes to convey more than images into emotions, memories, in other words, mirrors of our life.

Nature teaches the beauty of a moment, the magic of colour, shape and light, yet we sometimes pass by it without noticing it. We find that even small things have a deeper meaning than they show, if only needs the right time and a free mind.



Photos by Silvia Borlea  
Text by Alina Creta



Many thanks to our sponsors in the "Magic Words" writing competition:

