



Principal's Note

My dear friends,

On May 29, 1953, an extraordinary event unfolded: Mount Everest, the world's highest peak, was ascended for the first

time. Sir Edmund Hillary and Sherpa Tenzing Norgay reached the summit, paving the way for countless adventurers to follow. In recent years, an increasing number of climbers and intrepid Sherpas have embraced the challenge of reaching the top, even daring to enter the perilous 'Death Zone.'

Following their historic ascent, Sir Edmund Hillary asked a Sherpa how he could assist their community. The Sherpa responded, "Our children have eyes, but they are blind and cannot see. We would like you to open their eyes by building a school in our village." This poignant request led to the construction of schools and ongoing support for the children of Solu Khumbu, the homeland of Sherpa Tenzing Norgay.

Just as Sir Edmund's vision transformed many lives, at Billabong, we too have a vision. We strive to nurture intelligent and compassionate young minds committed to helping others and improving the world. We understand that as the world evolves, it can sometimes feel bewildering and daunting, but with a robust education, one will be equipped to face any challenge.

As educators, we help to perceive the larger picture and prepare for the future. We are dedicated to ensuring you receive the finest education possible, bolstered by your parents and a supportive community. This concerted effort has fostered a robust and nurturing environment where one can thrive and succeed.

We believe in each individual's potential, and our mission is to eliminate any barriers that might impede one's aspirations. Due to this unwavering dedication, many Billabongers have already accomplished remarkable feats in academic pursuits and extracurricular activities. Each success story is a testament to the supportive and nurturing environment we have cultivated together.

As we progress, let us dream ambitiously and set our sights on new goals, like climbing new mountains. Let's together reflect on the numerous Tenzings and the countless summits that lie ahead. As a team, we can scale new heights and achieve extraordinary things.

Keep believing in yourself, keep aiming high, and let's conquer the future!

Never forget that we are in it together.

- Ashish Agarwal

Student Editorial Board



Devyani Sadho
Editor-in-Chief



Abaan Ansari



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Prisha Arora

A JOURNEY BEYOND THE SENSES

'Vision' seems deceptively simple, doesn't it? Linked with the sense of sight, yet its essence stretches far beyond the physical world. Vision refers not merely to the panorama before our eyes, rather, it's the perception of these sights that renders our understanding and way of viewing this world unique.

Physiologically, it's a marvellous phenomenon, how mere rays of light, passing through several layers of our eyes, show us not what everybody sees, but what we wish to make of the sight. We make sense of what's around us by drawing from our experiences, knowledge, and biases. These elements shape how we interpret reality, adding depth to our perception.

When I heard the newsletter theme, mythical creatures and fairies came to my mind. They exist only if we believe in them, reflecting the power of imagination. As a student of psychology, I'm fascinated by the human mind's intricacies and storytelling's ability to convey broader images to audiences.

Diving deeper, our visions create us and the world we wish to be part of. They embody foresight and insight, the qualities that define us as humans. They grant us the power of imagination and creation, but also of destruction. We create for ourselves an ideal future and choose the path to achieve it, yet we can also create obstacles by letting our fears get the best of us. If you wish to bake a cake, you can't let the thoughts of a messy kitchen stop you, but surely think of a marvellous cake and try to replicate it, without being disheartened if it isn't exactly alike.

Vision opens the doors of endless opportunities, whether it's envisioning our future, crafting a realm of aspirations and innovations, or simply indulging in daydreams about a tub of our

favourite ice cream waiting in the fridge at the end of a long day. And it is people like these, who challenge their destinies, that shape the course of history and open doors for those visionaries yet to emerge. These individuals leap much higher than perhaps permitted, questioning the strength of the wings that set them free, while at the same time being enraptured by the haunting beauty of some fears constructed by their imaginations.

Each person is unique, and so is their perspective on the world. We might look at the same thing, but we'll never see it the same. Our visions are like maps guiding us toward our goals, showing us the way forward in our special way. We turn setbacks into opportunities, learning from failures as steps towards our destinies. Creating

a vision board for the life you wish to live alters your reality, reflecting what you feed your subconscious mind.

When discussing 'vision' with younger students, we discovered their imaginations were full of unique ideas, whether it was imagining themselves as doctors, teachers, pilots, warriors, or

even princesses, or creating something special with building blocks. It showed us that having dreams is important, but making them real takes hard work. They showed us that even with just a set of blocks, everyone can build something special.

So, let us embrace the multifaceted nature of vision - the physiological wonder, the prophetic foresight, the empathetic lens, and the creative muse. Through this broad interpretation of vision, we can understand its true depth, going beyond mere physical sight to explore the depths of our imagination and understanding.

- Prisha Arora (12B)

Editor's Note

The noise of the screeching tyres and engines being revved up is deafening to the point of catharsis. Some cars speed past you, but that only leaves you with the wind in your hair and impetus in your heel. There is ambition in the fuel and perseverance wafting in the air. But most of all, there is a sense of direction in this uncharted oblivion. The world seems to revolve around your vision as if it is in harmony with your aspirations. The vigour it draws from you is on par with what it rejuvenates; and if only for a couple of minutes, you recognize your pulse in the symphony of the universe.

Visions are the marriage of blank canvases,

empty Google docs, vacant sheet music, and amorphous clay to raw unfiltered creativity. With the ability to fathom all that can be, visions douse us with a sense of purpose in our anarchic lives. And amidst the heaps of hard work that shall follow, there is present an unruly desire to rather be Icarus than sit and squint at the Sun.

So as we bid farewell to our posts and treasured bulletin, it only seems apt to make 'Vision' the last theme of our tenure. I hope you enjoy our vision for this edition and all those that preceded it.

- Devyani Sadho, Editor-in-Chief



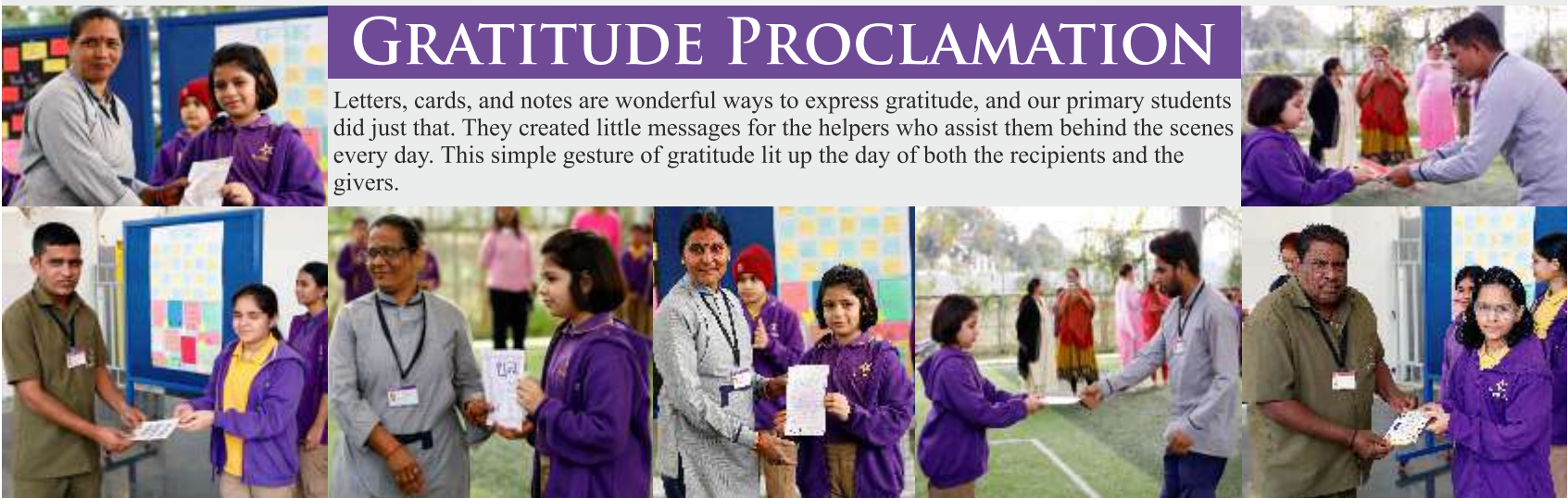
BHIS BIRTHDAY

As the school celebrated its 19th birthday, the event's pomp and show were a sight to behold. With wide smiles and high spirits, Billabongers commemorated their second home's growth with songs, dances, and special thank-yous. Naturally, no birthday is complete without a party, so the students celebrated Billabong's 19th birthday with classroom festivals.



GRATITUDE PROCLAMATION

Letters, cards, and notes are wonderful ways to express gratitude, and our primary students did just that. They created little messages for the helpers who assist them behind the scenes every day. This simple gesture of gratitude lit up the day of both the recipients and the givers.





JAPAN TRIP

Japan, the land of the Rising Sun, was a dream destination for many, and now these travelers have fulfilled their dream of visiting the birthplace of bullet trains. With Mt. Fuji towering above, they explored memorable sites like the bustling Teramachi Street and the renowned Universal Studios. Here are snapshots of their joy!



INTER-HOUSE DEBATE COMPETITION

When a topic ignites sparks, a capable representative must present a side of the conflict. Our students took the initiative to express their views on various controversial subjects in the Inter-house Debate Competition 2024. With strong defenses and aggressive attacks, these debaters embodied Yehuda Burg’s sentiment: “Words are singularly the most powerful force available to humanity.”



"Should there be age restrictions on coaching centres?"



Niharika, an 18-year-old JEE aspirant in Kota, left a suicide note for her parents stating, "I quit. I'm a loser." Abhishek, another student, also committed suicide earlier this year, leaving behind a note for his father: "Sorry, Papa, but I can't go on anymore." According to the National Crime Records Bureau, a student committed suicide every 42 minutes in 2020, for a daily total of 34. In the same year, 11,396 children below the age of 18 ended their lives.

Do we genuinely expect students to make it to these 'glamorous and star-studded' institutions at the cost of their well-being and, worse cases, their lives? Rattled by the increase in suicides, the Union Ministry of Education established severe recommendations to be implemented in all states to regulate the operation of private coaching institutes. Institutes are barred from enrolling students under the age of 16.

Moreover, they cannot issue misleading advertisements about guaranteeing high ranks and good marks. As an individual, I strongly stand by this decision. These 'coaching factories' are nothing but 'money-minting centres' with minimal regard for the individual well-being of students. Amidst the backdrop of these centres cashing in on lakhs and crores of rupees annually, we witness students grappling with immense and overwhelming pressure, resulting in various mental health issues.

These centres have a rigorous and taxing schedule with each student spending almost 18 hours studying every day, 7 days a week, leaving no time for relaxation and leisure. 'Aspirants' are cramped into crowded classrooms with one teacher teaching over 300 students at a time. The frequent fortnightly exams, where marks become the sole measure of a student's worth, increase anxiety among teenagers and lead to psychological distress. Furthermore, students are classified and separated based on their exam scores, which adds to their sense of pressure and separation. Just like that they are pushed into the 'rat race' and thrown to the 'wolves', often without the fundamental skills necessary to fight for their basic survival in the oppressive environment of a coaching institute.

Early admission into these centres robs young adolescents of their joy and carefree attitude. The emphasis on achieving high scores overshadows their passions, creative pursuits, and personal growth. They are unable to develop multidimensional talents since the solitary goal of success in tests such as JEE and NEET has dominated their educational experience since a young age. Young adolescents, who are meant to be enjoying the bliss and joy of their teenage years, suffer from loneliness and cut-throat competition in the challenging surroundings of these coaching institutions.

Another crucial factor to consider is unrealistic familial expectations. Even when children express their concerns and anxieties to their parents, they are reprimanded and forced to continue studying in these 'factories'. A majority of students who enrol themselves into coaching institutions belong to poor and lower-middle-class families. Their parents often resort to taking loans to pay the high coaching fees, leaving the child with no other option but to perform. As I conclude, I would like to voice that amid academic ambition, familial pressures, and the stressful environment of coaching centres, it is critical to remember that 'everything that glitters is not gold.'

Appearances can be deceiving, and while the charm and temptation of success may shine brightly, the true value of an individual lies in holistic growth, well-being, and a balanced approach to education.

YES**NO**

It is undeniable that the future ahead of us demands new skills. With the dawn of contemporary education, cultures, and youth opinions, it is crucial to pose the question: Should there be age restrictions on coaching centres?

A controversial subject, sizzling on the social pan, coaching centres have gained significant credibility and regard in recent times. To answer this, we must reconsider what society has forgotten: the true aims behind coaching centres. The coaching centre industry, which initially began as an enterprise aiming to leave a positive impact, now markets itself as a toxic and harmful concept. The effects on students' minds are undeniable, which is why many vehemently argue that imposing age restrictions on coaching centres is an effective solution.

An important point is that tuition is a boon to some and a bane to others. Coaching cannot be entirely categorized as beneficial or toxic. It has its fair share of ups and downs. According to a report in The Financial Express, students make up approximately 7.6% of the total suicide rate in India. Furthermore, India is also referred to as the "student suicide capital" of the world. However, these negative impacts simply cannot be curbed on a massive scale by imposing age restrictions.

Over the years, the concept of coaching has significantly transformed to a point where societal expectations and trends obscure the advantages that it can offer. We must ask ourselves: does the problem lie in the age limits, or is the problem with the principles that run the education industry today? Just like cancer cannot be treated with diabetes medications, superficial solutions like age restrictions just cannot serve the purpose.

In a world where most people often lose themselves within a crowd, it is undeniable that proper guidance and counselling are necessary for most students. Students come from a variety of backgrounds throughout the nation, and with themselves, they bring different experiences and mentalities. Age restrictions on coaching centres will act as a major obstacle and deprive many of the timely aid and guidance needed, which play an essential role in the critical career-building years of students.

To eliminate the harmful impacts, we must move towards effective and practical alternatives. It is important to take a step back and rewire our fundamentals. More importantly, as members of society, we must sever the link between trends and expectations and a student's career aspirations. Additionally, stress management, mental health awareness, and especially proper career counselling should be prioritized. I firmly believe that these methods will infallibly help foster student-friendly environments at coaching centres and bring about positive change in our methods and predominant beliefs.

In essence, it is necessary to address the issues at the root level rather than seeking superficial solutions, which will do us more harm than good. It's the eleventh hour, and we as a society must work together to kindle the fire and bring about fruitful reforms. Unambiguously, we cannot expect quick fixes like age restrictions to be suitable for facilities set up for young students.





RONALDO: The Greatest of All Time

Ronaldo was born on February 5, 1985. He grew up in an impoverished Roman Catholic home, sharing a bedroom and bathroom with his older brother and two older sisters. As a five-year-old, he used to watch football matches; that was his VISION. Growing up, watching football matches, inspired him to play the game himself and he asked his father to buy him a football. His MISSION was to excel in football. As his father was poor, they could not afford a new football, so Cristiano made one on his own. Many clubs watched him play, the club Andorinha, where his father was a kit man, loved his football skills and the way he hit goals, so they took him,

Later, Ronaldo spent two years with Nacional. When he was 12 years old, he signed for Sporting CP. After that, he signed for Manchester United, where he displayed great



skills and scored impressive goals. Then, he began his journey at the great club, Real Madrid. He did his first bicycle kick at the club. Then he moved to Juventus and defeated everyone- winning all their matches. After that, he returned to Manchester United and gave a stunning performance. According to Al-Nassr, in his journey to be the greatest player of all time, he won many trophies and completed his mission.

- Jiyaan Moolchandani (4B)



Vision and mission are words that everyone should know; let us know about them. Vision and Mission are all about our ambitions, and our first baby steps, to accomplish our vision and mission, start with learning.

Learning is the only thing that leads us to success; it is the key to our ambitions- our vision and mission for our lives. For example, if you want to be a lawyer, you first have to study the requirements for being a good lawyer. That is why you need to be educated well enough to

be the person you want to be when you grow up. Our second step starts with building relationships. To build relationships, you first have to show generosity, which we all need in our hearts. The third step is ownership of leadership. To own leadership, we first need to be polite and show enough generosity. As we slowly grow up, we get better, and to fulfill our ambitions, we have to follow these steps so we can finally become what we want by realizing our vision and mission.

- Param Rai (4E)

EVERYONE IS DIFFERENT

Because we feel inadequate, some of us have a tendency to imitate others. There are times we even go to the extent where we try to gain perfection by imitating or trying to live like others. Comparison will limit your progress the moment you start feeding into it by comparing your achievements with those of someone else.

Being unique is all about being different. What we think, what we do, and what we desire are not the same for everyone. And that is okay. Every individual has their own perspective, largely fuelled by the way they have experienced and navigated the world.

“The only person you are destined to become is the person you decide to be.”
-Ralph Waldo Emerson

It is clear from the aforementioned quote that you control your fate. Yes, we all need to remind ourselves of this every day. First of all, it is impossible to be genuinely happy if you don't accept and embrace your individuality. The secret to accepting your individuality is to learn to accept your strengths and flaws. Your life goal shouldn't be to emulate anyone else; it should only be to become a better version of yourself, day by day.

It's okay to speak your mind and express your opinion, which others might find weird and funny. Everyone has different interests and hobbies; thus, it's acceptable to have different ones from your buddies. It's okay to be yourself. At the end of the day, you are still going to be you. It's up to you whether you want to change or embrace yourself.

- Vidushi Lavania (8F)





The Crestfallen Legacy

Looking down from the Windermere peaks,
To the lakes and the streets,
And the houses with the rooftops and the creeks of the delicate poets,
Who came so far but are still told their word’s worth,

Whose words, like specks of gold, are preserved,
With the lessons of tranquillity allowing recollection,
Of the emotions felt so deep by those who felt endlessly,
For those whose visions were far beyond extraordinary and those who painted the world in their words,

Who were titled with craze and insanity and they wore the titles on them like badges of honour,
Because who could have known the extreme honour they were bestowed upon,

To even look at the world with words and letting the world be their audience to show colours that nobody else could,
Their way with words beautiful yet cryptic,
Like a realm cloaked with enchanted words haunted by the beauty,
With opening doors unopened,

Feelings yet to be felt,
And visions yet to be seen.

- Anvi Dixit (11B)

Ode to My Homeland

I vow to thee, my country, all earthly things above,
Entire and whole and perfect, the service of my love.
I heard my country calling, away across the sea,
Across the coast of waters, she calls and calls to me.
I hear the noise of the battle and the thunder of her guns,
I haste to thee, my mother, a son – among thy sons.
And there’s another country, I’ve heard of long ago,
Most dear to them that love her, most great to them that know.

- Pahul Kaur Arora (5F)

Vision of Life

Vision is something that everyone brings,
From a child to adult everyone thinks.
From writing a poem to becoming an explorer,
Either be a scientist of pain or a florist.
We all have goals to achieve in our own way,
A little price of time is all you need to pay.
Hurdles will come to push you back,
A little motivation will keep you on track.
With a pinch of determination, success is here,
Nothing will matter if you snuggle the fear.

- Advita Sarathe (4F)

Whisper of a Vision

In realms unseen, where dreams take flight,
A vision dances in the night;
A tapestry of colours bold,
A story waiting to unfold.
The eyes, the windows to the soul,
They seek the truth; they play a role,
In seeing beauty, pain, and grace,
In every line upon a face.
Through misty fog and shimmering haze,
Visions linger, like a silent maze;
They guide us forward, light our way,
Through darkest nights and brightest day.
So let your vision be your guide,
In oceans deep or mountains wide;
For in your mind, the world is spun,
A masterpiece, forever young.

- Laraib Hasan Khan (6C)

A Symphony of Sight

With our eyes wide open, we dare to see,
The magical beauty of the world, wild and free.
For only in vision’s gaze, we find our sight,
Guiding us through our darkest night.
With vision’s eye, we journey far,
Exploring complex galaxies, near and afar.
In every moment, it holds a special key,
To unlock wonders which are yet to be.
With vision’s gift, we explore and roam,
In this vast expanse, we find our home.
In each detail, a story is told,
In every colour, a new tale unfolds.
With eyes that wander, hearts that yearn,
Vision’s bright fire continues to burn.
In every echo, every soft sigh,
It reads the hidden secrets of the endless sky.
So let us honour this gift we possess,
A treasure that brings both joy and distress.
For in the depths of vision’s embrace,
Lies the beauty of the human race.

- Laaibah Faisal (9B)





THE LIGHTHOUSE KEEPER'S VISION

In a quaint coastal town nestled between rugged cliffs and rolling waves, there stood an old lighthouse. Its weathered exterior told tales of storms weathered and ships guided safely to shore. But beyond its physical purpose, the lighthouse held a deeper significance for the town and its people.

At the town's heart lived an elderly man named Elias, the keeper of the lighthouse. With his silver hair and weather-beaten face, Elias had spent decades tending to the beacon, ensuring its light shone brightly through the darkest nights.

One foggy morning, as the mist enveloped the town, Elias noticed a peculiar sight from the top of the lighthouse. A ship, barely visible through the thick fog, was struggling against the treacherous rocks near the shore. Without hesitation, Elias sprang into action, his years of experience guiding his every move.

With steady hands, he adjusted the lighthouse lamp, allowing its beam to pierce through the dense fog. The light danced across the waves, beckoning the lost ship towards safety. Through sheer determination and unwavering focus, Elias guided the vessel away from danger and towards the safety of the harbour.

As the townsfolk gathered to witness the miraculous rescue, they marvelled at Elias's unwavering resolve and keen vision. To them, the lighthouse keeper was more than just a guardian of the coast; he embodied the very essence of vision—the ability to see through the fog of uncertainty and navigate towards a brighter future.

But Elias's vision extended beyond the physical realm; it encompassed a deeper understanding of the world and its interconnectedness. He saw the struggles of his fellow townsfolk and sought to illuminate their paths just as he did for the lost ship at sea.

One day, a young artist named Clara arrived in town, her dreams as vast as the ocean itself. Inspired by the beauty of the coastal landscape, Clara set out to capture its essence on canvas. Yet, despite her talent, Clara found herself lost in a sea of self-doubt and uncertainty.

Sensing Clara's inner turmoil, Elias offered her guidance, much like he did

for the ships at sea. He shared with her the importance of vision—not just in art, but in life itself. They spoke of the need to see beyond the surface, to delve deeper into one's soul and find the light within.

Elias taught Clara to see beyond the surface, urging her to delve into her soul for inspiration. He emphasized the importance of clarity in vision, both in art and life. Through his guidance, Clara discovered a newfound passion and purpose in her work, with each brushstroke infused with the wisdom Elias imparted. With his encouragement, she learned to navigate the complexities of creativity, finding light in even the darkest of moments.

This allowed Clara to see the light, and she embarked on a journey of self-discovery. She painted with newfound passion and purpose; each brushstroke infused with the clarity of vision that Elias had instilled in her. And as her art flourished, so too did her spirit, illuminated by the beacon of hope that shone from the lighthouse atop the cliff.

Years passed, and Elias's time as the lighthouse keeper drew to a close. As he bid farewell to the town, he had called home for so long, Elias knew that his legacy would live on in the hearts of those he had touched. For he had not only guided ships to safety but had also helped countless souls find their way in the vast sea of life.

And as the sun set on the horizon, casting its warm glow upon the town below, Elias smiled, knowing that his vision had lit the way for generations to come.

- Veer Gothi (9A)



Myra's Vision

Once upon a time, there were two sisters: the elder one, named Syra, was very lazy, not sensitive about others, and was not at all organised in her work. The younger one, Myra, was opposite to her elder sister; she was always ready to help others and always planned her work. She was hard-working and compassionate. Myra had a vision to become a scientist and was ready to do all the hard work required. Whereas, Syra did not have any vision in her life and always killed her time by watching TV or sleeping.

One day, after coming from the office, their father informed them that their grandfather, who lives in a nearby village, was not well. Syra was least bothered by his health and did not want to go to the village. Myra, who felt bad for her grandfather, wanted to visit and take care of him. Finally, they all went to their village. Days passed and Syra was not at all taking care of her grandfather, whereas Myra took good care of him and used to help her aunt and mother with the household chores. All the while, Myra gave time to her studies as well. She also reminded Syra to revise her lessons, but she ignored her and spent her days sleeping and watching TV.

After some days, their grandfather recovered, and they all came back home. The next day, they were supposed to go to school and take their final exam. They both went and appeared for the exam. When the results came out, Myra came first in her class, and Syra was not able to clear her exam. That day, Syra realised the importance of having a set vision for her life.

"Vision is the art of seeing what is invisible to others."

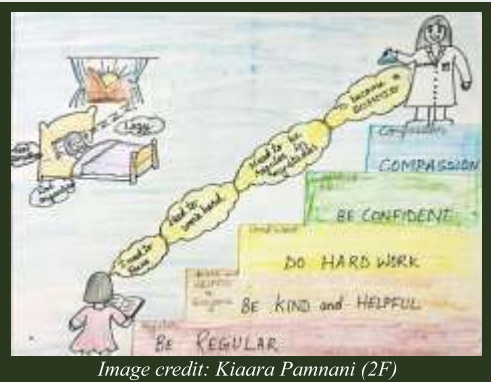


Image credit: Kiaara Pamnani (2F)

- Kiaara Pamnani (2F)

The Canvas of



It was a chilly day as Jimmy sat under a tree, munching on an apple that had just fallen a minute or two ago. The sun was on the verge of setting, creating a beautiful scenery in the sky. As he kept eating, he closed his eyes, envisioning himself as someone that he always wished to be, someone he was always fascinated by - a painter.

Jimmy was a twelve-year-old orphan, working at a stationery shop for a living. He was a helping hand for the owner, who always taught him about different types of brushes and pens.

One day, two girls arrived at the shop to purchase some art material. While he was packing things up, he overheard the girls talking about an art competition. "It is going to be a tough competition and there will be trials as well. You have to draw a landscape and mail it to the art gallery on the next street," said the girl to her companion. What Jimmy had heard rhymed sweet like a song in his ears. He was ready now; nothing could stop him. He then quickly closed the shop

and remained inside. He held out a canvas, some brushes, and pens and started painting. Just as he did, unique ideas rushed into his mind like a flowing river. Soon, after wavering each stroke of the brush with emotions, he came up with a beautiful painting. The next day, he mailed it to the art gallery.

A few days later, the results were out and Jimmy was selected! Realizing this, an intricate feeling knocked on the doors of his heart, and he opened the gates to welcome it. He finally won the competition. Years after years, victories after victories, he grew up to be someone exactly as he had envisioned himself to be, a brilliant painter.

Jimmy had finally transformed his vision to the present reality and achieved all the happiness in life. If Jimmy had stopped working hard for his vision, he would not have been able to become what he is now.

- Abhinav Mishra (8D)



Harry Potter is a seminal series of novels, later reimagined as movies by the billionaire British author, J.K. Rowling between 2002 and 2007. As a reader who delved into J.K. Rowling's famed Harry Potter series with fervent anticipation, I regrettably found myself disappointed by the entire saga. Despite the widespread acclaim these books have garnered, I cannot, in good conscience, overlook their myriad flaws. Harry Potter, like any other tale, follows the narrative of good versus evil. But when it comes to real life, we have our evils and are our own good, which is exactly why we don't need to dwell our minds into the fantasy of iniquity being immoral and vile. Evil is portrayed as a person, and the need for it to be defeated every single time can never fit right into anyone's wit. It is mankind; you can never defeat your evils and only retain the virtuous; you have to make peace with your evils to survive, and sometimes even sacrifice your rectitude for your persistence. Firstly, the characters, the cornerstone of Rowling's world, often fall flat and fail to evolve beyond simplistic archetypes.

Harry himself is a lackluster protagonist, exhibiting little depth or complexity beyond his status as "the chosen one." Secondary characters are similarly one-dimensional, lacking the depth necessary to truly engage readers on an emotional level. Harry and many others, at certain pivotal moments, are quite traumatised and mortified by horrible events. Yet there doesn't seem to be any means of healthy communication between all of them. And in all of this, Harry is particularly left to figure out how to deal with things on his own, and he's somehow supposed to be well-adjusted anyway as if he is a consummate being. The Ministry of Magic, which is the main source of control over sorcery in the Potter novels, is depicted as bigoted and corrupt. The excessive hype and commercialization surrounding Harry Potter have eclipsed any genuine literary merit the series may possess. In conclusion, while the Harry Potter series may hold nostalgic value for many, it ultimately fails to live up to the lofty expectations set by its reputation. Shallow characters, a predictable plot, and lackluster world-building combine to create a reading experience that is ultimately forgettable and underwhelming.

- Mariya Husain (10B)



"For never may you, like me, dread to be the instrument of evil to what you wholly love." This classic story winds together both the elusive mindset as well as the exasperating standards set for women in the patriarchal society of Victorian England in the 1800s. We recognise the conflict between conscience and passion of Jane Eyre, the protagonist, who is taken in by distant relatives after being orphaned. Her perseverance shows through as the silver lining as we witness her struggling through life trying to find purpose, love, and belonging. The narrative also sheds light on the conceit of the gentry class towards subservient classes. The story enables us to empathise with young Jane and her pragmatic character. From being mistreated by her obnoxious stepmother, to

experiencing sudden euphoria at having a temporary escape from her tedious school - her gilded cage - to surviving a typhoid epidemic, one can vividly navigate through the mayhem of her life. The outdoors is one of the few places where Jane feels at ease, and she seems to see the hand of providence in the canvas nature reveals to her. After she has established her position as a teacher, she further comes across Mr. Rochester, a stern and rather distant brooding master, viewed as an archetypal Byronic hero, for whom she aspires to work as a governess. Thereafter, the twists and turns, as well as the surprises that are in store for Jane keep readers transfixed throughout the narration of her poignant life. Despite the foreshadowings repelling the love for her master Mr. Rochester, like the splitting of a chestnut tree in turbulent weather, Jane emerges jubilant by virtue of her unparalleled strength. Her triumph brings tears to our eyes as we see her benevolent character receive the much-deserved love and affection.

- Arzoo Hajela (10D)



Directed and co-written by Amit Sharma and produced by Boney Kapoor and Zee Studios, the film is a biography based on the life of Syed Abdul Rahim, the legendary Indian football coach who served between 1952 and 1962. The film is about a man who had one belief and one dream: uniting the whole nation and reviving the nation's image in the world through football. Ajay Devgn, as usual, delivers a powerhouse performance in the film. The supporting actors, like Gajraj Rao and the young actors who play the roles of football players for the Indian team, have done complete justice to their roles. Ajay Devgn portrays the character of a passionate Indian football coach who struggles to overcome

various obstacles like politics in the football federation, lack of funds, his deteriorating health, etc. Coach Rahim and his team finally succeeded by winning the Asian Games in 1962, which was no less than a miracle. Though the duration of the movie is 3 hours, it consistently holds the attention of the audience and does not get boring at any point in time. The match scenes are realistic and exciting to watch. The movie is a masterpiece and inspires us not only to dream and have a vision but also to have a meticulous plan of action and relentless efforts for its achievement. It's a must-watch and highly recommended for audiences of all ages.

- Amaira Singh Raghuvanshi (5A)

ROBLOX: A BLEND OF CREATIVITY AND ENTERTAINMENT

Roblox is a metaverse of gaming where you can create, explore, communicate, and play. The game is loved by millions of people as it allows them to cross the physical limitations of the world of gaming. The game is a place where many users come together to play and create. The game encourages children to live their imaginations and make their very own dreams come true. Every game in Roblox offers a different vision for its players. The mega platform enhances human experiences and has been very successful in the universe of gaming. It's a game where you can access your wildest dreams. Roblox provides the wings of creativity for children to fly in the ultra-virtual world of gaming. There is a lot of creativity in every child, and if they wish to experience it, they can try this game. Roblox is not just for children; people of all ages can try it and explore their creative limits. It is also for those who wish to set a career in the metaverse of gaming. However, there is a catch. Roblox can be pretty addictive and should be played in moderation. Even though Roblox can never replace the benefits of real-life physical activities, it still gives a touch of co-human experiences. Thus, one can try Roblox to uncover their creative potential with the added advantage of entertainment. However, it should neither be a substitute for physical activity nor should it become an addiction.



Image credits: https://www.internetmatters.org

- Neeti Pithode (5A)



Grape O' Fizz

Ingredients:

- Grapes - 100 gm
- Soda/Cold Water - 200 ml
- Lemon - 1
- Chilli Powder - to taste
- Salt - to taste

Method:

- Put the grapes in a bowl and clean them using water.
 - Drain the water.
 - Use a blender to blend the grapes to a puree.
 - Sieve the mixture to get the grape juice.
 - Slice the lemon and rub a slice on the rim of the glass.
 - Make a mixture of salt and chilli powder on a plate and dip the glass upside-down, so that the mixture sticks to the rim.
 - Pour the juice into the glass and add the soda/cold water.
- If you prefer, add ice. Voila, your **Grape O' Fizz** is ready!

- Arya Abhijit Rozatkar (4C)

COMIC STRIP



Story:
- Soham Shrivastava (10C)
- Lakshya Agrawal (10C)

TRAVELOGUE

PACHMARHI: A Tranquil Escape

Last year, I took one of the best trips of my life to Pachmarhi. The fresh and clean air, the greenery, the hills, the weather-all of it had a heavenly feel to it. Our trip started with a ride in an open jeep to Dhoopgarh, which is the peak of Pachmarhi. As I stood up in the jeep, the wind blew through my hair. I felt one with it, completely free-no burdens, no pressure, just freedom. I realized that nature has a way of purifying your soul and providing a haven for your mind. The views at Dhoopgarh were absolutely stunning, with monkeys everywhere and a slight hint of foggy clouds. I felt like I was lost in a dream, and I wished to never wake up from it. On the second and final day, we went to visit the several churches of Pachmarhi, and their beauty captivated me. The simple and timeless elegance of these churches is beyond human imagination. Though the trip was short, my experience is an eternal memory for me, which strikes my mind daily.

- Kainaat Kapoor (9B)

Enchanting LANKA

My exquisite journey to Sri Lanka was a memorable one. Sri Lanka, also known as Ceylon, is a tranquil island. On our visit to the Turtle Hatchery, I saw many sea turtles. Sri Lanka is home to five out of seven sea turtles found in the world. The beaches are clean and the water is crystal clear. Sri Lanka houses a rich and diverse culture and heritage. The 'Sacred Tooth Relic' is a Buddhist temple in Kandy; it is also a world heritage site. There are three museums connected to the temple that give us an insight into how Buddhism spread in Sri Lanka. Galle is famous among historians and shopaholics. The buildings in Galle have a colonial-era layout. It is a type of mini-Goa. Galle is famous for its fort, lighthouse, and a good view of the sea. From there, we headed to Nuwara Eliya, a hill station. At Nuwara Eliya we saw Ashok Vatika. We were spellbound to see the ambiance. I can't forget my visit to Udawalawe National Park, which had around 500 elephants, though we saw only 30 elephants and different types of birds. We were thrilled to know that our safari guide could speak Hindi. I will always remember the friendly locals, exotic food, and comfortable resorts during our nine-day stay. It will always be an unforgettable vacation for me.

- Nachiket Chandwaskar (5A)



Tête-à-Tête with **VR RAJESH**

Excerpts from the Interview

Q You started your career at Ogilvy as an account executive and are now their group CEO. How did your role evolve over the years, and what qualities do you think helped you rise through the ranks?

Early passion and dedication played a crucial role in shaping my career trajectory. By enthusiastically embracing tasks others might have overlooked and working tirelessly on endeavors I loved, I was able to distinguish myself in a crowded field. My willingness to take on unconventional challenges not only made me stand out but also garnered attention from organizations seeking individuals capable of tackling unique problems. Initially I focused on client advertising for nearly two decades, I later transitioned to a role centered on building and future-proofing the organization. This shift necessitated assessing our capabilities, strategizing for the digital age, and planning for future growth and expansion. Thus, my career journey involved not only ascending through the ranks but also adapting to the evolving needs of the industry, a testament to my commitment to personal and professional growth.

Q How do you ensure that the TV ads you create align with the brand's messaging and image? And, in your opinion, what makes a TV ad memorable and effective?

We create various forms of communication, such as print, social, or outdoor performance, all tailored to align with our clients' brand image and address their specific needs. For instance, in the 90s, Cadbury approached us with a challenge: to expand their business despite limited chocolate consumption among children. We identified marketing to adults as a viable strategy, capitalizing on India's cultural affinity for sweets. By associating Cadbury with sweet moments in people's lives, we have established its relevance in homes over the past three decades. Our campaigns focus on everyday indulgences and moments of happiness, like learning a new dance or asking someone out on a date. These ideas stem from extensive research and collaboration with our clients, ensuring alignment with the brand's values and objectives. Our agency's success is built on long-term partnerships with clients, some spanning 10 to 30 years. Central to our approach is understanding our consumers' needs and desires, enabling us to create compelling messages that resonate with them. While we strive for accuracy, we remain open to feedback and ready to rectify any mistakes.

Q As the CEO of Ogilvy, you must be working on multiple projects at once with huge teams consisting of people with diverse perspectives and ideas, some of whom might not get along. In such situations, how do you execute plans to give your clients the best results while keeping your team together and satisfied?

Our business values interpersonal connections over mechanized processes. Throughout my 30-year tenure, conflict resolution has been a recurring skill we've refined. According to a Harvard Business Journal article, 96% of conflicts are resolved through direct dialogue. We prioritize face-to-face communication to ensure diverse viewpoints are heard and consensus is reached. Our three interconnected departments—client-facing, planning, and creative—each contribute distinct perspectives, necessitating collaboration for effective output. This collaborative ethos, coupled with the dedication of our team, underpins our success. I'm not the sole scorer on this team; it's about trusting and empowering each member. Our achievements are a collective effort, emphasizing the importance of teamwork and mutual trust.

Q Artificial intelligence is on its way to completely succeed in understanding and adapting to algorithmic and behavioural trends in consumers. Do you think this is a potential threat to people who wish to build their careers in the field of digital marketing?

It's premature to make definitive statements about AI's impact. I believe in respecting the unknown more than the known. Currently, AI plays a crucial role in analyzing trends and enhancing productivity in the creation field. It enables us to generate output at scale, particularly for tasks requiring numerous assets in a short timeframe, such as email campaigns or digital performance assets. However, AI still relies on human guidance for its operations and decision-making processes.

While AI continues to evolve, it cannot understand emotions and create emotional connections as humans do. For instance, crafting advertising campaigns with strong emotional appeal, such as Vodafone's "boy at the top," requires human input. Similarly, instilling a brand with a purpose, as in Dow's case with its focus on creativity and self-acceptance, presents challenges for AI due to its reliance on external data sources. Despite AI's growing role in advertising, human creativity and emotional intelligence remain invaluable assets. AI's influence will likely accelerate mundane tasks, but human involvement will remain essential in shaping brand identity and fostering emotional connections. Therefore, while AI will enhance efficiency, it won't diminish the importance of people in advertising careers.

Q Can you share any strategies your company employs to counter the influence of potentially deceptive or inauthentic products in your ad campaigns?

I believe we work with good companies that engage in such ventures. The essence of creating competition for a company lies in understanding its product and business deeply. We delve into their products, claims, and company ethos extensively. Mistakes may

happen, but acknowledging them and rectifying them is crucial. We may terminate relationships if necessary. We focus on doing the right thing ourselves rather than attempting to correct the world. Our confidence stems from thorough research; for instance, we analyze whether a cream moisturizes or reduces dandruff. The Advertising Standard Council of India, appointed by the government, monitors claims' accuracy, with consumers reporting inaccuracies. This body ensures accountability for our work.

Q How do you ensure that TV ads reach the intended audience and generate a strong response?

TV ads no longer reach audiences effectively as people have shifted from traditional television to digital platforms. This transition has reshaped consumer behavior, impacting shopping habits and brand engagement. For example, in beauty, K-pop and Korean trends drive preferences, with Instagram emerging as a key shopping platform. This digital shift alters product interactions, requiring adaptive advertising strategies. Brands like Mamalat thrive on digital platforms, challenging FMCG norms. Two advertising realms emerge: traditional TV and digital platforms, each with unique dynamics.

Q Given the negative health implications associated with harmful products, how do you ensure that the messaging in TV ads is clear and transparent, allowing the general public, especially kids like us, to differentiate between authentic information and potentially misleading claims like Parmasar Advertisements?

Guidelines enforced by the government dictate the permissible topics for discussion, with penalties for non-compliance. However, banning products like Coke won't eradicate their existence; someone will still sell them. Hence, it's vital to be mindful of whom we sell to and how to educate consumers about potential risks. Consumers today are more discerning and able to distinguish between right and wrong. While I am not personally fond of pan masala advertising, prominent celebrities endorsing such products limit our influence. Ultimately, it's the government's prerogative to regulate product availability, which can be unfair to businesses bound by specific guidelines. I don't possess a definitive solution to this issue.

Q What advice will you give to students who aspire to enter the field of advertising?

First, pursue your MBA. Advertising is a part of marketing. If you are interested in marketing, prioritize your MBA. It sets bigger life goals, helping you decide on advertising later. Marketing is broader, while advertising is narrower. Aim for a good college with diverse opportunities. Keep an open mind toward marketing. If you are still interested, pursue advertising after an MBA from a reputable college.





"Photography is about capturing souls not smiles."
– Dragan Tapshanov



Shreeya Hotwani (7E)



Kabeer Kataria (4C)



Siddharth Handa (10D)



Parv Madhavan (2B)



Aanya Malviya (10B)



Bhavya Agarwal (11D)



Naysha Agrawal (8C)



Sumedh Shukla (10C)



Atharva Singh Rajput (10D)



Hashvi Kataria (11C)



Rohan Lacchwani (7F)



Yohan Rebo Reji (2F)



Gaurik Khandelwal (1C)



Aashvi Parikh (7E)



Aarna Singh (7E)



Soham Shrivastava (10C)