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# АНАЛІЗ АНГЛОМОВНОЇ ПРЕСИ

НАВЧАЛЬНИЙ ПОСІБНИК

**Міністерство освіти і науки України**

**Мелітопольський державний педагогічний університет  
імені Богдана Хмельницького**

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Навчальний посібник призначений для методичного забезпечення освітнього компоненту «Аналіз англomовної преси», що вивчається здобувачами вищої освіти освітнього рівня «бакалавр» спеціальностей «Філологія. Германські мови і літератури (переклад включно)» та «Середня освіта. Мова і література (англійська)». Його метою є формування у здобувачів здатності орієнтування у сучасних актуальних контекстах англomовного середовища шляхом аналізу матеріалів з автентичної періодики.

Навчальний посібник складається з трьох основних і одного додаткового розділів. Перший розділ присвячено теоретичним засадам аналізу періодичної преси. У другому розділі подано детальний алгоритм аналізу текстів періодичної преси. Третій розділ має практичну спрямованість, він містить автентичні тексти з англomовної періодичної преси, що розподілені за певними темами, та різноманітні завдання до них, що сприятиме утворенню здатності тлумачити соціальні, політичні, культурні та освітні мовленнєві реалії. У додатковому розділі подано завдання для відпрацювання і повторення граматичних структур англійської мови.

Посібник стане у пригоді здобувачам і викладачам філологічних факультетів, а також усім, хто бажає вдосконалити свої знання з англійської мови.

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## ПЕРЕДМОВА

Освітній компонент «Аналіз англomовної преси» дозволяє набути студентам додаткових фахових компетентностей при опануванні циклу дисциплін професійної підготовки, таких як «Стилістика англійської мови», «Основи перекладознавства», «Лексикологія англійської мови».

Мета освітнього компонента полягає у формуванні здатності орієнтування у сучасних актуальних контекстах англomовного середовища шляхом аналізу матеріалів з автентичної періодики.

Завдання дисципліни:

- формування вмінь застосування певного плану, системи завдань та кліше для виявлення формату періодики,
- всебічне відображення сьогодення,
- опанування навичками аналізу різноманітних авторських стилів,
- визначення зміни та розвитку сучасного лексичного складу мови.

Опанування освітнім компонентом «Аналіз англomовної преси» передбачає ознайомлення з теоретичними основами аналізу англomовної преси, типами періодичних видань, різновидами профільних текстів, структурою аналізу текстів періодичних видань, типологією заголовків, структурою тексту, синтаксичними особливостями публіцистичних матеріалів, лексико-стилістичними параметрами профільних текстів, специфікою вжитку сталих виразів у текстах ЗМІ, морально-етичними засадами подання інформації у ЗМІ, опрацюванням категорії часу і стану.

Під час опрацювання кожної теми здійснюється ознайомлення з різновидами профільних текстів за темою, аналіз різних типів профільних текстів за темою, визначення тематичної лексики, застосування відповідних кліше, складання анотації до текстів, переклад статті, що аналізується або її уривку, складання питань за темою статті для подальшої дискусії в групі.

Внаслідок вивчення освітнього компоненту студенти мають вміти:

- Характеризувати діалектні та соціальні різновиди мов, що вивчаються, описувати соціолінгвальну ситуацію.
- Знати норми літературної мови та вміти їх застосовувати у практичній діяльності.
- Знати принципи, технології і прийоми створення усних і письмових текстів різних жанрів і стилів державною та іноземними мовами.
- Аналізувати мовні одиниці, визначати їхню взаємодію та характеризувати мовні явища і процеси, що їх зумовлюють.
- Здійснювати лінгвістичний, літературознавчий та спеціальний філологічний аналіз текстів різних стилів і жанрів.

Різноманітність типів завдань не тільки активізує розумові процеси, але й сприяє закріпленню світоглядної інформації, розширенню лексичного складу, а також здібності до побудови причинно-наслідкових зв'язків. Інформацію, що необхідна для успішного виконання завдань, ретельно підібрано відповідно до критеріїв актуальності, взаємоінтеграції навчальних курсів, відповідності лінгвістичним нормам тощо.

Даний посібник стане у пригоді студентам і викладачам філологічних факультетів, а також усім, хто бажає вдосконалити свої знання з англійської мови.

# SECTION 1

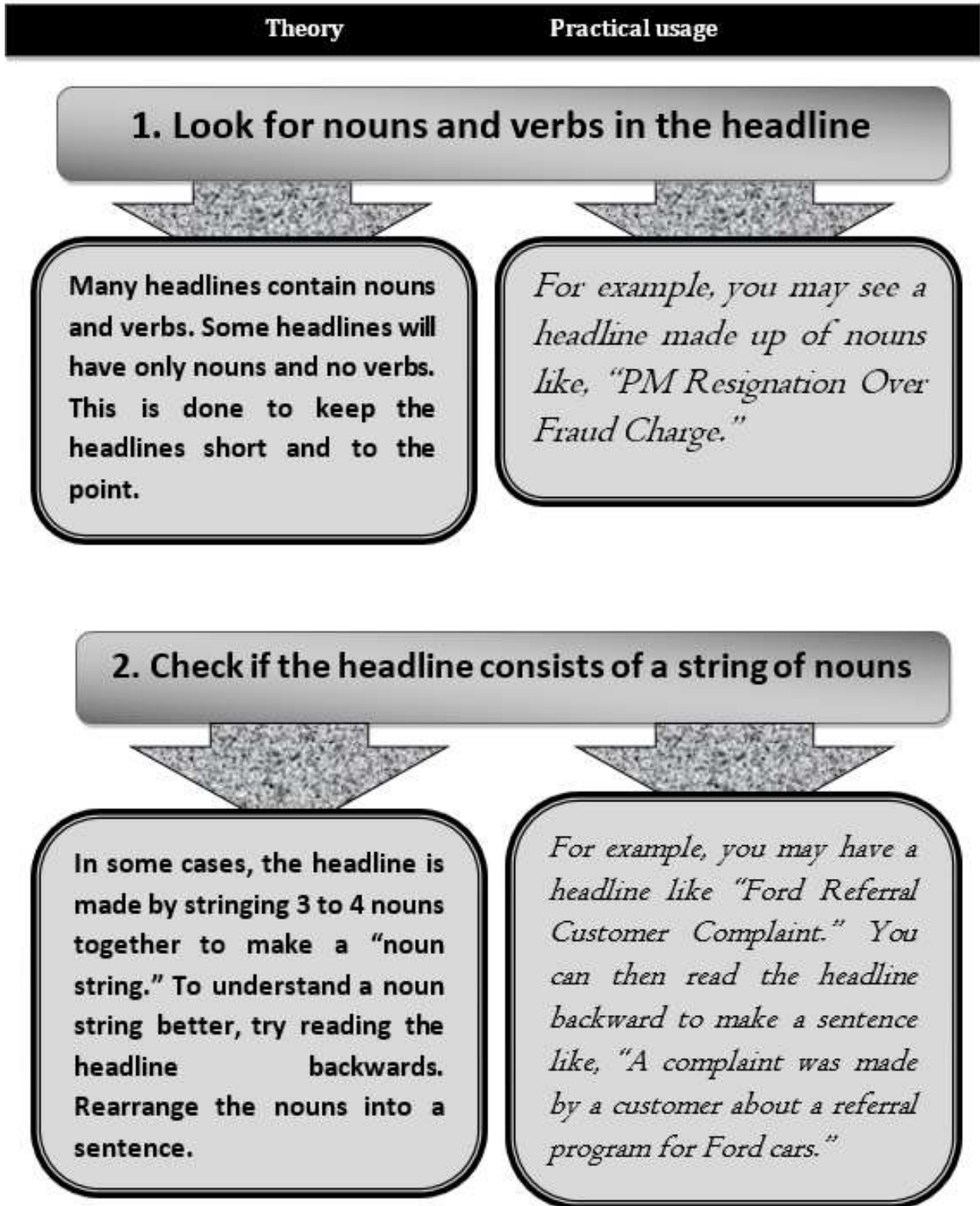
# THEORETICAL

# PART



# PART 1

## EVALUATING THE HEADLINE





**3. Notice if the headline has no articles like “a,” “an,” or “the”**

Other phrases that are considered extra, such as “some,” “few,” or “many,” are also usually left out of newspaper headlines to keep them short and to the point.

*For example, you may read a headline like “Neighbor Sees Woman Jump.” If you put articles into the headline, you may get a sentence like, “The neighbor saw the woman jump.”*

*Another example is a headline like, “Homeowners Fear New Flooding.” Rather than say “Some homeowners” or “Many homeowners,” the headline just says “Homeowners” to present the most important details.*

**4. Look for verb changes in the headline**

When verbs appear in headlines, they are usually adjusted to make the headline sound more immediate. Rather than describe the events in the past with a past tense verb, the newspaper will use a present tense verb in the headline.

*For example, you may read a headline like “Professors Lose Union Fight.” This means the professors lost the fight to start a union, as it just happened in the past.*

*The newspaper will also describe events that are going to happen with verbs like “to.” For example, the headline, “Nicolas Cage to Visit Portland” means that the actor Nicolas Cage will be visiting Portland in the near future.*

### 5. Check for wordplay in the headline

Some headlines have words that can mean two things at once. These words are called puns. Puns and wordplay are often done to give the headline an amusing or entertaining tone.

*For example, you may have a headline like "Otter Devastation." This is a play on the word "otter" as it can sound like "utter."*

*Another example is the headline, "From Russia...With Gloves." This headline is a pun on the famous James Bond film, From Russia, With Love and plays on the word "love" by using "gloves."*

### 6. Look for alliteration

Alliteration occurs when the same sound is repeated in a row. Often, headlines that use alliteration consist of words that start with the same letter. Alliteration is used by newspapers to make the headline more catchy and memorable.

*For example, you may have a headline like, "Man Makes Massive Maritime Menagerie." This uses alliteration with the sound "m."*

*Another example is the headline, "Sleepy Seamstress Sends City Into Century-Long Snooze." This uses alliteration with the sound "s."*

**7. Ask “who,” “what,” “where,” and “why” when reading the headline**

A good newspaper headline will answer at least 1 or 2 of the 4 W's (“who,” “what,” “where,” and “why”). Try answering each of these questions using just the headline of the article.

*For example, you may have a headline like “Man Makes Massive Maritime Menagerie.” The “who” would be a man, the “what” would be a massive maritime menagerie, and the “where” would likely be somewhere near water, as the headline refers to “maritime.”*

*Another example would be a headline like “Sleepy Seamstress Sends City Into Century-Long Snooze.” The “who” is a seamstress who sleeps too much, the “what” is a century-long snooze, and the “where” would be a city.*

**8. Use the headline to understand the body of the article**

The headline should give you direction on what will be discussed in the body of the article. You should refer back to the headline when reading the body, using it as a guide.

*For example, the headline “Eight Dead When Nursing Home Goes Without AC After Hurricane” will tip you off that the article is going to focus on the details of the death of 8 people in the nursing home and how it relates to the hurricane.*



## PART 2

# EXAMINING THE STRUCTURE, VOICE, AND TENSE OF THE ARTICLE

Theory	Practical usage
--------	-----------------

**1. Identify where the article is located in the newspaper**

Online articles that are straight news stories will be placed in the Current Events or Breaking News section of the newspaper. Articles that are written as opinion pieces or think pieces will be listed in the Op-Ed section (opinions and editorials page) of the newspaper. Determining where the article is located will help you know what to expect in terms of the rhetoric and tone of the article.

*For example, an article placed in the Op-Ed section will usually be written from the reporter's perspective or point of view. It may be biased towards a certain position and contain rhetoric that is persuasive and argumentative.*



## 2. Analyze the lead, or the first line, of the article

The lead of the article is perhaps the most important line in the entire article. It will summarize the story and discuss the who, what, where, when, and how of the story. Identify key words and phrases in the lead that seem important.

*For example, you may read a lead like, "The first evacuee was rushed into the emergency room of Memorial Regional Hospital on Wednesday, escaping a nursing home that had lost air-conditioning in the muggy days after Hurricane Ike."*

*You can then identify key words like "evacuee," "emergency room," "nursing home" and "Hurricane Ike."*

## 3. Look up unfamiliar words or phrases

Read over the article and circle any words or phrases that you do not recognize. Use a dictionary to look them up so you can better understand them. Then, place the defined word in the context of the sentence so you can understand it better.

*For example, you may be stumped on a word like "evacuee." You can then look it up and place it in the context of the sentence so you understand the sentence better as a whole.*

#### 4. Check for the active voice

Most newspaper articles use the active voice, where the subject is always the one acting in a sentence or doing an action. This keeps the article immediate and engaging for readers.

*For example, you may read a line in the article like, "Fire and rescue units were hurrying the nursing home's more than 100 residents out." This is active, as it shows the fire and rescue units doing an action, "hurrying...residents out."*

#### 5. Determine the tense used in the article

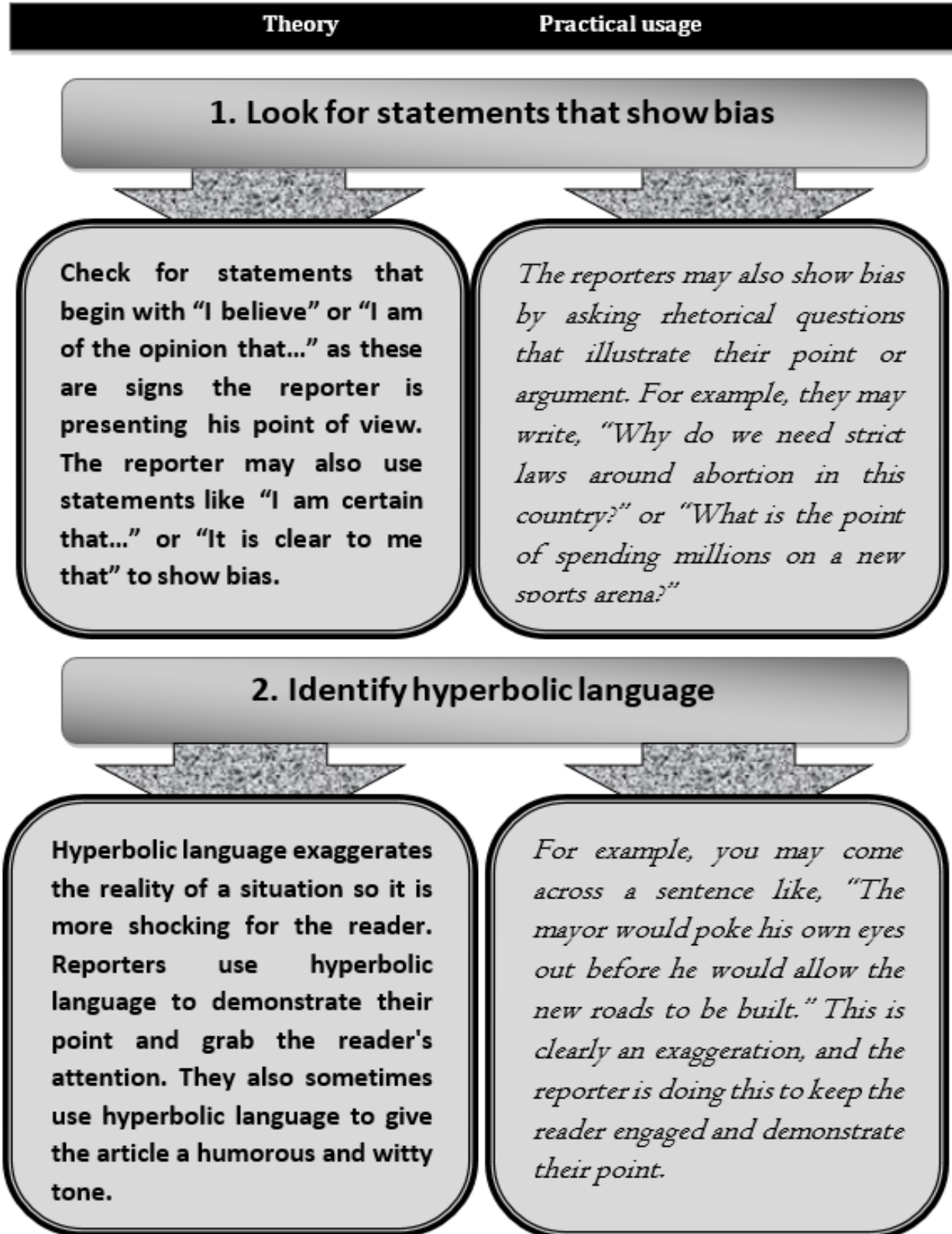
The newspaper article will use the past tense to describe an event that occurred recently, in the past. It will use the present tense to discuss an event that is going to happen in the near future.

*For example, if you have a sentence in the article like, "In all, eight were dead," this means the article is in past tense.*

*If you have a sentence like, "The city plans to open the new walkway next year," this means the article is in present tense.*

## PART 3

### LOOKING AT RHETORIC AND TONE





### 3. Look for clichés

Clichés are phrases that have become so familiar they have lost their meaning. Reporters may use clichés to get a point across quickly and easily to readers. They are also used when the reporter is trying to demonstrate a complicated point in an accessible way.

*For example, you may notice a cliché like, "You can lead a horse to water, but you can't make it drink" in the article. You may then consider what the reporter is trying to demonstrate to the reader by employing this cliché.*

### 4. Check for evidence or sources used to support an

Reporters will use evidence to support an argument. The evidence may be statistics, a quote from a source, or even a graph. They may also get an expert opinion to support their argument.

*For example, you may notice lines that begin with, "According to a new study...", "A new research report illustrates," or "Experts predict..."*

*The reporter may also use a quote from a source, such as "We are doing what we can to contain the situation," the police chief said at the press conference."*



### 5. Identify allusions in the article

Allusions reference well-known works or events in history. Reporters use them to invoke positive or negative feelings from the reader. They may allude to a moment in history to connect a current event with the past.

*For example, a reporter may allude to Dr. Martin Luther King Jr when discussing a rising activist leader in the African-American community. This would then invoke feelings of awe and reverence towards the activist, similar to the way the reader may feel about Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.*

### 6. Look for inclusive language

The reporter may use inclusive language like “we” or “us” to make the reader feel like they are on the same side as the reporter. Inclusive language makes the reader feel included in the reporter’s argument or perspective.

The reporter may also use exclusive language like “they” or “them” to exclude a group of people. This could make the reader feel like they belong to the “we,” rather than the “they.”

*For example, you may notice a line like, “We may not like it, but the safety of our families is at risk.” Or you may come across a line like, “We stand for freedom and equality, while they stand for hatred and exclusion.”*

## 7. Determine the overall tone of the article

News articles usually have an authoritative tone. Analyzing the language in the article should help you identify the tone and intent of the reporter. You may decide the tone of the article is:

- *Logical, where the article comes across as rational and reasonable. It may use lots of expert opinions and quotes to analyze a situation or event.*
- *Neutral, where the article is impartial and balanced, with no bias. Most straight news stories are neutral in tone.*
- *Passionate, where the article is written with a lot of emotion and personality. It may show its bias and argue a certain point by tapping into a reader's emotions.*
- *Witty, where the article is humorous or satirical. It may come across as lighthearted or tongue-in-cheek. It may try to make the reader laugh by using hyperbolic language and an impersonal or casual approach.*



**SECTION 2**  
**PRACTICAL**  
**GUIDE**

## **PRACTICAL GUIDE TO SUMMARY NEWSPAPER ARTICLE ANALYSIS**



### **Questions for article analysis:**

**1. What event led to the writing of the article?**

**2. What is the main idea of the article?**

**3. Select several facts (arguments) which support the main idea.**

**4. Does the author provide enough factual material to support his ideas: quotes witnesses, provides statistics, states his sources of information? Was he an eyewitness to events; or was the information obtained through a news service?**

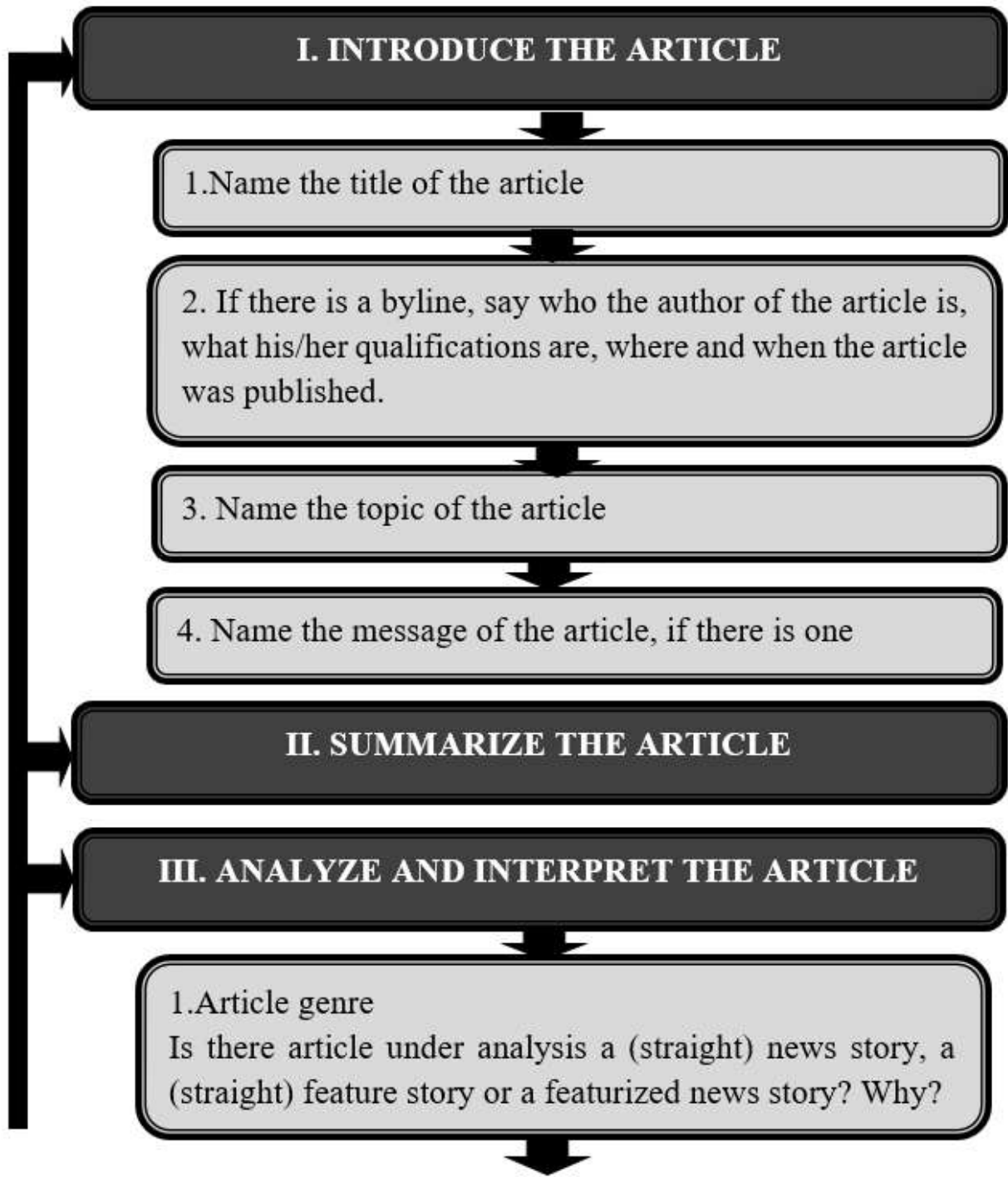
**5. Is the reportage, in your opinion, true, balanced or biased? Explain.**


**6. Are different viewpoints presented? Is this article an editorial (author's own ideas)? Is it informative, convincing, balanced?**

**7. What do you think of the article and its point of view? Explain.**



# PRACTICAL GUIDE TO COMPLETE NEWSPAPER ARTICLE ANALYSIS





2. Articles structure and unity:

1)Headline:

- What is the purpose of the headline?
- Is the headline straightforward or teasing? Why?
- Are there any grammatical/lexical/graphic peculiarities in the headline? If yes, how can you account for them?


2)Lead:

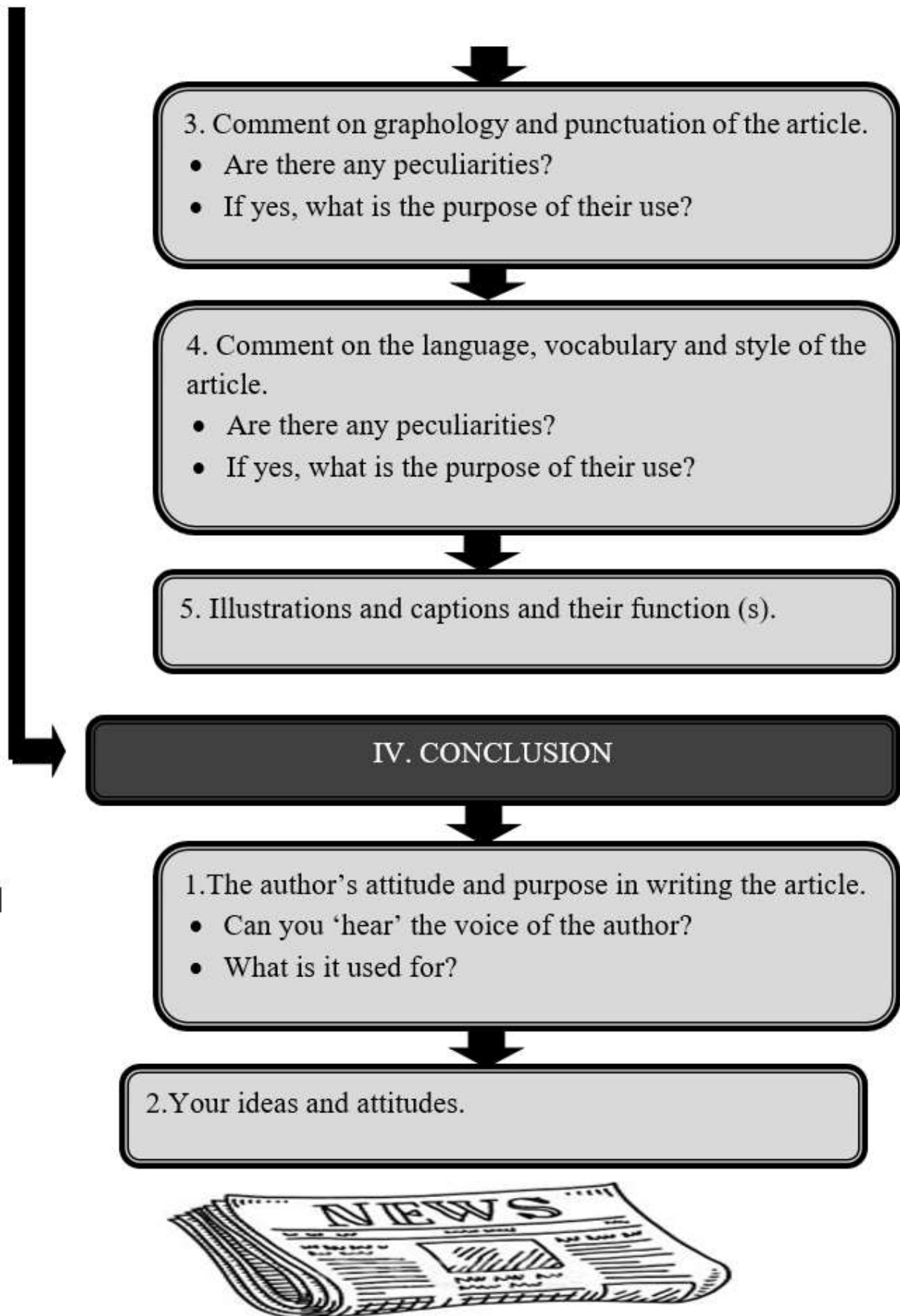
- Is it a direct lead summarizing the story's essential facts (who, what, when, where, why and how)?
- Or is it a delayed lead (an anecdote, a shocking or startling statement, a generalization, description, a quote, a question, a comparison, etc.) enticing the reader into the story by hinting at its contents?

3)Body of the article:

- Does the body of the article mainly contain details on the information given in the lead? Is it written in the 'inverted pyramid' form?
- Or is it a sequence of plot events united by the main theme and the message / a first - person narration about the author's own experience?
- Is it written in the quote/transitional way?
- Does the story have a thread?

4) End:

- Does the story end with less important information (in comparison with the lead)?
  - Or does it end with a conclusion wrapping up the story/a strong quotation/a surprising climax?
- 



## THEMATIC VOCABULARY FOR ARTICLE ANALYSIS (SAMPLE)

1	to cover the news /news coverage	висвітлювати новини/висвітлення новин
2	to give a complete background service	давати повне пояснення підґрунтя подій
3	to provide eye-witness descriptions	описувати події як очевидець
4	to conjure up the atmosphere	відтворювати атмосферу
5	an informative article	змістовна стаття
6	to have a nose for the news	вміння оцінити новину
7	sensational news	сенсаційні новини
8	urgent issue	терміновий випуск
9	biased news	необ'єктивні, упереджені новини
10	to gain media attention	звертати на себе увагу ЗМІ
11	to air the spot	висвітлювати місце подій (у новинах)
12	think piece	оглядова стаття, що містить дискусії та аналіз подій
13	feature story	тематична стаття; документальний нарис
14	a fast-breaking story	подія, що розвивається швидко
15	topicality	актуальність, гострота
16	novelty	новизна
17	an item of news/ an item of information	повідомлення, новина
18	hard news/hard information	влучні, конкретні, надійні, обґрунтовані новини
19	current thought	загальна (загальноприйнята) думка на даний момент

## SECTION 2. PRACTICAL GUIDE

20	to give authoritative comment	давати офіційні коментарі
21	to take account of social changes	давати оцінку змінам у суспільстві
22	to catch on	стати модним, завоювати популярність
23	to describe events at greater length	описувати події у повному масштабі
24	a relevant detail	важлива, ґрунтовна деталь
25	a newspaper scoop	сенсаційна новина
26	column	колонка, постійний розділ
27	a startling hard news story	надзвичайно достовірна інформація
28	to get to the bottom of the thing	дійти до суті справи
29	news flash	термінове повідомлення
30	to present news	подавати новини
31	to give priority to smth	надавати чомусь першорядного значення
32	a topical article on (medicine)	стаття на тему (на медичну тему)
33	feature	рубрика
34	readership	читачі, читацька аудиторія
35	a new angle of approach	новий погляд, точка зору на щось
36	to detect trends	виявляти загальний напрям, тенденцію

**CLICHÉS FOR ARTICLE ANALYSIS**

The title of the article is headlined...	Заголовок статті винесений на першу шпальту ...
The article dwells on/ touches upon smth...	У статті розглядається...
The purpose of the article is to ...	Мета статті – ...
The article highlights the idea that....	У статті наголошується на тому, що...
The author dwells on the importance of....	Автор наголошує на важливості...
The author draws the reader's attention to....	Автор звертає читацьку увагу на ...
The author comments on....	Автор коментує...
The author reviews the events....	Автор розглядає події...
The article gives wide coverage....	Стаття дає широке охоплення...
The article gives much comment on...	Стаття дає багато коментарів щодо...
The article carries comment on...	Стаття містить коментар щодо..
The author starts by telling the readers...	На початку статті автор повідомляє читачам...
The author is in favour of...	Автор підтримує...
The author is opposite to...	Автор виступає проти...
The author takes a critical view...	Автор критично оцінює...



## SECTION 2. PRACTICAL GUIDE

The author stresses/ points out .....	Автор наголошує/зазначає...
The author reports at length...	Автор надає розлогу інформацію про...
In this connection/ in this respect....	У зв'язку з цим / В цьому плані...
Speaking about ..... it's necessary to mention/ note that.....	Говорячи про... необхідно згадати / відмітити, що...
Analyzing the situation in... it's necessary to emphasize that....	Аналізуючи ситуацію, що склалася у ... необхідно підкреслити, що ...
Further the author reports....	Далі автор повідомляє...
The article goes on to say...	Пізніше у статті йдеться про...
There is every reason to believe....	Є всі підстави вважати...
It was disclosed that...	Було визначено, що...
The author comes to the conclusion that....	Автор доходить висновку, що...
The article concludes by saying...	Стаття закінчується словами / думкою...





# KEEPING UP TO DATE



## KEEPING UP TO DATE

### PRACTICAL TASKS

#### Task 1

In pairs / groups, dwell on the following items regarding the news article:

- My level of interest in the article
- Its relevance to my life
- Degree of difficulty
- Educational value
- Difficulty
- Vocabulary
- Grammar
- Reading / Listening
- Speaking activities
- Needed more / less time on

#### Task 2

You are a news reporter at the scene. Create your news report. You will soon have to give it in front of TV cameras (to a different group). Use the following questions as a guide to your story:

- What is the story?
- Where are you?
- What is happening around you?
- What can you hear (see, smell)?
- What are the events that have happened in the past few hours /days?
- Who are the people central to your story?
- Who have you found to tell you about what's happening?
- What are other people there telling you?
- What's your take on the situation?
- How do you think this story will develop over the coming hours /days?



### 3. PRACTICAL ASSIGNMENTS. KEEPING UP TO DATE. Practical Tasks

#### **Task 3**

Talk about how newsworthy the headline is.

- Should it make the front page?
- Should it be the headline news?
- Is it worthy of a newsflash / breaking news?
- Should it be confined to the second page or a minor article inside the newspaper in one of the sections or later on in the news program.
- How much page space / program time should be given to it?
- Should there be photos?
- Is it the kind of story you would talk about with your friends?
- Would you turn on the news to get an update on this news?
- Where would this news item be in a newspaper in your home country?
- Does it warrant a top news reporter being assigned to it?

#### **Task 4**

If the article is about people's responses to different situations, think of the tasks different people should do, or should have done better. For example, the theme to discuss is "Hurricane" and the issue is "What extra things do you think these people could do?"

- The country's leader
- The city mayor
- The head of the national weather forecast center
- Neighbors
- Police officers
- Fire fighters
- TV news reporters

#### **Task 5**

In pairs or groups, choose a "kind" headline from the proposed articles and make your own story about it. Develop the background, characters, what happened, what people said, etc. Change partners or groups and report the story to your new partner(s). Be prepared to answer questions from your new partners. Example headlines might include:

### 3. PRACTICAL ASSIGNMENTS. KEEPING UP TO DATE. Practical Tasks

- The Queen changes her mind
- China and Japan are friends forever
- Roses for everyone
- Israelis and Palestinians have a big party together
- World Kindness Day is a huge success
- Old lady helps the man who stole her car

#### **Task 6**

Talk about whether the news in the article would be read more by men or women and why. Write down three reasons why the article would appeal to men and three reasons why the article would appeal to women. Compare and discuss what you wrote down.

#### **Task 7**

Write a critical account regarding what you perceive as being wrong with policies outlined in the news items. This could also be part of a letter to the policy makers. Suggest remedial measures supported by your own reasons.

#### **Task 8**

If the article is about a product, brand, store etc, come up with a rival product. Explain the problems of the existing product and explain why yours is better.

#### **Task 9**

Underline all of the things you didn't know before. Share these things with your partner(s) after reading. Talk over whether or not these new pieces of information are worth knowing.

#### **Task 10**

Come up with reasons why the story or peoples' actions in the article are totally or completely...

- Ridiculous
- Amazing
- Mystifying
- Inspirational

### 3. PRACTICAL ASSIGNMENTS. KEEPING UP TO DATE. Practical Tasks

- Unfathomable
- Stupid
- Etc

#### **Task 11**

Speculate on the regrets the characters in the article might have about their lives and actions. Write down three things for each of the following:

- Regret ...
- Regret not ...
- Don't regret ...

Share and compare what you wrote down and evaluate each other's ideas. Does everyone think the statements are true?

#### **Task 12**

Pretend to interview the character from the article for your own job. Think of the questions to ask during the interview. Interview two more people in your group, then discuss with them who got the job and why.

#### **Task 13**

Consider how different words from the text could be used in different news categories (sport, business, entertainment, economy, etc.)

#### **Task 14**

If the article is about a scandal of some sort, talk to each other and add to the scandal, speculating and embellishing on the "facts". Change partners. Share and compare gossip and add more to the scandal. Then talk about the gossip you heard and discuss the likelihood of it.

#### **Task 15**

Write down three reasons why you would and would not want to swap places with the person in the article. In pairs or groups, tell each other and comment on the reasons.

### 3. PRACTICAL ASSIGNMENTS. KEEPING UP TO DATE. Practical Tasks

#### **Task 16**

Think of five reasons why the characters in the text might complain about his / her life and job. Discuss these things and compare them to your own everyday lives.

#### **Task 17**

For articles that feature new products, designs or inventions think of ideas to raise funds to launch and promote the product. Change partners and share and compare ideas. Role play a venture capitalist and the inventor.

#### **Task 18**

Write the ending to the news. It could be about the days following an aftermath or public reaction to a scandal, etc. This could be compared with what happened in real life if the story is still breaking.

#### **Task 19**

Write down five reasons for being cheerful, based on how events in the news item will positively affect your lives. Change partners and share and compare your ideas.

#### **Task 20**

How would people from different nationalities view the news in the article? Choose a country / region / people / religion etc. and talk about what the views of these people might be on the article. Change partners and share and compare your ideas.

#### **Task 21**

If the article is about a person or event with which you are very familiar, choose a number of other events or episodes related to that person's life. Rank the current story against those previous episodes.

#### **Task 22**

Find a top-five list of items related to the content of the article for your partner(s) to talk about and rank. They could add a further two or three to the list. For example:



### 3. PRACTICAL ASSIGNMENTS. KEEPING UP TO DATE. Practical Tasks

- The top five world cuisines
- The five most beautiful people in the world
- The top five mistakes of your President
- The top five uses of chocolate
- The top five computer games
- The world's worst five dictators
- The top five reasons why human cloning should go ahead
- The five best ways to propose marriage
- The top five reasons why monarchies should be scrapped

#### **Task 23**

Write three lessons to be learned from the story. Change partners and share and compare your ideas.

#### **Task 24**

Find five things in the article to finish the sentence: "It reminds me of..."

#### **Task 25**

Based on the theme of the news item, write down five sentences starting with the phrase "I'm looking forward to the day..." Change partners and share and compare your sentences. Discuss the possibility of these things happening and why you are looking forward to the day.

#### **Task 26**

Interview one of the characters from the article. Use "the best ever" in all questions. This could also be used for other structures, such as "When was the first / last time", "Would you ever...?". "What do you remember about...?"

#### **Task 27**

Student A has the article. Student B has a list of keywords from the article. Student B must ask student A one of the following questions:

- Does the article say anything about \_\_\_\_\_?
- Does the article mention \_\_\_\_\_?

### 3. PRACTICAL ASSIGNMENTS. KEEPING UP TO DATE. Practical Tasks

- What does the article say about \_\_\_\_\_?
- Is \_\_\_\_\_ mentioned?
- I heard something about \_\_\_\_\_?
- Is there anything there about that \_\_\_\_\_?

#### **Task 28**

Speculate on what kind of story the article might be if it were moved to a completely different news section headings – sports, business, entertainment, motoring, gardening, etc.

#### **Task 29**

If the article is technology related, brainstorm other similar innovations or potential inventions. Talk about the desirability and likelihood of the brainstormed breakthroughs becoming real. Change partners and share and compare what you talked about previously.

#### **Task 30**

Talk about how this news affects people from different income brackets (a homeless person, a family barely able to survive, a low income family, average income, middle class, well-to-do, very rich).

#### **Task 31**

Talk about how the news affects people of different ages. Write different age brackets for your partner(s) to speculate on.

#### **Task 32**

Talk about how the news item will potentially change your lives. Write down five changes and discuss them with your partner(s). Do all of you agree on how the subject will change your lives?

#### **Task 33**

If the story is about a famous person (or non-famous), play the role of that same person and get together for a chat. Choose the best pretended role and explain the criterion you used.

### 3. PRACTICAL ASSIGNMENTS. KEEPING UP TO DATE. Practical Tasks

#### **Task 34**

Talk about the effects events, items, products, etc. from the article would have on you, the world, your village, town, city or country. Write down three changes and discuss them with your partner(s).

#### **Task 35**

If the article is about some new development or proposed development, talk about how life would be different with it:

- Is it desirable?
- Would you like it?
- How much money would you pay for it?
- Are there any dangers of using / having it?
- Will everyone be able to have one?
- Would there be any damage to the environment?
- Do you need it?

#### **Task 36**

Talk about the theme of the article in relation to your own country and the views held by the government and compatriots. Use the following questions:

- How is this subject viewed or treated in your country?
- How different (better / worse) is your country's attitude towards this subject?
- How would this story be reported in your country?
- How much media attention would it receive?
- Do the things that happened in the article occur to the same degree in your own country?
- Would this piece of news be newsworthy in your country?
- Do different generations or different sexes have different views on this topic?
- Would this topic ever be considered taboo or be censored in your country?
- Would there be sympathy towards this topic in your country?
- Are citizens of your country generally interested in this kind of news?
- Other.



# Model challenges beauty ideals

Nyakim Gatwech, whose family fled South Sudan as refugees, is emerging as fashion royalty

Katherine Lalancette

## THEKIT

Nyakim Gatwech is taking the fashion industry by storm: She's walked the runways at New York Fashion Week, amassed 375K Instagram followers, and she's currently starring in a makeup campaign for Canadian brand An-nabelle.

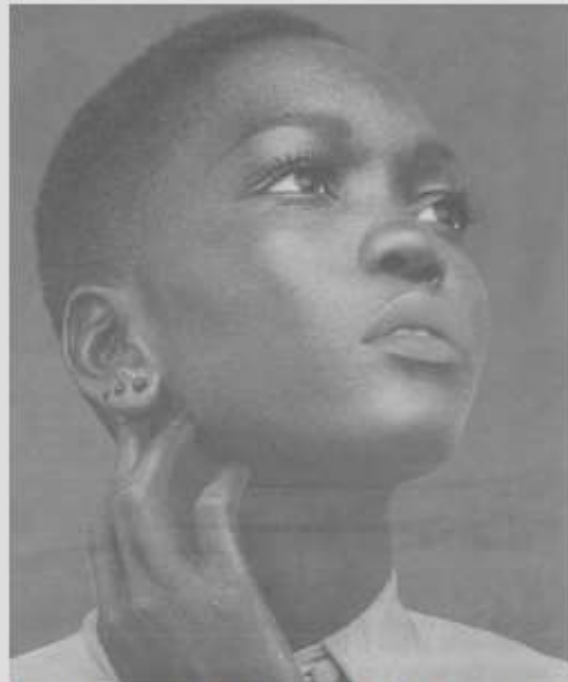
"From refugee camp to runway" seems like a far too easy way to put it, but that is Gatwech's story. When her mother was pregnant with her, she fled war-ravaged South Sudan on foot with her four kids and headed for the Ethiopian border. (Her husband stayed behind to fight.) The family walked for weeks and slept under trees — two of the children perished during the trek.

"When people ask me about my story, I only think about my mother," says Gatwech. "She lived through it, but it's her journey that makes me strong."

We recently caught up with Gatwech to chat about her quest to challenge beauty ideals in the fashion industry.

### How did you get into modelling?

"I knew modelling was what I wanted to do, but at school, I got bullied over my skin colour. Kids called me ugly or monkey. I started thinking, 'How can I be a model when models are beautiful and these kids are telling me I'm ugly?'"



"I still have to bring my own foundation with me to shoots and shows, because makeup artists don't have my shade," says Nyakim Gatwech, the face of Annabelle's EDGE collection. SUBMITTED

I thought about bleaching my skin, but my sister convinced me not to. Eventually, I gave modelling a try, and did local shows and photo shoots."

### What was your big break?

"I had given up on being a model and started studying to become an elementary school teacher. I still did shoots on the side, and then, out of the blue, one of those shoots just went viral. It was me and a lighter-skinned model and people loved it. Suddenly, they wanted to work with me because of my complexion."

**Find out Gatwech's thoughts on her nickname, the 'Queen of Dark,' in the full Q&A at [thestar.com/life/fashion\\_style](https://www.thestar.com/life/fashion_style)**



# Future is bright for theatre after £4.8m cash boost

## • Project will fund conservation and expansion

By **GRAEME MURRAY**

A theatre company in Glasgow has received a £4.8 million grant to preserve their landmark venue.

The Citizens Theatre Company was awarded the cash yesterday from the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) for its “transformational redevelopment” project.

It will see the conservation, repair and expansion of one of Scotland’s oldest and much loved working theatres.

The £4.8m funding be used to “protect the physical asset for future generations”.

The project will ensure “The Citz”, as it is affectionately known, continues to deliver world class theatre for the benefit of local, national and international audiences.

Judith Kilvington, executive director of the Citizens Theatre, said: “This critical funding will allow us not only to preserve our Victorian theatre but also to tell stories which help to uncover and communicate the physical, architectural, social and cultural heritage of the Citizens Theatre to many future generations of theatre goers, participants, and visitors.

“With our increased heritage engagement plans, we will be able to attract new audiences and participants

to the theatre for the first time and encourage a deeper level of engagement amongst our existing audiences by offering a variety of ways to explore the Citizens Theatre’s rich and multifaceted heritage.

The redevelopment, by architectural practice Bennetts Associates, will provide new learning spaces, rehearsal rooms and a 152-seat studio theatre. It also promises improved working conditions for staff and the transformation of front of house spaces to enable greater use by audiences and the local community.

The project will be underpinned by 12 creative heritage-focused activities including the creation of a “heritage hub” on the company’s website which will help people to share their stories about the theatre.

Lucy Casot, head of the heritage lottery fund in Scotland, said: “We are delighted to bring some Christmas cheer to one of Scotland’s oldest and best-loved theatres.

“Thanks to players of the National Lottery, the Citizens Theatre will undergo a transformation which shines a light on its incredible Victorian heritage while providing the modern facilities expected today. “After 139 years of entertaining audiences, her future as one of the country’s outstanding production theatres is rosy.”



# Next stop, Victoria theme park: ITV plans London fan attraction

**EXCLUSIVE**

**Joanna Bourke**

ITV is planning to build a mini theme park in London, giving up to 250,000 visitors a year a chance to “experience” its programmes rather than just watch them at home.

The broadcaster of shows such as *Downton Abbey*, *Victoria*, *The Voice* and *Broadchurch* has revealed it is looking for a site in Zone 1 for the visitor attraction.

A brochure issued on behalf of its “commerce and ventures” team to property industry professionals shows that the venue could include a 100-seat auditorium for “immersive cinematic presentations” and a restaurant. Visitors would also be able to look at sets, costumes and artefacts from programmes. The document is titled “A place for drama to live in London”, and comprises proposals for a “distinctive visitor experience”.

ITV said: “As part of our business we have a team which operates experiential events around our programmes, including the *Emmerdale* Studio Experience and *This Morning Live*, and are always looking at new ways to expand this and bring in new programme brands.”

The *Emmerdale* Studio Experience includes an 80-minute tour of sets in Leeds.

Agent Lambert Smith Hampton has been hired to lead the search for a suitable site of up to 20,000 sq ft. It declined to comment today.

It is understood the plans are at an early stage, although the target launch is 2018, when Carolyn McCall becomes ITV’s first female boss. If a deal is agreed, the visitor centre could provide a major new revenue stream for the media firm, which is trying to diversify away from advertising.



# Blockbusters reborn

## GOING OUT

Cult cinema classics are getting a thrilling second act this summer, finds **Katie Strick**

IT'S not in fair Verona where we lay our scene — but rather a remote corner of London, which has been transformed into a high-colour version of Verona Beach. This summer, Baz Luhrmann's *Romeo + Juliet* (Claire Danes and Leonardo DiCaprio, below) has been given the Secret Cinema treatment, and the show is its biggest production yet: a five-hour open-air festival and film screening packed with young hearts, ancient grudges, high-octane cars and, of course, a rather famous love story.

Dig out your angel wings and your Hawaiian shirt: you'll be assigned your tribe when you arrive based on your outfit. Though whether you're a Montague or Capulet, it's time to party — the show is running until next weekend, and you'll definitely have seen it all over your Instagram by now.

Luhrmann's post-modern riot act is just one of a number of film favourites that have been given a new look for this summer. Over at Regent's Park's Open Air Theatre, Alan Menken and Howard Ashman's tongue-in-

cheek 1982 musical *Little Shop of Horrors* has also been given a hot new revival.

Typically, the killer plant protagonist Audrey II is brought to life by stagecraft, but this month she's a living, breathing drag queen. Her name is Vicky Vox and she's over in London from America for the summer. You get to reimagine the old version with a new young cast: expect an anti-realist, subversive approach to the Faustian story.

Hamilton writer Lin-Manuel Miranda applied his Midas touch to a musical adaptation of the cult teen cheerleading movie *Bring It On* (he co-wrote the songs between *In the Heights* and *Hamilton*). Shake your pom-poms as the show takes you back to the Noughties.

Though, as any fan knows, there's more to it than pigtails and high-kicks — this production, which is running at Southwark Playhouse until September 1,

picks up the original themes of racism and the class divide in the US. You can sense Miranda's verve in every line.

@katie\_strick





## Spirit in a sheet is no laughing matter

IT TAKES a bold director to make a serious film involving the spirit world that is centred on that jauntiest of ghost images, favoured by children's cartoons and horror spoofs - the bed sheet with holes for eyes. David Lowery pulls off his self-imposed challenge with a left-field marvel that is mysterious, poignant and profound.

It reunites the writer/director with the stars of his breakout film, the Texas-based crime romance *Ain't Them Bodies Saints*. Casey Affleck and Rooney Mara again play ill-fated lovers with a powerful bond, which on this occasion endures into the metaphysical.

Early scenes establish the relationship between the unnamed couple, who live in a Texas suburb in a long, one-storey house that becomes, in effect, a third character. After investigating an unexplained bump in the night the pair embrace in bed. In one of many long, static shots, Lowery lingers on them for an age, during which the actors establish an



**Demetrios Matheou**

### AGHOST STORY

Cert 12A, 93 mins



intimacy that is so persuasively tender that it will inform everything that follows.

And then the man dies, killed in a car accident - though his story is far from over. As the woman returns home from identifying the body her partner's spirit follows, still wearing its mortuary sheet, with the holes now conveniently cut.

At first, the focus is her grief, while the ghost looks on unseen. When the woman eventually leaves their home to continue her life elsewhere, the film stays with the ghost, which is bound to the space even when the house itself disappears - both decades into the future and, surprisingly, far into the past.

Lowery is dealing with big themes - love, grief, mortality, mutability, history, the passing of time, not to mention the afterlife. Yet this has its lighter moments, including a fabulously fatalistic monologue by a future tenant (played by musician and actor Will Oldman) and Affleck's ghost communing witless sheeted neighbour, their silent dialogue related through subtitles.

It's such an original conceit, perfectly matched by the execution of alternately plaintive and strong soundtrack, cinematography, the places, the stock spectral image, one gorgeously surreal frame of another, the performances.

Though Affleck's technical feat can't be under-estimated, Mara's portrayal of grief is obviously more evident. Often locked in close-up, her face is a miracle of expressive stillness - while in one bravura, extended scene, she devours an entire chocolate pie in real time, each spoonful another cry of pain.



## Globe's new director: I'll still experiment

**Robert Dex**

Arts Correspondent

THE NEW artistic director at Shakespeare's Globe says she was not put off by the controversy surrounding the departure of its current boss.

Michelle Terry takes over next April when artistic director Emma Rice steps down after a row over her non-traditional approach to Shakespeare and use of electric lighting and sound.

In her first interview since her appointment was announced, Terry, who has performed at the theatre as an actress, told the Standard: "It didn't put me off because somebody had to do it.

"What is important to me was to feel that those artistic voices and those artistic ambitions for this organisation were somewhere being heard."

She said she had agreed to abide by "certain parameters

### Michelle Terry: Row over exit of predecessor did not put me off

around light and sound" but insisted the Globe would remain experimental in its approach.

The actress said she was asked to apply for the role after she wrote to under-fire chief executive Neil on stable offering her support.

She said: "I think there were lots of people who felt a loyalty to this place so I wrote a letter, sort of a pledge of allegiance, to Neil saying, 'I don't know what has happened, I don't really want to know what has happened but I pledge my allegiance to the artistic future of the building' and then got a letter back saying would I like to convert that to a formal application and that is what I did." Terry said the whole theatre remained a "thrilling" place to perform. "I think any actor will tell you the minute you walk on the



**Top role:** "Somebody had to do it," says Globe's Michelle Terry

you enter the stage as a human and leave it feeling like a god.

"When you are able to say those lines to people and see the whites of their eyes, something about the plays makes sense in a way that has never made sense anywhere else I have done it."

Terry, who said she will continue to act at the Globe while running the theatre, is in the process of commissioning her first work - a new play about the woman who may have inspired some of Shakespeare's love poetry.



### **Prom 42 Les Siècles/Roth**

Royal Albert Hall

★★★★

If nothing else, François-Xavier Roth's *Les Siècles* should win a prize for the most deliciously incongruous encore at this season's Proms. With the percussionists weaving a syncopated web of shaking and scraping, the Parisians played a big-band arrangement of Daft Punk's *Get Lucky* — on Victorian period instruments.

I felt I'd got lucky well before that. In its 14-year history, Roth's ensemble has explored many centuries of music using instruments and techniques appropriate to the repertoire. Here, however, it returned to where it began: the late 19th-century era when French instrument-makers led the world and French composers were eagerly trying out subtle new sonorities.

Roth threw in an extra element: exoticism. What linked all the pieces he chose was the inspiration of Africa and the East, but in typically Gallic fashion these sinuous arabesques were mingled with grandeur, mysticism and whimsy. And in the hands of these

virtuosic players, music hardly heard in concerts today — ballet music by Delibes and Lalo, or a rare Franck *poème symphonique* called *Les Djinns* - sounded as fresh as it must have done to Parisian audiences in the 1880s. It's unlikely, though, that those audiences heard such precise and beautifully delineated interpretations.

I must admit, however, that I most like this era of French composers when they are at their frothiest. When they try to get serious and symphonic,

I lose the plot, perhaps because they already have. That was my feeling listening to Saint-Saëns's "Egyptian" Piano Concerto No 5.1 can't imagine its rippling passagework more deftly played than it was by Cédric Tiberghien, yet still the music sounded like a random quiltwork of charming ideas. Saint-Saëns was much more convincing when evoking the lurid dances of the Philistines in the celebrated bacchanale from *Samson and Delilah*, which this orchestra delivered with irresistible élan.

**Richard Morrison**



# BBC Defends Entirely Different Cooking Show

by Our Plagiarism Staff **Kat Kopyy**

BBC executives leapt to the defence of their new programme "Strictly Come Baking" yesterday, insisting it was in no way similar to their previous show "The Great British Bake Off" for which Channel 4 paid millions for exclusive rights last year.

"For a start, it's got a completely different presenter," said one executive. "Her name is Mary Berry and she's a whole year older than the one who presented the original show that this one is nothing like."

He added, "This new show is a cooking show, which has nothing to do with baking cakes, except when the cooking task involves the baking of cakes. Oh, and by the way, the contestants in "Strictly Come Baking" are members of the public who



are totally different from the members of the public who were in the original show. The presenter is Claudia Winkleman, a witty female Cambridge graduate who is entirely different from Mel and Sue, who are two witty female Cambridge graduates."

The BBC has just announced a spin-off show called "An Extra Spice", which will analyse the highlights of the cooking show in a totally amusing and different way with a comedic cooking enthusiast, possibly Katy Brand, or maybe Jo Caulfield, or some combination of the two.

Channel 4 is outraged by the attempts to copy the "Bake Off" format. Said a furious executive, "Why can't the BBC come up with an original idea for a programme instead of just copying the one we bought off them?"

URBAN ETIQUETTE

## How do I tell people I don't want to be in photos?

Is it rude to ask my loved ones to leave me out of their cellphone snaps?



Dear Ellen,  
I hate having my photo taken, but it seems whenever I go to a family dinner or to the cottage, someone is shooting everything with their phone, then posting it on Facebook, Instagram or whatever. Can I ask them not to take my picture? Or at least demand that I have final say over which pictures of me they post?

*Anonymous*

Dear Anonymous,

You raise a couple of issues here. The first is privacy. Perhaps you have a life-or-death reason for not wanting the world to know you have relatives, or that you go to a certain cottage. Maybe you're in a witness protection program, and if a certain mobster is following your nephew on Instagram, he'll be able to track you down and your



whole family will be in danger. In this case, yes, by all means, tell the person with the camera to **BACK OFF**. The other issue is vanity. You sound like the type of person who might not want pics on the internet showing yourself chowing down on a drumstick, guzzling beer straight from the keg, or bending over in a bikini while being shot from an unflattering angle.

I'm as vain and secretive as they come, so I completely understand. Thus, I will officially declare that it's perfectly acceptable to politely ask relatives with cameras not to include you in any shots. If the relatives have any manners at all, they'll respect your request. At the same time, however, while being considerate

is at the core of timelessly good manners, the actual rules of etiquette are ever evolving.

Nowadays, taking photos of anyone and everyone is almost as acceptable as saying hello. Amongst millennials, who grew up with the technology and have been photographed more or less daily since birth, bad photos of oneself are not just to be expected — they're celebrated for demonstrating self-awareness and a sense of humour.

**Ellen elaborates on why the reader should get over not wanting to be in photos at [thestar.com/life/advice](http://thestar.com/life/advice) Need advice? Email: [askellen@torstargroup.ca](mailto:askellen@torstargroup.ca)**



## URBAN ETIQUETTE

### Dear reader, here's my advice: stop giving advice

Sometimes being a pal means listening, not lecturing



Dear Ellen,

I have a friend who's having some personal issues, so she ends up crying on my shoulder a lot, which is fine. That's what friends are for. I'm writing because I don't know how to deal with how rude she is sometimes. After listening to her complain for hours on end about her issues with a mutual friend, I try to give her advice about how to deal with him, but she never takes the advice and even takes offence when I make helpful suggestions. I don't want to upset her more, but how do I politely make her see she'd be happier if she followed even a little of my well-intentioned advice?

AK

Dear AX,

Thank God you have written to ask my advice, which is: stop giving advice. This is the first rule of etiquette when



dealing with a friend in distress. The other rules are as follows.

- When people ask for advice, like you just asked me, it's OK to dish it out. But when people come to you in emotional turmoil and just want to blather on and on about whatever crisis they're in, your one and only job is to listen.

- Even if they do ask for advice, proceed with caution. People in crisis often know what to do; they just aren't ready to do it (That's where all the emotional turmoil is coming from.) Instead of badgering them to act, ask them what they think their options are.

- No matter how much intimate detail they impart, or how often they sit on your shoulder, you must never mention their problem when you next see them. You can gently let them know you're there if they need to talk. But otherwise, it's up to them to reintroduce the subject — or ignore it if they don't want to think about it.

**Anything your friend says to you must go no further, cautions Ellen. Her full answer at [thestar.com/life/advice](http://thestar.com/life/advice)**  
Need advice? Email: [askellen@torstargroup.ca](mailto:askellen@torstargroup.ca)



# Alex NEILL

## Spreading fake news

TIMES MAY be tight but at Christmas we all like to make an effort, to splash out a little, to get that present you know a loved one would really appreciate, to go the extra financial mile even if that's really too far for our bank balances.

So when the prospect of a bargain turns up it's no wonder that we can be tempted. It's only natural to want to pay a cheaper price for a must-have item. Particularly when it comes to designer names or the toy of the year.

But of course there's always a catch. If something seems too good to be true it probably is - and what you're buying is unlikely to be the real deal. Worse, it could even be dangerous.

Fake goods are all about cutting costs - and not just for you. It means products are likely to be poor quality so they won't last as long, and they will fall short of vital safety standards, potentially putting you and your families at significant risk.



Counterfeit make-up can contain lead, copper, mercury, arsenic or cadmium and can cause swelling, rashes and poisoning; fake alcohol can contain methanol, antifreeze and fuel, causing nausea, stomach pains, kidney or liver problems, coma or death.

What about unofficial children's toys or dressing up items? They could pose all sorts of problems with loose parts, long cords and toxic materials. They're also likely not to meet fire retardant standards.

And poor quality and missing components in fake electrical goods and chargers can lead to electric shocks, fires and explosions.

On top of that counterfeit goods cost the UK economy around £1.3 billion a year in lost profits and taxes. That might not make you too concerned - but think about this: profits made from counterfeit sales can be

### FAKE FACTS

If you have unwittingly bought fake goods report it to the Citizens Advice Consumer Helpline on 03464040506. They will refer your case to the relevant trading standards authority.

If you've given your debit or credit card details to a website that deals in fakes, you could have given your card details to a criminal. However, when using cards you have extra protection if things go wrong compared with paying by cheque or cash. Visit [www.which.co.uk](http://www.which.co.uk) for advice on making a claim.

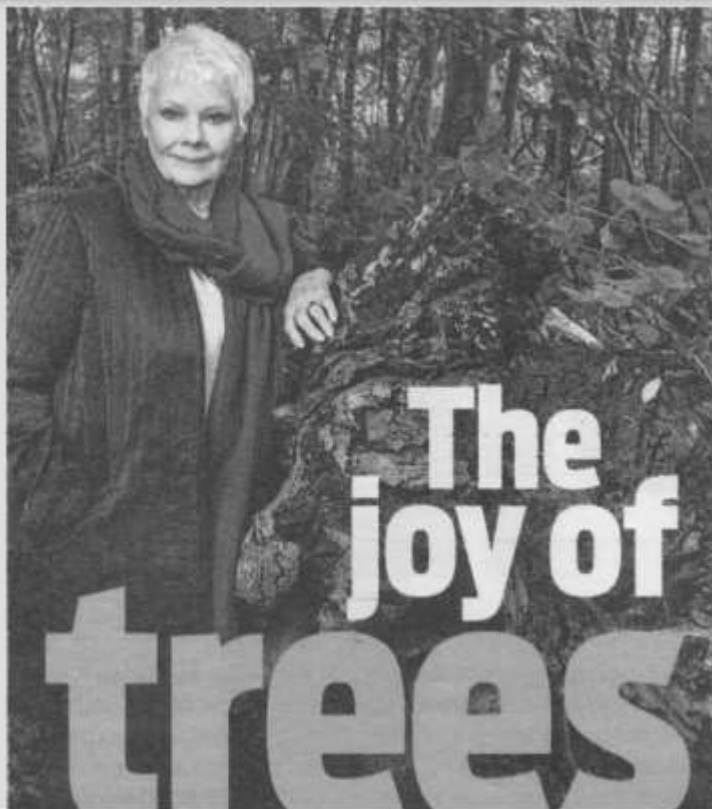
used to fund larger criminal operations including organised crime and even terrorism.

Luckily we have trading standards officials who work hard to combat counterfeits the whole year round to protect all of us as consumers. They are needed more than ever.

But we could give them all a Christmas bonus this year and avoid the crazy counterfeit deals.

■ Send me your consumer questions to [askalex@which.co.uk](mailto:askalex@which.co.uk)





*To Judi Dench they're magical beings, and in her new show she sees just what trees are capable of*

When Dame Judi Dench's husband Michael Williams died in 2001, she did what she always does when she loses a loved one: she planted a tree in his memory in the woodland behind her Surrey home, 'I do it because a tree is a living being, so the memory of that person carries on and gets ever more wonderful as it does so,' she explains.

Now, 16 years on, while filming her moving documentary *My Passion For Trees*, the Oscar-winning actress has made a joyous discovery. She's found out that trees not only keep the memory of a loved one alive, but also communicate with one another through the fungi

network that connects them. 'That's so reassuring,' she smiles. 'When I plant a tree in memory of any loved one I always hope they feel part of a community. Now I know that they are, which is the most marvellous and comforting feeling for me.'

Although *My Passion For Trees* has several moments of sadness for Dame Judi, 83, it mostly finds her in a playful mood as she takes experts around her six-acre woodland over the course of a year, discovering more about what it holds. Headphones and a listening device allow her to tune in to water moving up a tree from roots to leaves, making a popping sound that

has Judi's eyes popping out of her head with excitement.

She teems more about the 200-year-old oak that towers above her six-acre garden. 'It's my favourite and it's incredible to think it's been growing since Wellington won the Battle of Waterloo in 1815.' Computer technology allows experts to give her the most detailed information about her prized oak. It's made up of 25 tons of wood, has 12 kilometres of branches and 260,000 leaves. 'I'm very proud of it,' she beams. 'Not only is it magnificent to look at but it does good work for the planet, breathing in and dealing with vast amounts of carbon dioxide to help make our planet a cleaner place.' The documentary also gives us a glimpse into Judi's private life as we see her enjoying time with her partner of seven years, wildlife enthusiast David Mills. 'When it's freezing outside there's nothing I like more than sitting in the warm with my chap David,' she says. David adds, 'Judi's great fun to be with. We both have a great sense of humour and the silliest of things gives us fits of giggles.'

Viewers will see the tree planted for her late actor brother Jeff and the young oak celebrating the birth of Judi's grandson Sammy in 1997. 'Making the documentary has been the most incredible experience,' says Judi. 'I've always thought of my trees as part of my extended family and that there's so much more to these magical beings than I realised. And now I know there is. It's mind-blowing!' ■

*Tim Oglethorpe*

**Judi Dench: *My Passion For Trees*, Wednesday, 8pm, BBC1.**



## *An appetite for life*

His struggles with depression are well documented and his career in the food industry now spans five decades, but chef Antonio Carluccio remains as passionate as ever, says Rachael Sigeo

A conversation with Antonio Carluccio involves answering almost as many questions as you ask. So it makes sense that, despite more than half a century spent as a high-profile chef, businessman and author, he still sees food as a way to connect with people.

‘Probably I would have liked to be, more than a cook, an anthropologist/ he says. ‘Because I love to talk to people. I like to see what they are, who they are. Because through that you see who we are. If you understand people, you understand the world.’

He maybe seen as a titan of Italian cuisine, but Carluccio left the country of his birth in his early 20s, driven by that desire to meet more people. ‘I don’t see myself as a representative of Italy - I went away 60 years ago to be a European and to communicate with as many people as possible,’ he explains.

Now 80, Carluccio has lived in many countries and is a man who knows what he likes... and what he doesn’t. On Italian politics: ‘I am afraid I am not very impressed.’ On trendy restrictive diets: ‘I am against fashion in food.’

After three marriages and as many divorces - the most high-profile of which was to Priscilla Conran, sister to Sir Terence, with whom he set up the Carluccio’s restaurant chain - he is now happily in a relationship with Sabine, an archaeologist. They have

been involved with each other for six years, but don’t live together.

‘We see each other very often, but we live separately,’ he says. ‘She lives in the country, so I have the benefit of living in the city and the country, and visa versa. It’s a lovely combination.’

When we speak Carluccio is sitting in his London garden - he is growing strawberries, raspberries, peaches, grapes, blackberries, the list goes on - and working on his 24th cookbook. This one’s about fruit, and is in the same vein as his ode to greens, *Vegetables*, which was published in 2000.

Does this mean he is jumping on the vegan and plant-based diet bandwagon? ‘I think, generally, we don’t have very much knowledge about food,’ he says. ‘Most people don’t know the composition or the value of it. They think only of calories. They are missing food. They just embark on the idea of vegetarianism or veganism because it’s fashionable.’

Carluccio might have no time for fads, but he is not short of things to make him tick, and races over topics with little indication of slowing.

He is still a consultant for the Carluccio’s restaurant chain, having sold the company in 2010, and works hard to ensure that it continues to stay true to his ethos and values, providing accessible, good-quality Italian food in a relaxed and



welcoming environment. He acknowledges the difficulty of maintaining consistency when expansion takes place - there are now more than 100 Carluccio's in the UK - but believes the chain is still authentic and honest.

And in his later years he has found more time for passions unrelated to food: painting, sculpting and whittling sticks - he has a collection of more than 300. Just don't mention retirement.

'I don't for a moment think one should be retired,' he says. 'Retiring is a bit like dying. I hope everybody has a hobby or some- thing to do after retirement so life becomes more interesting.'

'Take Sir David Attenborough. He's 92. The only thing he's concerned with is not being a burden on his children in the future, but otherwise he works hard.'

Carluccio was born on the Amalfi coast in the village of Vietri sul Mare before moving to north-west Italy. His family was not well off - his father was a stationmaster - and he was one of seven children, but he talks fondly of his mother and her cooking.

His decision to leave his family brought professional success, but left him vulnerable to mental health problems.

'With the help of psychiatrists you discover the beginning [of depression], which in my case was also the fact that I chose to go abroad and make my own life, and lived practically without the support of the family for 60 years,' he says. 'And trying to carve my future all by myself, it's pretty Obvious one can make mistakes.'

There was also the tragic death of his younger brother Enrico, who drowned in a lake at the age of 13.

Carluccio was 23 when it happened, and had doted on his younger sibling. 'Ten years after me came this little boy,' he says. 'And because I was always educated by my older brothers and sisters, I had the chance now to educate somebody. I was a bit like an uncle. Henvas following in my footsteps, and it was really fantastic to have someone to look after.'

Having worked through his depression, he says the most important thing is recognising you have a problem, and that 'everybody should have someone who is just prepared to listen'.

If he had the opportunity, which decade would he like to return to?

When I was a student in Vienna,' he says, 'because I was enjoying the novelty of being young man full of hope, full of life, full of power. That's a lovely situation to be in. When you are in full control of life. That was wonderful'

It's the second time he has mentioned people being 'full of life' - the other was with regard to his late brother Enrico.

And although he is referring to his past self, many decades ago, Carluccio at 80, content in his fruitful garden, whittling sticks and still finding plenty to write about food and to enquire about people seems as full of life as ever.

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*Antonio Carluccio will appear at the Waitrose Summer Festival on 19 August. The event is at the Leckford Estate in Hampshire, 18-20 August. Visit [waitrose.com/summerfestival](http://waitrose.com/summerfestival)*



## There are so many parallels but I don't want to play Lear as Trump... or wear the wig!

**Natasha Salmon**

KEVIN McNALLY believes the parallels between Shakespeare's tragic, mad ruler and Donald Trump are "breathtaking".

The Pirates Of The Caribbean actor, an outspoken critic of the White House on social media, launched a scathing attack on the embattled president after stepping off The Globe stage last night.

He told the Standard: "The notions of power, love and loss scream out at you in ways that are as relevant today as they were when they were written 450 years ago.

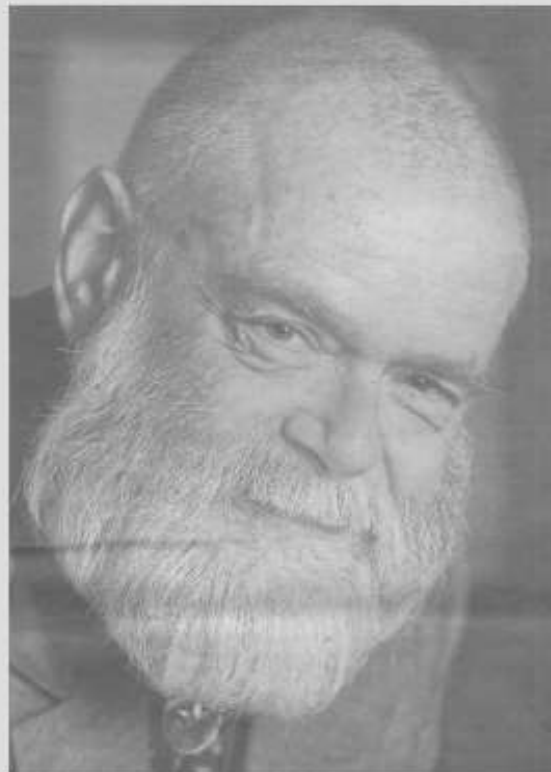
"There are literally lines that take your breath away because you feel as though they could have been coined yesterday.

"I learnt from living in America that it is absolutely apparent that the rise of an ill-educated and unhealthy society always produces fascism. They are the easiest people to manipulate and it does feel as though we're in that time, as it says in the play, when madmen lead the blind."

McNally, 61, who starred as Mr Gibbs alongside Johnny Depp in all five Pirates films, said he would not want to appear in a straight Trump adaptation of King Lear, despite the obvious „ parallels. He said: "I was determined c we didn't do a Trump production but ' you can certainly let echoes ring when c they are there.

"Certainly the idea of a man standing up and saying to everybody, 'tell me that you love me', we can all recognise that. You almost could do the play about him, but I wouldn't want that. I also wouldn't like to have to wear the wig."

McNally's first big screen role was 1977 Bond film The Spy Who Loved Me, alongside the late Sir Roger Moore.



He said he was thrilled that Daniel Craig has agreed to return for a fifth outing as 007. "I love his James Bond and I think he is a great choice, he has really made it a post-Bourne Bond," he said. "They've got back an edge to it. It had become more, maybe more in Roger's time which was the Bond I starred alongside, in those days it had probably relied a little too much on the jokes. So it is so good to see some fire £ in with Daniel".

Lear's American director, Nancy Meckler, said the Bard's masterpiece demonstrates how mistrust of leaders stretches back hundreds of years. She said: "In the last lines of the play Edgar says, 'Speak what we feel, not what we ought to say'. The way people feel about politicians these days is that they say just what they ought to say - which is why people don't tend to believe them any more."

# Gruff Pirates star takes the helm of restrained but resonant production

BEST known for playing superstitious Mr Gibbs in the Pirates Of The Caribbean films, Kevin McNally is a gruff and battle-scarred King Lear. Sporting a Captain Birdseye beard and dressed like an out-of-luck construction worker, he's not so much a despot shedding his regal authority as a squatter obliged to find a new patch.

By the standards of recent shows at the Globe, Nancy Meckler's production is restrained. That's not to say it's half-hearted, as it is defined by emphatic drumming, rowdy humour and a politically charged concern with homelessness. Yet the approach to this dense and contradictory family drama is uncomplicated. It lacks real emotional depth, and the delight in Shakespeare's morbid jokes is sometimes distracting, but there's a briskness that suits this venue.

McNally brings only hints of tenderness to Lear yet has an erratic physicality, revelling in his power and what remains of his virility but leaning on others – such as Loren O'Dair's otherworldly Fool – whenever he can. Emily Bruni and

**Veteran:** Kevin McNally plays King Lear. Right, Anjana Vasan as Cordelia

## FIRST NIGHT

### KING LEAR

Shakespeare's Globe

★★★★☆

### HENRY HITCHINGS

Sirine Saba convey the glib hypocrisy of his daughters Goneril and Regan, while Anjana Vasan has a dignified purity as their younger sister Cordelia. There's nimble work, too, from Ralph Davis and Joshua James as contrasting brothers Edmund and Edgar – with James especially mercurial after adopting the guise of the grubbily abject Poor Tom.

This isn't a harrowing or richly panoramic King Lear. But it makes confident use of the Globe's ample space, and the images of national disunity and civil war have an uncomfortable

resonance – never more so than when Burt Caesar as the cruelly abused Gloucester observes, "Tis the time's plague when madmen lead the blind."

■ Until Oct 14  
(020 7401 9919,  
shakespearesglobe.com)

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## **Alastair McKay** *The Viewer*

*Matt Groening's adolescent fantasy is a fun freak show for all the family*



### **Disenchantment**

Netflix

★★★★☆

ACCORDING to its co-creator Matt Groening, there are multiple levels to *Disenchantment*. He even offers a tease, saying "the very first thing you will see" in the show offers a clue "about the entire nature of what you are watching". What can he mean? Is he referring to the first moment in the title sequence or the first frame of the animated action? An extensive study of both by this untrained eye reveals no great puzzles, clues or portals to other dimensions. What it does display is the richness of the animation. The setting is inside a castle bedroom, the candles are burned down, one of the spars on the verandah above the bed appears to be broken, and — oh — is that a horse hiding in the fireplace?



**Modern heroine: princess Bean (Abbi Jacobson), flanked by the feline demon Luci (Eric Andre) and Elfo the elf (Nat Faxon)**

Groening is most famous for *The Simpsons*, a family sitcom disguised as a cartoon. The series that followed that, *Futurama*, felt like a failure by comparison but it ran for seven seasons, with 140 episodes, and is now as well regarded as anything Groening has done. *Disenchantment* uses a lot of the talent from *Futurama*, and has already been criticised for being the same show in a different setting.

*Futurama* did space, *Disenchantment* offers a fantasy landscape that feels like the past but isn't, on account of the elves, the magic, the swingers with eyes in the centre of their foreheads. That sort of thing. And remember, things are not what they seem. So how do they seem? Well, pretty fine, actually. Some early critics of the show have expressed disappointment that Groening's fantasy adventure didn't try



harder to spoof Game of Thrones, but as well as being pointless GoT has self-parody built in — that seems like a category error. In its manners and its humour,

Disenchantment feels closer to a Monty Python film, or maybe even Blackadder.

The central character, a teenage princess with a drink problem and a troubled relationship with her father — the idiot King Zog (John DiMaggio) — is called Bean (a nod, perhaps, to Rowan Atkinson). Bean (Broad City's Abbi Jacobson) is a very modern heroine, a kind of fantasy version of Princess Margaret. She has two sidekicks, Elfo the elf (Nat Faxon), who loves her, and Luci (Eric Andre) the demon,

who is frequently mistaken for a cat and is an unending source of bad advice. Elfo is innocent ("I've never had a nightmare, is this one?"), Luci isn't. (Luci is the character you'd want on a T-shirt). And, of course, any similarity between Zag, his reptilian wife, and President Trump and Melania, is entirely coincidental.

Visually, it's identifiably a Groening project. The characters have boggly eyes and overbites. Mostly, their skin is pink, though some are dark-skinned, and some blue.

This being a fantasy world, it's not all American. There are rampaging Vikings, incidental Scotsmen and a persistent strain of

Englishness running through the humour (Matt Berry's character is dispatched too soon). There's music by Mark Mothersbaugh (formerly of quirky Seventic band Devo, latterly a film soundtracker). Easily overlooked but potentially significant, there are evil overlords looking down on the action.

Designed as a serial, Disenchantment is episodic (the whole story arc requires the complete 20-episode run). As an adult fantasy it's reliably adolescent, and apart from a few hard-to-explain sex jokes, it's an agreeably twisted freak show for all the family.

*@AHMcKay*



# It's game on for the social animals

## Gaming

Good manners are returning to gaming as an updated streaming service takes on the trolls, says **Ben Travis**

FOR people creating internet media, there's one golden rule: don't read the comments. That way chaos lies - the more thoughtful or considered responses are found only by trawling through a flood of spam, racism, sexism and homophobia.

Gaming is no exception - just see the way the so-called progressive Gamergate movement (supposedly promoting "ethics in games journalism") was hijacked by the reprehensible trolling of women in the industry. While entire online gaming communities have bloomed through the ability to watch and play together, comments sections often don't reflect that positivity and acceptance.

But there are chinks of change, and streaming platform Twitch is one. It is a community where gamers can broadcast their own play live, and it is working to make its comments section a more positive place to be with



**Peace of mind:** gamers who broadcast live can filter out offensive comments with Twitch

AutoMod. This customisable moderation tool allows streamers to define what is and isn't acceptable on their feeds. It uses natural language-processing to detect potentially offensive comments within user-set

parameters and hold them for review. It's a major upgrade from the old system, where users had to wade through the negativity and manually report offensive comments to moderators.



“We always remind ourselves that real people are sending and reading messages across Twitch,” says Zach Goodman, its product manager for chat and moderation. “Toxicity and harassment can have a drastic impact on people’s lives. The Twitch community is a beautiful, welcoming place and we wanted to do everything we could to keep it that way.”

AutoMod is designed to understand individual users’ preferences, learning from what they deem Unacceptable and applying it to future inappropriate comments. “We worked extensively with streamer to fine-tune AutoMod and hone the experience for them,” explains Goodman. “We’re constantly fine-tuning its dictionary so it can continue to be effective as our community evolves. Because of the feedback we get when moderators approve and deny messages, we can spot when AutoMod is too aggressive or plain weird.”

It’s working. Full-time Twitch streamer David John Gibbons, 29,

broadcasts iRacing, Star Wars: Battlefront and Ark sessions, and says AutoMod has “improved things vastly”.

“I’ve never been one to take things to heart,” he says of the abusive comments he’s received. “But when people attack my other viewers, I won’t shrug it off. Twitch is not just about the streamer - it’s the chat, the whole package, the live interaction. Racism is one thing I really do not tolerate - it’s a warning and then an instant ban. Also sexuality. I have a few LGBT+ viewers. When people are very dismissive of other people, it’s not tolerated.” Thanks to AutoMod, that now gets shut down straight away.

Perhaps AutoMod’s most important feature is the way it puts streamers in charge of curating their own communities and setting the tone for what they will and won’t accept - especially when the line between so-called “gentle trolling” and outright harassment is a grey area.

“The good-natured side of trolling - prodding without the intent to hurt - is endemic to internet culture and helps internet citizens bond with others

in their community,” Goodman argues. “Harassers, on the other hand, intend to threaten, intimidate, and hurt, behaviour which is never welcome.”

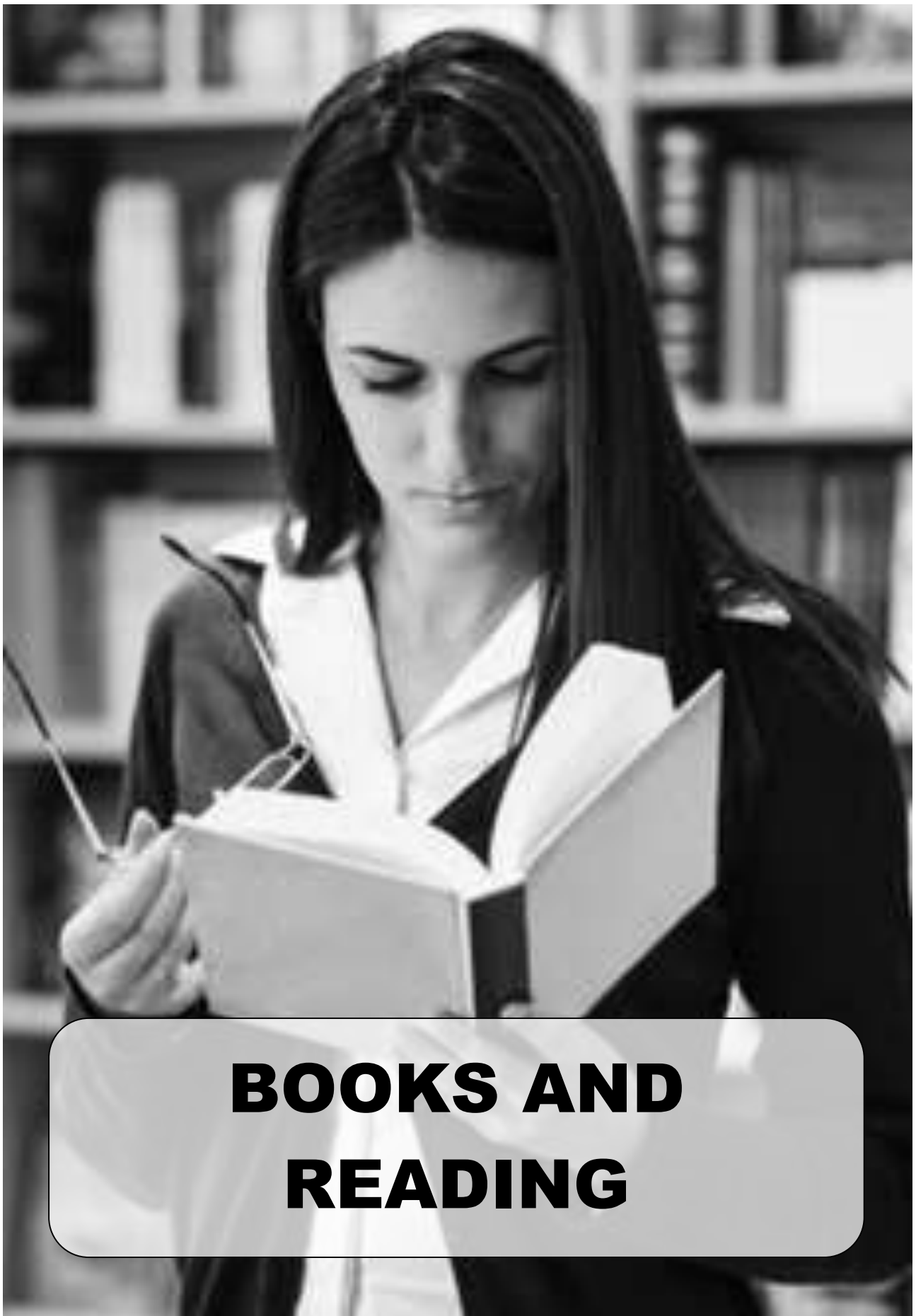
Gibbons agrees. “It’s a fine line, and it depends on the person. Regulars on my stream are quite flamboyant and they push it sometimes. I’ll intervene, and ask them to tone it down.”

While AutoMod isn’t an instant fix, it marks a move towards Goodman’s vision of “a magic button that a streamer can press to make harmful messages disappear”.

If trolling comments breed further trolling, the AutoMod philosophy is to promote constructive conversation.

“Negativity will always be with us - it’s part of human nature,” Goodman surmises. “What’s important is to build a culture of positivity that’s louder and more active than the negative voices can ever be.”

**@BenSTravis**



**BOOKS AND  
READING**

## **BOOKS AND READING**

### **PRACTICAL TASKS**

#### **Task 1**

In pairs / groups, dwell on the following items regarding the news article:

- My level of interest in the article
- Its relevance to my life
- Degree of difficulty
- Educational value
- Difficulty
- Vocabulary
- Grammar
- Reading / Listening
- Speaking activities
- Needed more / less time on

#### **Task 2**

Create biographies of the characters in a news item. Use the following items as a guide to your story:

- Youth
- Early career
- Influences
- Early successes
- Entry into the career
- High and low points
- Controversies
- etc.

#### **Task 3**

Look ahead to the future and speculate on how certain trends or discoveries might pan out in 5, 10, 25, 50, 100 years' time. Write down five ideas of what the future of the product or the world containing it might look like. Share and compare ideas in the next class.

### 3. PRACTICAL ASSIGNMENTS. KEEPING UP TO DATE. Practical Tasks

#### **Task 4**

Pretend the famous person in the article is your best friend. Write a story about how you met, the things you've done together, how often you contact each other, what you do when you meet, where you meet, etc.

#### **Task 5**

Write a brief essay expressing who you sympathize with in a particular story. Explain why you sympathize with that person. Use the following exponents:

- I sympathize most with \_\_\_\_\_ because \_\_\_\_\_
- My sympathies lie with \_\_\_\_\_
- I can totally relate to \_\_\_\_\_
- My heart goes out to \_\_\_\_\_
- I totally understand \_\_\_\_\_
- I can see where \_\_\_\_\_ coming from
- I think you have to feel sorry for \_\_\_\_\_

#### **Task 6**

Write down five reasons for being cheerful, based on how events in the news item will positively affect your lives. Change partners and share and compare your ideas.

#### **Task 7**

Discuss whether the news item would be best as a novel, play, musical, etc. Change partners and share and compare your ideas.

#### **Task 8**

Speculate on the prized possessions of the character(s) in the article. What kinds of things do they have that they would absolutely treasure? (photographs, letters, awards, achievements etc.) Share and compare your ideas. Talk about your own prized possessions.

### 3. PRACTICAL ASSIGNMENTS. KEEPING UP TO DATE. Practical Tasks

#### **Task 9**

Draw a simple family tree of the character from the article. Imagine how each of the family members may have affected or influenced this character. Change partners and share and compare your ideas.

#### **Task 10**

How will history judge the person from the article? Discuss this by assessing his/her contribution to the world.

#### **Task 11**

If the article is about a famous person, list the achievements, important events, etc. in that person's life. Discuss how these events and achievements might have contributed to events in the present news article. Compare that person with other people in his/her field.

#### **Task 12**

Look at the list below. Think of the reasons why the character in the article has a gift for these things:

- Intelligence
- Speech making
- Being popular with most people
- Reconciling and peacemaking
- Propaganda
- Making friends
- Gaining support
- Public relations

#### **Task 13**

Write down five things you have in common with the character or situation in the article and five ways in which you are different. Share and compare your ideas.

### 3. PRACTICAL ASSIGNMENTS. KEEPING UP TO DATE. Practical Tasks

#### **Task 14**

Decide on a number of things that need to be done to change a person's style, demeanor, popularity, etc. Change partners and share and compare your ideas. Decide who has the best ideas for the character's makeover.

#### **Task 15**

Student A pretends to be a person from the article and take Student B on tours of his daily life, home, offices, histories etc. Student B must ask questions. After taking turns doing this, change partners and share and compare what you heard.

#### **Task 16**

Write about how events, history, situations, etc. might be different if the particular item of news had not happened. Write down a number of scenarios and discuss them.

#### **Task 17**

Think about the headline and briefly describe how you think the story will unfold. Take a vote on whose story you think is ...

- closest to the real article
- most entertaining
- the craziest
- the least likely to be closest to the real article
- the most original

#### **Task 18**

Write the synopsis for a movie based on the news story. Write down:

- Which actors should play which roles and why
- The setting
- The period
- Costumes
- Who should sing the theme song and why
- Whether it is animated, black and white
- What happens at the end



### 3. PRACTICAL ASSIGNMENTS. KEEPING UP TO DATE. Practical Tasks

#### **Task 19**

If the article is about a person or event with which you are very familiar, choose a number of other events or episodes related to that person's life. Rank the current story against those previous episodes.

#### **Task 20**

Write three "What do you think?" questions based on the article. Ask each other in groups. Change partners and ask your questions again. Then sit with new partners and report what you found out.

#### **Task 21**

Write a brief essay expressing who you sympathize with in a particular story. Explain why you sympathize with that person. Use the following exponents:

- I sympathize most with \_\_\_\_\_ because \_\_\_\_\_
- My sympathies lie with \_\_\_\_\_
- I can totally relate to \_\_\_\_\_
- My heart goes out to \_\_\_\_\_
- I totally understand \_\_\_\_\_
- I can see where \_\_\_\_\_ coming from
- I think you have to feel sorry for \_\_\_\_\_

#### **Task 22**

Select phrases from the article that contain useful vocabulary, idioms or phrases that are key for global understanding. Cut the phrases into strips and give them to your partner(s). Comment on them and then make up your own sentences containing the selected material.

#### **Task 23**

If the article deals with some abstract topic, create some examples of that topic for your partner(s) to talk about. For example, the article is "Animals in art"; the corresponding theme is "Art":

### 3. PRACTICAL ASSIGNMENTS. KEEPING UP TO DATE. Practical Tasks

- What kind of art is your cup of tea?
- Are you interested in modern art?
- Do you have any paintings on your wall?
- What is art?

#### **Task 24**

If the article is technology related, brainstorm other similar innovations or potential inventions. Talk about the desirability and likelihood of the brainstormed breakthroughs becoming real. Change partners and share and compare what you talked about previously.

#### **Task 25**

Speculate about the school or student life of the person from the article. Consider the following areas:

- Punctuality
- Bullying
- Homework
- Popularity with other students
- Attire
- Attitude
- Discipline record
- Sports
- Art
- Other

#### **Task 26**

Talk about how the news item will potentially change your lives. Write down five changes and discuss them with your partner(s). Do all of you agree on how the subject will change your lives?

#### **Task 27**

If the story is about a famous person (or non-famous), play the role of that same person and get together for a chat. Choose the best pretended role and explain the criterion you used.

### 3. PRACTICAL ASSIGNMENTS. KEEPING UP TO DATE. Practical Tasks

#### **Task 28**

If the news item is about decisions, talk about your own decisions. Ask each other if you have made many big or momentous decisions in your lives. Talk about the decisions you have made regarding the following:

- Career
- Family
- Shopping
- Relationships
- English
- Studying
- Hairstyle
- Health
- Home
- Other

#### **Task 29**

Underline all of the things you didn't know before. Share these things with your partner(s) after reading. Talk over whether or not these new pieces of information are worth knowing.



# Books

## VENETO: RECIPES FROM AN ITALIAN COUNTRY KITCHEN

by Valeria Necchio (Guardian Faber, £20)

**Aimed at:** lovers of Italian food and the regional cooking of Veneto

*The author is willing to take on any culinary sacred cow-even her grandma's cooking*

'There are a lot of things that my grandma doesn't cook well at all,' Valeria Necchio.(below) insists. 'There are great recipes that "nonnas" do really well, but there are some that aren't that nice for modern tastes. That's obvious to me.

'Am I going to get in trouble for saying that? Not from my grandma. She freely admits that she can't bake. But there's always a balance, isn't there, between then and now?'

In fact the author's split her book into 'then' and 'now' sections - the former a collection of historic family recipes such as rice and pea soup, roast guinea fowl and tiramisu that she feared were going to be lost to history. The 'new' section is more experimental, switching back to Venice for ingredients or methods, so you end up with dishes like stir-fried beans with basil and garlic, and a polenta olive oil cake.

'All the recipes have to carry a story,' she says. 'That's all I really wanted to do, ensure they carried a story.

Whether it's about family or wherever I first discovered the dish or whatever, I wanted them to have depth.'

Because of her grandmother and mother's firm grasp on the kitchen, Necchio fell in love with cooking relatively late, after she'd left for university, but had learned by osmosis. 'It's amazing what you learn just by being in a kitchen when people are cooking,' she says.

'I knew exactly how to make a soffrito, even though I'd never done it before. But it was when I decided to do a masters degree in food, that's when I really fell in love with cooking.'

Impressively, the book is a solo project, with all recipes, stories and photography by Necchio.

'It was a mad, mad thing to do,' she says. 'I had no idea about food photography and food styling, and my first photos were awful. But I wanted to do everything together. That gave me the freedom to take pictures across the four seasons. It was important for me to take time to take photos as I cooked and went along.

'I learned a few things along the way. I suppose I've always done it for my blog, and my audience there is small, but they've learned my aesthetic, so I wanted to do this mad thing. And I'm glad I did.'







Lucy Cleland

## Don't sanitise books such as Fanny Hill, they teach us so much

I'VE been getting off (excuse the pun) on Fanny Hill pretty much ever since I could talk. The book and its author John Cleland (of whom I'm an indirect descendent - the poor chap never married or had children) is our family's literary legend. The joy of spilling the beans to ignorant school children or grown-ups - who'd inevitably thumbed stained copies at school under the covers looking for the really lewd bits - was the fact that I was related to a man whose book was so dirty it was banned for over 200 years earned me serious kudos.

I've even got a terrible manuscript of a modern-day feminist riposte I attempted to write over 10 years ago; a manuscript that got me over the border back into the United States from a visit to Canada when I was working on a ranch in Montana (and writing the book). The bemused face of the mustachioed US border guard as he asked if he could look at my script to prove my story is as vivid to me today as it was then in the darkness of that tiny border town of Sweetgrass. I also wrote about Fanny in the Erotic Review during Rowan Pelling's tenure, so you see, Fanny has served me well if not catapulted me into my own literary stardom (more my fault than hers).

I was therefore, as you might imagine, astounded by the news that Fanny has once more been censored.

Professor Judith Hawley of Royal Holloway, University of London, has apparently banned the book from her reading list 54 years after it was legally allowed to be published and more than 270 years after it was first written (in debtor's jail by the way). Her rationale? She was "worried about causing offence to my pupils". What kind of pupils is she teaching? Presbyterians, strict Muslims, Mormons, Orthodox Jews?

My mother's advice to me on reading it - younger than she probably would have wished - was that it "might make me feel funny inside", which now seems so charmingly quaint when pitched against Judith's fear of offending a youth that has grown up with EL James. If anything, the florid language - lots of throbbing, orbs, buds, gorging and battering - is risible and, as for the story, an innocent country girl turns to one of "experience" via prostitution and eventually to respectability is hardly revolutionary. And, yes, a middle-class man wrote it as though from a working-class woman's viewpoint, but this can hardly hold any residual shock.

The world is full of books (and people) like this. We have so much more to care about; why deny Fanny her rightful place in literary history? Don't rewrite the past in an effort to sanitise the future. Your pupils deserve more.

■ *Lucy Cleland is founding editor of Country & Town House magazine*



## David Keenan on Belfast: ‘It’s like a different planet, where different rules apply’

The writer on his family in Belfast and the influence of a city ‘populated by ghosts’

For me, Belfast has long been a place of myth, apocrypha, danger and glamour. My first encounter with the city was via the birthday and Christmas cards my father’s family would send to me in Glasgow from north Belfast in the 1970s. Few of my dad’s family were educated, and they would write like they were guessing how language worked. It was an early inspiration as a writer, the idea that you could transcend the most difficult of environments by laying claim to your own words.

Various books contributed to my experience of Belfast; *Show Me the Man*, the biography of ex-Provisional IRA member turned Sinn Féin politician Martin Meehan, who had grown up in the same street in the Ardoyne as my dad’s family; *Nor Meekly Serve My Time*, an incredible oral history of the H-block struggle; *Borstal Boy* and *Confessions of an Irish Rebel* by Brendan Behan, who, like my grandfather, was a volunteer in the IRA. Although Behan was from Dublin, his books helped situate the experiences of my own family in some kind of literary tradition, and I’m still in love with his ability



Folk art ... murals in Belfast in 1998. Photograph: Robert Wallis/Corbis via Getty Images

to channel his exuberant energy into prose that feels completely alive.

I always loved the Belfast murals, on both sides. Bill Rolston’s series on them, *Drawing Support*, are essential documents of modern folk art. Architectural and photographic books about the city became a major obsession, too; works by Paul Larmour and Jonathan Bardon. With the city being perpetually razed and renewed it felt like the ultimate palimpsest; every building populated by ghosts.

What attracts me to writing about certain places is the feeling of reality being up for grabs. In the 1990s my mum spotted a life-size model of Doctor Who’s dog K9 in a comic shop in Belfast. She inquired about buying it, but the owner



apologised and said he had to close up for the night because the IRA had kidnapped his wife and he had to go and pay their ransom. My mum just shrugged and asked if he would be open in the morning and he said, sure, he would. It was only once we were on the ferry with K-9 in the back of the car that we looked at each other like, "What just happened?" In Belfast it had seemed normal. But as soon as you are out of its reach it's like a different planet, where different rules apply.

In the last birthday card my

father sent me before he died, he wrote "always, remember, you, are, an, very, special, person". It's so important to read, my father would tell me, my father who couldn't even read himself. How would he know? I thought about this a lot after his death and I knew that if he could have read, most books would have disappointed him. That's when I made the vow to write the kind of novels that would live up to an illiterate person's fantasy. That's how Belfast made me, and how in *For the Good Times*, I remade Belfast in return.

## THIS WOMAN READS 100 BOOKS IN A MONTH (AND HOW YOU CAN TOO)

Last month, Therese embarked on a challenge to read 100 non-fiction books in a month.  
by Sandra Wu | Apr 20 2018

Hi, I'm Therese, a business development manager living in Berlin, Germany. Last month, I managed to read over 100 nonfiction titles in psychology, politics, and leadership. I know it sounds crazy, but I really did. Here's how.

It started with a bet. A colleague challenged me to read Malcolm Gladwell's *Outliers: The Story Of Success* in two hours. As determined as I was, I just couldn't meet the deadline.

I got through the first few chapters relatively quickly but found it impossible to finish the book in the designated 2 hours. So, I lost the bet,



but it gave me an idea! I needed to find a better way to consume nonfiction books. I found several websites, blogs and apps that transform books into 'bite-sized' content. But in the end, I opted for the Blinkist app.

I want to read more nonfiction books—I find it really useful to read the key takeaways from lots of books to help me get a feeling for what's an absolute must for my to-read list!

Blinkist is one of the first apps that transform books into 'bite-sized' content. As one of the first services to turn nonfiction books into quick reads, it has over 3,000 bestselling titles in its library. (including *Outliers: The Story of Success* — aka, the book that defeated me!).

To be honest, I was skeptical at first, but I learned some things that put my mind at ease. For example, I learned that in order to produce quality insights from every book, they have over 100 literary experts hard at work. I also loved that the app has an audio function which allows me to listen to great ideas throughout the day.

So, with this cool new sidekick, I set a fresh goal for myself — I'm very competitive like that! — to read the key insights from 100 books in just one month.

So, how did I do? I did it! I read 102

titles to be exact. It might sound like a lot, but the Blinkist packs take only 10-15 minutes to read. I read roughly 3 titles a day, mostly during commutes.

While I really enjoyed Dale Carnegie's books — they're all self-help classics — and Richard Dawkins' books about the human race are also very interesting, my new favorite author is definitely Dan Ariely. His book *Predictably Irrational* on human behavior has given me incredible insights that really help me in my job.

Now, I want you to take on the challenge! Yes, you heard me! I used to burn a lot of time on social media and Netflix. My job is exhausting, so by the time I leave work, my brain is pretty much useless. Reading a book on the Blinkist app however, is like a snack for my brain. I'm able to get the main learnings from a 400-page book in minutes. I'm happy that I'm doing something productive with my time. Everyday, I wake up wiser than the day before. If you want to get wiser, too, then I challenge you to try and beat my 102-title record! Check out the Blinkist app and start your reading adventure!



## *Book clinic: what contemporary literary fiction is uplifting?*

From tales of older people achieving extraordinary things to a redemptive quest, our expert picks titles that offer hope

**Q:** Is there any modern literary fiction that isn't completely depressing? I read quite a bit but I end up picking up depressing book after depressing book and sometimes life calls for something a bit more uplifting.

*Anonymous biologist, 23, Seattle, Washington, US*

**A:** Alex Preston, author and critic, writes:

It's perhaps a response to the ghastriness of the political climate, the fractures and fragmentation that surround us, but there's currently a real boom in exactly the kind of book you're looking for. It seems we no longer want to trudge through misery memoirs or dark Gone Girlish thrillers. We want books that are beacons, that tell us we're not alone and offer hope. The movement now known as "up lit" – uplifting literature – can be traced back to a couple of surprise bestsellers a few years back: *The Unlikely Pilgrimage of Harold Fry* by Rachel Joyce and *The Hundred-Year-Old Man...* by Jonas Jonasson, both stories about older people achieving extraordinary things, both treading carefully the line between strong emotion and sentimentality. Joyce's novel is the



better of the two and would be a good place to start.

Gail Honeyman is the current queen of up lit – her *Eleanor Oliphant Is Completely Fine* is a joyful tale of loneliness and eccentricity, love and friendship. See also Matt Haig's gorgeous *How to Stop Time*, Jean Kwok's wonderful *Girl in Translation*, and AL Kennedy's Le Petit Prince-inspired *The Little Snake*.

I'll leave you, though, with George Saunders, whose novel *Lincoln in the Bardo* may take as its subject a tragedy – the death of the president's son – but don't let that fool you. This is a heart-repairing book of wisdom, forgiveness and compassion.



## Stonewall defends 'vital' LGBT children's books after spate of ban attempts

In the last week, separate moves in Canada and the US threatened to restrict young readers' access to LGBT-themed illustrated stories



UK campaign group Stonewall has warned that children's books depicting LGBT people are vital for the wellbeing of young people exploring their sexual orientation and gender identity, following a spate of attempts around the world to remove titles depicting gay or transgender characters from library shelves.

Earlier this week in Canada, the Ottawa Catholic School Board was reported to have pulled Raina Telgemeier's acclaimed graphic novel *Drama* from the shelves of primary schools, moving it to middle and high schools where it would "more appropriately target 13+ students".

Aimed at children aged 10 and older, the book follows a girl who wants to help with her school play, and features a side story in which two boys kiss. It has proved controversial in the US in the past, with the American Library Association naming it as one of the country's most challenged books.

According to broadcaster CBC, elementary schools were told by the board that the book was "not necessarily" being removed for LGBTQ content, but for "the actual relationship content ... It is not a book we really need younger kids reading without guidance."



### 3. PRACTICAL ASSIGNMENTS. KEEPING UP TO DATE. Periodicals

Following protests – including one from Telgemeier, who said: “I’m sad for the kids who need this book but can’t access it” – the board decided to reinstate the graphic novel in elementary schools, saying it remained “fully committed to having safe, inclusive, and accepting schools”, according to CBC. Telgemeier said she was overjoyed at the reversal, because “all kids deserve representation, validation, and visibility in media at every age”.

Meanwhile in the US this week, a group of parents in Kansas attempted to have several children’s books featuring transgender characters – including picture book *I Am Jazz* – removed from the children’s section of Andover library. The protesters described them as “sexual revolution agenda, indoctrination of children”, according to the *Wichita Eagle*.

LGBT children’s books are frequently challenged around the world. In the US last year, preachers in Maine objected to young adult LGBT books in a display of censored literature in a library, saying it was “promoting a far-left political view that sees homosexuality as acceptable”, while in Iowa, an evangelical Christian filmed himself burning LGBT children’s books he had checked out of the Orange City public library. The library later received hundreds of donated books,

while the man was charged with criminal mischief and is due to appear in court on 22 January.

Stonewall’s head of education programmes, Sidonie Bertrand-Shelton, said on Friday that inclusive books were not only beneficial for LGBT young people, but “help all pupils develop an understanding of difference”. The group’s 2017 School Report found that only 20% of LGBT students were taught about same-sex relationships at school, while 77% never learned about transgender people or gender identity.

“Stonewall was set up 30 years ago to fight against the introduction of Section 28 – a piece of legislation that allowed bullying to flourish as it effectively banned teachers from talking about same-sex relationships or LGBT issues,” she said. “It’s crucial we don’t repeat history. Celebrating difference is an important step toward building inclusive learning environments where all young people can be supported to reach their full potential ... this makes representations of LGBT people in books and education materials vital for young people who might be questioning their sexual orientation or gender identity.”



# Crime fiction

## The journalist as sleuth

*Jeff Noon*

Despite being well-travelled as the BBC's world affairs editor, John Simpson doesn't roam far from home in his spy thriller, *Moscow, Midnight* (John Murray, £20). Life and art intermingle, in both subject matter and character. The hero is named Jon Swift, a veteran journalist bristling under new media regimes. When government minister Patrick Macready is found dead — presumably from a solo sex game gone wrong — Swift takes it upon himself to clear up a few loose ends. Soon he's under investigation himself, ostracised, and journeying to Moscow to work a connection to a number of Russians who have met similar 'accidental' fates.

Swift is cynical, unreconstructed in his view of women, a bit snobbish at times. But his voice is clear and strong, and his moral code keeps him on track. Simpson knows his stuff, obviously, and his plotting is strewn with expert analysis of international affairs and insider knowledge of journalistic practice: all very entertaining. But maybe an author can know too much? The usual gaps in the data field that spy stories revolve around are missing here. And so the mystery suffers. Sometimes, you just have to leave things out.

*In a House of Lies* (Orion, £20) is Ian Rankin's 23rd novel featuring the detective John Rebus. Well, he's

not really a detective any more. He's retired, and ill, hoping for a 'managed decline', as his doctor says. But the quiet life holds few delights, and old cases keep dragging him back into action. This time round a dead body found in the woods — a man missing for more than ten years — stirs up no end of trouble, not least for Rebus himself, who was on the original investigative team, a team that cocked up so badly they were named in a police corruption suit.

Over the last few books Rankin has been promoting two other detectives — Siobhan Clarke and Malcolm Fox — to take Rebus's place, and so the novel weaves between the three different officers, each coming at it from their own angle: Clarke as part of the new inquiry, Fox looking into the corruption, and Rebus on the sidelines, causing trouble and not a little embarrassment along the way. We're pulled along by the minutiae of police work and the Rankin style, which never wanes. Let's call it unmanaged decline, all guns blazing.

David Mamet's *Chicago* (Custom House, £10.99) is a convoluted, all-encompassing story set in the prohibition era. Mike Hodge is a newspaperman who falls in love with Annie, a florist whose family has mob connections. When Annie is gunned down and killed, Mike does all he can to track down her murderer. That makes it sound far more exciting than it is. The book takes many, many detours along the



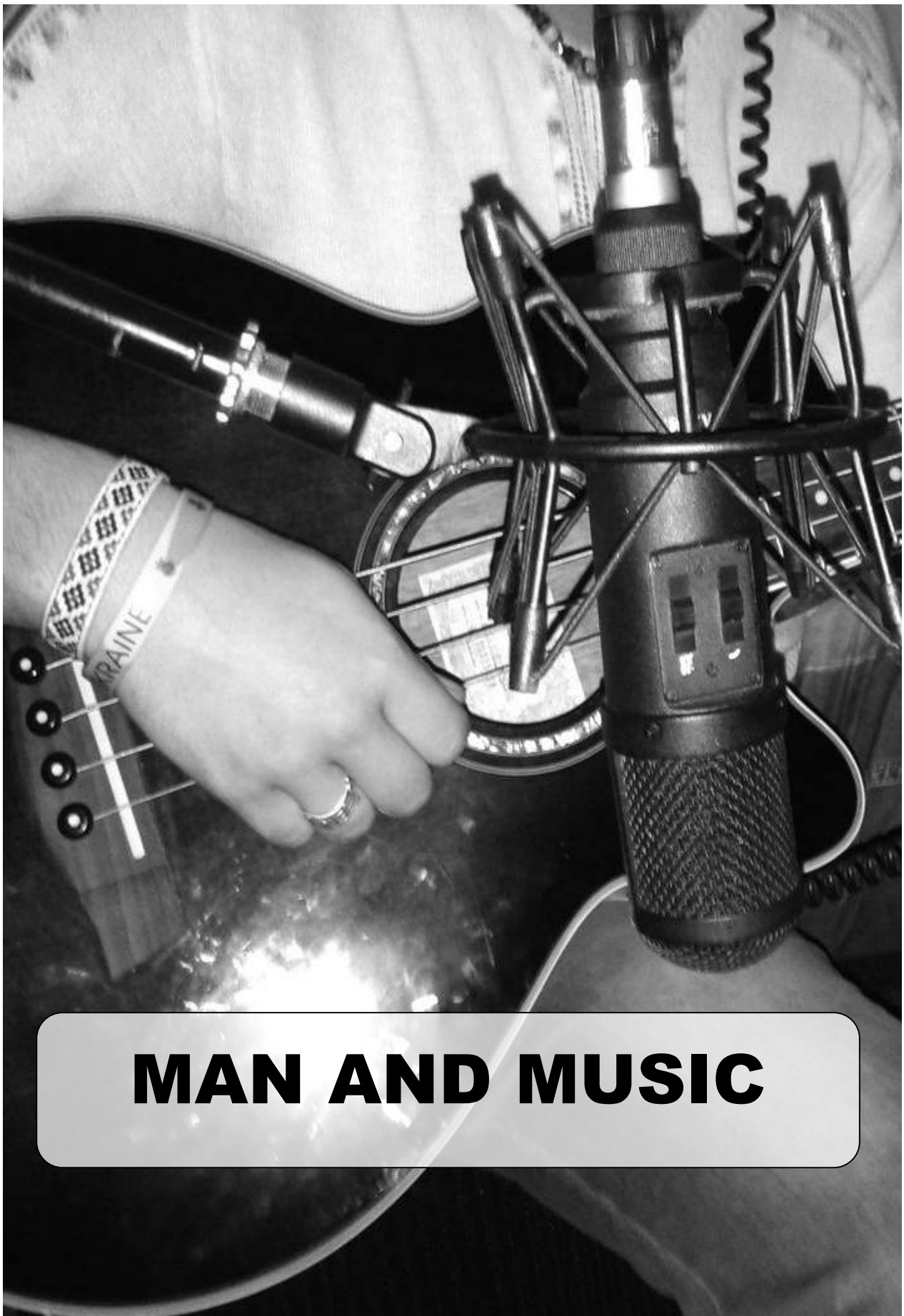
way, as characters discuss this and that, often unrelated to anything that's gone before, all set out in Mamet's well-known idiosyncratic manner. It's a bit of a slog, to be honest, unless extremely literary quasi-thrillers are your thing. *Chicago* is more a book to make you think, than one to read for pleasure. The language that Mamet uses is captivating in the theatre; on the page it has a different effect. Coded phrases lead to coded emotions, and because of this there's little honest humanity on show.

Keigo Higashino's *Newcomer* (Little, Brown, £13.99) offers a unique take on the genre. It's a murder mystery turned inside out: there's no real emphasis on the corpse, or the location of the crime, or even the imagined motives of the suspects. Instead, Detective Kaga visits the neighbours of the murdered woman, and the people who run local businesses — the girl at the rice cracker shop, the apprentice at the

Japanese restaurant, and so on — and he asks questions of them: the strangest questions, which appear to have little if anything to do with the crime. And yet, as the chapters unfold, a logic appears from this mishmash of idle chat, gossip and slips of the tongue. It's mesmerising. Kaga's approach is nonlinear, almost surreal at times. But there's another element...

At each place he visits the detective solves another case, a tiny case, often to do with simple domestic upsets, or familial misunderstandings. He brings people together, and offers them glimpses of hope. It's quite moving to watch him at work. And all the time the murder investigation proceeds, moving through all these nonsuspects towards a main suspect, until, with one deft move the strands all pull together: a body, a crime, a motive, a final twist. This is a different kind of mystery novel. A delight to read.





# MAN AND MUSIC

## MAN AND MUSIC

### PRACTICAL TASKS

#### Task 1

In pairs / groups, dwell on the following items regarding the news article:

- My level of interest in the article
- Its relevance to my life
- Degree of difficulty
- Educational value
- Difficulty
- Vocabulary
- Grammar
- Reading / Listening
- Speaking activities
- Needed more / less time on

#### Task 2

You are a news reporter at the scene. Create your news report. You will soon have to give it in front of TV cameras (to a different group). Use the following questions as a guide to your story:

- What is the story?
- Where are you?
- What is happening around you?
- What can you hear (see, smell)?
- What are the events that have happened in the past few hours /days?
- Who are the people central to your story?
- Who have you found to tell you about what's happening?
- What are other people there telling you?
- What's your take on the situation?
- How do you think this story will develop over the coming hours /days?

### 3. PRACTICAL ASSIGNMENTS. KEEPING UP TO DATE. Practical Tasks

#### Task 3

In pairs / groups, dwell on the following items regarding the news article:

- My level of interest in the article
- Its relevance to my life
- Degree of difficulty
- Educational value
- Difficulty
- Vocabulary
- Grammar
- Reading / Listening
- Speaking activities
- Needed more / less time on

#### Task 4

In pairs / groups, talk about how much you think your family and friends know about the theme of the article and how interested they are (or otherwise).

Options	Level of interest	Level of knowledge
Partner		
Parents		
Siblings		
Grandparents		
Best friend		
Workmate		
Other		

#### Task 5

Imagine you were a bystander at the event detailed in the article. Recall the sights, sounds, smells, temperature, weather, people, etc. in writing your own eyewitness account.



### 3. PRACTICAL ASSIGNMENTS. KEEPING UP TO DATE. Practical Tasks

#### **Task 6**

Write an exaggerated story that is full of superlatives about an experience that is similar to the one in the news article.

#### **Task 7**

Compose a phrase match with two choices in the second column. Your partner must decide which match corresponds to the article and comment on it. For example:

Pirating has

- afflicted the music industry
- reflected the music industry

#### **Task 8**

Create biographies of the characters in a news item. Use the following items as a guide to your story:

- Youth
- Early career
- Influences
- Early successes
- Entry into the career
- High and low points
- Controversies
- etc.

#### **Task 9**

Pretend the famous person in the article is your best friend. Write a story about how you met, the things you've done together, how often you contact each other, what you do when you meet, where you meet, etc.

#### **Task 10**

Write a brief essay expressing who you sympathize with in a particular story. Explain why you sympathize with that person. Use the following exponents:

- I sympathize most with \_\_\_\_\_ because \_\_\_\_\_

### 3. PRACTICAL ASSIGNMENTS. KEEPING UP TO DATE. Practical Tasks

- My sympathies lie with \_\_\_\_\_
- I can totally relate to \_\_\_\_\_
- My heart goes out to \_\_\_\_\_
- I totally understand \_\_\_\_\_
- I can see where \_\_\_\_\_ coming from
- I think you have to feel sorry for \_\_\_\_\_

#### **Task 11**

Find three things you thought were funny or amusing in the article. Discuss with your partners why you found these things to be funny.

#### **Task 12**

Whatever the article is about, find and adopt hobbies from it. Tell other students about these hobbies. Partners must ask questions. Partners could also give their ideas on how the hobby might branch out into different areas.

#### **Task 13**

Write down five reasons for being cheerful, based on how events in the news item will positively affect your lives. Change partners and share and compare your ideas.

#### **Task 14**

Pretend to be workers. Write down the gossip based on the article. Mill around and tell each other the latest gossip.

#### **Task 15**

Talk about whether the news article is accurate, truthful, biased or being used for propaganda. Find two possible reasons for each of these.

#### **Task 16**

Take the main theme of the article and associate it with different things and discuss each of these. For example, the issue to discuss is “Alcohol”. Consider the following aspects:

### 3. PRACTICAL ASSIGNMENTS. KEEPING UP TO DATE. Practical Tasks

- Alcohol and children
- Alcohol and driving
- Alcohol and law
- Alcohol on airplanes
- Alcohol and health
- Alcohol and domestic violence
- Alcohol and drugs
- Alcohol and bad behavior
- Other

#### **Task 17**

Choose a new job for the person from the article. There are 6 jobs on offer. Discuss how qualified the person is for each job, the dangers of the person doing the job, and the good things they might be able to achieve. Change partners and share and compare your ideas. For example:

- boss
- military man
- president of University
- receptionist
- toilet cleaner
- truck driver

#### **Task 18**

Speculate on the regrets the characters in the article might have about their lives and actions. Write down three things for each of the following:

- Regret ...
- Regret not ...
- Don't regret ...

Share and compare what you wrote down and evaluate each other's ideas. Does everyone think the statements are true?

#### **Task 19**

How will history judge the person from the article? Discuss this by assessing his/her contribution to the world.



### 3. PRACTICAL ASSIGNMENTS. KEEPING UP TO DATE. Practical Tasks

#### **Task 20**

Think of five reasons why the characters in the text might complain about his / her life and job. Discuss these things and compare them to your own everyday lives.

#### **Task 21**

Talk about what might happen if you invited a person from the article:

- to your wedding
- on a backpacking trip
- on a fishing trip
- to the supermarket, shopping for food
- to a secret place for a blind date
- etc.

#### **Task 22**

Student A pretends he is long-time friend of the main character in the article (Student B). The scenario is that the two friends, who have not met for many years, suddenly bump into each other. Catch up with all the latest news from the both sides. Talk about the past, what it's like to be president / an actor etc, plus the issue in the news item.

#### **Task 23**

If the article is about how a person or group of people can affect others, write a list of things that could be part of those influences. For example, the issue to discuss is "Bad influence". In pairs or groups, talk about whether the children in your country do any of the following, and if so, at what age do they start. Try to find reasons why they do these things:

- Might bad parenting be to blame?
- Smoke cigarettes or drink alcohol
- Take drugs
- Vandalism
- Graffiti
- Intimidating elderly people
- Burglary and robbery
- Physical assault or murder

### 3. PRACTICAL ASSIGNMENTS. KEEPING UP TO DATE. Practical Tasks

- Under-age sex
- Gun crimes
- Blackmail and extortion

#### **Task 24**

Interview one of the characters from the article. Use “the best ever” in all questions. This could also be used for other structures, such as “When was the first / last time”, “Would you ever...?”. “What do you remember about...?”

#### **Task 25**

Underline all of the things you didn't know before. Share these things with your partner(s) after reading. Talk over whether or not these new pieces of information are worth knowing.

#### **Task 26**

Read the text of the article and create three more alternative headlines that might be lurking behind the actual one. Expand on and tell the stories about the alternative. Change partners and share and compare your ideas.

#### **Task 27**

Think about the headline and briefly describe how you think the story will unfold. Take a vote on whose story you think is ...

- closest to the real article
- most entertaining
- the craziest
- the least likely to be closest to the real article
- the most original

#### **Task 28**

If the article is related to skills or abilities of other people, animals or inanimate things, imagine you now have those skills. How will your life change?

### 3. PRACTICAL ASSIGNMENTS. KEEPING UP TO DATE. Practical Tasks

#### **Task 29**

Talk about how the news affects people of different ages. Write different age brackets for your partner(s) to speculate on.

#### **Task 30**

Talk about the theme of the article in relation to your own country and the views held by the government and compatriots. Use the following questions:

- How is this subject viewed or treated in your country?
- How different (better / worse) is your country's attitude towards this subject?
- How would this story be reported in your country?
- How much media attention would it receive?
- Do the things that happened in the article occur to the same degree in your own country?
- Would this piece of news be newsworthy in your country?
- Do different generations or different sexes have different views on this topic?
- Would this topic ever be considered taboo or be censored in your country?
- Would there be sympathy towards this topic in your country?
- Are citizens of your country generally interested in this kind of news?
- Other.





## MUSIC

# Britain's Got Talent winner Tokio talks about his Generation

TOKIO Myers relishes being labelled an underdog. It worked for him when he rocked up to the prestigious Royal College of Music, not an aspiring rapper as many expected, but as a pianist with a love for Frederic Chopin and Sergei Rachmaninoff.

And it happened again when he successfully brought his electrifying mash-ups to television screens across the country courtesy of Britain's Got Talent, sweeping to victory in the process.

From delicate piano constructs to full-on electronic sculptures, he mixed Adele with Beethoven and Ed Sheeran with Claude Debussy.

People lapped it up, and now they're doing the same to his debut album, which fuses classical, cinematic, hip-hop, dance and 90s soul.

"The more you put me in a place I'm not supposed to be, it excites me more. I get a kick out of it because I know I can educate people," he says.

"I really love the underdog, I don't like doing the obvious thing. I don't want to be put in a box."

His motivation to audition for the ITV talent show came from a fear of stagnation.

After years as a session musician for Mr Hudson And The Library, where he toured with everyone from Kanye West to Amy Winehouse, Tokio wanted to flaunt a sound he had worked hard to hone.

"I reached a point in my life and things were pretty static, I hate static," he says. "I woke up one morning and decided I was going to do it, just for the sheer sake it was going to be superchallenging."

Afew days before we meet, Tokio teased the album, *Our Generation*, at an intimate showcase where he was introduced by broadcaster Reggie Yates – a friend since his Mr Hudson days.

As a touring musician he also performed at Glastonbury in 2009 and it's a platform he would like to return to.

"I want to take this to the top, this isn't just for my bedroom," he laughs, in bewilderment perhaps at his own rise from small crowds to the Royal Variety Show (BGT winners automatically play the event).

**Tokio Myers *Our Generation* is out now**



# Luther's tunes, 500 years after the Reformation

To mark the 500th anniversary of Martin Luther changing the course of religious history by hammering his 95 theses to a church door, the BBC has designated this Sunday as Reformation Day at the Proms. For those who can't attend — or who want an extra dose of austere theology and sturdy chorales — two new recordings from Harmonia Mundi will be manna from heaven.

The first is a riveting Mendelssohn programme from the excellent Freiburg Baroque Orchestra directed by Pablo Heras-Casado. Mendelssohn's religious faith is still a controversial matter. He was born a Jew, but baptised a Protestant in childhood (as were his three siblings). Whether his family were genuinely converting or being socially expedient is still a much-debated question. Either way, he was probably more inspired by Christianity than any other important composer of his sceptical generation.

That said, his *Reformation* Symphony is generally considered a dud. Or at least its most overtly Reformation bit is — the lame finale ponderously riffing on the chorale tune *Ein feste Burg*.

However, the Freiburgers play the whole work with such energy and persuasively sinuous period timbres that one easily overlooks its superficialities.

The chief reason to recommend this disc, though, is Isabelle Faust's thrilling solo playing in the Violin Concerto.

She takes the radical decision to perform the work as scholars now think mid-19th-century violinists would have done: with minimal vibrato, but lots of slides between the notes and very different bowings, making the piece sound far spikier and febrile than the suavely efficient readings one usually hears today.

Some may think her tone is too parched; I loved it.

An early Lutheran-style cantata by Mendelssohn (*Wer nur den lieben Gott lasst walten*, very much written in Bach-pastiche mode) is included on a new recording by the choir of Clare College, Cambridge, but as part of a much broader survey of Protestant music. It ranges from Lutheran chorales — so much livelier when sung, as here, in their original, syncopated rhythms — through two Bach cantatas and a lugubriously chromatic Brahms motet to Vaughan Williams's extended anthem *Lord,*

*Thou hast been our Refuge*. That culminates with choir and organ rising in exultant counterpoint as a solo trumpet unfurls an ancient Anglican hymn tune by William Croft.

- Directed by Graham Ross, the choir sometimes sounds a little too youthful: neat and tuneful, but falling short on rich timbre. However, there is much exciting instrumental work from an ensemble packed with distinguished names, and seasoned solo singing from Neal Davies, Nicholas Mulroy and the like.

**Richard Morrison**



**Isabelle Faust makes the concerto sound far spikier and febrile**





## Hitting right balance between send-up and storytelling

### **Snow White**

Eden Court Theatre, Inverness

\* \* \* \*

### **Aladdin**

His Majesty's Theatre, Aberdeen

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It's in the nature of panto to send itself up; it's not exactly a naturalistic art-form, after all, and awareness that it's all just a story is a vital part of the fun. The trick, though, is to get the balance right between send-up and storytelling; pantomimes are based on fairytales, and without the odd moment where the audience begins, however briefly, to believe in magic, we tip over into the territory where the whole thing becomes at best a vehicle for a bit of adult satire and at worst a self-indulgent joke.

And of all this year's large-scale big-city pantos, it's perhaps Snow White at Eden Court - created by writer-director Steven Wren and his team, with major panto producers Imagine Theatre - that most perfectly hits that balance, with a show that not only makes room for loads of laughs but also gives full weight, in Iain Lauchlan's script, to the story of Snow White's life-and-death struggle with her stepmother, the Wicked Queen, who wants Snow White out of the way so that she can remain for ever the most beautiful woman in the land.

It's a primal tale, well told by lovely Lucy Hutchison as Snow White and Marj Hogarth as the Queen; and around them swirl all the key panto characters, from an ace team of puppet dwarves with Scottish names such as Glaikit, Gallus and Dreich,



played by a chorus of Eden Court juniors, to the fine comedy duo of Steven Wren himself as the Dame, Dolly Mixture, and Ross Allan as her slightly gormless son, Jingles the Jester.

In this panto, though, there's never any doubt, from the opening moments, that the audience are also key players in the drama; the rapport between Allan, Wren and the Inverness audience is all but perfect and the show deploys almost a full set of classic panto devices, from a traditional kitchen slapstick scene to a hilarious behind-you sequence in the wild wood.

The final songsheet seems oddly rushed, with the audience never allowed to build up the right momentum behind the great old chants of "bring doon the cloot" and "we were the best!", but in every other respect this is the kind of panto of which archetypal childhood and family memories are made, funny, heartfelt, good-looking and full of festive spirit.

Aladdin at His Majesty's, Aberdeen, also features plenty of traditional panto fun; just try saying "three smart fellas, they felt smart" several times at speed and you'll begin to glimpse

exactly where this year's panto is coming from - and how it's brilliant song-sheet sequence is likely to end.

Yet a combination of factors - from the presence of a slightly overwhelmed-looking celebrity villain in Jimmy Osmond's Abanazar to the absence of Elaine C Smith, who has returned to Glasgow King's leaving behind only the recorded voice of the genie seems to knock the show slightly off balance; and the decision to have the hero Aladdin played by inspired daft laddie Jordan Young finally puts the kibosh on any chance of real romantic magic between him and Lisa-Anne Wood's spirited Princess Jasmine.

Co-writer Alan McHugh's big, galumphing Dame is as exuberant as ever in this Qdos panto, but the local comedy material seems thin and, with strong romantic storytelling in short supply, this Aladdin

- directed by Tony Cownie - often seems to be clobbering the audience over the head with Christmas fun rather than inviting them into it with that special panto mixture of magic, merriment and love.

**•Both until 7 January  
JOYCE MCMILLAN**





## Age gap bridged at youth club Christmas

DIFFERENT generations got together to share their stories and enjoy some turkey as part of an Edinburgh youth centre's Christmas festivities.

Around 60 people gathered at the Citadel Youth Centre to enjoy the occasion, aimed at spreading some cheer and building relationships within local communities.

The youth centre has been running community-based sessions in Leith since 1980 and project manager Willy Barr said the festive gathering was a great way to get people together.

He said: "It's an inter-generational project.

It's about bringing local young people together with local older people in a safe place to do activities that are structured.

"The whole idea is to develop relationships and get to know each other. They see each other in the community and that's quite nice.

"It works massively for the older people - they feel quite excited about being around younger folk because for a lot of older people they are quite isolated."

The festivities, which among other activities included a Christmas lunch and carol singing, followed a family day last week attended by dozens from all over the city.

Mr Barr said it had been a busy week, adding: "The nice part of the whole story is all of those activities have been made possible by the local people who have supported us at a community level."

## Mixing the visceral and cerebral... Let the studious thrashing of guitars begin

RSNO, John Storgards & Baiba Skride

Glasgow Royal Concert Hall

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Every single note the RSNO played on Thursday truly meant something. They were responding without exception to the forceful personality of John Storgards, a conductor who knows his own mind and who communicates his thoughts to the musicians with knowing intent and fiery conviction. The result? One of the most exciting orchestral performances I've heard this season from any Scottish orchestra.

Where did Storgards find such opulent magic in the string section, particularly the lustrous quality of the first violins that coloured the opening bars of Bernard Herman's Love Scene from the Hitchcock film *Vertigo*? It's a piece of stoked up Wagner, deliciously dense and achingly beautiful, and an atmospherically perfect prequel to Korngold's Violin Concerto, with its reuse of selected film themes by the Hollywood composer.

There were wonderful surprises, too, in that concerto, which Latvian soloist Baiba Skride injected, somewhat idiosyncratically, with a bullish panache. Easeful virtuosity and sensitivity sat side by side in the central Romanze; then the sizzling impetuosity of the finale, explosive and ebullient at every turn.

Equally compelling was Tchaikovsky's Fifth Symphony, Storgards stamping his own indelible impression on its familiar pages. The big picture was cohesive and effusive, never predictable, but always on message.

It was a breathtaking, high-definition performance, enriched by such treats as Christopher Gough's liquid horn solo, a firebrand wind ensemble, ravishing string sound and a brass section that made\* its burnished presence known without overpowering everyone else. An orchestra on fire!

**KEN WALTON**



## Joe McFadden eyes career in the West End after Strictly triumph

By CATHERINE WYATT

Strictly Come Dancing champion Joe McFadden has said that it would be a “shame” if he did not continue to dance after winning this year’s show.

The Holby City actor became the oldest winner in Strictly history on Saturday night when he lifted the glitterball trophy aged 42.

His Holby character, Raf di Lucca, dramatically died earlier in the month, leaving McFadden free to pursue his interest in theatre.

When asked if he was now unemployed, the actor said: “I am... I’m very optimistic about the future, things are looking up.

“I’m feeling really good and looking forward to having a really good rest over Christmas.

“I’m going to lie in a dark room for about a week and sleep.”

And when the idea of a West End role was floated, McFadden added: “I have no idea.

“It would be lovely to put all the dancing into practice - it would be a shame to let all of that [go].”

The Holby City star and professional partner Katya Jones came out top of a public vote in the BBC final after 13 weeks of competition. McFadden beat fellow finalists Alexandra Burke, Debbie McGee and Gemma Atkinson to claim the glitterball trophy.



Joe McFadden and Katya Jones with the glitterball trophy after they won the final of Strictly Come Dancing on Saturday night

His three performances on Saturday night - a Charleston, a showdance and a Viennese waltz - scored a combined 118 out of a possible 120 points from the judges.

Moments after being announced as the winner, McFadden said: “It feels utterly, utterly amazing and yeah, I really can’t find the words.

“It’s just been brilliant, the - whole experience has been brilliant.”

Jones praised the star’s talent, saying: “He has so much potential, give me more time with him, he’ll become a pro.”

Jones, who partnered Ed Balls last year for her first series as a Strictly professional, was often complimented by the judges for her creative choreography.

### 3. PRACTICAL ASSIGNMENTS. KEEPING UP TO DATE. Periodicals

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McFadden said: “The routines have consistently been brilliant and she’s such an amazing artist and dancer and just being in the training room with you every day was such a joy.

#### **COMMENT**

“It feels utterly, utterly amazing and yeah, I really can’t find the words. It’s just been brilliant, the whole experience has been brilliant”

#### **JOE MCFADDEN**

“I mean, it was hard work, but it was a joy and I wouldn’t have had it any other way. No one said it was going to be easy.”

McFadden, who is the oldest winner since the show started in 2004, was the third man in a row to take the Strictly crown.

He is also the only Scottish celebrity to win the show, and said “there might be one or two whiskies consumed” after his victory, after saying he was teetotal for most of the programme’s run.

McFadden was born in Glasgow. He was educated in city’s Holyrood RC Se School, where a trainer saw his potential commended him for part in Taggart.

After taking a role in Take the High Road, he built his career in the theatre, with roles in Chitty Chitty Bang Bang, Rent and Rainbow Kiss.

McFadden then took roles in television series Sex, Chips & Rock n’ Roll and The Crow Road.

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# The next big thing in Scottish pop music

NEXT year will undoubtedly be a big one for Scottish artists and their music with the National Museum of Scotland's Rip It Up exhibition starting in June and running through to late November and The Scottish Pop Music Exhibition Centre now hoping to be open by April or May.

However these are very different times from when bands like the Edinburgh beat combo The Athenians were playing nine times a week - twice on Fridays and Saturdays - and still holding down day jobs in the Sixties.

And though nobody knew it was post punk at the time as a genre, it still has relevance today and so do many of the bands. Paul Haig of Josef K went on to influence New Order and many others including Franz Ferdinand; dozens of bands cite Edwyn Collins and Orange Juice as an influence while others will talk of Roddy Frame and Aztec Camera. That Malcolm Ross played in all three bands (Josef K, Aztec Camera and Orange Juice) and is respected in his own right too only sums up what a time it was and then we have Scars,



***"There have been fewer artists break through more recently"***

Fire Engines, Skids, Simple Minds, The Associates and indeed many more that deserve to be mentioned, only proving the point, where do you stop?

While the choice is more clear-cut j from the 80s indie bands with the Shop Assistants and The Pastels, still hugely ' influential today, many of those smaller 80s bands went on to big things in the 90s with I bands like Teenage Fanclub and Primal Scream.



### 3. PRACTICAL ASSIGNMENTS. KEEPING UP TO DATE. Periodicals

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Then there was Belle and Sebastian, Mogwai, Biffy Clyro and so it went on.

Of course I've missed out the pop hits of The Bluebells and Altered for ages in that brief sojourn, failed to extol the virtues of Deacon Blue, Love and Money, Hipsway and their ilk and not mentioned entire genres like dance and folk. The Sensational Alex Harvey Band and Ivor Cutler should of course never be forgotten!

Many current artists such as The Twilight Sad and Frightened Rabbit have been with us now for over a decade and go from strength to strength but it has to be said that there have been fewer artists break through more recently in the way Chvrches have for instance.

Of course working on the pop music centre has focused my thoughts on all this - as did the requests I've had recently, and get every year, to recommend new Scottish artists to look out for.

Dan Willson and his band Withered Hand certainly deserve to be huge but Dan is already a ten-year veteran as is Neil Pennycook of Meursault, another band that deserve a far bigger audience. There have been flashes of brilliance this year from the pop of Be Like Pablo to the pop punk of Paper Rifles, but again neither are completely new to the scene.

In the end there was one artist I felt fitted the bill and that was Hamish James Hawk or Hamish Hawk and The New Outfit as he currently calls himself and his band. His first album came out in 2014 - endorsed by King Creosote - and is very good indeed. He has slowly built up a good live following and released several excellent songs in the last year.

A songwriter of some skill, who traces his art back through Withered Hand and Belle and Sebastian to Roddy Frame, I heartily recommend you give him a listen. Google and YouTube Will get you there! 2018 may well be the year that a new wave of young Scottish artists make their mark and come up with something new and exciting.





## Abba star Björn faces a new Waterloo over Mamma Mia! theatre

Lauren Pilat and Jonathan Prynn

ABBA star Björn Ulvaeus is facing a battle of Waterloo over plans to stage a musical based on the Swedish super group in a new theatre.

Ulvaeus, who co-wrote Abba's string of hits such as Waterloo, Dancing Queen and Knowing Me, Knowing You, has joined forces with producer Ingrid Sutej to apply for planning permission for a 500-seater South Bank venue on an undeveloped corner plot near the rail station and the BFI Imax. The proposed building by prize-winning Haworth Tompkins, who oversaw the £80 million overhaul of the nearby National Theatre, will have a set styled on a Greek taverna where audiences will dine on Greek food while the live show, called Mamma Mia! The Party, unfolds around them.

Construction of the building, with an 80ft tower, is expected to be completed in October 2018 if planning permission is granted, with the show opening by next Christmas. After five years it would be turned into a neighbourhood centre by social enterprise Coin Street Community Builders.



**Protest:** residents at the proposed theatre site on the South Bank today

But residents concerned about noise and traffic today staged a protest at the site, saying it should be used for community housing immediately.

One, Wai-King Cheung, said: "Putting something so boisterous in a residential area is an absolute joke. I'm shocked and disgusted they're not using it for community housing." A similar Mamma Mia! concept in Stockholm was opened in 2016, with the original band members reuniting for the first time in 30 years for its first night.

Ulvaeus said the project would offer "lots of positive benefits to the local community, as well as putting on a great show." The Coin Street community group said it was "an exciting and creative temporary use for the site".



## **Edinburgh dance**

### **Hope Hunt and the Ascension into Lazarus**

#### **Dance Base**

★★★★★

The title of this stunning solo Doherty is a mite unwieldy, but the work emphatically is not.

There isn't a wasted moment in Doherty's 40-minute potent, impressionistic dance-theatre treatment of what she refers to as "the male disadvantaged stereotype". It's riveting and moving, and she's a simply phenomenal performer.

It isn't strictly a solo, nor is the piece entirely set indoors. It begins outside with — spoiler alert — a compact red car driven close to the venue entrance by a tough-looking young man (Aaron Hickland). A speaker in the back blares heavy, clubby beats. He opens the hatch and out tumbles Doherty. Hair slicked back and in baggy, nondescript street clothes, she proceeds to dance in a hip-hop style while lightly, loosely, interacting with the audience. After five minutes she urges us into the theatre.

I say she, but Doherty's behaviour and garb carry strong masculine overtones. With a finger she quickly mimes drawing a moustache on her face. It's a raw, switched-on, fragmented and yet meticulously detailed performance, swift and clear

and full of sharp body language underpinned by a blistering, intuitive intelligence. In an upstage corner is a big pile of junk food detritus.

Otherwise the stage is bare. Doherty roves purposefully about it, initially speaking with a German accent (and name-dropping the pioneering 20th-century installation artist Kurt Schwitters, presumably a personal homage), but soon shifting into Irish intonations. She breathes hard and rhythmically while morphing a carefully chosen collage of words into new shapes and sounds. Her persona is cocky, then vulnerable and breathtakingly quick-change.

In the final section everything becomes bright, with Doherty in white and a soundtrack of soothing Renaissance music overlaid by the voices of people arguing violently. Painful yet mysteriously redemptive, *Hope Hunt* left me shaken and stirred. Doherty's new ensemble work has its premiere at the MAC Belfast International Festival on October 26. One to keep an eye on.

**Donald Hutera**



## The Proms are about how we live, not just about the music

Clemency  
Burton-Hill



AT THE end of a Prom last month, Daniel Barenboim, 74, gave an impromptu address to the audience at the Royal Albert Hall. Visibly moved after a concert in which his German orchestra had played an all-English programme, this Argentine-Israeli conductor, who also holds Spanish and Palestinian citizenship, talked about music's ability to unite people of different cultures and beliefs. He also mentioned isolationism, fanaticism and nationalism, arguing that their divisive effects can only be "fought" by educating future generations.

Perhaps unsurprisingly given the febrile climate, his words were met with opprobrium in certain quarters. The moment came at the end of a live broadcast, and for some commentators it seemed he had been encouraged to peddle explicit anti-Brexit sentiment - although Brexit was never mentioned.

The controversy that ensued raises a question bigger than any single artist or statement. What do we want our creative artists to be? Accomplished technicians who deliver the goods but

have nothing to say? Or thinking humans who use their art to try to express what it is to be? The Proms is fortunate to be able to engage the world's greatest soloists, ensembles and conductors; invitations to perform are based on musical merit alone. It is not, and has never been, a political platform, but it would be impoverished indeed if musicians - or audiences - were forced to suppress their authentic personalities.

There's not a country on earth that wouldn't be proud to host a festival as ambitious in scope and open in spirit as this. Every summer, musicians and concertgoers of myriad nationalities are drawn to SW7. Multiple beliefs, political and otherwise, co-exist in that iconic hall which holds up to 6,000 people every night - 1,000 of whom pay just £6. This season, as well as core classics, you could hear tributes to Ella Fitzgerald, Dizzy Gillespie, Charles Mingus, Stax Records and Scott Walker, plus the film scores of John Williams or the theatrical glories of Oklahoma! You could enjoy a night of music from India and PaMstan, or Chineke!, an orchestra of classical musicians from BME backgrounds.

Music is an engine of empathy: AT THE end of a Prom last month, Daniel Barenboim, 74, gave an impromptu address to the audience at the Royal Albert Hall. Visibly moved after a concert in which his German orchestra had played an all-



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an engine of empathy: whoever you are, I believe it is hard not to leave the Proms feeling a little more convinced that we are engaged in a collective endeavour: this being human. Our divisive times call more than ever for artists who answer what playwright Tennessee Williams described as "the crying, almost screaming need of a great worldwide human effort to know ourselves and each other a great deal better".

- *Clemency Burton-Hill presents the Proms and Breakfast on BBC Radio 3. Her forthcoming book Year of Wonder: Classical Music for Every Day -will be published in October by Headline.*



## **MUSIC**

### **THE PRODIGY**

AS pioneers often do, The Prodigy have always done things their own way by experimenting and leaving the listening public to either like it or lump it.

But what is your opinion of The Prodigy? Do you think they are no so much a dance group but more a descendant of punk bands like the Sex Pistols and the Clash? The Essex-based trio (Liam Howlett, Maxim and Keith Flint) formed in

Braintree 1990. After hit albums Experience and Music For The Jilted Generation, they achieved mainstream

success in 1997 with their 10 million-selling album *The Fat Of The Land*.

During their career, the dance behemoths have amassed quite a catalogue and they're far too prolific for anyone to look back on them in nostalgia terms, which is what makes them still relevant. Early next year, they will release their seventh studio album.

They're not quite national treasures, they're far too off-the-wall for that, but they are a UK institution at the very least.

**Richard Jones**  
*Tonight, 02 Academy, Glasgow.*  
[o2academyglasgow.co.uk](http://o2academyglasgow.co.uk)



## *Neneh's girl: Music stars came to my house... but I only cared about Lego*

Alistair Foster and  
Hamish MacBain

RISING star Mabel McVey has spoken about growing up with musician parents - and dealing with their fame as she forges her own singing career.

McVey, 21, is the daughter of Swedish singer Neneh Cherry and music producer Cameron McVey, who has worked with Massive Attack, All Saints and Sugababes.

As a child she was used to stars such as REM'S Michael Stipe coming round to her house - where All Saints recorded their hit Never Ever. To McVey, however, they were "all my dad's annoying friends. Like, can I just get on with building this Lego?"

The singer, who grew up in Stockholm, moved to London at 18 to forge her music career - but did not reveal her full identity when contacting management companies.

She told ES Magazine: "I wanted to do music by myself. If my parents helped, I'd never feel confident in the fact that I'm actually good."

After "literally just harassing people" she secured a manager, and in 2015 released her first song on Soundcloud. It went viral and



**Family values:** Mabel McVey in a shoot for ES Magazine and with her mother Neneh Cherry

later that year she signed a record deal with a big label. The singer, who has made her name with a 21st-century take on Nineties R&B, now feels better able to cope with her parents' fame, saying: "When I was in my teens I felt quite embarrassed by being my mum and dad's daughter. I thought, 'People will never take me seriously'. But actually, the older I get, the prouder I become of the things they've accomplished. My mum's sung for Nelson Mandela, and my dad produced one of my favourite albums of all time [Massive Attack's debut, Blue Lines]."

## ES Magazine



The singer also spoke about how music helped her cope with the severe anxiety she suffered as a child. Born in Spain, she lived in France, New York and London before the age of eight. At that point her family moved to Stockholm, where she “instantly felt safer”. She said: “Mum has always kept journals and she told me, ‘You need to be writing all of this down’. I must have been five or six when I realised all the stuff I was writing made sense with what I was playing on the piano. “And that was an incredible tool for me. Any time I was feeling down, I was always just like, Ah, go and play’. My mum would always say it was never a bad thing. It just meant that I was open, and that I felt a lot. The older I get, the more I agree with that.”

# Grande way to restore the light

**Ariana Grande**  
Sweetener  
(Island)

★★★★☆

POP stars often struggle to be taken seriously after finding fame young. As she releases her fourth album at 25, eight years after making her name as a quirky Nickelodeon actress, Ariana Grande has a very different problem. How can she be expected to have fun again after what happened at her Manchester concert in May last year? It's now impossible to hear her name without thinking of the bomb that killed 22 people and injured over 500.

The Florida star handled it at the time with a perfect balance of empathy, dignity and inspirational behaviour, returning to Manchester less than a fortnight later to put on a huge benefit concert. Here she also pulls off a tricky equilibrium between

acknowledging it — from the upside-down cover image indicating turmoil to the a cappella intro Raindrops (An Angel Cried) — and moving on with positivity. Her comeback single, No Tears Left to Cry, is a prime example, beginning as a heartbroken ballad before shimmying outwards as she sings, “I'm picking it up.” Breathin sees her encouraging herself to get over a panic attack.

Producers Max Martin and Pharrell Williams make Sweetener an album of two halves, with some of the EDM-lite pop that existing fans love but also stranger fare. Successful skips along over steel drums and a woozy keyboard line. The Light is Coming, with Nicki Minaj, is her oddest song to date. On an album that arrives carrying a jumbo jet's worth of baggage, Grande moves onwards and upwards with a remarkable lightness to her step.

**David Smyth**



# HEAR IT NOW

*Stuart Maconie*



## The 6Music presenter on Graham

If Graham Gouldman had never been in 10cc, he would still be one of the greatest pop songwriters Britain has ever produced.

In fact, by the time he formed that smart, brilliant outfit with Eric Stewart, Loi Crème and Kevin Godley, he was already a songsmith of repute within the industry, even if he could probably still walk the streets of Manchester unrecognised.

-In his late teens working in a gents' outfitters by Salford docks and playing in local bands by night, he shut up shop one lunchtime and came up with a song called For Your Love that his manager hawked around the Tin Pan Alley circuit until it reached The Yardbirds. 'My manager wanted to offer it to The Beatles but I pointed out that they were doing all right in the songwriting department actually.'

This last remark is pure Gouldman; in a business where knaves and fools often prosper, he is a splendid and engaging chap. I spoke to him last week about a new compilation called 10cc Before, During, After which, as the title obliquely hints, tells the story not just of 10cc's pop heyday in the 1970s, but the solo work of all four before and after too. For Gouldman, as well as For Your Love - too poppy for blues purist Yardbird Eric Clapton who took his guitar home in disgust - there were hits like No Milk Today for Herman's Hermits and Bus Stop for The Hollies, lovely pop vignettes that evoke the north of the 1960s as brilliantly as A Kind Of Loving or A Taste Of Honey.

**'Everyone was flamboyant; Roxy Music, Slade, Queen. 10cc formed in a studio. We were so bland it was revolutionary'**



‘Well, I’m so pleased you think that,’ he said. ‘That’s exactly what I wanted to do. No Milk Today was my dad’s idea. He went round to his mate’s house and there was a milk bottle on the step with this note, and he came back and said, “there’s a great idea for one of your songs.” I said, “Dad, that’s a terrible idea.” He had to point out to me that he wasn’t actually suggesting I write a song about milk and dairy retail, but use it as a metaphor for love having left the house.’

After a brief stint in New York working in the bubblegum hit factory of Kasenetz-Katz (also featured in the boxset), he returned to the North and became involved in the setting up of Strawberry Studios in Stockport from which emerged a geeky gang of musos called 10cc. ‘Everyone at that time had a flamboyant image; Roxy Music, Slade, Queen... we looked like what we were, four guys formed in a studio.

We were so bland it was revolutionary.’

Those four guys made a string of dazzling albums and near-perfect pop singles - The Dean And I, Rubber Bullets, Wall Street Shuffle, I’m Mandy Fly Me, I’m Not In Love - any one of which would have been the highlight of most bands’ careers. 10cc made it look effortless, which of course it wasn’t. But those records are now getting the recognition they deserve, something we pop fans have always known. Clapton may be a great guitarist, but he was wrong about the songs of Gouldman.



Photography: Alamy

**SONGSMITH** 10cc frontman and writer Graham Gouldman

# Macca's tribute

**MUSIC stars and world leaders paid tribute to soul legend Aretha Franklin who died yesterday aged 76.**

Sir Paul McCartney said: "Let's all take a moment to give thanks for the beautiful life of Aretha Franklin, the Queen of our souls, who inspired us all for many, many years.

"She will be missed but the memory of her greatness as a musician and a fine human being will live with us forever."

The American icon, whose career spanned seven decades, died at home in Detroit. She had been fighting pancreatic cancer.

The Queen of Soul, whose songs included Respect, Think, (You Make Me Feel Like) A Natural Woman, and I Say a Little Prayer - died on the 41st anniversary of Elvis Presley's death.

Franklin, a symbol of America's Civil Rights movement in the 1960s, had fought ill health in recent years and retired from touring in 2017.

Sir Elton John, who witnessed her last performance at his Aids Foundation concert, said: "We were witnessing the greatest soul artist of all time. I adored her and worshipped her talent."

In a tweet, Beach Boys star Brian Wilson called her "one of the

By **JAMES BEAL**

greatest and most emotional signers."

Annie Lennox, who performed with Aretha, called her "simply peerless". And Lionel Richie added: "Her voice, her presence, her style. No one did it better."

Dionne Warwick said: "We've lost an

iconic person."

Former US leader Barack Obama, who saw Aretha perform at his inauguration in 2009,

said: "The gift of her music remains to inspire us all."

US President Donald Trump tweeted: "She was a great woman, with a wonderful gift from God, her voice. She will be missed!"

As music fans worldwide mourned, Aretha's 30 Greatest Hits album shot to No 1 on iTunes.

*james.beal@the-sun.co.uk*

*The Sun Says - Page 12*



**Brian Wilson**

@BrianWilsonLive

I'm very sad to hear about Aretha Franklin passing. She was one of the greatest and most emotional singers. I used to love listening to her in the sixties but her music is timeless. Love & Mercy to Aretha's family and friends.

**Sorrow . . . tweet from Beach Boys' Brian**



# Love me tender: why curating London's new Elvis exhibition is so bittersweet for Priscilla



**Alistair Foster**  
**Showbusiness Correspondent**

PRISCILLA PRESLEY says curating a new Elvis exhibition that focuses on his touring years has been bittersweet.

The singer's heavy schedule after his comeback in the late Sixties put a strain on their relationship, leading to them divorcing in 1973.

Priscilla, 72, has looked after the star's estate since his death in 1977 and helped put together the new exhibition *Elvis On Tour*, which will open at The O2 in November. It will feature many items that have never before left Graceland.

Asked if it was upsetting to curate, she told the *Standard*: "It was. Touring wasn't just tough for Elvis and I, it's tough for any couple, whether they are married or not. There are long days, hard days, the planes, the cars... being apart from each other for so long, you just wanted to fill that void with anything, even just conversation.

"We would talk to each other every single day, but it just wasn't enough... there were lonely hours, nervous hours time had a lot to do with it. Elvis wasn't fond of waiting around. He also enjoyed it as that was his life, and you just had to take the good with the bad."



Elvis On Tour will feature 200 artefacts, including 35 jumpsuits, guitars he used on stage and tour trunks full of the silk scarves he used to hand out to fans. Priscilla added: "I know pretty much what people are looking for and want to see. There are many of the famous jumpsuits from 1969 to 1977 which people are still so fascinated by. It's funny because the first few jumpsuits that were made for him, he couldn't move in them, let alone dance on stage or perform his famous karate moves. Flexible fabrics were just coming out and once we started using them, he was able to move around properly."

The exhibition follows 2014/15's Elvis At The 02, which was visited by 200,000 people.

Priscilla believes Elvis, who died at 42, would have been shocked at his enduring appeal. "It's remarkable that people are still so interested, and I don't think Elvis himself would believe it," she said. "He thought he would be an old-timer at 40 - he always said that to me."

*Elvis On Tour opens on November 3. Tickets on sale Friday at [elvisontourexhibition.co.uk](http://elvisontourexhibition.co.uk). Priscilla will join the Royal Philharmonic on stage at the 02 for the Elvis In Concert: Live On Stage UI tour on November 30.*

## Dance

### Julie Cunningham

Royal Festival Hall

★★★

Who thinks it's a good idea to stage a dance event on a rooftop in London in August? You may think it's summer but the weather often has other ideas, and on Wednesday night the audience for Julie Cunningham's programme shivered in an especially bitter cold wind. I can't imagine how the lightly dressed, barefoot dancers coped.

This 45-minute event was presented by Rambert (Cunningham is the company's choreography fellow) and comprised two halves. In the first, Cunningham (in eccentric headgear) performed *Brutal*, a quixotic solo. If you hadn't read about it in advance (the printed programmes were handed out *after* the show) you wouldn't have a clue that it was inspired by Upton Sinclair's 1906 novel *The Jungle* (about the exploitation of immigrants in America), and the work of the Russian theatre director Vsevolod Meyerhold.

In the absence of such context, what was obvious in the choreography was that Cunningham was having some kind of private conversation that spoke of pain and confusion, of unsettling fears and manipulation.

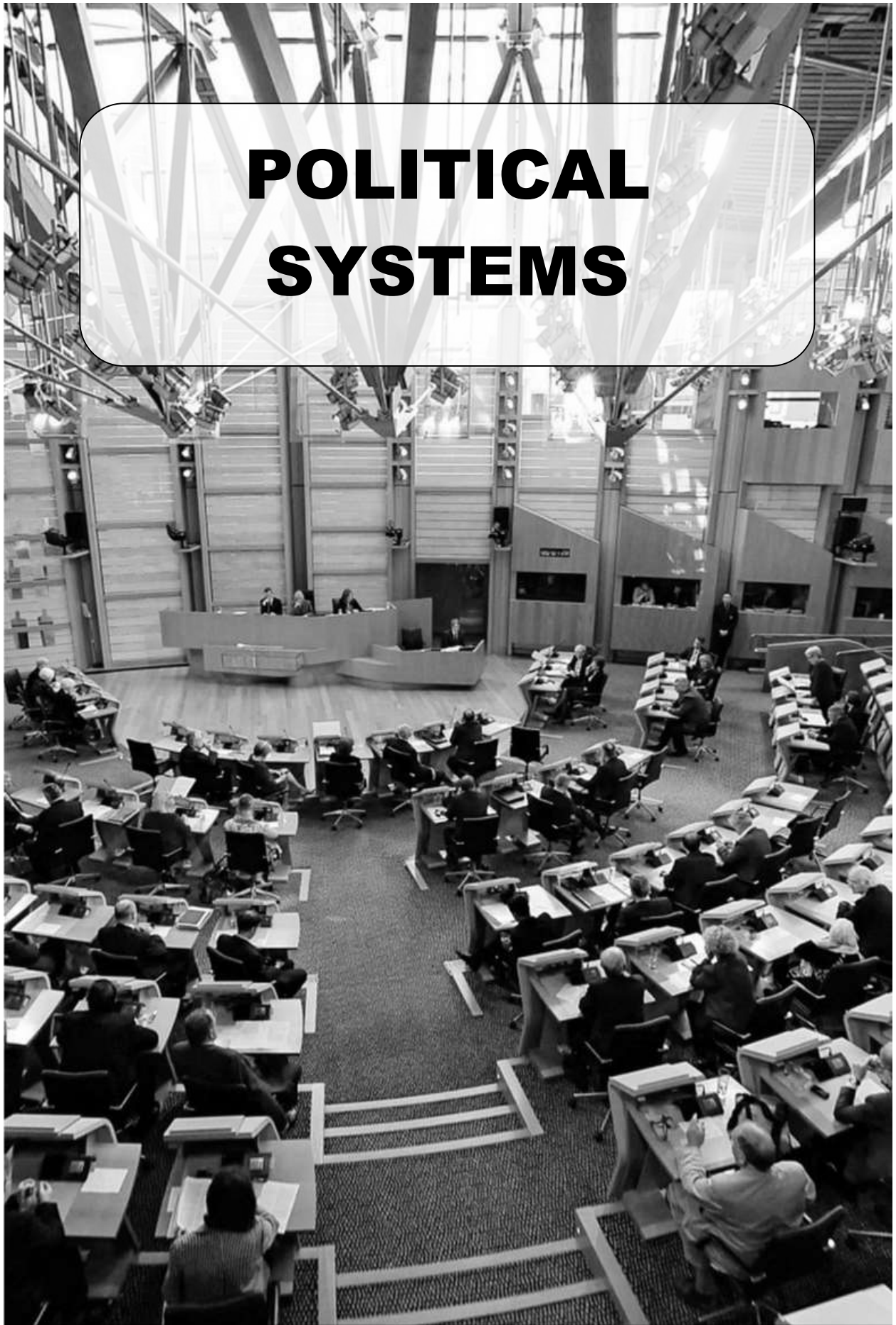
The solo didn't sustain its length, but the Thameside view — from the London Eye to Somerset House — was breathtaking.

Things picked up considerably for *Your Ten Thousand Eyes*, a new site-specific work for five dancers, including Cunningham and two dancers from Rambert. Here the mood is watchful, meditative, even serene, until the moment when the carefully crafted moves start to feel creepy and strange. How the dancers interact — or fail to interact — is part of the appeal, and the standout moment is a riveting, finely balanced duet for Cunningham and Hannah Burfield that feels as if the two women are daring each other into some kind of reaction. Cunningham, who set up her troupe last year, is clearly a choreographic talent to watch.

**Debra Craine**



# POLITICAL SYSTEMS





## **POLITICAL SYSTEMS**

### **PRACTICAL TASKS**

#### **Task 1**

In pairs / groups, dwell on the following items regarding the news article:

- My level of interest in the article
- Its relevance to my life
- Degree of difficulty
- Educational value
- Difficulty
- Vocabulary
- Grammar
- Reading / Listening
- Speaking activities
- Needed more / less time on

#### **Task 2**

Write down a number of things you really don't understand about the world, related to events in the news article. Use the following exponents:

- I really don't understand why \_\_\_\_\_.
- I have problems understanding \_\_\_\_\_.
- I really don't see why \_\_\_\_\_.
- Why \_\_\_\_\_ do \_\_\_\_\_ is beyond me.
- Other

#### **Task 3**

Write a mirror image of the article you studied from the perspective of a different country's newspaper, political leader, participant in events, etc. Tell the story "from the other (or another) side".

### 3. PRACTICAL ASSIGNMENTS. POLITICAL SYSTEMS. Practical Tasks

#### **Task 4**

For articles that are about leaders, discuss the qualities required of a good leader. What attributes are important to be a good leader? Discuss the importance of those below. Place a score of 1 to 10 in the “Importance” boxes. Talk about whether your nation’s leader has these attributes. Finally, discuss whether you have these qualities.

<b>ATTRIBUTES</b>	<b>IMPORTANCE</b>	<b>YOUR LEADER</b>	<b>YOU</b>
Never lies			
Highly intelligent			
Brilliant orator			
Wonderful smile			
Dynamic style			
Squeaky clean public life			
Lovely clothes			
Opposes war			

#### **Task 5**

You are a news reporter at the scene. Create your news report. You will soon have to give it in front of TV cameras (to a different group). Use the following questions as a guide to your story:

- What is the story?
- Where are you?
- What is happening around you?
- What can you hear (see, smell)?
- What are the events that have happened in the past few hours /days?
- Who are the people central to your story?
- Who have you found to tell you about what’s happening?
- What are other people there telling you?
- What’s your take on the situation?
- How do you think this story will develop over the coming hours /days?

### 3. PRACTICAL ASSIGNMENTS. POLITICAL SYSTEMS. Practical Tasks

#### **Task 6**

Imagine you are the leader of the organization or nation in the news article. Deliver a speech to your membership or people in the next lesson based on the theme of the article.

#### **Task 7**

Rewrite the text using only half the words. Use your own language, provided there is a summary of the main article ideas.

#### **Task 8**

Make a list of the pros and cons of a theme taken from the news article. Pad out each item on the list into more and solid arguments. This could be used as the basis for debate.

#### **Task 9**

Write a list of famous people, countries, organizations, etc. Discuss what each of these should be doing right now to correct a situation or problem related to the article. What are the possibilities of each of these fulfilling their responsibilities? Why aren't they fulfilling their responsibilities? What responsibilities do the students have regarding the situation?

#### **Task 10**

Write about the differences in culture between what is described in the article and your own culture. The cultural differences may be due to nationality, wealth, religion, class, education, etc. Add an observation on whether the differences are positive or negative.

#### **Task 11**

Write about how events, history, situations, etc. might be different if the particular item of news had not happened. Write down a number of scenarios and discuss them.



### 3. PRACTICAL ASSIGNMENTS. POLITICAL SYSTEMS. Practical Tasks

#### **Task 12**

Describe the average person in your country who is similar to a character in the news article. Try to profile him/her in full. Describe his/her schedules. Compare the average person you profiled with other average people from different nationalities. What are the similarities and differences?

#### **Task 13**

Write down five reasons for being cheerful, based on how events in the news item will positively affect your lives. Change partners and share and compare your ideas.

#### **Task 14**

Write down five reasons why you would and would not like to be in the article. Change partners and share and compare your ideas.

#### **Task 15**

Write down three reasons for being pessimistic and optimistic about the news in the article. Change partners and share and compare your sentences. Discuss which ones might outweigh the others.

#### **Task 16**

For articles that are based on politics, elections, economic policies, etc., pretend to be opposition politicians who can do everything much better than the politicians in the article. Take part in a mock election. Create your manifestoes and say why you could do better. Change partners and give each other feedback on manifestoes.

#### **Task 17**

Talk about whether the news article is accurate, truthful, biased or being used for propaganda. Find two possible reasons for each of these.

#### **Task 18**

If the article is about a scandal of some sort, talk to each other and add to the scandal, speculating and embellishing on the “facts”. Change partners. Share and compare

### 3. PRACTICAL ASSIGNMENTS. POLITICAL SYSTEMS. Practical Tasks

gossip and add more to the scandal. Then talk about the gossip you heard and discuss the likelihood of it.

#### **Task 19**

If the news story deals with new laws or their possible introduction, discuss the reasons you should or should not have to follow those laws. Try to convince your partner of the error of his / her thinking.

#### **Task 20**

If the news article deals with jobs and high profile celebrities, discuss how capable that celebrity is at doing the job in question. For example, the theme is “Career history”, and the issue to discuss is “What kind of experience is best to become a politician?” From the list below, decide which careers provide the best training to become a politician. Give a score from 1 to 10 for each job. In pairs or groups, compare scores and discuss which skills from each job would be useful for a politician.

<b>JOB</b>	<b>SCORE</b>	<b>USEFUL QUALITIES</b>
actor		
lawyer		
farmer		
police officer		
journalist		
engineer		
bank clerk		
soldier		
teacher		
company CEO		

#### **Task 21**

How will history judge the person from the article? Discuss this by assessing his/her contribution to the world.

### 3. PRACTICAL ASSIGNMENTS. POLITICAL SYSTEMS. Practical Tasks

#### **Task 22**

If the story is about a famous person (or non-famous), play the role of that same person and get together for a chat. Choose the best pretended role and explain the criterion you used.

#### **Task 23**

Write down five things from each paragraph you consider to be missing information (something unsaid / unwritten / deleted). Share and compare your answers and speculate on why the information was missing and what it might mean.





# DAILY EXPRESS

FRIDAY AUGUST 11, 2017

## WHY DIANA WOULD HAVE VOTED FOR BREXIT

by Our Royal Staff  
Lee Vuralone



THE *Express* can exclusively reveal today that the late Princess Diana would definitely have voted to leave the European Union in any referendum and would currently favour a hard Brexit.

This extraordinary finding is the result of in-depth research of her political and economic opinions by top Dianaologist, Professor Charlotte Tan. "Let there be no doubt," said the professor, "all the facts point to only one possible conclusion: Diana would have been a committed Brexiteer and would strongly have resisted membership of both the Customs Union and the Single Market. Her objections on an imposed tariff wall were well known."

The professor's research document backed up these points with the following irrefutable proof:

- Diana hated Germans, particularly the Queen, who wasn't very helpful when she complained about Charles
- Diana hated Greeks, particularly Prince Philip, who told Charles it would be acceptable to take Camilla as a Mistress
- Diana hated Italians, particularly the paparazzi
- Diana hated Brussels, particularly at Christmas

"How much more evidence does anyone need?" asked the professor, "Can I have my cheque now? In Euros, please."

## Labour MP under fire after tweeting birthday tribute to Fidel Castro

*Kate Proctor Political Reporter*

A LABOUR MP's birthday tribute to late Cuban dictator Fidel Castro has been blasted by the Tories as further evidence of the party's "obsession with corrupt regimes".

Shadow Chancellor John McDonnell's parliamentary private secretary (PPS) Karen Lee tweeted "happy birthday Fidel" when she shared a message from the Cuba Solidarity Campaign.

One constituent said she was "absolutely disgusted" that her MP would commemorate Castro on Twitter while account Electable Labour wrote she should not be an apologist for "authoritarian communists".

The Jeremy Corbyn-supporting MP's Tweet comes just a week after the Labour leader came under fire from the Conservatives and some in his own party for not condemning violence in Venezuela under socialist President Nicolas Maduro.

Paul Scully, Conservative MP for Sutton said: "Labour are clearly obsessed with celebrating corrupt regimes. John McDonnell's right-hand woman would do better to focus on things closer to home like Labour's



**Shared message:**  
Labour MP  
Karen Lee  
tweeted 'happy  
birthday Fidel'

own dismal economic plans than leaders that deny the democratic rights and freedoms of their citizens."

Ms Lee, a former nurse who won her Lincoln seat from Tory Karl McCartney in June, shared a message from the solidarity campaign praising the Cuban revolution for its achievements in health, education, women's rights and social justice. Castro, who would have turned 91 yesterday, has been scorned for extensive human rights abuses and state persecution of gay people.

As Mr McDonnell's PPS, Ms Lee is a trusted member of the shadow Treasury team. Mr Corbyn previously praised the late Cuban leader's record on health and education. Labour said they would not comment.



## Australia deputy PM in citizenship row

### Ben Morgan

THE deputy prime minister of Australia has become the latest politician to be caught up in a growing constitutional crisis over dual citizenship.

Barnaby Joyce was revealed to hold dual citizenship with New Zealand in a revelation that could lead to him standing down.

Under the constitution, members of the House of Representatives and senators are barred from being dual citizens.

Mr Joyce, leader of the National Party, was given New Zealand citizenship by descent, through his father. He said he will take the case to the High Court, after his apparent status was revealed by the New Zealand government.

"I was shocked to receive this information," he said. "I've always been an Australian citizen. I was born here, just as my mother and great-grandmother were born here, 100 years earlier.

"Neither I, nor either of my parents, have had reason to believe I am a citizen of any other country."

Mr Joyce's father was born in New Zealand and moved to Australia in 1947. His son was born in New South Wales in 1967. Under New Zealand law a child born to a New Zealand national is automatically given citizenship.



**Position under threat:** Barnaby Joyce may have to step down, depriving the government of its majority

Mr Joyce said: "Neither my parents nor I have ever applied to register me as a New Zealand citizen. The New Zealand government has no register recognising me as a New Zealand citizen." He said legal advice suggested he was not in breach of rules, and he would remain as deputy PM.

However if he were to be removed it would increase the pressure on the government of Malcolm Turnbull, which holds a one-seat majority.

Last month Green party co-leaders Scott Ludlam and Larissa Waters were forced to resign over their citizenship status. Mr Ludlam was found to hold dual citizenship with New Zealand and Ms Waters with Canada.

Resources minister Matt Canavan left the cabinet last month after discovering he held dual citizenship with Italy through his mother.

Malcolm Roberts, of the One Nation party, also faces a legal eligibility test. He renounced his UK dual citizenship but this was not confirmed before his election.



David Gardner  
US Correspondent

AN alleged white nationalist was fired from his job today after being outed on social media for his involvement in a Far Right rally in America that left one anti-fascist demonstrator dead and more than 20 injured.

Cole White was one of a number of marchers named and shamed on Twitter. As a result, he was fired from the Top Dog restaurant in Berkeley, California, where he worked.

White was one of thousands who gathered for the Unite the Right rally in Charlottesville, Virginia, on Saturday. The event, which was openly attended by neo-Nazis and other hate groups, was ostensibly intended to protest against the planned removal of a statue of Confederate general Robert E Lee from the newly renamed Emancipation Park.

Anti-fascist demonstrator Heather Heyer was killed when a car rammed into a crowd protesting against the rally.

Another of those identified as an angry-looking torch bearer, 20-year-old student Peter Cvjetanovic, said: "I understand the photo has a very negative connotation. But I hope that the people sharing the photo are willing to listen that I'm not the angry racist they see in that photo."

The "Yes, You're Racist" Twitter page has been naming the Unite the Right marchers to its 180,000



**"Outed":** Cole White at the Charlottesville rally, also attended by Peter Cvjetanovic, above right. Left, James Fields is accused of killing Heather Heyer

online since the hate-fuelled rallies on Friday and Saturday.

One of the alleged alt-right protesters, using the name @FearsWilliam, retweeted an image that the page posted of him throwing up a Hitler salute, saying "lol".

The man describes himself as being the "charismatic leader of a white breeding cult" in his profile.

The Yes, You're Racist page also posted photos of James Fields, the Nazi-loving 20-year-old who allegedly rammed his car into a crowd of anti-racist protesters on Saturday, killing 32-year-old paralegal Ms Heyer. Fields has been charged with second-degree murder.

His former history teacher told the Washington Post that he idolised Adolf Hitler. "It was obvious that he had this fascination with Nazism and a big idolatry of Adolf Hitler," Derek Weimer said.

Thousands of people gathered in cities across the US last night to protest against the violence in Virginia.

Trouble broke out as anti-fascist marchers clashed with riot police in Seattle. There were also peaceful gatherings in New York, Florida and Cleveland.



The political reverberations were still being felt today, with both Vice President Mike Pence and the White House seeking to play down Donald Trump's failure to condemn white supremacists who sparked the bloodshed in Virginia, forcing the state governor Terry McAuliffe to declare a state of emergency.

Soon after the rally President Trump blamed the trouble on "many sides". Later he ignored reporters who asked him whether he condemned white nationalist groups or considered the murder of a woman in Charlottesville a terrorist attack.

Today a White House spokesperson suggested that the

president condemned "white supremacists, KKK, neo-Nazi and all extremist groups", even though he failed to mention any of them. "The president said very strongly that he condemns all forms of violence, bigotry and hatred, and, of course, that includes white supremacists, KKK, neo-Nazi and all extremist groups," the official said.

Speaking in Cartagena, Colombia, Mr Pence said Mr Trump "clearly and unambiguously condemned" the "bigotry and hatred".

"We have no tolerance for hate and violence from white supremacists, neo-Nazis or the KKK," he added.



New Zealand adopted its flag in 1902.  
BLOOMBERG FILE

**Lewis Evan Fischer**  
THE NEW YORK TIMES

SYDNEY—The acting prime minister of New Zealand accused Australia this week of copying his country's 116-year-old flag and demanded that Australians come up with a new design.

"We had a flag that we've had for a long time, copied by Australia," Winston Peters, who is filling in for

## New Zealand to Australia: Get your own flag

Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern while she takes maternity leave, told TVNZ, a state-owned network. "And they should actually change their flag and honour the fact that we got there first." New Zealand adopted its flag in 1902. Australia did not formally adopt its flag until 1954, although a version was flown as early as 1901.



# Clock ticks toward reuniting families

More than 700 parents deemed not eligible, many of whom may have been deported

Astrid Galvan and Elliot Spagat

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS



Children who were separated from their parents after entering the U.S. illegally arrive at a nonprofit welfare agency in New York.

GREGG VIGLIOTTI/THE NEW YORK TIMES

SAN DIEGO—The Trump administration said Thursday that more than 1,800 children separated at the U.S.- Mexico border have been reunited with parents and sponsors but hundreds remain apart, signalling a potentially arduous task ahead as it deals with the fallout of its “zero tolerance” policy on people entering the U.S. illegally.

There have been 1,442 children 5 and older reunified with their parents in U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement custody and 378 others who were released “in other appropriate circumstances,” including to other sponsors, the Justice Department said in a court filing.

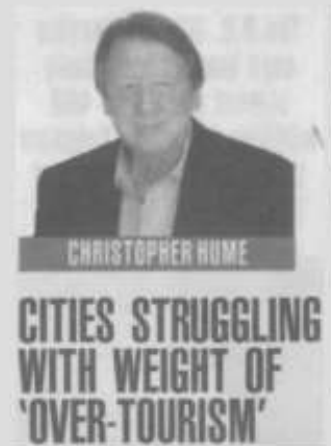
Still, more than 700 parents were deemed not eligible or currently not eligible, many of whom may have been deported. Of those, 431 children have parents outside the United States.

More than 2,500 children were separated from their parents at the border in the past several months amid a zero-tolerance policy that criminally prosecuted anyone caught crossing illegally.

Some children who had not seen their parents in weeks or months seemed slow to accept that they would not be abandoned again.

Read the full story on [thestar.com/wofid](https://www.thestar.com/wofid)





Ontario got a taste of "over-tourism" this summer when a field of sunflowers in Flamborough was overrun by selfie-seekers. **JULIA LOVETT/METROLAND FILE PHOTO**

The most troubling issue in many European cities these days is not migrants, it's tourists. From Barcelona to Venice, Paris to Amsterdam, visiting hordes have residents up in arms. Overwhelmed by the sheer number of out-of-towners, locals are fighting to reclaim their cities from the disruptive forces of industrial- scale tourism.

If ever there was a case of too much of a good thing, this is it. However much money tourists contribute to municipal coffers, it comes at a heavy cost.

As Europeans have discovered, tourism exacerbates inequality. It exerts intolerable pressure on cities: Housing shortages are worsened, inadequate transit systems are overwhelmed, as is the public realm - from cultural landmarks to streets, sidewalks, parks and squares.

Little wonder residents feel like strangers in their hometown.

Last year, Amsterdam introduced regulations designed to stop new tourist- oriented stores from opening in the historic centre. In Paris, the Mona Lisa smiles wanly through a veil of flash bulbs. Poor, beautiful Venice is drowning in tourists as it's sinking into the sea.

The paradox of tourism, of course, is that it destroys the very reasons it

**THE PARADOX OF TOURISM IS THAT IT DESTROYS THE VERY REASONS IT EXISTS.**

exists. Closer to home, we got a taste of that this summer when a field of sunflowers in Flamborough, Ont., was overrun by mobs of selfie-seekers. One Saturday, upwards of 7,000 showed up. When a local highway became a parking lot, police moved in

and the place was shut down.

But in an era of cheap flights and an ever-expanding middle- class — in Asia if not North America - everybody wants the experience of greatness. These cities possess the civic equivalent of celebrity. They are famous for being famous, but, unlike human celebrities, accessible for the price of a plane ticket and an Airbnb apartment.

Dealing with what's now called 'over-tourism" won't be easy. How can a city keep tourists away without turning itself into a walled encampment? Ideally, the sites that draw crowds are spread out over a wide area. In the confined spaces of the traditional European historic centre, however, that's rarely possible.

Clearly, the problems of urban success must be addressed. When giant cruise ships arrive in centuries-old cities, their wake does damage even before they disgorge their sightseeing armies.



# MPs put on pressure to let Big Ben ring out

**Nicholas Cecil**  
Deputy Political Editor

COMMONS chiefs faced growing pressure today • not to silence the bongs of Big Ben for four years during renovation work.

Senior MPs claimed they had been kept in the dark about the controversial proposals. More parliamentarians today spoke out against the move to turn off the bells for health and safety reasons.

Senior backbench Tory MP Nigel Evans accepted measures had to be taken to protect the hearing of workers doing the work.

But he called for “imaginative, out-of-the- box ideas” to allow the bells to toll at some times. He said: “Why can’t they switch the bells back on when they stop working at 5pm or 6pm or whenever it is? Also why is it taking four years?”

Former Labour Cabinet minister Lord Adonis tweeted: “4 yrs to repair Big Ben?! We could have left the EU twice in that time.”

Liberal Democrat Tom Brake has contacted Ian Ailles, House of Commons director general, calling for a review of the plans.



## Renovation: Big Ben will be silenced for workers’ health

Mr Brake said: “I have asked whether someone can do some work working out what the costings and the practicality of ringing them more frequently would be.

It not be possible for them to continue to be rung every 15 minutes as is currently the case, that would not be practical. But it may be perhaps practical and it may be financially viable to ring them more frequently than is currently being proposed.”

.....  
**Editorial Comment Page 14**



## Let's get rid of all nuclear weapons

KARIN von Hippel gives us a frightening yet accurate insight into the dangers of the nuclear confrontation between the United States and North Korea [Comment, August 10]. But she fails to mention an important point.

Since 1968, when the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons Treaty was signed, the US, like Britain, has been legally committed to work "in good faith" for the elimination of all [nuclear weapons. Yet these two countries show no interest in getting rid of their own. Indeed, we are spending at least £205 billion on renewing Trident. No wonder the North Koreans are not impressed.

It is to be hoped that both nations will come to see that nuclear weapons only mean more insecurity in the world. It is time to get rid of the lot and spend the millions saved on the real needs of humanity.

**Bruce Kent**

## A way to stop hard border with Ireland

THE question of an Irish border is complicated. A hard border opens up again the smuggling business, and no one wants it. The DUP will not have an internal UK border and, given its crucial role in keeping the Tory party in government, if they don't want it then it won't happen.

But perhaps there's a simple solution. Let there be no border and let goods and people flow freely as now. If the UK plan works and trade deals are effected with the US, Australia and 'H' India, it can benefit Ireland.

**Dr George Maher**

## Google gender row was misinterpreted

AYESHA Hazarika's column describes "an angry bloke at Google who has railed against gender equality in the most manly way possible - a huffy internal anonymous memo" [Comment, August 8]. She obviously hadn't read the news stories, which made it clear that far from being anonymous, the author was an engineer called James Damore. She also hadn't read the memo, even though it is widely available online. He wasn't railing against gender equality.

**Julia Spira**



## Silence is just the latest setback in the chequered story of Big Ben

*Rosemary Hill*



BIG BEN is set to fall silent for four years to allow for repairs to the Elizabeth Tower, a rare interruption in more than a century and a half. Since it first rang out in 1859 the clock has come to symbolise London and its resilience. Through good times and bad it has told the hours and the quarters. But this impression of monumental stability belies a history of setbacks, controversy and personal tragedy.

Strictly speaking, Big Ben is the bell itself, named after Benjamin Hall. Hall was Commissioner of Works in 1856 when the first 15-ton bell, pitched in E natural, was cast. Visitors flocked to see it exhibited at the foot of the tower where it was rung regularly to entertain them.

Enthusiasm, however, turned to disappointment 11 months later when it suddenly cracked. Edmund Denison, who designed the clock, commissioned a new bell with the sensible provision that it was not to be paid for “until it has been tried by ringing with seven-hundredweight clapper”.

Big Ben mark two was hauled across Westminster Bridge in 1858 past cheering crowds and had to be winched sideways up the tower. London held its breath for the day and

night, during which eight men working in shifts by gaslight successfully hoisted the bell. From the ground the clock tower had assumed its finished appearance but there was a ghost in the machine. Sir Charles Barry, the architect of the Palace of Westminster, had been assisted ever since he entered the competition for the job, by AWN Pugin. He designed the interiors of the House of Lords, the royal throne, the tiles, the panelling, the wallpaper, furniture and glass. He understood the Gothic style of the palace as Barry, a classicist, did not.

When the House of Commons was opened in 1852 the clock tower was still unfinished and the design not settled, but by now Pugin was desperately ill. Barry knew time was short and so just days after Queen Victoria knighted him, he visited Pugin and stood over him while he made drawings for the upper part of the tower and the clock face. They were the last he ever made. Seven months later, aged 40, he was dead.

Years afterwards, as the tower was finished and the clock faces built, it was found that the minute hand, as Pugin had drawn it, was too heavy to keep time, so it was modified.

Today the contrast between the Gothic hour hands and the plain minute hands is a poignant reminder of a life cut short - and the fact that Pugin’s most famous design was also his last.

- *Rosemary Hill is the author of God’s Architect: Pugin and the Building of Romantic Britain*



# Tax rise for higher earners right move

## But not everyone's impressed by SNP's Budget

- I am hugely impressed by the SNP tax plans in Thursday's Scottish Budget (Metro, Fri) - and that's not something I expected to say.

The progressive plans have quite rightly asked those earning the most to pay a little more, while protecting those working hard on low earnings who have been hammered by the Tories. The pay increases for public sector workers are also much needed.

Will the vile Tories see sense and stop demonising essential, low-paid public sector workers and recognise that everyone who works is valuable, not just the wealthy, and are due a decent pay rise?

*Fraz, Glasgow*

- NHS Scotland has a shortage of doctors and nurses, while education has a shortage of maths teachers. Who will now come to Scotland to fill those roles when they would pay significantly more tax than in England following the Budget? The SNP has squandered money on Prestwick Airport, failed renewables projects costing more than £65million and other expensive vanity projects.

International relations will cost £17.3million, which is to self-promote the SNP, while local authority services are cut and taxes increased for those who drive the economy. It is no surprise the SNP needs 46 spin doctors costing £4.6million.

*Clark, Linlithgow*



**Spending plans:** Our story on Friday

• Predictably, Conservative anti-independence commentators who can't say anything good about the SNP are opining that finance secretary Derek Mackay's progressive new tax system will make Scotland the highest taxed part of the UK, compelling many to leave the country. I've never really bought this negative argument when there was no significant exodus from Britain when the top rate of tax was 60 per cent under Margaret Thatcher.

Studies have shown that public opinion in Scotland suggests increased taxation for higher earners is long overdue. Mackay seems to be on the right track, even though he could have gone further on the top level of tax.

I believe that Scotland will now be the fairest taxed part of the UK.

*Just Jack, Musselburgh*



# First Nations' candidates claim election interference by federal government

**Carolyn Bennett was at the annual general assembly where voting was taking place**

## **THE CANADIAN PRESS**

VANCOUVER—Four candidates in the race for national chief of the Assembly of First Nations are claiming election interference by the federal government because of the presence of a cabinet minister ahead of the vote.

Minister of Crown-Indigenous Relations Carolyn Bennett was at the annual general assembly today in Vancouver where voting is taking place.

After the first round of voting put incumbent candidate Perry Bellegarde in the lead, his four challengers stood beside a stage to discuss their concerns.

Sheila North of Manitoba said Bennett's presence represents a "disgusting display of interference" and a direct attack by the Liberal government on the assembly, while Miles Richardson of B.C. said the federal government has divided First Nations long enough.

Russ Diabo of Quebec called for the minister to be sanctioned.



Assembly of First Nations National Chief Perry Bellegarde holds the eagle staff as he waits to lead the grand entry at the opening of the AFN Annual General Assembly, in Vancouver on Tuesday. **THE CANADIAN PRESS**

In a statement, the federal department says "in no way" did the minister interfere in the election process.

It says Bennett was invited by Chief Marlene Poitras of Alberta to listen to her regional concerns and at no point was the election for national chiefs discussed.

Katherine Whitecloud of Manitoba was eliminated after the first round of voting.

A candidate must win 60 per cent of the votes to be elected leader.

A total of 538 chiefs cast ballots in the first round of voting, but none of the candidates

reached the threshold of 323 votes.

Bellegarde won 286 votes, followed by North, with 106 votes. Richardson received 87 votes, while 40 votes were cast for Diabo and 19 for White cloud.

Bellegarde says his close relationship with the federal government has secured billions of dollars in new funding for Indigenous issues over the last three budgets, although he has been criticized by other candidates for being too cosy with the government.



# Don't shoot off your foot over immigration, Hague tells May

**Nicholas Cecil**  
**Deputy Political Editor**

FORMER Cabinet minister Lord Hague today warned Theresa May against “shooting your foot off” by ditching a liberal immigration system. The former foreign secretary also said that Brexit negotiations were the “most complex task” of any government since the Second World War.

The peer issued the warnings as it emerged that EU tourists are likely to be able to visit the UK without a visa. However, they would need to apply for permission to study, work or settle under Whitehall proposals.

Business chiefs fear the Government could hit their industries with a hardline crackdown on immigrant workers as part of the Brexit deal.

The former Tory party leader supported Britain leaving the single market and believed that an agreement could be reached with the EU which would mean “taking powers back, the sovereign powers back, to the UK”. However, he said that such powers needed to be used in a “constructive way”.

“Which means continuing to have quite a liberal approach on migration, which is essential to our economy in



**Warning:** Lord Hague urged Theresa May to use Britain's “sovereign powers” wisely

the short-term anyway, so we take back control but we use that to enter a strong free trade agreement,” he told BBC Radio 4's Reflections with Peter Hennessy. “You can take back control of a gun but it doesn't mean you use it to shoot your foot off.” He said the talks were likely to be fraught: “The Government faces the most complex task of any government since the Second World War. It is a very difficult one.”



Reflecting on his time in government, he said he had “most regrets” about the failure to resolve Syria’s civil war.

“I’m not sure there’s much more I could have done over that, but it is the great frustration,” he said. “We came quite close in 2012 to agreeing with the Russians a settlement of the Syrian war and that’s, I think, the biggest scar.”

If the Government allows citizens from EU countries to continue to visit without a visa, it will raise questions over how to stop them working illegally. Details of the proposal emerged after the Brexit Department outlined a blueprint for no hard border

Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland.

EU leaders accused the Government of being unrealistic but the Government said today that it was confident of making “sufficient progress” in the talks by October to move on and discuss future ties with the bloc.

EU chiefs have accused Britain of being unprepared in the negotiations, but a spokeswoman for the Department for Exiting the European Union said: “It is important that both sides demonstrate a dynamic and flexible approach to each round of the negotiations.”

*@nicholascecil*

## Dismay on homes Green Paper

ON TUESDAY the Government published its long-awaited Green Paper on social housing. It was not the step-change that many people had expected.

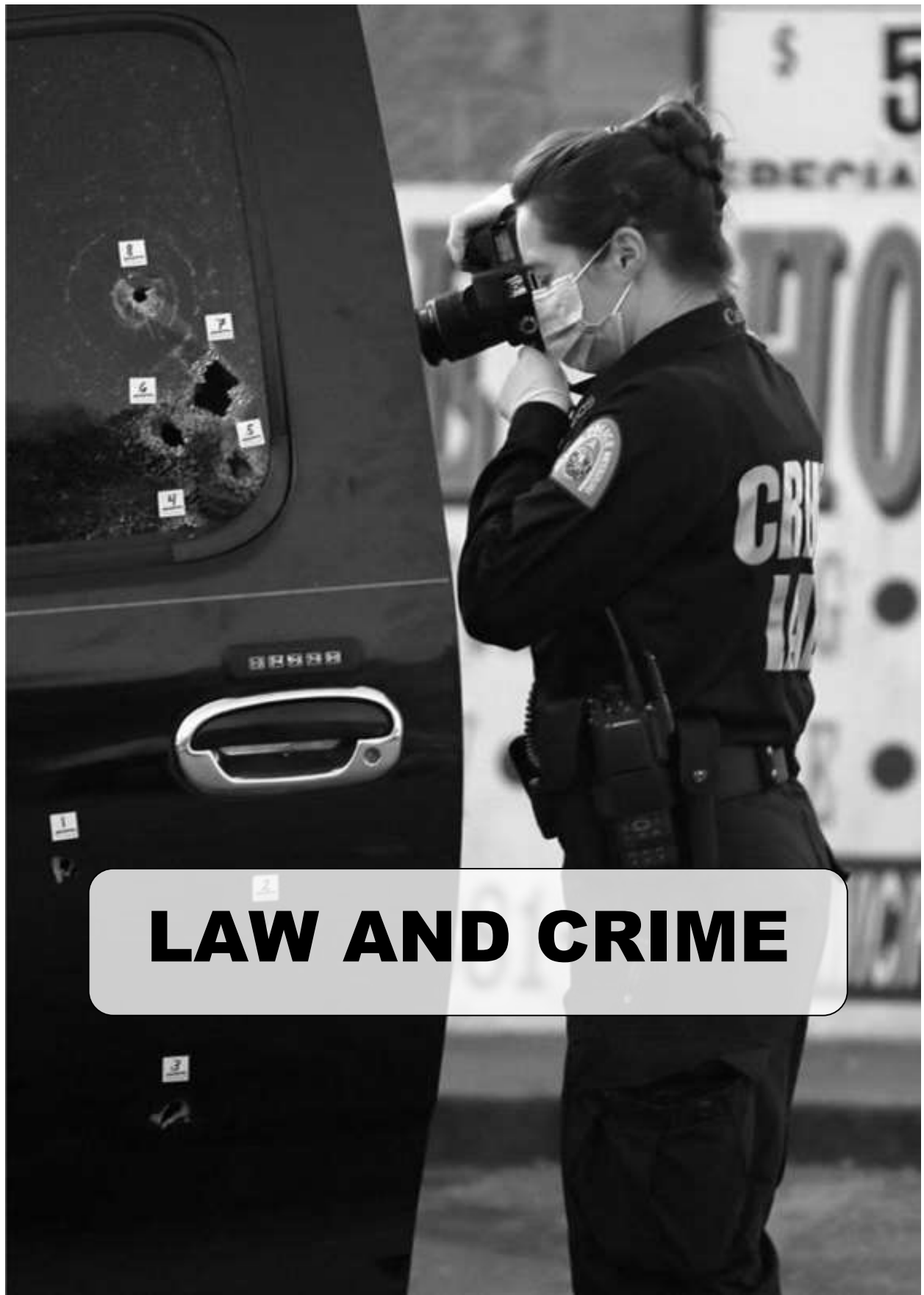
After the Grenfell Tower fire the Prime Minister, Theresa May, said the culture towards people living in public housing had to change. What didn’t change was the Green Paper’s failure to include any funds to build the homes that the capital so badly needs. What the document did contain was a proposal to make it easier for council tenants to buy their

homes by “slashing the minimum amount of equity” for shared ownership schemes from 10 per cent to one per cent.

The previous day the Government made a commitment to end homelessness, yet the proposed measure will result in more homelessness as tenants will have trouble keeping up the increased payments.

**Terry McGreenera**  
*The House Party*  
*(Homes for Londoners)*





## LAW AND CRIME

### PRACTICAL TASKS

#### Task 1

In pairs / groups, dwell on the following items regarding the news article:

- My level of interest in the article
- Its relevance to my life
- Degree of difficulty
- Educational value
- Difficulty
- Vocabulary
- Grammar
- Reading / Listening
- Speaking activities
- Needed more / less time on

#### Task 2

Pretend you are a higher power and have full authority to punish or reward the characters in the article, or even change the events. What would you change? What would you do to the characters?

#### Task 3

Speculate on outcomes or consequences arising from the news in the article. Write down five to ten possibilities of what might happen. Follow up each outcome with a connected scenario and a series of related outcomes or knock-on effects.

#### Task 4

Paint a positive picture of the bad news described in the article. Identify every negative in the article and balance it with a positive. Share and compare your ideas with group mates.



### **Task 5**

Relate the issue from the article to your own daily lives. Write down the advantages and disadvantages of your situation compared with that described in the article.

Examples might be:

- How terror affects your live
- The difference a new diet pill would make to your live
- Research into the health benefits of chocolate
- A doubling of fuel prices
- Other.

### **Task 6**

For news items that highlight the misfortune of others write down how lucky you are in your own lives. Make a note of ten things you should appreciate more, which perhaps you take for granted now. For each item you appreciate, write an explanation why that thing is important to you and what life would be like without it.

### **Task 7**

Imagine you are reporters at the scene of the events taking place in the article. Talk to each other the conditions, what's happened, who you've met, any dangers you've encountered, etc.

### **Task 8**

For articles that are shocking or disturbing enough to lead you to think about life. Write about:

- What you read that might make you change your ways in the future.
- The aspects of your life that are affected by what is described in the article.
- The reasons for the article scaring you or making you reflect.
- The lessons to be learned from the article.

### **Task 9**

Write down the skills required to survive or be of use in the situation described in the article. Talk about whether you have these skills and what kinds of experiences you have that could help you cope with the task.

### 3. PRACTICAL ASSIGNMENTS. LAW AND CRIME. Practical Tasks

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#### Task 10

Make up stories similar to or based on the one from the news article. For example, the theme is “Mystery”. In pairs or groups, create a mystery story about a famous person. Use the ideas in the left column to help you:

Who is the famous person?	
What happened?	
How?	
What mysterious object(s) was / were left at the scene?	
What did the police say?	
What reasons might the person have for the actions described?	
What conspiracy theories are there?	
Other	

#### Task 11

For news stories about addictions, you are to participate in a role play. Make a list of criteria for your partners to discuss. For example, the issue to discuss is “How would your life change if you had one of these addictions?”

- Chocoholic
- Workaholic
- Alcoholic
- Drug addict
- TV addict
- Gaming addict
- Addicted to love
- Addicted to ice cream
- Addicted to studying English
- Addicted to nicotine
- Addicted to gambling



3. PRACTICAL ASSIGNMENTS. LAW AND CRIME. Practical Tasks

Make a list of criteria for your partners to discuss or you can use the following sample:

Life	
Work	
Family	
Friends	
Health	
Body	
Wallet	
Feelings	
Other	

**Task 12**

If the news story is about urban decay, discuss the ways of beautifying the city. In pairs or groups, think of the ways to end the problems listed in the left column forever. Propose the suitable punishments for offenders.

<b>URBAN DECAY</b>	<b>HOW TO END THE PROBLEMS</b>	<b>PUNISHMENTS</b>
Graffiti		
Litter		
Dog mess		
Used syringes		
Broken bottles		
Calling cards offering sexual services		
Human urine		

**Task 13**

If the news article is about security issues (financial, personal, computer, international, etc.), devise the ways of increasing security. In pairs or groups, discuss:

- what problems would occur if thieves managed to steal or copy the personal items or information below
- how well you protect these things now
- what you should do in future to protect these things.

<b>PERSONAL ITEMS / INFO</b>	<b>PROBLEMS IF STOLEN</b>	<b>HOW I PROTECT THEM NOW</b>	<b>BETTER PROTECTION IDEAS</b>
Credit card Other			
E-mail passwords			
Wallet / purse			
House / car key			
Personal stamp or seal			
Jewellery			
Children			
Other			

**Task 14**

For news stories about hardship and suffering, talk to your partner(s) about your hardships and how and what things you take for granted. In pairs or groups, talk about what you think conditions are like for millions around the world who are homeless, without jobs and don't have enough food and water. Talk about the things we take for granted in the table below. Do you count your blessings you have these things? Think of two hardships you would experience without these things.

### 3. PRACTICAL ASSIGNMENTS. LAW AND CRIME. Practical Tasks

THINGS WE TAKE FOR GRANTED	HARDSHIPS WITHOUT THESE THINGS
Electricity	1. 2.
Clean water	1. 2.
Three meals a day	1. 2.
Freedom	1. 2.
A home	1. 2.
Jobs	1. 2.
Honest political leaders	1. 2.
Peace	1. 2.
Other	1. 2.

#### Task 15

If the article is related to responsibility, fill in a questionnaire about what you are responsible for. Things to talk about might include responsibilities at home and work / school, responsibilities while single or married responsibilities as a teenager or pensioner, etc. Compare your levels of responsibility and how responsible you are to the people in the article.



### **Task 16**

If the article is about someone doing something wrong, decide the range of punishments available. For example, the issue to discuss is Britain's Prince Harry's behaviour at a fancy dress party (he wore a swastika). Decide on a punishment for such incident:

- His title of 'prince' be forever removed.
- Visit Auschwitz and the Holocaust museum in Jerusalem.
- 100 hours community service.
- Attend a synagogue and publicly ask a rabbi for forgiveness.
- Be permanently barred from any association with Britain's armed forces.
- Harry should never again receive public money from the British taxpayer.
- Harry should make a large cash donation to a Holocaust fund.

### **Task 17**

If the article is about human rights, animal rights, equal rights, etc., talk about the very minimum rights that must be in place. Talk about what life would be like for people or animals without these rights. Talk about why these people don't have these rights and whether people have them in your country or the rest of the world.

### **Task 18**

Create a list of rules related to the theme of the article. Change partners and share and compare your rules and how they might be improved. With your new partners, choose the best rules. Return to your original partner and show each other your revised rules.

### **Task 19**

If the article is related to the theme of "Public response" think what you would do in the given situations. Talk about the following with your partner(s):

- You see a man wearing a thick jacket on a subway train. There are wires visible at the bottom of his jacket. It is summer.
- You hear an explosion in a subway station. Seconds later you see a man running towards you being chased by police.
- You overhear a conversation on a bus between two men who say there is a bomb under the seat that will detonate in one minute. You have a mobile phone.

### 3. PRACTICAL ASSIGNMENTS. LAW AND CRIME. Practical Tasks

- You visit a friend's house. You notice there is an open web page on his/her computer with instructions on how to make a bomb. While your friend is in the toilet, you look into his/her bedroom. You see lots of wires and chemicals.
- There is a backpack on an empty seat opposite you. The owner of the backpack headed in the direction of the toilet seven minutes ago.
- You are standing next to someone with a backpack on a rush-hour train. You can hear ticking inside the backpack.
- A policeman is fighting on the floor of your train with a terrorist. The terrorist is winning. The policeman's gun lands at your feet.
- You see a group of four men in a subway station. They spend a long time checking their watches. They then all shake hands and head off in different directions. They all have backpacks. Change partners and share what you heard from your earlier partner(s). Who is the bravest?

#### **Task 20**

If the article is about how a person or group of people can affect others, write a list of things that could be part of those influences. For example, the issue to discuss is "Bad influence". In pairs or groups, talk about whether the children in your country do any of the following, and if so, at what age do they start. Try to find reasons why they do these things:

- Might bad parenting be to blame?
- Smoke cigarettes or drink alcohol
- Take drugs
- Vandalism
- Graffiti
- Intimidating elderly people
- Burglary and robbery
- Physical assault or murder
- Under-age sex
- Gun crimes
- Blackmail and extortion



# You don't need to be Sherlock to catch these idiotic criminals

LF GARNETT, the bigoted bard of Wapping in *Till Death Us Do Part*, would have something to say about it: 'Bleeding foreign criminals, coming over here and robbing us. That's a British criminal's job, that is!'

And even the coppers in **The Brighton Police** (ITV) were having a hard time biting their tongues as they rounded up a gang of Kosovan Albanian drug dealers.

After battering down the triplebolted door of a seedy den and seizing wads of cash the size of breezeblocks, one policeman gestured with contempt at the suspect in handcuffs. 'He said he's come over here on a lorry,' he muttered, 'and I don't imagine he was the one driving it.'



But you can't blame the Albanians. They're only doing the crimes that British toe-rags are too lazy or thick to commit.

We saw a couple of local lads in action. They barged into a bookie's waving an air pistol, with stockings over their faces, demanding the contents of the till. Their technique wasn't exactly polished — they didn't even have gloves on to hide their fingerprints.

A couple of days later, they did it again, this time without nylon masks. Down at the police station, DS Julie Greenwood looked fed up with the blatant stupidity of it. Taking a

swig from a mug of tea emblazoned with the slogan *More Love Less Paperwork*, Julie predicted that now she knew what they looked like, the moronic robbers would be in the cells within a week.

It took less than that. A police helicopter flew over the estate where the duo were believed to live, and one of them came out of his house to stare at it.

He was nicked, and so was his mate when Julie spotted him from her car as he walked home. It wasn't exactly Sherlock.

Back at the station, a kindly desk sergeant explained to one of the robbers how forensics



could trace the stolen banknotes by their serial numbers. The slack-jawed crook said in disbelief: 'They aren't gonna be able to number the tenners, are they?'

No wonder European crime dramas are so much better than our home-grown ones. Our villains are clueless.

Because the investigations were so unglamorous, this was depressing and seedy stuff. On the voice-over, Philip Glenister did his best to imbue the police body cam footage with drama, as he boomed: 'Brighton... a city with two faces! Beneath the fun and glamour of this party city, there has

always been a criminal underbelly.' Don't use long words like 'underbelly', Philip — the crooks won't understand.

But it still made better viewing than **Taxi Of Mum And Dad** (C4), a one-off compilation of scenes shot inside cars, as parents gossiped and bickered with their teenage children.

It was all painfully overrehearsed, and punctuated with deafening bursts of pop music. The families had a playlist of tracks to sing along with, dancing in their seats as they pretended to be starring on Carpool Karaoke.

The hum of road noise made it difficult to hear

the conversations, though that hardly mattered — teenagers don't make great conversationalists.

Every scenario was a set-up: one father was laying down the law about his daughter's end-of-year party, a couple were taking their son and his girlfriend for a baby scan, a mum was tearfully telling her gay 16-year-old how proud she was of him.

None of them forgot for a moment that they were wearing microphones. They were showing off and following a script. As a result, you'd hear more interesting chatter at the bus stop.

## Farmer's herd ban

A FARMER has been banned from keeping livestock for life after being convicted of cruelty and neglect of his cows.

Cases at Peter Thomas's business included a calf with a broken leg, which was left untreated.

Leicester JPs heard a total of 250 cattle at the city farm and another he has in Northampton have now been slaughtered.

Thomas, 69, got a suspended 18-week jail term for 14 welfare offences.



# Accountant who stole £350k to feed gambling habit spared jail

**Rashid Razaq**

AN ACCOUNTANT who stole £350,000 from her employers to feed her gambling addiction walked free after a judge said she was “not the general stuff of which the prison population is made”.

Natalie Saul, 37, pilfered the money from technology firm Idio’s accounts over a year and blew more than £250,000 playing online poker.

The mother-of-one submitted more than 400 fake invoices to get the cash from the software company, based in Fitzrovia, between March 2015 and December 2016.

But Saul was given a two-year suspended sentence and 250 hours unpaid work by judge Catherine Newman, QC, who admitted the sentence was “wholly exceptional” and fell outside guidelines.

The judge told Southwark crown court yesterday: “I’m taking a considerable risk that the Crown will think it lenient and appeal, but it’s a risk I’m willing to take.”

Lucie Daniels, in mitigation, had argued Saul was “shaken” by the loss of her grandmother in 2013 and was a committed charity worker. She said: “This offending is so out of character, she has worked hard and paid her taxes and been a responsible citizen.”

The court heard Saul used her role as office manager to create fake invoices to pay cash into her own bank account before switching the details to avoid detection.



**Suspended sentence:** Natalie Saul blew more than £250,000 playing online poker

A new chief financial officer spotted the invoices after Saul took maternity leave. When she was challenged by the company she admitted one count of fraud by abuse of position.

Judge Newman said: “It has caused considerable harm to your employer which could ill afford to lose such a substantial sum, but thankfully survived. Your grandmother’s death rocked the stability of your hitherto good citizenship.

“You had a steady partner who had no idea of your gambling addiction and stands by you. I’m prepared to take the wholly exceptional course of reducing your sentence and suspend it.” Saul, of Tregarvon Road, Wandsworth, burst into tears as Judge Newman told her the sentence was suspended. She must also complete a 250-hour community order and pay £360 costs.



## Iran votes to spare lives of convicted drug dealers

### Iran

Hannah Lucinda Smith Istanbul

Iran could ease its law on the death penalty for drug traffickers, potentially sparing thousands of prisoners' lives.

The Iranian parliament voted to raise the quantity of drugs required to incur capital punishment, which usually takes the form of hanging. Only those caught with more than 5kg of processed drugs such as heroin, cocaine and amphetamines now risk a death sentence, up from 30 grams. The amount of unprocessed drugs, such as opium and cannabis, required was raised from 5kg to 50kg.

The new legislation also restricts capital punishment to traffickers who lead gangs or use a firearm in carrying out a drug-related crime, rather than the lower-level workers who are sometimes children or the victims of bonded labour. Many of the 5,300 people on death row for drug trafficking will have their sentences commuted to 30 years in prison and a fine.

However, the legislation still needs to be signed off by the guardian council, a judicial body heavily influenced by experts in Islamic law. It can strike down bills passed in the parliament, or return them for reconsideration.

Human Rights Watch has cautiously

praised the bill, saying it would be "the first step in addressing the epidemic of executions in Iran".

Sarah Leah Whitson, Middle East director at Human Rights Watch, said: "Even Iranian officials admit the ineffectiveness of capital punishment for combating drugs, and the parliament should next outlaw capital punishment for all drug offenders, and then end all executions."

The easing of the death penalty law, should it be approved by the guardian council, represents a significant victory for the reformist agenda of President Rouhani over hardliners within the judiciary. Mr Rouhani has promised greater respect for civil and political rights and has won praise from the United Nations for the country's battle against drug trafficking. The change appears to be a recognition of the failure of the country's drug policies.

Iran is a significant transit country in the trafficking routes that bring heroin from Afghanistan to western Europe and it is thought that about six million people in Iran use drugs.

The country executed 567 people last year, including children, placing it in the top free countries in the world for use of the death penalty. Eighty per cent of those killed had been convicted of drug charges.



# Man blackmailed ex-lover's frail mother in £10,000 plot

**Tony Palmer**

A WELDER tried to blackmail his former partner's frail mother out of £10,000 by threatening to report her for benefit fraud.

David Ward, 32, believed 60-year-old Christine Anne Gullefer had not done enough to support him, her daughter or their child financially and demanded money to clear his debts.

Inner London crown court heard Ward turned up at Mrs Gullefer's home in Clapham a week after splitting up with her daughter.

He demanded a slice of her savings and later texted his ex "I want £10,000 off your mum or I'm taking her to the cleaners", adding: "I'm not greedy, she's got a lot of money." He threatened: "If you call the police your mum will go to prison."

Prosecutor Peter Lancaster said Mrs Gullefer, who suffers from various health problems and receives benefits, was left "in fear and intimidated" by the confrontation at her home on May 13. "[Ward] said he wanted to speak about her daughter and naively she let



**Admitted guilt:**  
David Ward threatened to tell police his former girlfriend's mother had committed benefit fraud

him in and said she did not want to get involved," he said. "[Ward] raised his voice and said he wanted £10,000 and gave her until 6pm or he would contact social services and say she made false claims."

Judge Usha Karu said Ward had a "sense of entitlement" as she sentenced him to 12 months in prison suspended for two years and ordered him to carry out 150 hours of community service.

"This lady has some significant health issues and you took advantage of that by threatening to report her for making a false claim," she told him.

Ward, of Brixton, pleaded guilty to blackmail.

Murdered: Pc George Gutteridge was finishing his night shift in Essex when he flagged down a car at 4am, unaware that it had

## Shot in the eyes: Killing that gripped Britain... and gave us 999 service

**Kevin Eason**

ALEC WARD was on his early morning rounds, delivering mailbags around Essex, when he spotted a figure slumped by the road in a dark lane.

It was the body of Pc George Gutteridge, who had been shot through both eyes.

Ward rushed to raise the alarm but on that bleak night of September 27, 1927, there was no 999 number to call. The Brentwood garage owner had to drive miles to find a telephone box. His first call to Romford police station was turned away and he had to telephone another in Ongar.

But the operator refused Ward's call because he didn't have five pence for the money box.



**Hanged:** thief Fred Browne fired two shots into the police officer's eyes

Eventually the local postmistress intervened, but Pc Gutteridge's murderers were long gone. Mr Ward's frustrated pleas for help led first to emergency calls being made free and later to the 999 service, which marks its 80th anniversary this year.

The murder of Pc Gutteridge dominated headlines across the country. The constable had been finishing his shift at about 4am when he saw a car approaching. He flagged it down, not knowing

that two men - Fred Browne and William Kennedy - had stolen it from a doctor's house in Billericay.

Browne pulled out a revolver and fired two shots. As Pc Gutteridge lay motionless, his eyes wide open, Kennedy reloaded the gun and handed it back to Browne.

The thief, fearful of the legend that a person's eyes carried an image of the final thing they saw, shot the constable through both sockets. The Old Bailey heard that before pulling the trigger, he shouted: "What are you looking at me like that for?"

Police found the car in Brixton and traced Browne to his lock-up in Clapham after an ex-criminal, who had served time with the killer, gave information to claim a newspaper's cash reward. Police



raided the garage and found the gun. Kennedy tried to shoot his way to freedom when he was found in Liverpool. After the trial, both were hanged on the same day.

The officer's funeral was a national event - thousands lined the streets as his cortege made its way

through Brentwood to Lorne Road cemetery. A memorial was erected on the Romford to Chipping Ongar road where the killing took place and exhibits from the case are in the Met's Black Museum. The legacy, however, lies with the tens of thousands who have benefited from Mr Ward's ordeal.

Six months after the murder, emergency calls

to police, fire and ambulance were made free in London and operators were told to put all calls through without charge. By 1937, the 999 system we know was rolled out across the country. Today it accepts as many as 500,000 calls each week in London alone - all because of that fateful night in Essex, 90 years ago.

## Met documentary will return for third series

**Alistair Foster**

Showbusiness Correspondent

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THE BBC'S acclaimed behind-the-scenes programme *The Met: Policing London* will return for a third series, it was announced today.

Met commissioner Cressida Dick praised the show for giving the public an insight into the workings of the force and said the broadcaster would "film us as they find us" and have full editorial control.

The second series of the BBC1 show was broadcast this summer and had an average audience of 3.77 million per episode. Ms Dick said: "The first two series have opened our doors to millions of people telling diverse stories of how we police London and the amazing dedication of officers and staff. A third series is an opportunity to show viewers the variety of work we do caring for victims, keeping the streets safe and locking up criminals." It is not expected to be broadcast until at least 2018.



**POLICE 5**

## **Autism arrests**

**NORTHAMPTONSHIRE Police has been criticised over its attitude towards disabled people, following two serious complaints about the way officers treated young autistic men.**



In both incidents police video footage had been erased before the Independent Police Complaints Commission (IPCC) could investigate.

Although the incidents were in 2015, the IPCC has only just concluded its investigations.

The first case arose after a short clip of mobile phone footage, circulated on social media, appeared to show an officer shouting at an autistic 17 year old before pushing him to ground and punching him. He had apparently been trying to search the teenager at a house in Northampton.

Last month the IPCC said the Crown Prosecution Service had decided there was insufficient evidence to bring criminal assault charges and the officer who struck the teenager received a written warning for misconduct in failing to treat him with respect, using inappropriate language, failing to properly record the use of force - and breaching police policy by deleting his camera footage. His supervisor

was subject to “management action” after viewing the footage before it was deleted but doing nothing about it.

In the second case a 25-year-old man with autism and learning difficulties had been held in a police cell in Corby for eight hours and charged with assault, when he himself been victim of a nasty attack “for being weird”.

It took six months for Daniel Smith to clear his name when Corby magistrates decided he had been acting in self-defence. They heard he had been left beaten and bruised after an encounter with two men in a park; but it was Daniel who was arrested and taken to the police station. He did not see a doctor and says he told officers he was only trying to defend himself against “the bullies”. He also says he told police he was autistic. His father Owen claims police should have found an ID card among Daniel’s possessions noting his disability.

Owen Smith made an official complaint about his son’s treatment eight days after the incident. But police insisted on Daniel’s written consent before recording the complaint, and because Daniel had returned to his assisted living accommodation in Devon, there was a delay. By the time the complaint was recorded, all CCTV footage of what had happened had been erased.

Because the case was not passed to the IPCC until after Daniel’s trial in June 2016, the custody sergeant accused of failing to treat him as a



vulnerable adult and denying him appropriate medical treatment was not interviewed by the IPCC until this February - some 16 months later. He could remember little about it, and the IPCC was largely left with only custody sheets. The records suggest Daniel answered "no" when asked by the sergeant if he had a disability or illness, and that his injuries were not considered serious enough to require medical attention. The IPCC concluded that there was "insufficient evidence" to justify the custody sergeant facing a misconduct hearing.

Daniel's father is very unhappy with the report and angry that the force and IPCC failed to consider - even after the court case - why the attack on

Daniel was not treated as a disability hate crime.

Northamptonshire Police said that given the two cases it had carried out wide-ranging reviews. It was now ensuring all officers and staff check for disability or autism ID documents as part of its "extensive training to officers and staff about how to assist people who have vulnerabilities, including developmental disabilities such as autism". It had also reviewed complaints about disability and hate crimes "to improve our response". Steps had also been taken to ensure body-worn video cannot be deleted without an audit trail.

#  
4 **Sun** Friday, August 17, 2018

# 'ARMY' BLITZ ON MOB-RULE JAILS

DRUG use and violence will be slashed at ten jails within a year in a military-inspired crackdown, the Prisons Minister has vowed.

Rory Stewart will today unveil a "no excuses" regime at the country's most notorious nicks after taking advice from Army chiefs and headteachers.

A top brigadier will be seconded to a new college for jail governors - with Mr Stewart saying the programme will produce "significant" results within 12 months.

He told *The Sun*: "Unless you tackle drugs and violence, you can't calm the prisons down and make them safe."

"I've spoken to the Army, but

**Pledge ... Rory Stewart**



By **STEVE HAWKES**, Deputy Political Editor

also business and headteachers. In many ways it's like turning around a problem school.

"We need to make these prisons calmer, more orderly places. That comes down to challenging and managing prisoners consistently, firmly and fairly."

The jails included in the scheme are Hull, Humber, Leeds, Lindholme, Moorland, Wealstun, Nottingham, Ranby, Isis and Wormwood Scrubs.

Around £10million will be spent on airport-style drugs scanners, as well as sniffer dogs.

Cash will also go towards improving infrastructure.



## Phone jammers in prisons to stop criminals running empires from their cells

Joe Murphy Political Editor

PRISONS may soon be equipped with phone jammers to tackle the scandal of mobiles smuggled into cells, the Justice Secretary has announced in today's Evening Standard.

David Lidington said he wants to see handsets rendered "useless", stopping criminals being able to operate by phone from behind bars.

He also announced a new unit to prevent "foot-dragging" when dangers or failings are identified at individual prisons, ensuring quicker responses.

Writing exclusively on his plans to modernize the creaking prisons system, the Cabinet minister admitted there was too much violence and drugs - and not enough help for prisoners who want to turn their lives around. In his article Mr Lidington:

- Reveals that the Ministry of Justice is in talks on "new technology" that will stop smuggled phones working.

- Promises a "new unit" tasked with responding within 28 days if the Chief Inspector of prisons identifies a "significant concern that he believes needs urgent attention".

- Discloses concern that extreme gang cultures are spreading from the streets into prisons.

- Sets a target of cutting prison numbers - but says rehabilitation rather than softer sentences will be the key.

"To combat illegal phones...we are working with mobile phone companies on new technology that makes handsets largely useless," said Mr Lidington.

Mobile phones are a major problem in prisons, where some inmates use them to run crime empires and wield power. An official report found some

had "commissioned murder, planned escapes, imported automatic firearms and arranged drug imports" with illicit handsets.

Prisoners can charge between £400 and £1,000 just to borrow one. Some 7,451 phones and simcards were confiscated in 2013 and the Prison Officers Association has campaigned for several years for signal blockers.

Jammers are used in the US to disrupt signals, but they are harder and more expensive to install and maintain in Britain's Victorian prisons, which are often close to homes and businesses that rely on lawful handsets.

However, a judge called it a "scandal" that one prisoner could arrange the smuggling of machine-guns into the UK from inside a jail. Other inmates have run a cocaine ring, organised the murder of a teenager as part of a feud and set up the killing of a rival gang leader.

Mr Lidington set out his vision of prison reforms in the wake of several recent disturbances which critics have linked with drugs, overcrowding and under-staffing.

Candidly admitting the need for improvements, Mr Lidington writes: "There is too much violence and self-harm. There are growing concerns about increasing numbers of crime gangs in London and other cities moving from the streets to prisons, continuing their violent feuds."

He says 2,500 extra staff are on the way but adds: "The changes we all want to see will not happen overnight, because in more volatile prisons the problems run deep."

**David Lidington** Page 14



# Jailed, ex-stockbroker who stole charity cash

Fraudster spent £7,500 raised for Great Ormond Street



Scam: Akbar Siddiqi outside Kingston crown court before he was sentenced

*Tony Palmer*

A FORMER stockbroker has been jailed for a year after pocketing £7,500 raised to help sick children, while he was in charge of a Rotary Club charity skydive and dinner.

Akbar Siddiqi, 29, offered to organise the fundraising events in aid of Great Ormond Street Hospital, going on the radio to promote the Tooting club's charity endeavours.

But he was secretly spending the money on shopping, Tube travel, meals out and hotel stays. He withdrew £4,105 in cash, and even spent £638 of the charity funds on internet dating.

Siddiqi admitted fraud in January and was given a chance to get a job and start paying back the money, but admitted at Kingston crown court this week that he had failed.

Jailing him for a year, Judge Judith Coello told Siddiqi: "It was a mean, despicable and devious offence.

"You persuaded other members of the club to fundraise for charity, but unbeknownst to the other signatories and members you obtained a cash card for that account and took money destined for charitable purposes."

The judge said the fraud had been "embarrassing" for the club, and that Siddiqi had made a "half-hearted

attempt" to return the funds. She added: "No real effort was ever made to pay back the money and it was a classic case of avoiding what you had done." Siddiqi carried out the fraud between April 27, 2014, and August 3, 2015, after being made a signatory to the club's charity fundraising bank account.

He proposed the skydive and a dinner at the exclusive Connaught Rooms in central London, helping to raise a total of £15,725 for Gosh. Prosecutor Alexander Boshell said Siddiqi took money for himself throughout the fundraising, then stopped attending the club once the events were over.

Club president Len Saker told the court members felt "cheated" and had suffered "a great deal of distress" when they realised the money was missing.

"My initial reaction was amazement and confusion," he said. "I couldn't believe what I was seeing. Akbar had been a trusted member of the club."

Gudrun Fama, mitigating, told the court Siddiqi, of Thornton Heath, was a "troubled young man", adding: "He was an alcoholic and did take the money during a difficult time in his private life... he no longer drinks."

# MAN FACES TRIAL

# A FERRY

# BAD BOY

## First laser pen attack on ship

By EMMA JAMES

**A MAN is thought to be the first to go on trial for shining a laser pen at a ferry.**

Christopher Lee, 21, is accused of aiming the beam into the bridge of P&O's cross-Channel vessel *The Spirit of France* last March.

He denies unlawfully and intentionally seriously interfering with the operation of a ship.

The ferry's captain and first mate are likely to give evidence at the three-day hearing, set for January.

Lee, of Dover, was granted unconditional bail until the trial.

Canterbury crown court was not told where he had been standing, or how far away from the ferry, when the alleged offence took place.

Lee is charged under the Aviation and Maritime Security Act of 1990. Last



**Danger . . . laser pen and Spirit of France**

month a new Laser Misuse (Vehicles) Act came into force which will mean offenders facing "much tougher penalties" of up to five years in prison, an unlimited fine or both.

Announcing its enactment, Aviation Minister Baroness Sugg said: "Lasers, used recklessly, can have very serious, potentially fatal consequences."

Lee is not charged under this law.

*emma.james@the-sun.co.uk*





Hunter, a two-year-old Belgian Malinois, is the first Human Remains Detection Dog trained with the Edmonton Police Service.  
CLAIRE THEOBALD/  
STARMETRO  
EDMONTON

## Cold-case K9 Joins Edmonton



**CLAIRE THEOBALD**  
STARMETRO  
EDMONTON

A new police dog has grown into his ears and his new responsibilities as the first human remains detection dog with the Edmonton Police Service.

Hunter, a two-year-old Belgian Malinois, has been training with handler Staff Sgt. Tom Bechthold to detect human remains to assist local police in missing persons and homicide cases.

“They can pick off an odour from hundreds of yards away,” said Bechthold, demonstrating some of Hunter’s skills at the Vallevand Kennels in Edmonton on Thursday, adding, “it never ceases to amaze me how strong their sense of smell is.”

Bechthold said police dogs are first selected when they are around 50 days old.

“The biggest things (we look for) are independence and enthusiasm,” Bechthold said.

Training Hunter to pick up the scent of decaying remains is similar to the way police dogs are trained to sniff out illegal drugs or explosives.

“It involves first teaching them how to search, and then introducing new odours one at a time and getting the dog imprinted on each odour,” Bechthold said.

While Bechthold trained Hunter for months, the real test came when he went to Ontario to become officially certified, and having to detect the scent of real human remains.

“His performance was great,” said Bechthold, adding he easily kept pace with the other dogs.

Hunter can already detect human remains buried underground, but by this time next year, Bechthold hopes to have Hunter in training to go out on a police boat and sniff out corpses underwater.

In Edmonton, where the city is divided by a 7,400-hect- are stretch of dense river valley, Bechthold said having a dog that can help officers find human remains in even the most rugged conditions will be a huge asset.

**More K9 help ahead at  
[thestar.com/edmonton](http://thestar.com/edmonton)**



## A BIT OF OUR GARDEN HAS BEEN NICKED!

Fiona  
McNulty  
OUR LAWYER ANSWERS  
YOUR QUESTIONS



QWHILE we were away on holiday our neighbours put up a fence, which is on our land rather than on the boundary between the two properties. In fact, they seem to have encroached on our land by about a third of a metre. We bought our house three years ago and we have never had any issues with the neighbours before. We certainly had no idea that they intended to do this. How should we deal with them? "

AYOUR neighbours should have discussed their intentions with you before they did the work. Check your title documents to see the position of the boundary and whether boundary ownership is mentioned - but note that the red line on Land Registry title plans is deemed to indicate a general boundary only, unless the boundary has been determined.



Speak to your neighbours in the first instance and ask them to reposition the fence in the correct place. You could offer to sell them the land or suggest the fence can remain temporarily, provided that when it needs replacing it is erected on the original boundary. If that fails you could take court action against them but that is likely to be costly and stressful.

Check if you have the benefit of legal expenses insurance policy on your home insurance, which may assist you with a claim.

If you do nothing, you risk a future claim by your neighbours based on adverse

possession - i.e. they could try to claim ownership of the land upon which they have encroached. To avoid this, give them notice that they are encroaching on your land and - if you are prepared to consent to it - provide your consent but reserve the right to terminate it at any time and require the fence to be repositioned on the original boundary. Make sure you write to these neighbours periodically to renew your consent. Should they sell up and move, give the same notice to the new owners.



# Arrests after bonfire night chaos

**Seven held over scenes of carnage on city streets**

JAMES DELANEY

SEVEN youths have been arrested in connection with disorder on Bonfire Night after police raided addresses across the city as part of an investigation into chaotic scenes which left areas of Edinburgh "looking like a war zone".

A female police officer suffered serious burns after yobs discharged fireworks towards emergency services responding to call-outs from panicked residents in Drylaw, while vehicles in Craightinny and Pilton were reduced to smouldering wrecks as groups of youngsters ran riot on the evening of November 5. Four males were charged with offences on the night, but seven others, all aged between 16 and



**WRECKED:** Resident Alistair Clark with his Audi that was set alight during the Bonfire Night rampage

21, are now set to appear in court after officers carried out enforcement action at homes in Craightinny, Drylaw and Leith on Friday morning.

Chief Inspector Kevin McLean, Local Area Commander for North East Edinburgh, praised the work of locals who called in tips regarding the youngsters involved and warned the operation would continue until all perpetrators were caught.

He said: "The range of offences that we witnessed during Bonfire Night were totally unacceptable and left hard-working and law abiding members of

our communities in a state of fear and alarm. Furthermore, when officers attended to assist the public, they were directly targeted and this will not be tolerated."

"Our activity on Friday has been the culmination of weeks of intelligence gathering, planning and engagement with our relevant local partners.

"These arrests should send a very clear message that the north of Edinburgh, and the city as a whole is not a safe haven for those who look to cause mindless destruction and disorder."



He added: "We will continue our investigations into the Bonfire Night incidents and if we identify you as being involved in any way, you can expect a visit from us in the near future."

Fire crews responded to 57 separate calls in Edinburgh during the night, prompting calls at local and political level for more stringent measures to be put in place regarding the sale of fireworks.

Ash Denham, MSP for Edinburgh Eastern, said: "Police Scotland has been working diligently to identify perpetrators of violent and antisocial behaviour during this year's Bonfire Night. I commend them for making arrests and holding those who caused much distress and damage to account."

She continued: "There is still a strong public sentiment, particularly

in my constituency of Edinburgh Eastern, for stricter regulations on fireworks and I am pleased that the Scottish Government's legal affairs minister has instructed policy officials to investigate the extent to which fireworks are posing dangers to communities."

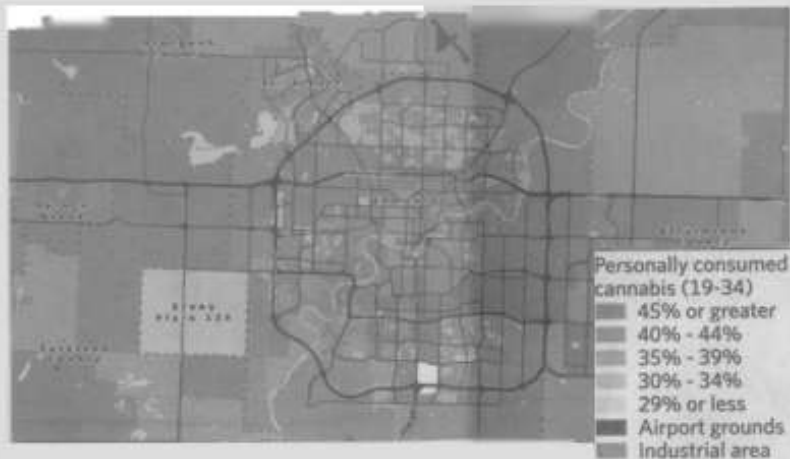
"I look forward to hearing results from this and associated recommendations for action in due course."

# Pot use highest among millennials in Edmonton

The recent data paints a wide ranging portrait of Canada's marijuana scene

Joe Hall  
CANNABIS  
REPORTER Kevin  
Maimann STARMETRO  
EDMONTON

Communities with high immigrant populations tend to smoke less weed in Edmonton, according to a new survey.



**Edmonton**  
In Edmonton, cannabis consumption rates among 19- to 34-year-olds are generally higher although consumption rates drop significantly north of Yellowhead Trail and south of Whitemud Dr.



A comprehensive survey released Thursday with research from Environics Analytics shows marijuana use across the country is highest among 19- to 34-year-olds.

That age group indulges fairly consistently throughout the Edmonton region, but less so in Mill Woods and in communities north of 137 Ave.

"Mill Woods is highly ethnic, and so is north of Yellowhead Trail — Castle Downs and other places," said urban planner and University of Alberta professor Sandeep Agrawal.

U of A sociologist Rob Shields said a recent census shows the north side is a mixture of new Canadians and couples with children.

The survey shows little connection between marijuana use and income in Edmonton. While use is higher than average in lower-income neighbourhoods around 118 Ave., it's also high in affluent Sherwood Park, as well as the university area and east side communities like Capilano.

"To me, that's interesting — the relatively even quality of this," Shields said.

The data paints a wide-ranging portrait of Canada's marijuana scene three months before recreational use becomes legal across the country on Oct. 17.

The information — most of which will be offered by subscription to groups with interests in the emerging market that legalization will trigger — touches on dozens of elements of use and distribution and drills down to the postal code level right across the nation.

Among other things, it shows:

- 41 per cent of Canadians under 35 have consumed cannabis at least once;
- 29 per cent of all Canadians older than 19 have tried the drug;
- there is a \$3.9 billion marijuana market in Canada, with the average price for a gram of pot being \$7.36 nationwide;
- and more than 38 million joints could be rolled from the amount of cannabis consumed annually in Edmonton, if each joint weighed 0.43 grams.

Rupen Seoni, a senior vice-president with Environics Analytics, said he cannot

confidently predict at this time whether cannabis use will increase after legalization.

But public-health records show that use of the drug in Colorado and Washington has not risen appreciatively since it was legalized in the two U.S. states in 2012.

Seoni said the factors driving cannabis use are uniform across the country and discernible imbibing concentrations emerge on survey maps of every Canadian city.

"What's remarkable is when you look region by region, city by city, the propensity to use, or the propensity to have used at some point, is pretty similar," he says.

"When you look over 35 (years old, for example) pretty much every region it's somewhere around 25 per cent of the population... regardless of how you slice and dice."

**Continue reading at  
[thestar.com/edmonton](http://thestar.com/edmonton)**



# Prison reform must also factor in a new focus on rehabilitation

There will be practical measures to reduce drug use in jails and to increase the number of officers

David Lidington  
**Justice Secretary**



ON A visit to HMP Pentonville in Islington last month, I was given a mug made in the print workshop by offenders. It's in my office now, and when I look at the date - 1842 - that forms part of Pentonville's logo, my respect for its governor and frontline staff grows.

Imagine trying to keep control of, and rehabilitate, some of society's most troubled and troubling offenders in a packed Victorian-era jail with Dr Crippen buried in its grounds.

The print workshop is evidence of the positive work happening there each and every day, giving offenders skills for life on the outside, on the right side of the law.



**In the spotlight:** too many of our jails are beset by rising violence among inmates and the use of illegal drugs

The staff I met were professional and energetic, engaged in promoting rehabilitation and setting offenders on the road to reform. The admirable women who run the sewing shop, to single out just two of them, have no fewer than 40 years' service between them.

But staff face huge

challenges in Pentonville and across the prison estate. There is too much violence and self-harm. There are growing concerns about increasing numbers of criminal gangs in London and other cities moving from the streets to prisons, continuing their violent feuds.



The use of illegal drugs and mobile phones, and their trade inside jail, leads to violence, addiction, debts, threats and misery.

Nigel Newcomen, the prison ombudsman, has referred to the spread of new psychoactive drugs as a "game-changer".

In this environment, too few prisoners get the training and education that will set them on the path to a more positive future. So my first priority is to improve safety and security, and then press ahead with prison reform.

I've heard governors, staff and union representatives say the need to stabilise prisons is paramount. It's a view shared by our well-regarded Chief Inspector of Prisons, Peter Clarke, in his meticulous reports.

Because I believe we should be accountable to the public for prison performance, and because it will help improve security and safety, I have decided to make our response to these reports more robust.

It seems clear to me that when considered recommendations are made by the inspectorate they should be followed up. This is particularly true when the same issues crop up in different prisons: it should help governors - and policy-makers - understand the causes and find solutions.

For this reason I am setting up a new unit, ultimately accountable to ministers, that is responsible for making sure we respond and react to reports. We must do so in a timely fashion: we will also agree to respond within 28 days if the Chief Inspector flags up a significant concern he believes needs urgent attention.

If we decide, with governors, that we should not accept a particular recommendation, or need more time to act, we will explain why this is the case or agree a new deadline where it is appropriate.

The changes we all want to see will not happen overnight, because in more volatile prisons the problems run deep. But more officers on the frontline will help.

We are hiring 2,500 prison officers over the next 18 months - and the number of new recruits is currently at its highest level for seven years.

This means more support for colleagues, more eyes looking out for illegal drugs and mobiles, and more ears listening out for trouble brewing. And more support for prisoners, with our new key-worker scheme that will train each officer to work more closely with six offenders, building stronger relationships to bring about positive change.

Staff are getting more technical help: extra CCTV in jails, and more body-worn cameras for prison officers. Some 300 dogs have been trained specifically to detect psychoactive drugs.

To combat the use of illegal phones, each prison now has handheld mobile detectors, and we are working with mobile phone companies on new technology that makes



handsets largely useless.

The people who use drones to deliver the contraband are being pursued through the courts: Tomas Natalevicius was sentenced to nearly eight years after being found guilty of conspiring to supply Class A drugs to prisons in the South-East. One of his targets? Pentonville.

All these measures will help bring greater stability in the short term. But we must look to the longer term.

I want to see prison numbers come down. We need better custody that cuts reoffending and crime. And we need to ensure judges, magistrates and the public have full

confidence in the other penalties available.

The purpose of prisons is two-fold. First, justice, for victims and the wider public, by holding in prison offenders, whose crime is so serious that no other penalty will do, or who would pose a danger to the public if released.

Second, rehabilitation, not because prisoners are entitled to an easy time of it but because society is entitled to expect them to make a fresh start when they get out.

Prisons are out of public sight, and most often out of mind. But the vast majority of prisoners will at some point leave jail and rejoin our communities, which is why what happens inside matters to us all. And it's why, when offenders are sent to jail, they should be held in

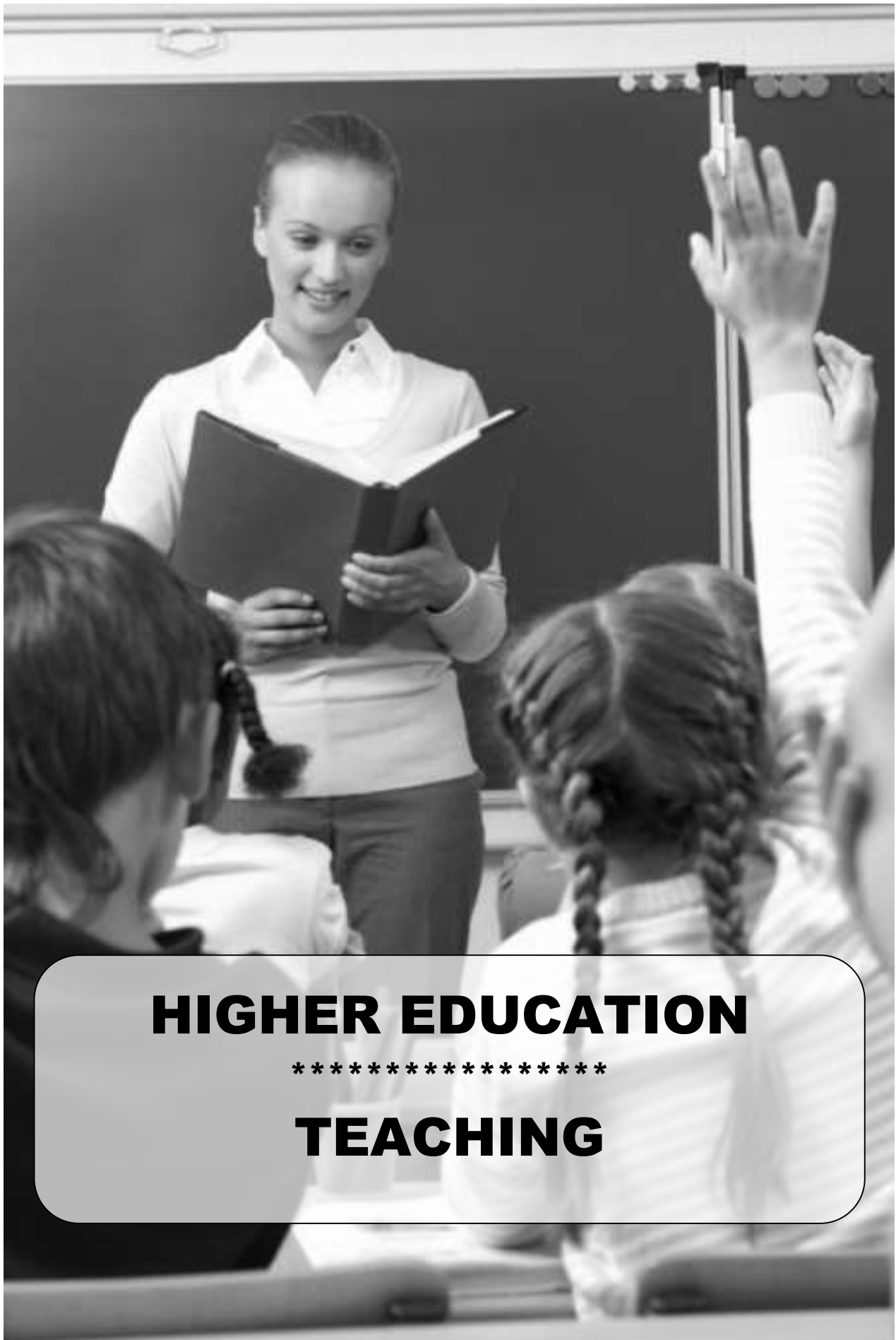
conditions that help them turn their lives around.

The debate about prisons is now opening up to a wider audience, not least through the Evening Standard's probing coverage of late.

The facts on reoffending are stark: at the moment, around half of the offenders we send to jail will break the law again once they're out, inflicting more pain on victims and ending up back behind bars. We must do better by offenders who are sent to prison to make them less likely to return. This will not happen overnight - but I will not shy away from the challenge.

To read more log on to: [standard.co.uk/comment](http://standard.co.uk/comment)





**HIGHER EDUCATION**

\*\*\*\*\*

**TEACHING**

## **HIGHER EDUCATION. TEACHING**

### **PRACTICAL TASKS**

#### **Task 1**

In pairs / groups, dwell on the following items regarding the news article:

- My level of interest in the article
- Its relevance to my life
- Degree of difficulty
- Educational value
- Difficulty
- Vocabulary
- Grammar
- Reading / Listening
- Speaking activities
- Needed more / less time on

#### **Task 2**

Write a critical account regarding what you perceive as being wrong with policies outlined in the news items. This could also be part of a letter to the policy makers. Suggest remedial measures supported by your own reasons.

#### **Task 3**

Plan a new academic syllabus based on the theme of the article (cloning, whaling, rodent studies, etc.). Discuss the following in setting up the new subject:

- Aims
- Subjects
- Project work
- Assignments
- Field trips
- etc.



### 3. PRACTICAL ASSIGNMENTS. Higher Education. Teaching. Practical Tasks

#### **Task 4**

For articles in which there is a debate over some problem in the view of “who should be doing what”, prepare different alternatives to discuss. For example, the theme is “Sex education”, and the problem to discuss is “Who should be doing the sex education?” Possible items to consider:

- Parent
- Biology teacher
- Religious leader
- friends
- Grandparent
- Aunt or uncle
- Police officer
- Doctor or nurse
- Television programs

#### **Task 5**

For articles about parenting, create guidelines for parents. You have to establish a series of guidelines on good parenting that all parents must follow. In pairs or groups, discuss the recommendations you wish to make, possible parental objections and your answer to these objections.

<b>GUIDELINE</b>	<b>RECOMMENDATION</b>	<b>PARENTAL OBJECTION</b>	<b>ANSWER TO OBJECTIONS</b>
Smoking in front of children			
Drinking in front of children			
Hitting children to punish them			
Teaching children about God			

### 3. PRACTICAL ASSIGNMENTS. Higher Education. Teaching. Practical Tasks

Establishing a “no raised voices” home policy			
Children and television			
Children, diet and exercise			

#### **Task 6**

Talk about whether the news article is accurate, truthful, biased or being used for propaganda. Find two possible reasons for each of these.

#### **Task 7**

Write five controversial opinions based on the article. Change partners and share and compare the controversial opinions. Discuss them.

#### **Task 8**

Write 5-10 questions based on the article. Exchange the questions with your partner(s). Then ask and answer all the mixed questions (yours and your partner(s)).

#### **Task 9**

Write down five reasons for being cheerful, based on how events in the news item will positively affect your lives. Change partners and share and compare your ideas.

#### **Task 10**

Underline all of the things you didn't know before. Share these things with your partner(s) after reading. Talk over whether or not these new pieces of information are worth knowing.



### 3. PRACTICAL ASSIGNMENTS. Higher Education. Teaching. Practical Tasks

#### **Task 11**

Talk about the news in the article and what it means for today's children and their future:

- Will this news be continuing when today's children grow up?
- How will this news affect today's children?
- What legacies of this news will children have to deal with when they grow up?
- Will today's children harbor the same fears, insecurities and animosities that their parents and grandparents felt?
- Will today's children make a better world for the future?
- What kind of world will today's children inherit when they are adults?
- Will today's children forgive the present generation of adults?
- Will today's children be more sensible than the present generation of world leaders?

#### **Task 12**

Speculate on what people will be saying about the news item or how it will be viewed 5, 10 or 20 years from now. Write down three things for each time period. Change partners and share and compare opinions.

#### **Task 13**

Talk about a set of opinions saying to your partner(s), 'I'd agree with this statement if...'. Finish the statements for each opinion.

#### **Task 14**

In pairs / groups, talk about how much you think your family and friends know about the theme of the article and how interested they are (or otherwise).

<b>Options</b>	<b>Level of interest</b>	<b>Level of knowledge</b>
Partner		
Parents		
Siblings		

### 3. PRACTICAL ASSIGNMENTS. Higher Education. Teaching. Practical Tasks

Grandparents		
Best friend		
Workmate		
Other		

#### **Task 15**

Write a mirror image of the article you studied from the perspective of a different country's newspaper, political leader, participant in events, etc. Tell the story "from the other (or another) side".

#### **Task 16**

Make a list of the pros and cons of a theme taken from the news article. Pad out each item on the list into more and solid arguments. This could be used as the basis for debate.

#### **Task 17**

Create a questionnaire based on the issues in the article; use them in your future discussion.

#### **Task 18**

Write about the differences in culture between what is described in the article and your own culture. The cultural differences may be due to nationality, wealth, religion, class, education, etc. Add an observation on whether the differences are positive or negative.

#### **Task 19**

Write down five words or expressions you liked from the article and the reasons you liked them. Do the same with five words you didn't like (for example, they are too complicated for memorizing). Explain your choice.



### 3. PRACTICAL ASSIGNMENTS. Higher Education. Teaching. Practical Tasks

#### **Task 20**

Write a “diary” entry analyzing your thoughts on studying the news article:

- Was it interesting?
- Did you learn anything?
- Would you like to do another one next week?
- How did it make you feel?
- Are you glad you studied it?
- Do you have any questions?
- Other

#### **Task 21**

Describe the average person in your country who is similar to a character in the news article. Try to profile him/her in full. Describe his/her schedules. Compare the average person you profiled with other average people from different nationalities. What are the similarities and differences?

#### **Task 22**

Whatever the article is about, find and adopt hobbies from it. Tell other students about these hobbies. Partners must ask questions. Partners could also give their ideas on how the hobby might branch out into different areas.

#### **Task 23**

Write down three reasons for being pessimistic and optimistic about the news in the article. Change partners and share and compare your sentences. Discuss which ones might outweigh the others.

#### **Task 24**

Use the following or other adjectives to express your feelings about the article’s content:

- Surprised
- Worried
- Angry

### 3. PRACTICAL ASSIGNMENTS. Higher Education. Teaching. Practical Tasks

- Excited
- Hopeful
- Exasperated
- Despondent
- Furious
- Scared
- Disappointed

#### **Task 25**

Discuss what kind of talents, skills and training are required for the particular jobs done by the characters in the article and whether you are capable of doing it. In pairs or groups, decide who is better suited to the job.

#### **Task 26**

For news items about busy people and hectic schedules, talk about how you can squeeze more time into your days. Talk with your partner or group about your lifestyle and where you would like to squeeze more time into. Your partner(s) will give you advice on how to be more time efficient. Use this table to help you:

	Breakfast	Morning	Lunch	Afternoon	Dinner	Night
Monday						
Tuesday						
Wednesday						
Thursday						
Friday						
Saturday						
Sunday						

#### **Task 27**

If the news article is about stress relief imagine you are a psychologist and your job is to clear out the reasons for stressful things. Discuss how to help your partner(s) overcome his (their) stress.



### 3. PRACTICAL ASSIGNMENTS. Higher Education. Teaching. Practical Tasks

OPTIONS	STRESSFUL THINGS	HOW TO DEAL WITH STRESS
Studies		
Dogs		
Life in a big city		
Rumors		
Weather		
Other		

#### Task 28

If the article is related to responsibility, fill in a questionnaire about what you are responsible for. Things to talk about might include responsibilities at home and work / school, responsibilities while single or married responsibilities as a teenager or pensioner, etc. Compare your levels of responsibility and how responsible you are to the people in the article.

#### Task 29

Prepare a set of idioms based on the language or keyword from the article. Consider them with your partner. In pairs or groups, try to guess their meaning. Match the idioms/ similes with their meanings in the right column. Use each idiom / simile to ask your own questions to your partner. For example, the issue to discuss is “New mammal species found”. Look at the following idioms and similes that refer to small furry animals.

IDIOM / SIMILE	MEANING
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. I'm more scared than a porcupine in a balloon factory.</li> <li>2. She should try to squirrel away a few dollars each month.</li> <li>3. She is such an eager beaver.</li> <li>4. Like a rat deserting a sinking ship.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Stop pretending something is a crisis when it's just a small problem.</li> <li>b. I need someone to be a volunteer for my project / activity.</li> <li>c. Someone who quickly tries to abandon others when problems or signs of trouble occur.</li> </ol>

### 3. PRACTICAL ASSIGNMENTS. Higher Education. Teaching. Practical Tasks

<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>5. Don't make a mountain out of a mole hill.</li><li>6. They are like rabbits caught in the headlights of a car.</li><li>7. She was as quiet as a mouse.</li><li>8. Who's going to be my guinea pig?</li></ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>d. Suddenly unable to move or make decisions.</li><li>e. Saving a little money for something in the future is a good idea.</li><li>f. She made no sound at all.</li><li>g. It is difficult to be more afraid than how I'm feeling at the moment.</li><li>h. She puts maximum effort into everything she does.</li></ol>
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#### **Task 30**

Write a list of do's and don'ts related to the theme of the article and talk about their importance. Change partners and share and compare your answers.

#### **Task 31**

Take the main theme of the article and associate it with different things and discuss each of these. For example, the issue to discuss is "Alcohol". Consider the following aspects:

- Alcohol and children
- Alcohol and driving
- Alcohol and law
- Alcohol on airplanes
- Alcohol and health
- Alcohol and domestic violence
- Alcohol and drugs
- Alcohol and bad behavior
- Other

#### **Task 32**

If the article is about a new idea or invention, discuss the negative and positive impact of it on your life and on the world.



### 3. PRACTICAL ASSIGNMENTS. Higher Education. Teaching. Practical Tasks

#### **Task 33**

If there is a problem associated with the article, devise a five-step plan to overcome that problem. Share and compare ideas and provide feedback. For example, the issue to discuss is “SHARK PHOBIA”. You are a phobia expert. It is your job to create a step-by-step programme to enable the victim of a shark attack to overcome his/her fear of sharks and of swimming in the sea.

Step 1	
Step 2	
Step 3	
Step 4	
Step 5	
Step 6	

#### **Task 34**

You are unhappy with news report. They write down five reasons for your unhappiness. Change partner and share and compare your ideas. Role play the conversation between the unhappy reader and the reporter (who must stick to his / her guns).

#### **Task 35**

Write down a number of consequences of the news in the article. From those consequences, add another consequence, and another, and another, until a chain of sequences has been built up. Change partners and compare your consequence chains.

#### **Task 36**

Think of all the positive and negative sides of the situation in the news item. Use what you think of to make a speech. Share and compare the things you wrote down. Start your speech by saying, “On the one hand... but on the other hand...”

### 3. PRACTICAL ASSIGNMENTS. Higher Education. Teaching. Practical Tasks

#### **Task 37**

Write down five things from each paragraph you consider to be missing information (something unsaid / unwritten / deleted). Share and compare your answers and speculate on why the information was missing and what it might mean.

#### **Task 38**

Create “How to” guides based on the article:

- How to survive in the jungle.
- How to make the perfect proposal of marriage.
- How to be the perfect parent / child.
- How to become fluent in English in 14 days.

Fill the guide with potential problems and ways of overcoming them.

#### **Task 39**

List a specified number of pros and cons related to a theme in the article. Put these pros and cons in order of most important and discuss to what degree you agree or disagree with them. Share and compare with other students to create the five top pros and the five top cons.

#### **Task 40**

If the article is about how a person or group of people can affect others, write a list of things that could be part of those influences. For example, the issue to discuss is “Bad influence”. In pairs or groups, talk about whether the children in your country do any of the following, and if so, at what age do they start. Try to find reasons why they do these things:

- Might bad parenting be to blame?
- Smoke cigarettes or drink alcohol
- Take drugs
- Vandalism
- Graffiti
- Intimidating elderly people
- Burglary and robbery

### 3. PRACTICAL ASSIGNMENTS. Higher Education. Teaching. Practical Tasks

- Physical assault or murder
- Under-age sex
- Gun crimes
- Blackmail and extortion

#### **Task 41**

Based on the theme of the news item, write down five sentences starting with the phrase “One thing I really don’t understand is...” Change partners and share and compare your sentences. Try to enlighten each other regarding the things you don’t understand.

#### **Task 42**

Select phrases from the article that contain useful vocabulary, idioms or phrases that are key for global understanding. Cut the phrases into strips and give them to your partner(s). Comment on them and then make up your own sentences containing the selected material.

#### **Task 43**

Underline different things in the article you want to know more about. After reading, share and discuss these things with partner(s) to see if they can find out more information.

#### **Task 44**

Circle things in the article that are different in your own cultures. Talk them over with your partner(s).

#### **Task 45**

If the article is based on something useful, brainstorm as many uses for it as you can think of. In pairs or groups, decide which are the most useful uses.

#### **Task 46**

Speculate about the school or student life of the person from the article. Consider the following areas:



### 3. PRACTICAL ASSIGNMENTS. Higher Education. Teaching. Practical Tasks

- Punctuality
- Bullying
- Homework
- Popularity with other students
- Attire
- Attitude
- Discipline record
- Sports
- Art
- Other



# Select the university with the E-Factor

University of East London students benefit from unique experiences and opportunities - and these help them to stand out when it comes to their future



WITH campuses situated between Canary Wharf's financial services hub, Shoreditch's creative start-ups, and an emerging arts and business boom in Docklands and Stratford, the University of East London's students are reaping the benefits.

It's little wonder UEL student Farhana Begum, 20, was picked to be one of just 15 Mayor of London's entrepreneurship interns. "I really wanted to do an internship for the experience, so I jumped at the chance to apply for the Mayor's

## MAKING A DIFFERENCE TO STUDENTS - AND THE COMMUNITY

UEL's drive to combine academic quality with entrepreneurship opportunities and civic engagement has taken root in east London.

UEL's Royal Docks School of Business and Law operates a community-focused free legal advice centre. People in the community who cannot pay for legal advice can get help from qualified

solicitors and support from UEL law students. They have even set up a partnership with an autism charity in Essex to provide free legal help for people with autism, which has attracted the support of a national law firm who want to lend a hand.

The centre provides valuable experience, for students, too.

Entrepreneurship Programme," says Begum, a second-year accounting and finance student at UEL's Royal Docks School of Business and Law.

"I'm planning to take a year out to do a work placement for my third

year, and I'd like to start a business around finance in the future."

She even got to meet the Mayor of London, Sadiq Khan, and discuss

entrepreneurship in London with him and the other interns.

In fact, entrepreneurship is on the rise like never before. According to the Federation of Small Businesses, there were a record 5.5 million private sector businesses at the start of 2016, an increase of 97,000 since the previous year.

Which is good news for people like management graduate Mahyar Rahmantalab. He won UEL's annual entrepreneurship competition, E-Factor, held at One Canada Square last year.

### **A BUSINESS LAUNCHPAD**

With a Dragons' Den format and a business start-up package worth £20,000, it has helped launch the businesses of current UEL students and graduates.

Rahmantalab's business-to-business company, Pomegranate, brings top restaurant chefs and quality local food producers together.

"The best thing about E-Factor was that it allowed me to stress-test my idea - now I'm going to go ahead and make my business happen," he says.

Started 12 years ago, E-Factor has given more than 200 students the opportunity to turn

business proposals into a reality. But that's not all. UEL's Centre for Innovation, Management, and Enterprise provides students with opportunities to network and receive expert guidance.

It's something that mature student Theresa Yemisi Williams has used to enhance her studies and turn her life around. She has just finished her degree in events management at UEL, and is looking forward to graduating this year. Theresa organised a conference involving several housing associations last November. The conference looked at an innovative scheme called Housing First, which aims to address the problem of homelessness - a subject which is close to her heart.

Before coming to UEL, she was struggling to pay her mortgage, but was reluctant to ask for help, and ended up sleeping in her car for two weeks. She has since been given a fresh start and now rents a house with her children.

"I've been given a second chance at education, doing something I love, and I want to do a master's

degree, too, so I can better help those affected by homelessness," she says.

Zain Umar, 23, completed his LLB law degree last year, and won a place on the Civil Service Fast Track scheme.

"It was thanks to UEL's careers service inviting students to an event about working at the Civil Service," he says. "The UEL careers team went the extra mile for students, getting Civil Service staff to meet with us and give advice about the application process. They also arranged a mock assessment day which was great preparation."

Places are available this September in a range of subjects, from bioscience and business to education and early childhood to psychology and sport.

• *To start a degree this September, call UEL's Clearing Hotline today, 8am-8pm, on 033 00575599*

**Niki Chesworth**



# Experience the real business world

All of Pearson College London's pioneering degrees are powered by industry engagement - including employment experiences you may not get at a traditional uni



**WHEN** Nicola Porter's son David went through Clearing, after changing his mind about his choice of degree, she was glad he did his research.

"He came across Pearson College London and saw it as a real opportunity to do something fresh and employment-focused rather than a traditional academic degree," she says, adding that the college is "the way of the future".

David agrees, adding: "I had opportunities I would not have otherwise received at other traditional universities - industry days, founding a social enterprise and a guaranteed internship."

That is because business is part of Pearson College London's DNA.

David has since graduated with a first-class honours degree in Business & Enterprise, and one of his legacies is Pearson College London's innovative and pioneering Business Incubator, which he helped to launch.

The Incubator offers free space for 12 months to an Edtech start-up in exchange for allowing business students to get involved in the business's projects - providing an amazing opportunity for learning, development and valuable business insights.

This is just one example of the initiatives that help students to gain real-world experience by becoming immersed in the

business world, learning from real-life events in real time.

This year, Pearson College London is cementing its reputation as provider of highly relevant degree courses by launching its Centre for Industry Engagement, which will centralise the work it does in this area, including: Internships: all full-time Pearson Business School students are guaranteed at least one placement with a leading firm subject to academic approval. **Industry**

**partnerships:** Pearson College London's 100-plus industry partners - which include Unilever, IBM and Direct Line - are a vital part of designing and delivering degree

modules to ensure they equip graduates with the skills employers want and need.

**Pioneering programmes:** These include the “8th day scheme”, which allows entrepreneurs, start-ups and small businesses to undertake the projects they would do if they had an extra day in the week by partnering them with undergraduates.

Pearson College London is also a preferred choice for employers planning degree apprenticeships, and is working with leading employers including L’Oreal to deliver these.

#### **SECURE A PLACE TODAY**

There are a limited number of Clearing places available to start in September for degrees in business

management, enterprise, accountancy, marketing and law. The Clearing entry tariff is 112 UCAS points (BBC at A-level or equivalent). If you have fewer points than this, you can complete a Business School Workshop to secure a place.

#### **THE PEARSON DIFFERENCE**

If you want to stand out in the jobs market, you need an education that stands out, too:

- All Pearson College London’s degrees are designed, developed and delivered with industry partners, to immerse you in the real world of work.

- Students don’t just learn about their area of study - they gain experience from and get access to the best of the best, both in the classroom and by

visiting the college’s partner organisations’ locations, too.

- As the only college run by a FTSE100 company, Pearson College London has unrivalled access to more than 100 top employers.

- Students benefit from high contact hours per week, reflecting what life is like in the business world.

- The links Pearson College London has with some of the biggest businesses in the world opens doors - ensuring students graduate with the skills required to succeed. \*

- One hundred per cent of their degree graduates in work or further study within six months after graduation.

**Niki Chesworth**

#### **SUCCESS - IN THEIR OWN WORDS**

PEARSON College London graduates are highly employable and have gone on to some amazing careers. Here, three of them share the reasons why:

- “Industry days, career events and talks, studying in a corporate environment as well as the nature of the course assignments have provided me with an all-round experience of understanding the business world better” - **Sophie Preece, IBM business consulting graduate scheme.**



“The advantage it gave me was to break down the barrier between education and the business/real world” - **Jack Preston, graduate scheme at Notonthehighstreet.com**



- Pearson does this wonderful thing of helping you realise you can be more. They offer you challenges, the tools to face them, and show you how to make the first step’ **Kevin Nyatoro, sales excellence business Analyst, Microsoft.**



# Daily Mail

## COMMENT

### **Exam success and the student debt crisis**

THE Mail congratulates all the hardworking A-level pupils who yesterday achieved the grades they need to find jobs or go to university.

But their justified celebrations must not distract from the profound problems which persist within our education system.

After years of rampant grade inflation, this should have been the year in which the reforms advanced by Michael Gove as Education Secretary finally began to take effect, including tougher exams in subjects such as English, chemistry and history.

But regrettably, the 'all must have prizes' culture has triumphed once again, as pass marks have been adjusted down so students don't 'miss out' - a decision which will undermine this long overdue effort to restore rigour to the system.

Then there is university funding. The Mail accepts there is no alternative but to charge tuition fees for students who benefit from higher education.

But there is no justification whatsoever for the stratospheric interest rates charged on student debt which, at 6 per cent, are more expensive than a bank loan.

After graduating with average debts of £50,000, students face bigger repayments if they earn a higher salary - a huge disincentive to seek better paid work. Worse, many are still pushed into courses which little enhance their earning potential.

Meanwhile, the university gravy train continues unchecked, as vice chancellors and legions of managers are paid salaries far in excess of the Prime Minister.

So is it any wonder that so many students feel so aggrieved? Or that they are tempted by Jeremy Corbyn's hollow promise to 'deal with' their debts and abolish fees?

Ministers must confront these issues, or risk alienating an entire generation.



# Public exam results? Not for university snowflakes

**By Eleanor Harding**  
Education Correspondent

CAMBRIDGE students are to be given the chance to opt out of appearing on public notices displaying their grades after campaigners claimed it could affect their mental health.

The tradition of 'class lists', as they are known, spans 300 years and sees exam results posted on boards outside the university's Senate House every year.

The practice was seen the most efficient way of letting students know their results, and in recent years has been regarded as

a way of celebrating their achievements. But campaigners have said the lists are 'damaging' to welfare, trigger depression and 'promote a culture of shaming'.

The issue has divided opinion among students, with many saying they would be sad if the tradition was swept away. The move comes amid a mounting drive towards protecting students' mental health while at

university. Critics have said that while those with genuine mental health issues must receive support, going too far risks creating a 'snowflake generation' incapable of handling adulthood.

Currently, applications from students wanting to have their names removed are only considered in 'exceptional circumstances'. Under the proposed system, every student would be able to simply tick a box which states they wish to opt out.

The decision was made earlier this week by the University Council and looks set to be in place by the end of the academic year. Martha Krish, students' union education officer, said the lists had caused 'distress and harm to countless students and said the was 'a massive improvement'.

Last year student Nicholas Taylor, of the campaign Save the Class List, said: 'I think it is a fantastic tradition... If you are part of a bigger institution at an ancient university which goes back 800 years, then your results should be public.'

## ‘Open Britain’ needs to have more masters of language

Anne McElvoy



### Comment

THE chap in the Piraeus car hire firm was explaining the route out of town. “Second turn at the roundabout, not the big one with the concrete stones but the one shaped like a teardrop.” His fluency was a joy to behold.

What hope of finding such easeful polyglots in Britain in the years ahead? Exam results season takes me back to sitting in the school car park, waiting for the results of modern languages that could catapult us keen state-school linguists into chosen universities. It opened careers for us, growing up far from London, which would have been unthinkable without the ability to speak in other tongues.

One of my friends from that era is a landscape gardener in Greece, one became an expert on Vladimir Putin and another on Spanish poetry translation. German, French and Russian are my most useful resources.

But we are losing the battle to enthuse younger linguists. This year, exam boards have been so concerned about native speakers monopolising the top grades that Ofqual has insisted that exam boards drop the grade boundary marks. So two-fifths of German entries get an A or A star.

That sounds excessively high - but Ofqual reckoned just under a fifth of the top scorers spoke German as their native language. Ofqual will need to move fast to end the skew towards unfairly rewarding native speakers.

If we think A-level grades look too generous, consider the falling-off in language entries over the past decade - only the truly motivated seem to be trying the lesser-studied languages.

Flogging every pupil to do GCSE languages, as the E-Bacc for five core subjects did, was a well-intentioned error. It has not primed sixth-form linguists, nor do we use technology well enough to take the pain out of early-stage learning, even though apps such as Duo Lingo make it easier. “What German vocab are you doing today?” I ask the 13-year-old. “I’m learning to go on a date,” is the reply.

The horizons of linguists are wide and the opportunities likely to grow as there are fewer skilled linguists for employers to choose from. Good universities are also quietly desperate for linguists, so much so that they are scouting for ab initio degree students who will take on a new language or mix one with another subject. People take risks only when they realise that sweating over verb conjugations or odd noun declensions gets easier with one language under your belt.

The monoglot logic is that English is so vital that everyone else will learn it. But do you want to sit in a negotiation in which you hear only what the other side would like you to hear? We travel more for pleasure and work, and yet study languages less. At a time when we need to hang on to openness, that’s a loss we shouldn’t shrug about.

*Anne McElvoy is senior editor at The Economist*

## *Failing to get the exam results you want could be the best thing that happens to you —just look at me*

IT HAS been decades since my exam results day, yet even now, when those words are uttered I am back at college again draped in false bravado but secretly terrified. I can see my acne, smell Lynx Africa from every orifice, feel the cut of my Chipie chinos and I am convinced that failure would be the worst thing that could ever happen, that there would be no point in continuing. I would have let myself and my family down so deeply that the shame would be too much to bear. I believed then that being 17 was for ever.

I never spoke about these memories, even when I was invited to schools to address young adults. Instead I would do the usual: a self-aggrandising snore-fest of how great the next few years would be and a “don’t forget to have fun” with a PS — work really hard because getting a first-class degree is really important if you want to do law. etc. etc.

### **Rob Rinder**



I trotted this script out to young people and parents who had invested everything in getting their children to do well by successfully jumping them through

the obligatory academic hoops. By using this language I ended up playing an unfortunate part in spreading the toxic myth that a CV full of starry A-levels is the automatic gateway to a future of eternal joy.

I was doing my usual schmaltzy pep talk recently when I came to those two words “results day” and I stopped. I flashed back to myself as an unhappy, spotty teenager of limited academic success and wondered what I wished someone had said to me at that moment. I could think of only one simple message: none of it matters. Not one tiny bit.

I reminded that room (and myself) of some of the extraordinary men and women who have been leaders in politics, commerce and law who haven’t got an A-level, GCSE or a 10-metre swimming certificate to rub together. There are the obvious ones, of



course, such as Richard Branson, self-proclaimed "the dumbest person at school" until he dropped out. But how many young people know that Jo Fairley, the co-founder of Green & Black chocolate, the youngest-ever UK magazine editor and health entrepreneur, left school at 16 with the modest ambition of becoming a secretary? Former Prime Minister John Major left school at 16 with a mere three O-levels, and even Einstein was expelled for being "a rebel and a dunce".

I confessed to that audience that I hadn't the foggiest what I got in my own exams. Whatever they were, they fell short of me getting into Oxford, which I was convinced was the end of my

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*The more pressure we put on results, the more we detract from what turns young people into good citizens*

world. It wasn't, of course. It was just the start. I told the truth at that moment because I am convinced that the more pressure we place on the single moment of exam results, the more we detract from nurturing the intellectual and emotional range that turns young people into successful adults and good citizens. More than exam results, what matters most is their character, their capacity to recognise when their feelings of hurt, rejection and failure are getting in the way, to acknowledge them and move on.

I am, of course, genuinely pleased for those who have done well. It is fantastic to have worked hard and to have seen the results. But education is also about things that cannot be graded; most importantly, about how young people can weave their talents, identity and personality into the baffling and ever-evolving world around them.

Whether it's a place at the university of your dreams or a daunting period of confusion that lies ahead of you, the most important thing is your capacity to be resilient and determined. If, like me, you didn't get what you were hoping for, it might just be the best thing that has ever happened to you.

# A great new alternative to university in the capital

Worried about tuition fees and getting into debt at uni? Or are you wondering if your degree will be practical enough to get you into the world of work? Morley College London's HNDs could be for you



AS a qualification, HNDs are highly respected by employers. That is because they are less about abstract theory and instead are more vocational, providing the practical skills needed in the world of work.

They are also significantly cheaper than a degree, with annual fees of £6,000 compared to £9,000 plus at most universities, and the other positive is that they only take two years - although you do have the option of topping up to a degree.

This September, Morley College London - one of the oldest and largest institutions of its type - is launching its new HND programme of six courses designed to give you a strong grounding for your future career.

What is so exciting about this development is that Morley has a fantastic reputation, having offered specialist education and training to adults in Lambeth and Southwark for almost 130 years.

It already has some amazing facilities, great specialist teaching staff and a brilliant location- perfect if

you live in London and perhaps want to work part-time while studying.

So what is on offer?

## ***BUSINESS STUDIES***

If you're a budding entrepreneur with a great business idea, or you want to get the right skills to climb the corporate ladder more quickly, taking an HND in Business will set you off on the right foot.

Morley College London's course will help you to become an effective business practitioner and prepare you for a range of business-related careers, ensuring you are familiarised with different aspects of business activity and enabling you to design and implement business plans with confidence.

The HND covers everything from large-scale business activities, like creating marketing plans and managing business projects, to everyday procedures such as staff recruitment, workforce management, and interactions with

agents like unions, other businesses and the Government.

It's a great option if you want to run your own business, work in marketing, or become a business analyst or consultant.

### **HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE**

The health and social care sector is the largest in the UK and set to grow further, with an estimated two million new employees to be needed by 2022.

This important and rewarding sector is highly competitive, so it's vital that you get the right kind of training to build the career you want.

Morley's HND in Health and Social Care not only provides you with a solid foundation in a range of career options in the sector, including research and analytical skills, but it also offers you the opportunity to study in purpose-built learning spaces, including a fully equipped, peaceful complementary therapy room in a quiet part of the college, and a modern science lab that is perfect for individual and group work in the fields of Biology, Chemistry or Health Studies.

Morley will also help you secure a 200-hour work placement as part of

se, giving you valuable real-world work experience in your chosen field before you even graduate. If you want to work in midwifery, nursing, childcare or complementary therapy, this is an excellent step in the right direction.

### **ARTS AND MUSIC**

Morley College also has a deep historical connection to the worlds of the arts and music, reaching back to its origins as part of what is now known as the Old Vic.

Its new HND programme also builds on this heritage, with courses in Fashion, Ceramics, Performing Arts and Music Performance or Production starting this September - all designed to help you transform your passion into a successful career.

### **SEE FOR YOURSELF**

Find out more about all the HNDs starting this September at Morley College London by going to its Higher Education Open Day this Saturday, August 19, from 12.30pm-2.30pm. Details can be found at [morleycollege.ac.uk/events](http://morleycollege.ac.uk/events)

**Niki Chesworth**



# Yes, you can afford to study in London

If you live in the capital and don't want to move away for your degree, there is an affordable, employment-focused and flexible option - Arden University

WHAT do you want to achieve by going to university? Most graduates hope that their study will lead to a great job with the pay and prospects that make a degree worthwhile.

However, you cannot escape the news that students starting this September will be leaving uni with at least £50,000 of debt, on average, and no guarantee of a graduate-level job. If you choose to study in the capital, your costs and debt will be even higher.

But there is an alternative - one that is much more affordable, and one that enables you to leave uni with three years of employment experience and get a head start on the career ladder.



This is why Arden University is seeing applications increase at a time when overall university application numbers are on the decline.

If you are having second thoughts about starting at a traditional, high-debt/low-learning hours university, it is not too late to change your mind.

## **MORE AFFORDABLE**

By condensing your learning into two or three days a week, Arden University's blended degrees enable you to work and gain valuable experience for the rest of the week - or you can learn online and work full-time.

Not only does this make a degree much more affordable (£18,495 for a three-year blended undergraduate course and £12,825 if you study remotely), you can further reduce your costs by living at home.

You can also make yourself more employable, perhaps by working in the sector of your choice on your free days. You are earning, you can help fund your degree, which means less debt.

## **SUPPORTIVE TEACHING**

On your days on campus, you will benefit from condensed learning - unlike more

traditional universities where, on some courses, your 10 or 12 contact hours are spread across five days.

When you are not in the classroom you will benefit from that all-important personal tuition time, as well as learning alongside other students - so you can still enjoy the student experience and get the support you need.

If you want to work during the week, you can opt for online learning with support via email or over the phone.

#### **A GREAT NEW CAMPUS**

Arden University has three campus facilities in London including Tower Hill and Holborn - all close to great transport links, making it easy for you to combine earning and learning.

This autumn sees the opening of an exciting new modern campus in Ealing, minutes from

Ealing Broadway station. With a dedicated computer suite, quiet study areas equipped with PCs, breakout areas, courtyards, private landscaped gardens and a light environment, students should find this an inspirational place to learn.

The High Street and Ealing Broadway Shopping Centre are close by, so this is also a lovely part of London to socialise and shop in, as well as study.

#### **MAKE THE RIGHT CHOICE**

Razzel Tayeh applied to Arden to study an LLB (Hons) Law at the Tower Hill campus after deciding the traditional, high-cost degree was not for her.

Here, she shares her tips on tackling Clearing, saying: "It really is not

too late to change your mind and change your future."

**Take a moment to think:** Consider where you want to be in three or four years' time. How much debt will you have? Will you be ready for work? Find a course where you can get an education and work experience.

#### **Ring up and ask for advice:**

Some universities will accept direct applications like Arden, or you can go through UCAS. Don't be afraid to call up and speak to them directly - some personal advice from their admissions staff will help you make the right choice.

**Keep an open mind:** Don't be put off just because you're not very familiar with a particular university. There are more options than you might think, and what you originally chose over a year ago might not be the right choice any more.

**Niki Chesworth**

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**Words of advice:** Arden student Razzel Tayeh



## You've got a place, now where will you live?

Do not forget to ask about student accommodation when you are talking to universities about places in Clearing - or you could find that you miss out

MOST students want to live in halls during their first year at uni. It helps them to settle and it can be easier to make friends. The accommodation is usually of a good standard and in a convenient location.

While you should not choose a university purely because it can guarantee you accommodation, it could be the deciding factor.

A few universities guarantee Clearing students places in halls, including Brunei University. "We realise how important it is for students to have a place in halls during their first year," says Ruth Lucas-Levitt, head of accommodation at Brunei. "That's why we guarantee Clearing students a place in halls, providing they apply for a room by the end of August.

"Living in halls, you can make friends for life or even meet your future partner. And being so close to the university support services can help you throughout your course."

The University of Sheffield and University of Aberystwyth also offer accommodation guarantees, but you will need to accept a place soon.



**Big move:** Aberystwyth is one university with a first-year accommodation guarantee

If the university offers no such guarantees, then apply as soon as you can for accommodation. You may get lucky.

For example, Leeds University allows you to apply two days after you have accepted your Clearing offer, and while there are no guarantees, says "we are confident we will be able to help you find accommodation" although it warns that this will not be allocated until September 6, so you may still have to hunt for somewhere to live.

Do not be too picky. Surveys show that even those who end up in the "cheap and cheerful" budget accommodation are generally happy - they are forced to meet other people rather than locking themselves away in their rooms, and have more cash in their pockets.

Bristol, for example, had 290 non-guaranteed applicants last year and of these, 190 were offered places at



University-allocated accommodation. Sometimes, you may need to share.

In 2016, a total of ISO students had to share a room at the very start of term. By the end of November, all students who wanted their own room had been moved. Some temporary sharers chose to stay sharing for the rest of the year.

The university's advice is: "Please keep an open mind. These temporary shares are very short-term, can be a great way to meet new people and, because you pay a reduced fee while sharing, it's a cost-saving option, too."

If you still have no luck, you will have to find your own accommodation.

If you do not know anyone to share with, the Accommodation Office and Students Union can put you in touch with other students. Some universities host special house-mate events, including the University of Bristol, where you can stay in a hall of residence to meet others in the same position.

**What about money?** Cost is a key factor. A report by the NUS has found that the cost of purpose-built student

accommodation rose 23 per cent between the 2009/10 and 2015/16 academic years and shows no sign of getting cheaper.

Some students are looking for cost-saving alternatives, such as house-shares. Alejandro Artacho, CEO and co-founder of property website Spotahome, says: "The increase in costs is driving more students to look for cost saving alternatives, such as flat-sharing."

The cost of student accommodation in London varies between £214 and £350 per week for a double room. In comparison, the average weekly rent for a room on Spotahome is £142.50.

**Read the small print:**

Before agreeing to accommodation, check if there are any extras to pay for, how much notice you have to give if you are not happy and other terms and conditions.

Paying for halls: Have you got £2,000 to £3,000 spare? If you are going through Clearing, you might have to pay for accommodation before you get your student loan. Can you manage it?

**Niki Chesworth**

# Work or study? No need to choose

Evening-taught degrees at Birkbeck, University of London are increasingly popular with those who don't want to quit their jobs to gain qualifications

BIRKBECK students are proud of the prestigious reputation of their University of London qualifications - but that isn't the only thing attracting record numbers of students.

The opportunity to study at London's evening university while using the daytime to build professional experience is vital for today's ambitious students who don't want to choose between career or university.

It is now accepting applications through Clearing for certificates of higher education; foundation degrees; and BA, BSC and LLB degrees across its five schools: Arts; Business, Economics and Informatics; Law; Science; and Social Sciences, History and Philosophy.

Students are taught by leading academics who are active in their own fields and whose teaching has been awarded silver in the national Teaching Excellence

**Good progress:**  
student George Knoerr



## **Modern facilities:**

Birkbeck has a lot to offer its students and services all open late

Framework. It means students learn about the very latest developments and can apply this knowledge in their workplace.

"Engaging with the latest ideas and a wide variety of opinions is really important for our students, who come from a range of backgrounds, bringing knowledge and ideas from their different cultures, careers and experiences," says Dr Melissa Butcher, reader in Social and Cultural Geography. "My students learn as much from one another as they do from me."

Dr Butcher is part of Birkbeck's Clearing admissions team this year: "We are helping lots of students, who often have questions about what our degrees involve and what it's really like to study in the evening." Birkbeck's Clearing team is available to speak to students up to the start of term on Monday, October 2. New students are invited to workshops and events to help them prepare for study and settle into the College.

Birkbeck's facilities include a state-of-the-art library, arts and performance spaces and study support seminars and workshops, while opportunities to socialise are ample: the College has a bar and coffee shops, and students can use the sports, swimming, music and other facilities at Student Central, the University of London student centre, next door to Birkbeck's main Bloomsbury building.

The College has lively campuses in central and east London, giving students easy access to the city's cultural, political, legal and financial hubs. All of Birkbeck's facilities and support services are geared around evening study and are open late. Birkbeck staff are used to supporting students who are juggling study with work, family and other commitments, and understand the pressures students face.

For those who are looking to use their time in the day to progress in their careers, move into a new area or even launch their own business, Birkbeck offers support in CV writing, interview preparation, entrepreneurship and networking through the Careers and Employability Service, the in-house recruitment service Birkbeck Talent, and the Enterprise Pathways programme, available to all students.

George Knoerr, who studies BSc Computing at Birkbeck, said: "Thanks to studying in the evening, I am still able to work full-time and can progress my career on an academic and professional level at the same time. After enrolling, I also found a new job that was more closely related to the degree I was studying and I could impress my new employer both with the commitment I could demonstrate to my career development and also the knowledge that I was bringing to the job from my study at Birkbeck."

Eleanor Martin, who runs Birkbeck Talent, agrees: "Employers are often impressed by our students' ability to combine work and study and value the contribution this enables them to make to the companies they work for."

For people thinking of making the next step and applying to Birkbeck during Clearing, Dr Butcher has this advice: "When applying, we want to know why you are interested in a particular course or discipline, and how you can show that you have the drive and ambition that our students are known for."

*Find out more at [bbk.ac.uk/clearing](http://bbk.ac.uk/clearing) or call the hotline on 020 39070700 until 6pm today and 9am-6pm tomorrow. From Monday until the start of term, it will be open Monday to Thursday 12pm-6pm and Fridays 12pm-5pm*

**Niki Chesworth**



# Having doubts about all that debt?

**Another route:**  
OU student Nicole Luque



TWO-THIRDS of people believe too many people go to university because it is seen as the “done” thing, and more than half would skip university if they could get the same-job and salary straight out of school.

The findings from the Army, to promote its A-level entry officer scheme, probably come as no surprise to anyone daunted by the cost of a degree.

What may be a surprise is that you do not have to go to university to land a well-paid job. While some jobs - such as becoming a doctor or a teacher - require a degree, many don't.

While those who go to uni do benefit from an earnings premium, so do those who take the higher apprenticeship route - which can often lead to a degree or an equivalent qualification.

The lifetime earnings gap between the two is just 1.8 per cent, according to research conducted by Barclays and the Centre for Economics and Business Research and in some sectors, such as the arts, media and publishing, apprentices earn even significantly more than graduates thanks to the real-world experience they gain while training.

So how do you get a degree without the debt?

Spending at least three years for a degree that might not lead to a graduate-level job, but will leave you with around £50,000 of debt is daunting. Have you considered these alternatives?

## NEED HELP TO DECIDE?

- For advice on taking your next step call the Exam Results Helpline 0808 100 8000.
- For info on a wide range of alternative career paths visit the [Nationalcareersservice.direct.gov.uk](http://Nationalcareersservice.direct.gov.uk) site or call 0800100 900.
- For guides to apprenticeships and on-the-job training visit [notgoingtouni.co.uk](http://notgoingtouni.co.uk) and [ratemyapprenticeship.co.uk](http://ratemyapprenticeship.co.uk)

**Degree or higher-level apprenticeship:** An increasing, but still relatively small, number of employers offer these. Not all of them lead to degrees.

Tough competition for places means you may need to withdraw your application to university and then work while waiting for a place.

According to [RateMyApprenticeship.co.uk](http://RateMyApprenticeship.co.uk) the top employers for higher apprenticeships are GSK, Nomura, IBM, CGI and Stannah. Other firms offering them include Deloitte, EY, Barclays and CapGemini.

**Vocational professional qualifications:** These top sectors are accounting and finance - particularly AAT, which can lead on to Chartered Accountancy status - which you can start at a range of employers straight from A-levels.

These are much more role specific than a degree, with qualifications usually awarded by professional bodies. For example, Deloitte's Bright Start Higher Apprenticeships can lead to Chartered Institute for IT professional certifications, as well as Institute of Chartered Accountants of England and Wales qualifications.

**Degree at a non-traditional uni:** The other alternative to the traditional university route is a part-time, evening- only or blended learning - a mix of online and on campus - at either college, the Open University or one of the newer universities, such as Arden.

If your A-level results are not great, you can start with a Foundation Degree and then move on to a BA or BSc. Or you can start with an HND, at colleges such as Morley College London, and then progress on to a top-up one-year degree programme.

The fees are about a third less and you can earn while you learn to fund living costs, while gaining valuable experience. Juggling work and study is hard work and requires discipline. But providers such as Birkbeck, University of London, specialise in this type of teaching, so will give you lots of support.

**'I'M STUDYING AS AN APPRENTICE'** Nicole Luque, 24, did not get the A-level grades she was hoping for, so instead of going to uni, she started work in a shop, where she found out about the Open University's chartered managers degree apprenticeship with the British Institute of Facilities Management.

She admits that working and studying requires commitment, but says: "I can study around my job and can ask for time off whenever it is needed. This year, I have already attended three face-to-face workshops.

"During the evening, I talk to tutors and other students via the OU's Chat-Box system - so there's a lot of interaction and face time involved."

**'I WANTED TO GET INTO WORK'** Second Lieutenant Nathan Weaver, 23, says: "After A-levels, I wanted to get stuck into work straight away, rather than go to university as I was concerned about costs.

"Having passed out from Sandhurst, the Army has now given me the opportunity to study mechanical engineering at university and pay for my three-year degree."

Both the Army and the RAF have A-level entry officer training schemes (starting salaries of around £26,000) which can lead to a degree or equivalent qualification without any student debts.

**Niki Chesworth**

# Pressured to go to uni? Do it your way

Now your results are in, it's time to decide on the next step. But you don't have to go to university. Two people who have taken the AAT route share their experiences

ARE the momentous choices you are now facing making you feel ill?

Well, you are not alone. Half of the 16 to 19-year-olds surveyed by AAT (Association of Accounting Technicians) said that the stress caused by deciding what their future career choice should be had affected their health.

Nearly three in 10 admitted they were struggling to sleep, nearly a quarter said they were either over- or under-eating, and nearly a fifth were suffering from panic attacks.

Leaving school or college could be one of the most nerve-wracking moments of your life and the choices you have to make are not easy - particularly when everyone else seems to have an opinion.

## A DIFFERENT PATH

About two in three of the 16 to 19-year-olds surveyed told AAT that they had "experienced pressure from their school or college to go to university". One in four said that this pressure was "significant". No wonder so many young people believe that they have to take this path-even if they do not necessarily feel it is the right option for them.



**Smart move:** Thomas Brinsley and Bola Lawal, inset left, both recommend AAT

WOULD you rather take on £28,000 of student debt just for your tuition fees, or have no debt and a starting salary as a trainee of more than £23,000 a year?

Before you answer, you need to know that both options could lead to exactly the same type of professional career in finance.

Now you know that, the obvious choice is "no debts".

This debt-free option is AAT - and it can even lead to chartered accountancy status more quickly than taking the degree route.

So, in a few years' time, you could find yourself further up the career ladder than other school leavers now heading off to uni.

While they will start their careers saddled with debt, you will have been earning for several years, and perhaps have even started to save up for your first home.

As an AAT trainee, life is busy.

You will be combining learning on the job with studying part-time.

However, the financial boost is good. According to the 2017 AAT Salary and Careers survey, student members in London earn an average annual income of £23,250.



Bola Lawal, 22, from Essex, is someone who decided to take a different route from university into the career she wanted. Her story might inspire you to make your own decision about your own future.

After she finished her A-levels at college, she had the option of going to university, but instead decided to take an alternative route by studying for an apprenticeship in accountancy with AAT.

Lawal says: "I had the choice of going to university, but decided to opt out of it because of the debt and because I believed that studying for a professional qualification like AAT would strengthen my chance of becoming a successful accountant, by giving me better understanding of the industry and expanding my knowledge of the profession."

As part of her apprenticeship, she worked as an accountant, and the company she worked for regularly gave her time off to go to college to study, and also time off when it was time for her to take her exams.

So Lawal combined working and studying - earning at the same time as learning the skills she needed to become an accountant. By doing both at the same time, she already had work experience and knew how to apply the knowledge gained from studying to the job role immediately.

She adds: "I would recommend AAT training because it provides you with the skills and understanding that employers require, and it opens up more opportunities for you."

Mark Farrar, CEO of AAT, says: "It is encouraging to see there is recognition among some young people such as Bola that high-level vocational routes such as apprenticeships are a viable option that leads to rewarding career paths."

Another student, Thomas Brinsley, wanted to move into a finance role, but did not want to go to university. "Since a degree or the equivalent is so important within finance, I thought that this would impact my career, until I found AAT and their different ways to study," he says. "Studying an AAT qualification allows me to apply for positions that I wouldn't have been able to enter any other way, and has made me much more effective with communication and time management."

AAT qualifications are open to everyone regardless of previous experience or exam success, and can also put students on a fast track to becoming a chartered accountant.

- *Find out more at [aat.org.uk/es](http://aat.org.uk/es)*

**Niki Chesworth**

## A-level results show reforms have not helped students

CONGRATULATIONS to the many students who, despite having dealt with the stress and pressure of rushed-in exam reforms, have done so well in their A-levels.

It is encouraging that more students are studying maths and sciences. And good that entries to Stem subjects continue to rise — although it would be good if more girls chose to study these subjects. But the continued fall in students studying French, Spanish and German, and this year English, is worrying as these are all important in a global market.

However, changing the assessment of A-levels so they focus on high- stakes exams taken at the end of two years of study does not allow students to demonstrate their ability properly and puts them under huge pressure. Coursework and

other non-exam assessments are a better way for students to demonstrate their skills, are less of a memory test, and help lower-attaining students and those with special educational needs and disabilities show their achievements. Teachers report increases in mental health issues among students who have multiple qualifications assessed through end- of-course exams.

We are also seeing the narrowing of the options available to students. Decoupling AS-levels from A-levels has led to most students now only studying three subjects post-16, which gives them a less broad curriculum than previously.

Mary Bousted  
Joint general secretary,  
National Education Union





***Anna Davis***  
***Education***  
***Editor***

***Dear Mary***

SITTING a high-stakes exam that tests two years' worth of knowledge and will determine whether you can go to university is the stuff of many people's nightmares. This year students were asked to do just that in 11 more "toughened-up" subjects – where coursework has been scrapped and modules replaced by a final exam.

You are right to say students are under huge pressure. But some people thrive in this environment and prefer an all-or-nothing test to spending

months endlessly perfecting their coursework.

Some have suggested that the reforms have put boys at an advantage. Since results from the new exams were first published last year boys have started to score slightly more A\* and A grades than girls — although girls continue to outperform boys in all other grades.

The reforms, brought in by former Education Secretary Michael Gove, were designed to make A-levels more rigorous and better prepare students for university. Only time will tell who benefits from this, and what impact the reforms will have on this "guinea pig" generation.

***Anna***

**University first as sign language is recognised as 'foreign' tongue**

**Anna Davis** Education Editor

A LEADING London university will recognise sign language as a foreign language for the first time, it was announced today.

University College London will treat students with qualifications in British Sign Language (BSL) the same as those with traditional foreign languages from September.

The university is the only one in the country to demand that undergraduates start with a basic level of foreign language competence - such as a C-grade

language GCSE - no matter which subject they study. It offers extra classes to those who don't meet the requirement. But now students who have studied sign language will also be accepted.

A spokeswoman for UCL said: "It is thought that the recognition of British Sign Language as a modern foreign language will also benefit UCL students from particular specialisms who may come into contact with deaf signers in their future careers, such as doctors, speech and language therapists or teachers."

The Government recognised BSL as a language in its own right in 2003.



# There's still time to get

**The first day of Clearing is always frantic. However, only one in five of those going to university via this route have accepted a place already... that means you are not alone if you are still looking.**

**By Niki Chesworth**

BY NOW you should know your grades, whether or not you are in Clearing and, more importantly, if you still want to go to university this September.

However, you might not know what you are studying or where.

You are not alone. Around four in five of those going to university via UCAS Clearing are yet to secure a place. However, do not be complacent. Places do fill up fast and are offered on a first-come basis.

Also, the sooner you apply, the more likely it will be that you manage to secure a place in university accommodation, or halls.

You might even have time to visit (many unis have open days this weekend) to get a feel for what it will be like to spend the next three years in a particular city or town and perhaps even talk to the tutors (just to double-check you are making the right choice).

If you are having second thoughts about your chosen subject, talk to the admissions teams and also search UCAS carefully. Read about course modules and what they cover and check what happens to students once they graduate. Do they go into the career paths that interest you?



**Double delight:** Twins Himmat and Arjun Sohail, Harry and Thomas Ashton-Key and Catherine and Henry Darlison celebrate their A-level results at Peter Symonds College, Winchester, yesterday

**Changed your mind?** You can ask to be released from your place at your firm or insurance choice. Once this has happened you can then go through Clearing. Check the UCAS website first, to make sure there are places available on alternative courses.

**Did better than expected?** Now you have got over the shock and finished celebrating, you could consider Adjustment to upgrade your choice of degree or uni. You can keep the place you already have while you look around. But you need to act fast. Note that universities that do not enter Clearing may offer places through Adjustment. You might need to check individual university websites to find out more. Enter Adjustment on UCAS Track so universities can see your application and act fast — places go quickly. Adjustment ends August 31 and you only have five 24-hour slots to use this service... it's complicated, but worth it.

**Want to defer?** You will need to talk to the university directly. You will also have to give a reason why. Deferring commits you to a particular course next year — so you need to be sure it is the right one for you. If not, you will have to start applying again

next year. If you are planning a gap year, make sure you do something useful. Sitting at home playing video games will not enhance your life chances!

Haven't applied yet? You can apply to universities directly through Clearing. So it is not too late.

**Not sure you want to go?**

There are some great alternatives to university. Degree-level apprenticeships (a degree without the debt while you are paid to train) as well as more vocational paths (AAT for accountancy) can get you ahead faster than going to uni first.

This week job site Indeed surveyed the jobs you can do without a degree and found that Ethical Hacker came out top, with double the average annual salary of £56,547.

Also in the top 10 best paid jobs that do not require a degree are pilot at £32,691 and head chef at £30,867.

Remember it is better to change your mind now than a few months into your course. So if in doubt, speak to an advisor. Try the National Careers Service on 0800100 900 ([nationalcareersservice.direct.gov.uk](http://nationalcareersservice.direct.gov.uk)).

# *Set sights on an outstanding education*

Clearing is your chance to upgrade your future - and you can't aim higher than gold, the rating given to the University of Northampton

CLEARING is your opportunity to make a life-changing choice. So, before picking up the phone and calling the Clearing hotlines, take a few minutes to check out which universities are going to offer you the best teaching, with outstanding academic support and great employment prospects.

The Government's new Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF) provides an official rating of the quality of UK universities. The University of Northampton is one of a select group of institutions which received gold, the very highest possible rating for teaching excellence under this framework.

It has some places available during Clearing, so you could soon be benefiting from the highest-quality teaching.

"We may be one of the youngest universities in the UK, but are officially one of the best," said its vice chancellor, Professor Nick Petford.

"We offer our students an experience that many promise, but few can deliver."



**Personalised approach:** the student experience at the University of Northampton is tailored to individuals

.....

While quality teaching is vitally important, it is not the only thing that sets Northampton apart. The TEF judges also found that its provision was "outstanding" in a number of other areas, including the personalised student experience, academic support, the quality of assessment and feedback and the university's approach to involving students in research, scholarship and professional practice.

## **STUDENT-CENTRED LEARNING**

The university has an increased focus on seminars or tutorials to allow closer interaction between students and teaching staff, with this more personalised student experience being recognised as "outstanding" by the TEF.



This 'blended' approach to learning makes the most of students' time and puts them at the centre of their own learning by giving them more opportunity to ask questions, delve deeper into their subject, and ultimately have a learning experience that will benefit them after they graduate.

#### **EMPLOYABILITY A PRIORITY**

One of the reasons Northampton was judged to have outstanding outcomes in terms of the numbers of students going on to employment or further study is that employability is embedded across the entire student experience.

Wray Irwin, head of the University of Northampton Centre for Employability and Engagement, says: "From course content and design, to bringing in employers to talk about their sector, as well as providing internships and placements to all students - with 60 per cent of courses having these inbuilt - we ensure that students gain the current skills and competencies employers are looking for."

#### **YOU CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE**

Another key feature of a University of Northampton education is that you will be encouraged to make a difference.

The university is focused on creating social change, and that means getting involved with volunteering or work placements during your course, which makes you more employable and able to make a contribution to society.

"Our Changemaker offering helps graduates to build their careers over a lifetime as it teaches them how to adapt and change by using their skills in a different way by working with

a social enterprise or charity - or even starting their own charity," says Irwin. "Changemaker also helps them to understand how their activities can effect positive social, environmental and cultural change so they are an active participant in the world around them. "We have had graduates go along to interviews where all they have been asked about is their experiences and how they apply their skills in different ways. This is what makes a Northampton education different."

#### **AN OUTSTANDING EXPERIENCE**

How a university supports you - with your studies, to find a job and to benefit from some amazing experiences - is also an important factor. The TEF judges felt this was another area where Northampton was "outstanding".

Ann Shelton-Mayes, executive dean, student experience, says: "This is down to a commitment of staff to an excellent student experience. We have a mission to transform lives and inspire change.

"This involves course design, and we are coming towards the end of a four- year plan to design every single element of every course - with student and sector involvement - to make sure each has aspirational targets and is professionally oriented and industry-relevant.

"We have a strong commitment to 'active blended learning', with more interaction between lecturers and students and in smaller groups. You will find the student experience - from tuition and assessments to employability plans - is personalised. At Northampton, you're known as an individual."

**Niki Chesworth**

# You don't have to go to uni just yet

In two minds about whether you still want to go to university this year or defer instead? Or perhaps you just want to make the most of the next month before beginning your studies? Travelling abroad is a great way to discover more about yourself, enjoy memorable experiences and boost your employability, writes **Hatty Copeman**



FROM InterRailing across Europe to joining a tour for a month or taking a year out to make a difference, travelling abroad is a fantastic way to get ahead of other students and broaden your horizons.

However, having a productive and positive travel experience depend<sup>^</sup> a lot on what you decide to do, and what you want to do afterwards.

Think ahead to how the experience can help your employability. Surveys show that employers believe those who have taken a gap year are more confident, creative, flexible and proactive.

Gaining relevant work experience abroad was seen as good for those entering the competitive world of business (82 per cent) or teaching (77 per cent), according to a survey from booldng.com.

Creative industries liked volunteering and charity work (68 per cent), as well as learning new skills or languages (65 per cent).

“The quality of the experience and how you turn that into a relevance for an employer - how you talk about it - is what will improve your chances of getting a job,” says Chris Rea, higher education services manager at Prospect.

Taking a directed gap year is also great opportunity to work out what you want to do afterwards and avoid making an expensive mistake.

According to The Year Out Group, one in 10 reconsider going to university after a gap year, and change direction' entirely based on their experiences.

## ESCAPE BEFORE STARTING UNI

Graduates who have good language skills, can appreciate cultural differences and have a global mindset are sought-after by employers. So even if you are only spending a few weeks travelling, think about how the experience can add to your skill-set.

InterRail is a great way to enjoy travelling across Europe on high-speed trains, with just one ticket for up to one month.

You can visit everything from the mountains to the sun-soaked beaches and the bustling cities, and decide last-minute where you want to go.

You can also save time and money on accommodation by kipping on the night trains - falling asleep in Paris and waking up in Rome. Visit [interrail.eu/](http://interrail.eu/) to find out more.

If you do not have a bunch of mates with any money left after the summer, you can go on a group tour, such as Europe in 14 days organised by firms like STA Travel (£1,127). Or wait for a late deal - once children go back to school, prices for package holidays and flights plummet.

#### **DEFER YOUR PLACE**

A “gap” doesn’t have to be for an entire year. You can defer your place to start in the spring, as many universities, such as London Metropolitan University, offer January start dates.

Check with your Admissions Officer first, as some courses do not allow deferrals.

Note that a deferred entry only means you will be considered for an offer for the following year.

According to Which? University: “If you’re planning to apply to a competitive course, you may find that you are in a stronger position if you apply during your gap year, with your qualifications already achieved, rather than applying for deferred entry with predicted grades.

.....  
‘The quality of the experience is what will improve your chances of getting a job’

#### **VOLUNTEERING ABROAD**

Volunteering overseas gives you a great mix of adventure, travel and valuable work experience, which will make you stand out as a candidate when applying to university or for a job.

Go with a company that offers a structured programme - it is also safer.

Note that these schemes are not always cheap - £2,350 for five weeks on Operation Raleigh, rising to £3,450 for 10 weeks, but you will get to work in remote communities in some of the most incredible areas of the world. The International Citizenship Service is Government-backed, so could be more affordable - but you will need to raise at least £800.

Volunteering schemes are also incredibly popular, so you may have to wait to find a place. To make the most of your “gap”, and to fund your volunteering abroad, you will probably need to work, too. Again, try to pick a role that will enhance your chances of getting into uni next year.

#### **WORKING ABROAD**

A mix of travel, living in a different country, perhaps learning a new language while gaining valuable employment skills, is going to really set you above other candidates.

Make sure you understand visa requirements - for example, the two-year student visa available in Australia – before travelling, and try to have work lined up. Otherwise, you could travel a long way to find that you run out of money and have to return home.



## Want time out? Here's what to do, and what you should avoid

WHICH? University has some dos and don'ts for your time out...

**Do:** gain some relevant experience. For certain degree courses, it may even be an essential - or at least highly desirable - requirement to have a year out to gain experience. Social work, medicine and veterinary medicine are good examples.

**Do:** maintain or improve your skills. Whatever you plan to study, it's a good idea to keep up the skills you've acquired in your subject to date, as well as ideally spending time building and developing them.

In order to prove they are well prepared for their studies, applicants holding offers for mathematics or languages degrees who are taking a gap year are strongly recommended to undertake work that maintains their mathematics or language skills during their year out.

**Do:** earn some money to fund your studies. University is expensive.

Using your gap year as an opportunity to save up some money will only be viewed positively by admissions tutors.

Saving up to fund your studies, according to the University of Sheffield, "reflects very well on you as

an individual, as you are demonstrating social responsibility".

**Do:** spend some time "discovering yourself". This could be time spent backpacking round Europe or further afield, getting involved in a local community project, or even just learning a new skill or hobby.

You have probably been in full-time education from the age of five, so why not take a break? There are plenty of adventures to be had while gaining new skills and experiences that cannot be gained in the classroom.

**Don't:** waste it. However you decide to spend your gap year, make sure that it is a constructive use of your time. Don't just spend the year having a good time and not doing anything that will add value to your time at university - it won't do you, or your application, any favours.

The best way to avoid wasting your gap year is to ensure that you plan out your time effectively.

Do your research well in advance to avoid any unexpected pitfalls, such as costs for travelling or volunteering that you can't afford to meet, or not getting a work experience application in on time.

## CAM RESULTS BETTER (OR WORSE) THAN EXPECTED?

# Keep A-level head



**MORE than 500,000 teens found out their A-level results yesterday - but you don't have to get an A\* to be a star.**

In fact, even for those with brilliant results, university is not the be all and end all, with just 24 per cent of employers preferring to hire graduates.

Indeed, 49 per cent would rather choose an applicant with a relevant apprenticeship under their belt, according to a new study by the Association of Accounting Technicians.

This means you can still get on to the right career path without getting the marks — or the student debt.

*We have teamed up with the National Careers Service Exam Results Helpline to answer two of the most common worries after the results arrive.*

**I didn't get the results I wanted - I am devastated.**

Remember, everything will be OK. If you don't get the grades you expected, it may be quite a shock but the best thing you can do is stay calm and focus your energy on figuring out your next steps.

Seek advice from the experts, because while families, friends and teachers are well-meaning they won't necessarily know all the options.

Call our free Exam Results Helpline on 0800 100 900. It is open 8am-10pm, seven days a week.

ALICE ARMSTRONG is among the first people to train as a software developer on an apprenticeship instead of going to university.

The 26-year-old, of Newham, East London, got a place on the Makers Academy software engineering training scheme.

Alice says: "Coding apprenticeships will be very popular in the future, because of how accessible it makes the industry for people who didn't consider it an option earlier." Makers Academy graduates can expect to earn between £30,000 and £35,000 in London for their first job. Those taking part in

Makers Apprenticeships earn around £18,000 to £25,000 while getting a year's training.

See [makers.tech/become/apprentice](https://makers.tech/become/apprentice).

If your heart is set on university but you've lost your conditional offers, try clearing.

Last year, almost 65,000 students found a place.

Visit [digital.ucas.com/search](https://digital.ucas.com/search) — but be quick — as courses fill up fast.

**My results are better than I expected - what do I do now?** Explore any new options. Consider a different uni, or degree apprenticeships where employers pay for you to study while you work for them.

But if you want to stick to your original plan, carry out the finishing touches — accept your uni or college place or apply for an apprenticeship.

Get the financial support you need in place and

make sure you are ready to start the new academic year or the next part of your career journey.

And celebrate your success — spend time enjoying the moment with loved ones.



**APPRENTICESHIPS and Skills Minister Anne Milton says:** I want to say a huge congratulations to everyone receiving their results this week. I also want to let you know there are more choices for you and ways to get into work than ever.

There are now high-quality apprenticeships available in a range of exciting industries including aerospace, fashion, nuclear and teaching - and up to degree level, too.

Doing an apprenticeship means you can earn while you learn and get a headstart in the workplace over your peers. What's not to like?

Call the National Apprenticeships Service helpline on 0800 100 900, or look at our Find An Apprenticeship service [ongov.uk](http://ongov.uk).

## ***FORGET MARS & CARS***

### Musk has set up secret school for kid geniuses

#### **MATTHEW FIELD**

LONDON Elon Musk, the billionaire Tesla founder, invests in cars, rockets and tunnels and even hopes to colonize Mars, but he has one venture that he has kept secret at his SpaceX campus.

He has founded a school called Ad Astra, at his offices in Hawthorne, Calif., dedicated to child geniuses.

Unlike other schools in the U.S., its loose curriculum focuses on projects that most fascinate the entrepreneur, from artificial intelligence and machine ethics to robotics and coding.

In a move that might horrify some parents, there is no room for foreign languages or sports.

Musk founded the experimental school three years ago to “exceed



traditional school metrics on all relevant subject matter through unique project-based learning experiences,” according to a regulatory filing document discovered by the tech website Ars Technica.

While he is normally happy to publicize his ventures — most notably, his recent efforts to help rescue 12 young soccer players from a cave in Thailand — Ad Astra has been kept secret as a mostly private venture.

It educates children aged from seven to 14 and started with a class of eight, including Musk’s own children. It has since grown to around 40 students made up of gifted applicants and the children of SpaceX employees.

According to the filing, the school is funded entirely by Musk. The document reveals that the school emphasizes “ability over age” for group projects, study of science, math, engineering and ethics.

It adds the school will develop “remarkable people imbued with a strong sense of justice.” It can cater to up to 50 students at a time.

There is little else to even prove that the school exists. A website for Ad Astra has just a home page and one link, for children’s parents.

In a rare interview last year, Joshua

Dahn, the headmaster, revealed a few insights. According to him, the school day is from 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m., although it is intensive with “no down time.” Classes focus on projects rather than disciplines.

Students learn to code in multiple software languages. No spoken languages are taught, based on Musk’s belief that computers will soon help humans instantly communicate in any language. Sports are nowhere on the timetable.

Children from seven to 14 work together.

“We take the most precocious kid we can find who can keep up with kids who are a bit older,” said Dahn, who described one problem-solving exercise, called “The Lake,” which involves students discussing a town with a factory that is polluting the local water and killing wildlife.

The factory employs everyone in town, and voters keep in power the politicians who favour the factory. Students are asked: who is most to blame for the pollution — the voters, the politicians or the factory owners?

There are no grades awarded; children are simply given critical and honest feedback.

*London Daily Telegraph*

# Boys outperform girls when coursework carries less clout

*Rosemary Bennett,  
Nicola Woolcock*

Boys emerged as the winners in this summer's A levels, clinching more top grades than girls for the first time in almost two decades.

Their success was put down to radical changes to the exam system, which were considered to favour their way of working. Course work and regular testing, and mid-point AS levels, have been stripped away and the result rides on the final exams at the end of two years in the reformed A levels.

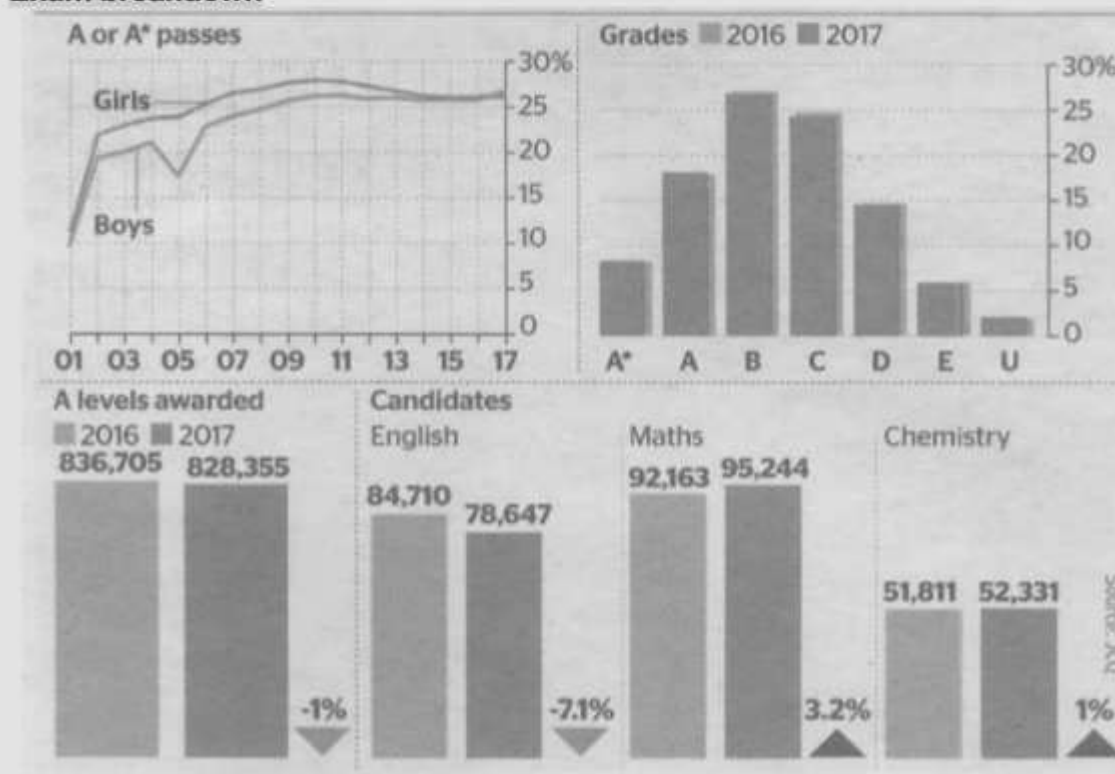
Boys scored 0.5 percentage points higher than girls in As and A\*s. The gap has been narrowing in recent years but stood at 0.3 percentage

points in girls' favour last year. At its height, in 2004, it stood at almost 3 percentage points.

The gap in the 13 reformed A levels, which range from English to Chemistry, was even more marked. Both girls and boys gained 24.3 per cent As and A\*s compared with a lead of 0.9 percentage points in girls' favour last year.

Boys are thought to do better at cramming, enjoy the bravura of exams and have a more cavalier attitude to coursework. Girls are generally more conscientious and better at working steadily and consistently, so have done well on regular tests and coursework. The content of the 13 reformed subjects

## Exam breakdown



is also considered more “boy-friendly”, with a higher content of maths included in science subjects such as biology.

While boys have closed the A-level gap, *they* have a way to go when it comes to getting a university place where the gender gap on admissions, already wide, grew this year.

Almost a third of 18-year-old girls (31.7 per cent) have gained places this year, up from 31.3 per cent last year. Among 18-year-old boys, 22.9 per cent have been offered places this year compared with 22.6 per cent last year.

Ucas, the university admissions service, calculates that young women are now 39 per cent more likely than their male peers to go to university, compared with 38 per cent last year.

Nick Hillman, director of the Higher Education Policy Institute, called the gender admissions gulf a national scandal. “Everyone knows there is a problem and yet there are no policies in place to address it,” he said.

In a blow to ministers, the rate of improvement of sending disadvantaged teenagers to university appears to be slowing. The proportion of the poorest fifth of pupils heading to university rose from 16.1 per cent of the cohort last year to 16.5 per cent this year. A source close to Ucas said:

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### Gender choice

Exam boards may adapt the system they use to compare the grades of boys and girls and include a category for students who do not identify with either gender.

In future non-binary pupils may have

“The data suggests this is slowing down.

”Universities must run schemes to encourage poorer children to apply. There are also government initiatives to boost the numbers. Historically, pupils from families with no tradition of going to university tend to attend newer, less prestigious universities.

Today’s figures show that while numbers placed at so-called high-tariff universities have risen by 1 per cent, and at middle-tariff institutions by 2 per cent, numbers for lower-ranking universities have fallen by 3 per cent in a year.

Les Ebdon, director of Fair Access to Higher Education, said: “I am delighted that there has, once again, been a rise in the number of young people from the most disadvantaged backgrounds getting the grades they need to secure places in higher education. I applaud their effort and dedication.

“Unfortunately, some young people have exam results today that do not reflect their potential, because they have been held back by socio-economic or educational disadvantage. Universities and colleges have a key role to play in working with schools to give support.”

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the option of telling the Joint Council for Qualifications that they do not wish to be classed as either male or female.

Sharon Hague, senior vice-president of Pearson Qualifications, the exam board, said that it was working with Stonewall, the gay rights charity, on the



*best way to record gender diversity. "This is something that young people feel strongly about," she said.*

If the plans go ahead, a third category for gender would be added to the results tables. Exam boards would also allow students who have received their results to change their gender classification

afterwards. Since 2010, the number of children under the age of ten referred to the NHS as a result of transgender feelings has more than quadrupled and many schools have adopted a more flexible approach towards uniforms.

## Pupils drop English and history as big push for science pays off

**Rosemary Bennett** Education Editor  
**Nicola Woolcock**  
Education Correspondent  
**Oliver Moody** Science Correspondent

Teenagers are deserting English and history at A level in droves and embracing science in all its forms.

Entries for English language fell by 10.2 per cent and history by 8.1 per cent. Mathematics, chemistry and physics, with their promise of well-paid jobs, are soaring in popularity, with maths by far the most popular A-level subject.

Some 33 per cent of all entries this year were in so-called Stem subjects: science, technology, engineering and maths. A decade ago, the proportion was 24.8 per cent.

The shift is the result of a concerted push on Stem subjects led by successive governments and business leaders, who say that Britain needs such skills for the economy to flourish.

There was speculation that schools had persuaded weaker candidates to avoid English and history, which have been toughened up in a series of reforms. Experts said that this was probably a marginal factor. Physics, chemistry, computing and economics have also been reformed and all attracted a sharp rise in candidates, with the biggest increase coming in computing, up by 33 per cent on last year.

Head teachers and experts warned that the country would become a "nation of techno-nerds" if schools were unable to add arts and humanities to the mix, whether through formal study or extracurricular activities.

Some 95,244 pupils took maths, with 16,172 taking further maths as well. This compares with 67,965 a decade ago. Biology was the second most popular subject, followed by psychology. Chemistry was more popular than history for the first

time, at 52,331 entries compared with 50,311.

The fall in English literature was among the most marked declines. Until 2013 it was the most popular A level. Now it is sixth, with 46,411 entries. When English language is added in, there were 78,647 entries, down 7.1 per cent on last year.

Sir David Cannadine, president of the British Academy, said that he was deeply worried by the trend. "Studying subjects such as history puts the whole of human experience in context and help us to understand cultures, societies and why humans behave as they do. There is not a challenge facing the world today which can be solved by looking through a scientific lens alone," he said.

These skills would become even more important after Brexit, he said. "Skills such as the ability to appraise evidence critically, to persuade, negotiate, and unravel complexity will be crucial. We shouldn't force students down a narrow path."

Jane Lunnon, head teacher of Wimbledon High School, said that she feared the new style of A levels, which encourage deep study rather than breadth, could make the situation worse. "We must ensure we maintain breadth of approach, breadth in attitude and cultural richness. We do not want a nation of techno-nerds," she said.

The science community welcomed the results. Frank Kelly, chairman of the Royal Society's advisory committee on mathematics education, said that he was delighted.

"Mathematics is essential for understanding the modern world and provides the foundations for economic prosperity," he said.

Charles Tracy, head of education at the Institute of Physics, said: "These qualifications will prove to be an excellent foundation for students' next steps, setting them up for life." Some 36,578 pupils took physics, up 3.5 per cent.

Only political studies bucked the trend. Although still a small course, entries rose by 13 per cent to 17,523. Sharon Hague, senior vice-president of Pearson Qualification Services, suggested that Brexit, President Trump and other major world events had increased young people's interest in politics.

Overall top A-level grades rose for the first time in six years. A\* and A grades were awarded to 26.3 per cent of entries, up by 0.5 percentage points compared with last year.

**Philip Collins, page 27**

**Letters, page 30**

**Leading article, page 31**

**Results, pages 54-55**



# App stops teenagers ignoring their parents

**Katie Gibbons**

Thanks to one fed-up father, the days of teenagers simply ignoring texts from their parents could be over.

Nick Herbert, 45, has developed an app that takes over a smartphone screen and sounds an alarm that only stops when the recipient replies to a text. Parents install the app on their own devices and are notified when their child sees the message or are informed that the child's phone is turned off.

Mr Herbert, a digital product manager from West Wickham, southeast London, built the ReplyASAP messaging app after becoming frustrated that his 13-year-old son was always playing on his smartphone but never replied to text messages.

Mr Herbert acknowledged that some teenagers could find the app intrusive but said that there had been positive feedback from parents. He added: "As they are teenagers I realise they aren't going to be massively keen. My son hasn't really said anything negative about the app. It is all about him understanding why it's there."

The app is available to download and costs 99p to send messages to one person, £2.49 to track four people and £6.99 for ten. It joins the growing supply of products aimed at concerned — or overbearing—parents who are keen to keep tabs on their children.

On average, British children own their first mobile phone by the age of seven, a tablet at eight and their first smartphone by ten, according to a consumer survey. A recent report found that British teenagers spent more time on the internet than any other group in the world, leading them to become more unhappy and vulnerable to mental health problems.

Many parents unable to ban smartphones altogether are relying on apps to curb their use.

Those fed up with their children playing too many games or accessing social media at the dinner table can install Phonesheriff, a popular app that allows them to shut down and lock their child's phone from their own device.

Another app, MamaBear, is designed for parents of new drivers or teenagers with friends who have recently gained their licences. When downloaded on to both the parent's and teenager's devices it allows the parent to monitor the speed of the vehicle in which their child is travelling.

Perhaps the ultimate control app is Mspy, which gives full access to everything a child is doing on a smartphone — who they call, what they text, which apps they use, and their GPS location.



EDUCASHUN NEWZ

## Class war



**A** MONTESSORI primary school in Hampshire has lost two headteachers and most of its pupils in the past year and is embroiled in a row over the use of the school for National Citizenship Service courses for teenagers.

Resonate Hants, a company offering “the experience of a lifetime” to 15 to 17 year olds, used the grounds and rooms of Norman Court during the summer term for workshops and social action projects. Parents say pupils were squeezed out of school spaces to make way for the NCS scheme, and a school music and dance concert was cancelled because NCS was using the dining hall and other rooms needed to host the event.

The longstanding Norman Court Prep School was closed in 2012 and sold due to falling numbers of pupils. The Norman Court Montessori School, which opened in the same Georgian mansion in 2014, is an independent school run by a community interest company whose founder and sole director is Susan Hartley-Raven, also the school’s chair of trustees. Hartley-Raven is also one of three owners of Resonate Hants.

Trustees tried to reassure parents that the NCS activities are a big money-spinner for the school, and accounts for 2016 show Resonate paid £93,000 into school accounts for use of the site, mainly during the summer holiday. However, the trustees accepted that “it brings logistical challenges for the short period of overlap with the school term”.

Previous head teacher Hamish McKeown quit and left teaching altogether in December 2016. His replacement, Andrew Hammond, started on 1 April and resigned on 13 June after disagreement with the trustees. Parents called in the Independent Schools Inspectorate, which ran an emergency inspection. This revealed that the school, which was only licensed to teach under 11s, was teaching pupils up to 14 years old.

In a further letter to parents last month, the trustees insisted “we have learnt lessons here. The way that NCS and the school work together in future is being completely reviewed and reassessed.” However, many parents had already withdrawn their children and correspondence seen by the *Eye* suggests fewer than 10 pupils will to start the new school year in September.

## Watch this

Top marks for this brainy bunch

Child Genius  
Channel 4, 8pm

Richard Osman is back, as are the country's most gifted youngsters, who with their enquiring minds, a motivation to learn and an interest in the world around them are certainly an inspiration to most folk these days, who, let's face it, get their knowledge via social media.

This is the fifth series of the annual search for Britain's brightest eight- to 12-year-old, which is organised in association with British Mensa. However, it's not just about the questions and giving viewers the chance to pit their wits against the clever kids. The series also follows the children and their families and offers us an insight into what it's like to be a gifted youngster, and the different ways their parents deal with the challenges involved.

The programme also stokes the age-old nature-versus-nurture debate, and ponders whether kids are just born bright or if their intellectual ability is at least partly down to parental encouragement.



**Little thinkers:** Richard Osman puts a new batch of pint-sized poindexters to the test

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In tonight's opening edition we meet some of this year's contestants, including siblings Fabio, aged nine, and 12-year-old Olivia, from London. Their mum Susan is one particular parent who believes she is playing a key role in both her children's success, but she certainly has her favourite. "I'm 100 per cent behind the boy," she admits. However, the brother-and-sister duo face a tough first challenge here as they tackle the Spelling and Complex Linguistic Memory rounds, which test the participants' ability to recall the Latin- and Greek-derived scientific names of 60 fruit and vegetables.

PARENTING

## What you can do if your child is the class bully

In many instances bullying is an adaptive behaviour, professor says  
**Sheryl Ubelacker**  
THE CANADIAN PRESS



Little Johnny may not be a perfect angel, but his parents believe he's a pretty good kid all around. But then comes a call from the principal that bursts that particular bubble: their son has reportedly been bullying other kids — a complete no-no given many schools' zero-tolerance policies for such behaviour.

So why do kids bully and what are parents to do?

In many instances, bullying is an adaptive behaviour for a child, teen or adult, says Tony Volk of Brock University, pointing to U.S. President Donald Trump as a particularly glaring example.

"The first thing that predisposes people to doing it is that it's effective at getting what you want in many cases," says the professor of child and youth studies at the St. Catharines university.

Younger children in elementary and middle schools are more likely to engage in bullying, which decreases in prevalence as children grow older, says PREVNet, a group of 130 Canadian researchers and 62 national youth organizations. **dreamstime**

"They want to get something out of it—popularity, sex, resources, the best place at lunch. And if you're able to do it well, it often comes with relatively few costs, especially in the short run," he says, noting however that the price for victims of bullying is often much higher, leading to what can be long-term effects on mental and physical health.

Psychiatrist Dr. Susan Baer, medical director of outpatient mental health services at BC Children's Hospital, says a common reason for some children and teens to target someone in their peer group, for instance, is because they feel powerless in other

aspects of their life. Bullying is a means of obtaining power, she says. "Other things can be wanting to gain social standing or attention, admiration from friends. Interestingly, one of the more common (reasons) is being bullied themselves. And sometimes, there can be sort of a culture either that the child has been exposed to in the home or in the school." Still, it's not always clear whether a child is being actually bullied or if they are on one side of what would be considered merely conflict with another.

The first step is to understand what lies behind the behaviour. Learn more at [thestar.com/life](http://thestar.com/life)



# Vaping teens 4 times more likely to smoke

TEENAGERS who use electronic cigarettes are four times more likely to move on to tobacco, a study found.

**The research is the first UK evidence that vaping may act as a gateway to smoking.**

E-cigarettes contain liquid nicotine that is heated into vapour, avoiding the harm caused by tobacco smoke.

Around three million British adults have used e-cigarettes in the decade or so they have been on the market.

Health experts agree the devices are much safer than smoking tobacco. They are thought to help 22,000 people quit smoking each year, and there are plans to make them available on NHS prescriptions.

But some say there are unresolved safety concerns.

US studies have warned teenagers who use the gadgets are more likely to 'graduate' to tobacco later.

British doctors have insisted there is no evidence that this is the case in the UK. But the latest study, in the BMJ journal Tobacco Control, suggests for the first time that the 'robust association' between vaping and smoking exists here as well.

Experts led by Leeds University staff examined survey responses from 2,836 pupils at 20 schools in England,

By **Ben Spencer**  
**Medical Correspondent**

aged 13-14, and a year later, at 14-15. Among those who had never smoked but had tried an e-cigarette, 34 per cent tried smoking tobacco over the year. Among those who had not smoked and never used an e-cigarette, only 9 per cent tried tobacco.

The scientists pointed out they asked only whether pupils experimented with tobacco - meaning some may have tried it only once.

Study leader Professor Mark Conner of Leeds University said that

## 'A strong predictor'

among teenagers who had never smoked, 'use of e-cigarettes was a strong predictor that within 12 months they would have tried a conventional cigarette'.

But Professor Linda Bauld of Stirling University said: 'This study does not provide evidence that using e-cigarettes causes young people to become smokers...smoking among young people in the UK is at an all-time low.'

It is illegal in the UK to sell e-cigarettes to under-18s.



WITHOUT TRUST, SOCIAL MEDIA WILL CONTINUE ITS SLIDE

Social media share prices took a beating at the end of this past week, with Facebook investors losing US\$120-billion of share value and Twitter ones losing US\$5-billion. Both of these companies lost 20 per cent of their value in a day, along with Snapchat, which lost 5 per cent.

Are investors waking up to what consumers already know, that social media has passed its peak? Facebook and Twitter have grown rapidly on the promise of greater connectivity. Along with the benefits, however, the dark side of these new technologies has come to the surface and consumer trust is eroding fast.



"The route to long-term success is based on serving the needs of one's consumers, not on manipulating and exploiting them for short-term results," writes Saul Klein.

**"WHAT WAS ONCE SEEN AS A BOON TO FREE SPEECH HAS CREATED A PLATFORM FOR VITRIOL AND ONLINE BOLLYING."**

The annual Gustavson Brand Trust Index shows how social media brands are perceived by consumers. Of 299 brands surveyed in Canada in 2018, Twitter ranked No. 296, Facebook ranked No. 295, and Snapchat was No. 294. These are also among the brands that Canadians are least likely to recommend.

If we recognize that people don't want to do business with brands they don't trust, the overinflated growth projections of social media brands was clearly an illusion. Now that it is becoming clear that the emperor has no clothes, we should expect continuing turbulence in the social media space. Continuing large increases in subscriber growth are unlikely to materialize unless the companies do something about the way they are perceived.

What was once seen as the advent of a new era of free and open communications has

into a nightmare of manipulation, loss of privacy and hate-speech.

Rather than new media creating strong alternatives to traditional channels, allowing a greater diversity of views with governments and other powerful stakeholders having less control over access to information

site has happened. Authoritarian regimes are now more able to control content and manipulate readers and viewers. Without legitimate gatekeepers, truth has evaporated, and it is becoming increasingly difficult for consumers to distinguish fake news from any other kind.

What was once seen as a benign tool for individuals to stay in contact with one another, build communities around common interests and share experiences, has become a vehicle for unscrupulous agents to use personal information to target and shape opinion.

## ROUGHING IT WITH THE KIDS

**Ethan Rotberg**

There are so many good reasons to go camping—it's quality time with friends and family, it's an affordable vacation, and, maybe most importantly, it allows you to escape your hectic city life.

If you grew up tent camping, you're probably excited to take your own children on their first camping trip. Even though your kids will assuredly appreciate the great outdoors eventually, there are still a few things to consider before you go.

Tim Dea knows a few things about camping with kids. In addition to being the marketing & communications manager for Edmonton's Rainbow Valley Campground, Dea was taking his two sons camping from the time they were just babies. He shares some tips to help you make the most of the experience.



**If you grew up tent camping, you're probably excited to take your own children on their first camping trip.**

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**Choosing the right spot:** One of the first things you might look for is a campground with easy access. Dea would choose somewhere within about an hour from Edmonton, avoiding long road trips that can be tough with small children.



Besides getting there in one piece, you can also ensure the campground has the amenities to make things easy and fun for kids.

“We always looked for a place that had a decent playground, were the washrooms clean, did things work when they were supposed to work,” Dea said.

Frontcountry campgrounds can also offer amenities like showers, snack bars and swimming pools.

**Be prepared:** Preparation takes a new importance when going with young children. Make sure you’re prepared for rain, for hot weather or cold weather.

And while you’ll have plenty of time to explore the great outdoors, having some distractions for kids can be helpful.

“You can get so much stuff that can keep kids entertained that you don’t

have to keep plugged in,” Dea said. “It’s interesting the amount of gadgets you can get — and it’s all pack-able and foldable.”

It’s also helpful when kids know what to expect before the trip, Dea says.

“It’s the fear of the unknown,” he said. “We set up the tent in the backyard so they got used to being in there. So that acclimatization is helpful, they see it’s not some scary thing.”

Dea also mentions that if you’re new to family camping, you can test it out by going with another family.

“We always went with others who had some, or a lot, of experience camping with kids,” he said. “That way if you forgot anything, someone else may have brought that thing.”

## Surge in exclusions of autistic pupils set to be halted after landmark legal ruling



Provoked: **Reece Earle and his mother Sarah**

THE mother of a boy with autism temporarily excluded from school said staff needed to better understand the condition to help prevent aggressive behaviour.

Reece Earle was temporarily excluded from Acton High School after lashing out when targeted by bullies.

His mother, Sarah Earle, explained that Reece, 13, who is a top-level sprinter in his age group,

### Mother's battle with school after son lashed out

had reacted in self-defence.

It was only after Ms Earle repeatedly complained to the school that they agreed to attach to his file a note explaining that Reece had autism and had been provoked by another child.

Ms Earle explained that Reece often got into trouble when he did not understand things and "shut down", a term used to describe how autistic children can become unresponsive when pressurised. "Children like Reece, when they shut down, will not reflect on their actions. You cannot deal with it at that time, you need to give them time to calm down or come home," she said.

A spokesperson for the school said two independent investigations had found that it had followed correct procedures, and that Reece had been taken out of the school after two temporary exclusions.

### Sian Bayley

CAMPAIGNERS are calling for better training for schools to deal with children with autism.

It follows a surge in the number of pupils with the condition who have been suspended, and a legal ruling this week which found students were being too easily removed from schools.

Figures released by charity Ambitious About Autism show a 61 per cent increase in pupils with autism temporarily excluded in the capital since 2011. It rose from 315 in 2011/12 to 515 in 2015/2016. Ten pupils were expelled in each of the two academic years.

Nearly half of pupils excluded on both a permanent and temporary

basis have special educational needs (SEN), official figures show.

Alison Worsley, director of external affairs at Ambitious About Autism, said children with autism were the most likely SEN group to be suspended.

She said: "This is a disproportionate and alarming rise and a worrying sign that children with autism are being let down by our education system. The current independent review into school exclusions must examine why pupils with autism are so much more at risk of missing vital education time."

The charity was today joined by the National Autistic Society in calling for urgent change after a judge this week branded the current policy of excluding autistic children for aggressive behaviour "repugnant".

Upper Tribunal judge Alison Rowley said schools should not treat

aggressive behaviour as "criminal or antisocial" when it was a result of a child's condition and "not a choice". Ruling in favour of a boy identified as L, who was temporarily excluded in 2016 for hitting a teaching assistant, she said a regulation under the Equality Act that allows schools to exclude pupils for aggression was incompatible with human rights legislation.

Jane Harris, director of external affairs at the National Autistic Society, said that before this ruling schools were able to exclude pupils who have a "tendency to physical abuse", "even if that behaviour came about because a school had failed to make adaptations for their condition". She called the ruling "a powerful recognition of the rights of autistic children".

A Department for Education spokesperson it would be considering the judgment and its implications.



# Let's talk about stress, baby

## HOW TO SPEAK TO KIDS ABOUT MENTAL HEALTH

### SEND A WHATSAPP

Jo says: "Nowadays you don't always have to talk about mental health face-to-face.

"Teenagers might appreciate a text, an email or a WhatsApp.

"I suffered a bereavement recently and, while I didn't feel ready to talk about it, I really appreciated hearing the ping of the phone with people messaging to make sure I was OK.

"The medium doesn't matter. The important thing is that you reach out and ask, 'Are you OK?'"

### GIVE TIME

Jo says: "Time is a huge pressure for parents. While not every parent has days off over the summer holidays, it might be a good opportunity to find extra time to sit and talk with your teenagers.

"Perhaps they are less busy than they are when they are at school. We'd really encourage parents to bring up the topic when they can.

"We've done research with parents and many feel they don't know enough. But you don't need to be an expert to explore this topic.



"It's OK not to know everything. Just ask, 'Have you learnt about this at school?' or 'Have you and your friends experienced this?'"

### TALK CELEBS

Jo says: "A great way of raising the issue is to say, 'Did you see that star opening up about their mental health?' or 'Did you see that storyline on EastEnders about mental health?'"

"Talking about something you have seen in the news, or on the television, is a good way of showing teenagers it is not a taboo subject.

"We should be talking about mental health like it's everyday and ordinary. We know it is common.

"One in ten young people will have a mental health diagnosis by 16. We wouldn't balk at talking about our physical health.

"We are looking for a change in generation so the young people of today will become adults who find it OK to talk about mental health. They will then reach out for help much earlier.

“This means the prognosis going forward is much, much better.

“If they hold these things in and don’t feel they can talk about it, it can escalate.”

### **GO SHOPPING**

Jo says: “Nine times out of ten you have some of your most interesting conversations when you are out shopping, driving or doing the school run.

“It means you are not sitting at home, pulling up a chair and saying, ‘Let’s have a chat about mental health’. It doesn’t have to be that formal. Teenagers are more likely to open up if they feel relaxed. It also means you are not overplaying the issue but it is coming up in a more natural way.”

### **LEAD BY EXAMPLE**

Jo says: “As we grow up we look to our peers. But we also look to the adults around us to pick up behavioral cues and what is OK to do and not do.

“It’s exactly the same when we are talking about mental health.

“If something comes on TV and you think it was interesting then try, ‘This happened to me or my friend’.

“Being open creates a culture where young people can look to adults and know it’s OK to seek help if you need to.

“It’s also good to let’s e»d went» demonstrate that you take measures to look after your mental health.

“Any protective factors are good, whether running is your thing, or if it is taking ten minutes out of your day to go for a walk.

“If you explain you are doing it

because your mental health is important to you, then it sets a good example for young people.”

### **LISTEN**

Jo says: “It’s great if you feel able to talk about mental health. But if no one is properly listening in a way that is non-judgmental and open, it won’t help a great deal. Listening is one of the most important things you can do.

“If you want to be a good listener, ask open questions. Make sure that whatever you hear, you are being non-judgmental as you will encourage them to open up.

“Go at their pace. Don’t push for more if someone is not ready.”

### **SEEK HELP**

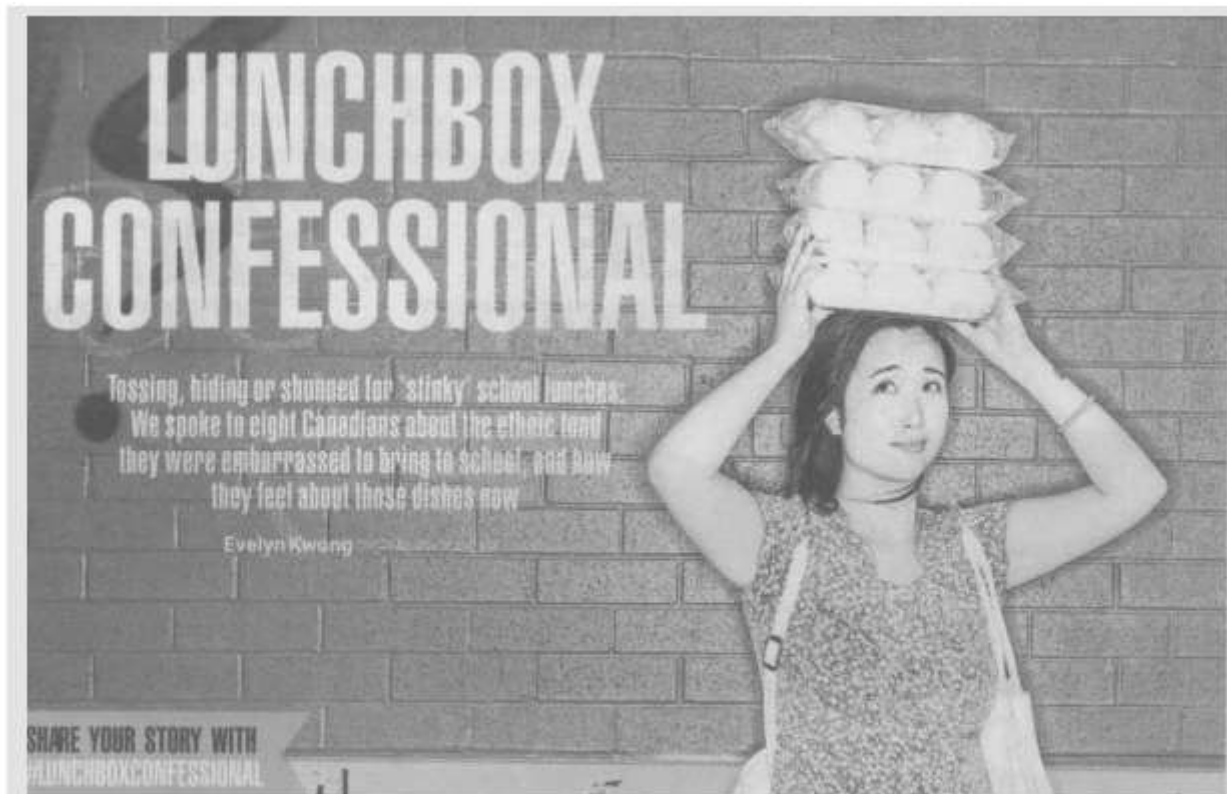
Jo says: “It can be hard to know when your child needs help, or if they are having normal issues associated with growing up.

“Generally speaking, we know better than anyone else and you probably know what is normal for them. If there is something you feel worried about, you think it’s been going on for more than three or four weeks and it’s a real change for your child, then you may need to seek help.

“The first thing to do is to try to have a conversation with your teenager.

“Hopefully you can agree a plan together and get a better idea of what is going on.

“Usually the first port of call is your GP but there are also lots of charities around that can offer support and advice.”



**"One time in high school I was in a rush and I just brought the frozen baos. That day, i got so many comments about how it smelled, how it looked, how weird it was," says Christine Vu.**

**Christine Vu, 28,  
PR at Momofuku**

**The lunch:** The food is char siu bao, it's a Chinese dish. My parents bought it frozen. We called it banh bao in Vietnamese, and this is what my sister and I lived off of.

**Why was it embarrassing?** I always made my own lunches because my parents both worked full time. I'd bring basic lunches, like ham sandwiches. I didn't bring Vietnamese food, or Asian food to school, because I subconsciously got really good at separating my ethnic home life from school life because I went to a predominantly white school.

But one time in high school I was in a rush and I just brought the frozen baos. That day, I got so many

comments about how it smelled, how it looked, how weird it was, and it was embarrassing. Someone even asked me to throw it away I did have an older student stick up for me, and all they had to say was 'it smells good,' and that made everyone shut up. I had never thought about it, but after that, I never brought it back to school.

Growing up in Fort McMurray, Alta., I didn't really experience that much racism, but it was a different kind of racism where if you didn't do things the way they did, you would feel othered. It was almost more shocking that way, because I never knew I was looked at differently until I brought these to school. It made me look at my own friends differently, and made me re-evaluate



people that I hung around with. As a teenager, I didn't know how to articulate what was wrong or how to speak up for myself.

**What would you say looking back?** My parents worked really hard and they didn't really have time to provide anything else. When I was getting teased, I wish I just said something myself, instead of waiting for someone else to say something, because there might not have been someone there to say anything at all. It was my own friends who were making comments, and I should have been comfortable enough to say something.

No one should be saying stuff like that anyway. At the time of the lunchroom incident, I didn't tell my parents because I didn't think they would get it. Now, being mothered is something I know they understand, too. Food was just one of many things that made us different as a Vietnamese family in Fort

McMurray. As hard as it was at times, I wouldn't change a thing.

*Submissions have been edited for clarity and length.*

**'I remember being told by a teacher to go to the kitchen and eat it - alone': Read the other confessionals at [thestar.com/food](http://thestar.com/food)**

## Let's keep A levels but scrap outdated GCSEs

**Our education system caters well for the gifted minority but is badly letting down those unsuited to academic exams**

**Philip Collins**



@PCOLLINSTIMES

Benjamin Disraeli was the first, in 1880, to make education compulsory until the age of ten. David Lloyd George extended it to 14 at the end of the Great War. The wartime coalition made it 15 in 1944 and Ted Heath raised it to 16 in 1972. Then Gordon Brown decided that the age at which

you can leave education or training should be 18. Even so, while a third of that age group had a nervous time yesterday receiving A-level results, two thirds were not even involved. The way we abandon those who never get to do A levels is the biggest problem in Britain's education system.

The usual controversialist's strategy come mid-August is to ruin the achievement of A-level students by pointing out that the examination has been hopelessly corroded by grade inflation and that A levels are the wrong qualifications in any case,

as they force students to specialise too soon. All told, the whole endeavour has been a waste of time and there is little point, all those blonde girls being so clever at physics just so they can get their pictures on the front page of the paper.

There is a column that writes itself here but every last one of these accusations is wrong and, more importantly, entirely beside the main point. The problem with A levels is not that they are not good qualifications. It is that yesterday was an important day for too few students.

The British system of examinations recalls the sage advice of WC Fields: "If at first you don't succeed, try, try again. Then quit. No use being a damn fool about it." Before 1951 students took a course towards a school certificate followed by, for the gifted who made it through a further two years, the higher school certificate. In 1951, the two school certificates were replaced by the O and A level respectively but it was already clear there was a problem. In 1944, Churchill's education secretary Rab Butler had divided schooling between grammars and secondary moderns and, after the war, Clement Attlee's Labour government forbade any school other than a grammar from entering pupils for external examinations under the age of 17.

Secondary moderns objected to the exclusion and, to cater for those less academically able pupils who were

Those voters who took A levels do not want the currency devalued

struggling with the pass or fail nature of the O level, Harold Wilson's government introduced, in 1965, the certificate of secondary education (CSE). This rapidly became a sort of lesser O level, a signal of the absence of academic virtue. The O level catered for the top 20 per cent and the CSE for the next 40 per cent. You won't need the top marks in CSE maths to work out that those numbers left a problem quite apart from the O level and CSE split.

In 1988, the Thatcher government turned about face and tried to integrate all students into a single examination at 16. The combined general certificate of secondary education (GCSE) replaced the sheep-and-goats system of O levels and CSEs. The GCSE presented a new problem, which was that it was stretched across such a range of abilities that the grading rubric had to be expanded, including the addition, under John Major, of an A\* at the top.

Throughout the random walk of reform the system did just one thing well. It processed the gifted minority through to A level, which qualification in turn processed them efficiently into university: just 12 per cent of 18-year-olds in the 1960s, rising to 20 per cent by 1990.

The Butler system was always supposed to have a third part, a technical curriculum, to complement the grammars and secondary moderns, but the technical schools never materialised. It was no surprise that the 40 per cent who did not fit

ended up doing very badly in public examinations at 16, if they bothered turning up at all. It didn't always matter. Semi-skilled work was abundant and the training offered in employment was adequate.

The annual celebration of A-level results sits on the top of this mess, which means that too few people are gaining qualifications at that level. There is a clean and bold solution which is to abolish the whole lot of it. The solution is not an isolated change to the A level but a comprehensive reform. Just get rid of public examinations at the age of 16. Most countries don't bother and neither should we. When the school leaving age was ten, 14,15 or 16 there was, perhaps, some elementary sense to ensuring that pupils did not leave school without a certificate to wave at employers. Not that they all did and not that they all, back in the day, actually needed one.

These days that slim justification for any public examinations at 16 has gone. Assessment does not have to be external. It is important that pupils are assessed throughout their school careers as there is ample evidence that tracking progress helps to husband success but there is no reason why that has to involve a set of examinations at the age of 16.

The pre-1951 school certificate, or some modern version, could be reinstated to ensure progress in English and mathematics were good enough. If we wanted to be truly radical we could stipulate, for all but the tiny minority who really do not



**Pupils are sitting too many public examinations during their school years**

have the capacity to pass, that anyone failing the school certificate should keep taking it until they succeed. But there is no need for the curriculum to come to a full stop at 16 and then begin again.

This change has always fallen foul of the crucial voters who did A levels themselves and whose children do A levels and do not want the currency devalued. In 2004, a former chief inspector of schools, Mike Tomlinson, conducted a major review of the curriculum which recommended a four-part diploma for 14 to 19-year-olds to replace the



### Every prime minister has funk'd this examination question

current system. It was an attempt to include everyone in a single system while permitting the specialisation that is the necessary response to the variety of talents. When this idea reached Tony Blair he instantly worked out that abolishing A levels just before a general election was pretty poor politics. David Cameron always concluded the same.

The A level is a good exam and it has a place within a viable system. Abolish the GCSE and devise a new curriculum under a single banner

which permits students to follow a pure academic or an applied course and then also allows them to specialise or stay broad to suit. Maths and English would be compulsory throughout, as would some form of civics in which students could learn why Jeremy Corbyn's attitude towards Venezuela matters.

Every prime minister until now has funk'd this examination question. Theresa May perhaps does not have the will or the strength to do it but she might as well try before she quits.

## How being a Darent helps :o give our memories a vital boost

By **Colin Fernandez**  
Science Correspondent

THINKING about your children could boost your memory, a study suggests.

Researchers believe the improvement is explained by the need to use more brain power to protect offspring.

In tests they found memory was more important in child- raising than in finding a mate.

Ralph Miller, who led the study at Binghamton University, New York, said the findings were explained by evolution. 'Our ability to think and memorise information arises from our nervous systems,' said the psychology professor.

'As our nervous systems are a product of evolution, one can reasonably expect that how well we memorise information today is Influenced by natural selection

that occurred among our ancestors long ago.'

He and his colleagues asked subjects to imagine they were living in the ancient grasslands of Africa, and to remember words such as rock, apple, ball and stick. They were asked to rate the relevance of each item to their chances of survival.

When presented with a scenario that involved raising children, they remembered many of the words. But in a task involving finding a mate, the recall rate was not so high.

The scientists said while both activities relate to survival, our ancestors may not have realised mating could result in children. Professor Miller added: 'The specific functioning of our brains is strongly Influenced by genes that were selected from among our ancestors.'

## Celebrate A-levels, then remind students about the real world

With the march of technology, the exam system is just a small part of the education our children need



Tony Little

SO THE results are in. Pass rates in the new “tough” A-level subjects are down a little. Cue anxious debate. It seems to be a peculiarly British custom that there should be an annual bout of self-flagellation in mid-August when public exam results are aired. This year, even before the results were published, there has been talk about further grade inflation, “loose” marking and confusing grades.

There is some substance in all these concerns. Over the years there has undoubtedly been grade inflation but that in itself is not an issue; grading is always relative. I cannot remember a year when there have not been concerned voices talking about some aspect of the process. This can be healthy, but these are all relatively minor concerns. What matters is whether our young people are being properly equipped to face a worryingly uncertain world with well-grounded confidence.



**Heads down:** A-levels and GCSEs are still hugely respected around the world

It can sometimes be helpful to see ourselves as others see us. Speaking at an international conference of non-European teachers, hailing from Pakistan to Vietnam, I was struck by their polite response to the keynote speakers and the vehemence of their passion for discussion about the future of A-levels. Why is it that people around the world value A-levels and GCSEs? They see rigour. Parents like them at least in part because they can take comfort from regular testing, believing they know where their children stand and the perception



(sometimes misplaced) that the assessment is reliable. Children like it, too. As one 12-year-old boy who had transferred from an American to a British curriculum school told me, “kids actually know stuff”. And lest we forget, a rigorous curriculum with reliable assessment is the surest way to spread opportunity to all children. Rigour is a friend to self-advancement and social equality.

The forensic use of data in a targeted way to help young people achieve their best has been one of the most dramatic, beneficial developments in schools in my working lifetime. But it comes at a cost. When the pursuit of measurement becomes an end in itself it can lead to a self-feeding frenzy of statistics. We live in the Age of Measurement and it is not hard to see why “measurable progress” is attractive to governments. The problem lies not so much with the act of measurement (though weighing the pig and fattening it are altogether different things) but in the segmenting of knowledge in pursuit of reliable statistics. We have fallen into the habit of assuming that holding up small parcels of knowledge to the light is the only transparent and fair way to assess intellectual progress. If “Only connect” should be the mantra for great education, then over the past two decades our education system has moved smartly in the opposite direction. We seem to value bite-size chunks more than the whole.

We are allowing ourselves to wander into a cul-de-sac. The advent of advanced artificial intelligence will dramatically change our world. The workplace is likely to be a very different proposition to the way it has been understood by past generations. The skills and mindset needed to thrive in a world of constant and very rapid change will be hard to measure. An A-level or three may not seem hugely relevant. So what should we do?

We should remember that the exam system is important but it’s only one small part of a good education. We should stop tinkering with it. We need to break down well-established academic silos in the school curriculum, exploring and celebrating the connections between subjects. We need to make sure our children are digitally aware, in ways that their parents may find disconcerting. We need to ask big questions, about the nature of society and individuals within it, and we need to help the young understand the vital equation between intellect, morality and ethics. In this sense we need to return to the spirit of ancient Greece: what does it mean to be a good citizen, a good man, a good mother? In a disturbed and disturbing world, these questions matter more than ever before.

We might imagine a school of the future which has its focus on the development of character, with plenty of sport for healthy living and just a couple of academic subjects to



stimulate intellectual precision. Let us call the subjects Latin and Greek and we have just reinvented the mid-19th-century curriculum of a school like Eton.

I certainly do not urge any return to “Victorian values” but sometimes we can learn from the past - it is worth remembering that an obsession with measuring intellectual achievement at the expense of a truly holistic education is a modern and recent phenomenon, really only over the past quarter of a century.

We will continue to have our measurement and statistics and we will continue to scrutinise and applaud intellectual achievement but we must give at least equal weight to the qualities on which success and

happiness will depend, the flexibility and capacity to deal with uncertainty, the confidence to drive change and an acute awareness of the connectedness of things, all expressed through a tolerant humanity.

As students pick up their A-level results today, I applaud their achievement to the echo. They will have the sure foundation from which to explore a world of opportunity. They will have done what we have asked them to do. And while they celebrate, I hope they have the wit to realise that A-levels are just one small step.

■ *Tony Little is a former headmaster at Eton. His book, *An Intelligent Person's Guide to Education*, is published by Bloomsbury*

## HIGH COURT QUASHES REPORT ON FLAGSHIP SCHOOL OVER WATCHDOGS 'UNFAIR' PROCESSES

# Arrogant Ofsted tried to destroy us, says academy head after legal victory

'I was shocked... the ruling didn't match our experience at all'

TAMRA THOMAS feared she would have to move her five-year-old son Jasaiah to a new school after Ofsted's ruling.

The mother-of-four said: "When I heard the news I was shocked because I hadn't experienced anything of what was being said about the school. It didn't match our experience at all.

"My three eldest children also went to Durand and they all left with National Curriculum level five, when the national average is four.

"It baffled me and it was disheartening because there were a lot of parents considering taking their children out and I had a couple of days where I considered doing the same.

"Once I started getting my head around the report and asked myself what the real reason is that I wanted to remove him, I didn't have one."

Ms Thomas, of Stockwell, said Durand was "valuable and important" both to her family and the community.

She said: "It's been an important part of my life and my children's lives and I'm so proud that the school was brave enough to stand up and fight.



Satisfied: Tamra Thomas with son Jasaiah and Charlotte House and Nick McGhee with daughter Madeleine

"It's disgusting that a government body in the UK can act the way it has. It shouldn't be allowed."

Charlotte House, mother of Madeleine McGhee, eight, said she feared Durand would be taken over by another academy or academy trust due to the "inadequate" report.

She said: "Our fear when we saw that report was that Durand Academy would become a different school with a different ethos, different leadership and different offering across the curriculum, and we absolutely didn't want that."

Lauren Pilat

Martin Bentham  
*Home Affairs Editor*

SCHOOLS watchdog Ofsted has been accused of seeking to “destroy great education” after a flagship London academy won a landmark High Court battle over its inspection report.

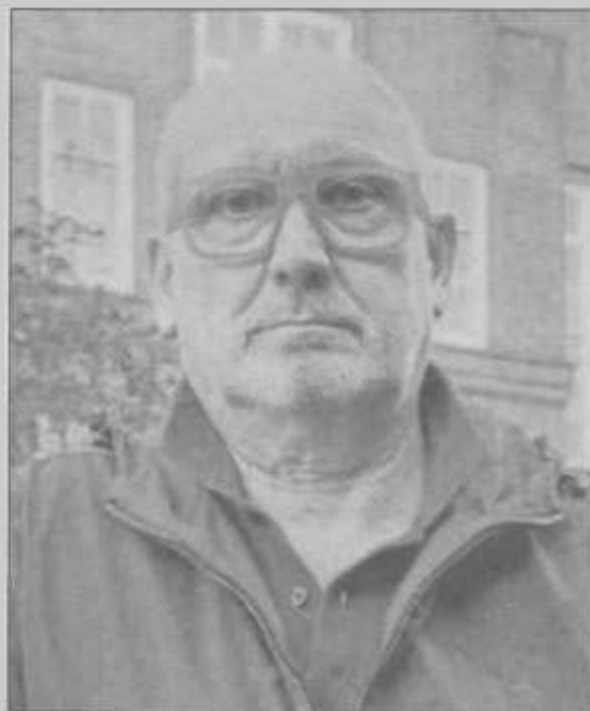
Durand Academy in Stockwell - which is run by the controversial headteacher Sir Greg Martin - was due to be placed in “special measures” after Ofsted inspectors ruled that it was providing an inadequate standard of education for its pupils.

The verdict came despite the school, which has around 1,000 pupils, achieving test results for primary pupils that put it in the top 10 per cent in the country. Sir Greg had also been feted by Cabinet minister Michael Gove and knighted for services to education.

But a High Court judge has now quashed the report on the grounds that Ofsted’s processes are unfair in a ruling which be seized on by other schools who feel they have been wrongly judged to be failing.

Hailing the judgment today, Sir Greg, who is now the academy’s chairman of governors, said: “We are delighted. It was tough. It’s the first time I think anyone has managed to defeat Ofsted which I think shows how powerful they are and the arrogance and complacency which they have shown.

“It has saved us from being



**Awful experience:** Sir Greg Martin said the judgment had saved the academy

.....

destroyed. We have been undone, vilified and attacked by the educational establishment which is meant to be safeguarding education, not just for the privileged few but for the under-privileged too.

“We have demonstrated to other schools that there is hope. I know that we are not flavour of the month because, of all the negative publicity that we have had, but I’m sure that a lot of schools which might not be supportive of us will recognise now that there is hope.

“It is an awful experience. You get people who can make judgments and you have no right of appeal. The fact that we have won, I think it’s good for education.”



Sir Greg, who was paid more than £200,000 before retiring as head in 2015, added: "We feel abandoned by the very people who are meant to be supporting great education.

"Parents have been badly let down. We are in the top two per cent in the primary sector.

"Nobody would pretend that every school is successful. I would admit that we struggled with the boarding school but that's because we haven't received any funding from the Education Funding Agency. Not a penny.

"We are very disappointed at what has happened to us. If our governance is so poor how do we get such good results? It's nonsensical. It seems to be that no matter how good you are, to supposedly protect the children's education we have to be closed down. It doesn't make sense to any normal human being."

In the new High Court ruling, Judge Martin McKenna said that Ofsted's system for handing complaints about its findings was "not fair or rational". This was because Ofsted effectively took the view that its decisions "will always be unimpeachable".

The judge added: "The absence of any ability effectively to challenge the report renders the complaints procedure unfair and in my judgment vitiates the report. It follows, that the report should be quashed."

Durand, which became an academy in 2010, was originally a primary school and judged to be outstanding, but expanded with a

boarding school in Sussex to cater for secondary pupils, adding to two sites in Stockwell.

The judge adds that the inspection which led to the special measures verdict was conducted amid a protracted dispute between the academy and the government's Education Funding Agency, which wants to change the management of the academy. The agency has also announced the termination of the academy's funding deal. Judge McKenna says the academy feared that Ofsted's judgment might have been "clouded" by this and the "unusually high degree of scrutiny" that had been applied to its management "with several reports and inquiries" into its affairs creating an "unfavourable" climate.

The judge says that he "entirely rejects" this notion. He also states that he does not need to reach any conclusions about the accuracy of Ofsted's criticisms of the school, although he does say that the academy's portrayal of itself is "somewhat simplistic" and that there is "considerable force" in the inspectorate's argument that it had expanded too quickly since 2013.

Despite today's victory, the academy still remains mired in a dispute with the Education Funding Agency. It will terminate the funding of the existing Durand Academy Trust so that the existing management can be replaced and has called for a raft of changes including Sir Greg's departure.

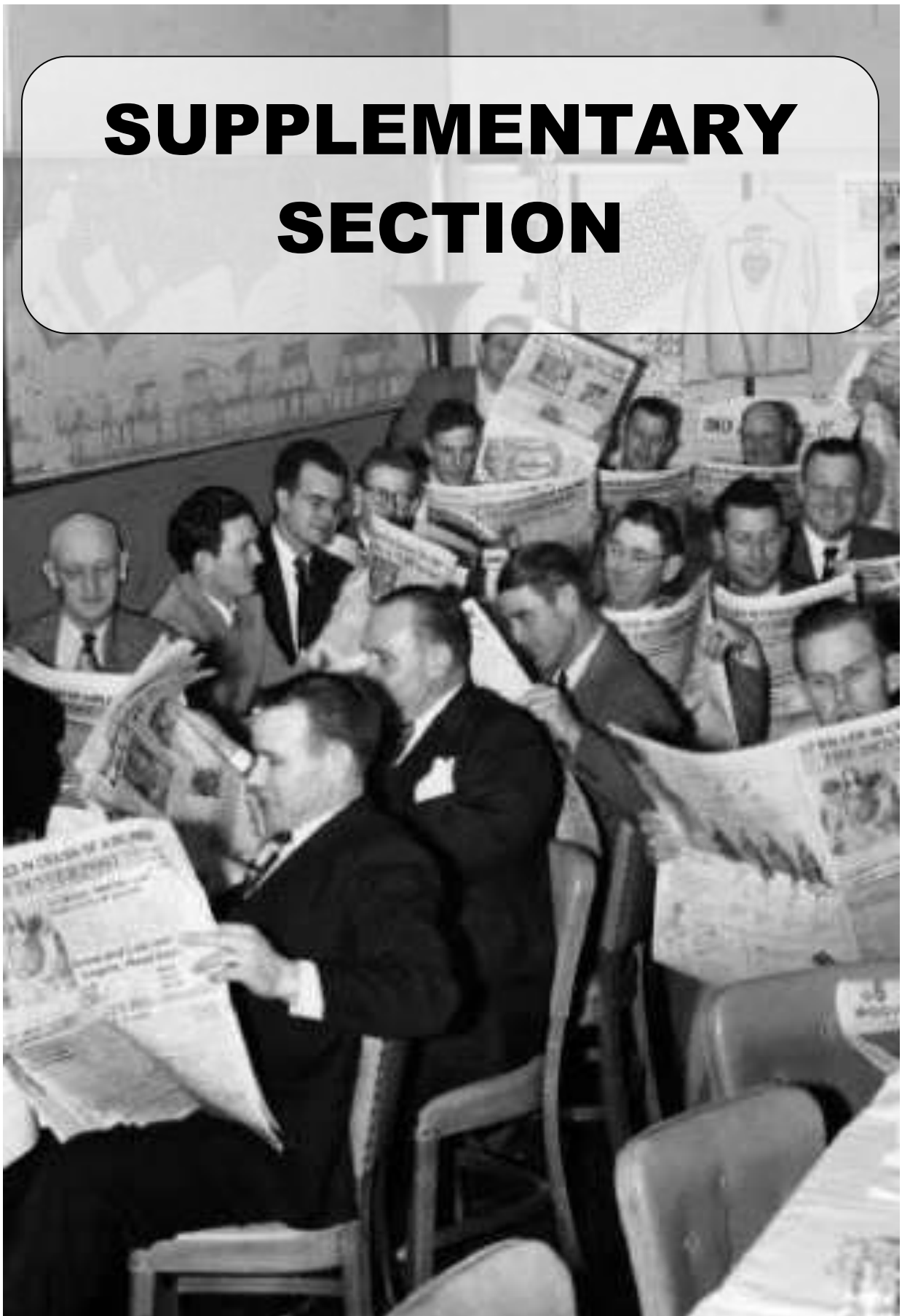
Sir Greg said that he would be standing down as chairman of governors shortly. The school's

headteacher Mark McLauhghlin is also standing down. Ofsted said it was “disappointed” by the ruling and had sought permission to appeal. It added: “Notwithstanding the overall judgment, we are pleased that the court recognised the impartiality and professionalism of the inspectors undertaking the inspection.

“Our complaints process is long-standing and has previously been commended by the Independent Adjudicator. However, as an organisation we always keep

policies and practices under review and.. will consider whether any clarification of our complaints procedure may be required.” The new developments follow several years of controversy surrounding Durand Academy and Sir Greg. He was praised by the government for raising the attainment of his inner-city pupils and achieving some of the best primary results in London. But he came under fire after questions were raised about his earnings and a new ownership structure under which the school was run by a charitable trust.

# SUPPLEMENTARY SECTION





## TASKS FOR PRELIMINARY DISCUSSION

### Task 1

Discuss the importance of news in your lives. Cover the following questions with your partner(s):

- Why is the news important to you?
- Do you need to know? Why?
- How do you feel if you miss the news?
- Is the news more important than watching TV dramas or reading books?
- How does the news change your feelings?
- What kind of news is most important to you?
- What region's news is most important to you?
- What region's news is most interesting to you?
- Do you feel different if you're up-to-date with the news?
- How often does the news make you angry?
- How does the news change your perspective on life and the world?

### Task 2

Describe to your partner(s) your newspaper reading habits. Consider the following questions:

- How do you read a newspaper?
- Which part of the newspaper do you start with?
- How do you feel when you start?
- Do you always read the paper from cover to cover?
- Where do you usually sit?
- Do you have a drink while you read?
- Do you share the news with anyone?
- Where do you finish?
- Which sections do you skip?
- Which parts do you really look forward to?

### Task 3

Talk about news of your favorite people or things. For example:

- Sports player or team
- Actor
- Politician
- Singer
- Animal
- Cartoon character
- Country
- Town
- Environmental issue
- Scandal

### Task 4

Ask each other about your involvement with the news. Discuss the following questions with your partner(s). Start with “Have you ever...”:

- worked on a school newsletter?
- wanted to be a journalist?
- been in the news?
- worked as a newspaper delivery person?
- written a letter to a newspaper?
- got really angry with something you saw on the news?
- seen a friend on national TV or a national newspaper?
- seen a major news story being filmed by journalists and camera crews?
- been angry with a newspaper or journalist?
- cried at anything you saw on the news?

### Task 5

In pairs or groups talk about the recent news in your hometown. Use the following questions as a guide:

- What kind of news is normal for your town?
- What’s the biggest news ever to come from your town?
- What are the local newspapers like?

## SUPPLEMENTARY SECTION. Grammar –oriented Tasks

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- Does your hometown have its own TV news channel?
- How often do you receive / look at news of your town?
- Have you ever seen pictures of your area on national or international television?
- What news stories have hit the headlines recently in your hometown?
- Have you ever been in the local newspapers or on TV?
- Is there any big news coming up in your hometown?
- Who has made the biggest headlines in your hometown?

## GRAMMAR – ORIENTED TASKS

### Task 1

Consider the following table. Choose from the article the key words, consult the dictionaries and find examples to fill in the information.

	Other senses	Homo nymns	Homo phones I	Idioms	Phrasal verbs	Parts of speech	Phonemic	Picture
Word 1								
Word 2								
Word 3								
Word 4								
Word 5								

### Task 2

In pairs or groups, make five predictions about the news item using the future perfect. Change partners and discuss the likelihood of the predictions coming true.



### Task 3

In pairs or groups, write down as many sentences as you can, based on the news item, using the present perfect for recent events. Change partners. With new partners, tell each other your present perfect sentences as though you are reporting real news. Continue your conversations as though you are reporting the news.

### Task 4

Talk about the best, worst, hottest, longest, most expensive of whatever the subject of the article is. Consider the adjectives that might be used as comparatives. For example, if the article is about bus rides, talk about superlative bus rides:

- What is the longest bus journey you've taken?
- What's the most uncomfortable bus journey you've taken?
- Most scenic
- The noisiest
- The one with the most objectionable person sitting beside you
- The most expensive
- The craziest
- The most eventful
- The happiest
- The cheapest

### Task 5

If the article is about the best or worst of something, try to persuade each other that you are the superlative case in that situation. For example, the theme is "I'm the poorest". Sample questions and tasks:

- Have you ever been (Are you now) very poor?
- What must it be like to be very poor?

Talk with your partner(s) and try to convince them that you are the poorest person in the class. Be sure to exaggerate and tell the saddest, sorriest story you can. Talk about these things in your poor life:

- Food
- Clothes and shoes
- Newspapers
- Family
- Studying English
- Transport
- Entertainment
- Other

### **Task 6**

Write sentences using the phrase “up to now” with the present perfect. You can write your sentences about the text and about your own lives. Then talk about your sentences in discussion form. Change partners and compare sentences. Continue discussions with new partners.

### **Task 7**

Write four sentences using the pattern “not as ... as ...” and four sentences using the pattern “nowhere near as... as...” Then talk about your sentences in discussion form. Change partners and compare sentences. Continue discussions with new partners.

### **Task 8**

In pairs or groups, write four “used to” and four “didn’t use to” sentences about the article. Then talk about your sentences with your partner(s). Change partners and compare sentences. Continue your discussions with new partners.

### **Task 9**

Choose words from the article and find synonyms in a thesaurus. Explain the words you like and why you like them.

### **Task 10**

Prepare a set of idioms based on the language or keyword from the article. Consider them with your partner. In pairs or groups, try to guess their meaning. Match the idioms/ similes with their meanings in the right column. Use each idiom / simile to ask

## SUPPLEMENTARY SECTION. Grammar – oriented Tasks

your own questions to your partner. For example, the issue to discuss is “New mammal species found”. Look at the following idioms and similes that refer to small furry animals.

IDIOM / SIMILE	MEANING
1. I'm more scared than a porcupine in a balloon factory.	a. Stop pretending something is a crisis when it's just a small problem.
2. She should try to squirrel away a few dollars each month.	b. I need someone to be a volunteer for my project / activity.
3. She is such an eager beaver.	c. Someone who quickly tries to abandon others when problems or signs of trouble occur.
4. Like a rat deserting a sinking ship.	d. Suddenly unable to move or make decisions.
5. Don't make a mountain out of a mole hill.	e. Saving a little money for something in the future is a good idea.
6. They are like rabbits caught in the headlights of a car.	f. She made no sound at all.
7. She was as quiet as a mouse.	g. It is difficult to be more afraid than how I'm feeling at the moment.
8. Who's going to be my guinea pig?	h. She puts maximum effort into everything she does.

### Task 11

Use each of the following modal verbs in a sentence about the article:

- Should
- Shouldn't
- Have to
- Don't have to
- Could
- Couldn't
- Must
- Mustn't
- Negatives



### **Task 12**

Think of three “What would you do if...” situations. Pool all of your ideas and put them on the board or on paper. Propose your partner(s) to comment on some of the situations. Change partners and share and compare your ideas.

### **Task 13**

Think of three “I should never have thought that...” situations. Pool all of your ideas and put them on the board or on paper. Propose your partner(s) to comment on some of the situations. Change partners and share and compare your ideas.

### **Task 14**

Based on the theme of the news item, write down five sentences starting with the phrase “I’m looking forward to the day...” Change partners and share and compare your sentences. Discuss the possibility of these things happening and why you are looking forward to the day.

### **Task 15**

Write five sentences about the article starting with the phrase, “I’m curious to know what would happen if...” . Change partners and share and compare your sentences. Discuss the possible answers.

### **Task 16**

Talk about a set of opinions saying to your partner(s), ‘I’d agree with this statement if...’. Finish the statements for each opinion.

### **Task 17**

Interview one of the characters from the article. Use “the best ever” in all questions. This could also be used for other structures, such as “When was the first / last time”, “Would you ever...?”. “What do you remember about...?”

### **Task 18**

Read the article and underline three interesting (happy, sad, worrying, etc.) things. Report these things to your partner(s). Partner(s) must respond with (e.g.) the following:

- Yes, that's interesting, but not as interesting as ...
- Yes, I also thought that was interesting, but I didn't underline it.
- Why did you think that was interesting?
- Was that the most interesting of the things you underlined?
- I didn't think that was as interesting as ...

### **Task 19**

Change the part of speech for five words in each paragraph of the article. Your partner is to identify and correct the parts of speech.

### **Task 20**

Blank out some of the words in the article. Your partner is to decide on his own words to fill the blanks.

### **Task 21**

Circle words that you do not know the meaning of. Find out more about the words after the exercise by showing the words to your partner(s) and trying to guess the meanings in context or by breaking the word down into prefixes, suffixes and roots.

### **Task 22**

In pairs or groups, make four or five sentences related to the article using the third conditional. Talk about your sentences in discussion form. Change partners and compare your sentences. Continue your discussions with new partners.

### **Task 23**

Choose a keyword from the article and create a list of collocates. Share your list with a partner. For example, the key word is "hope". Consider the following collocations and make up your own sentences using them:

- Beyond hope
- A symbol of hope
- Your hopes and dreams
- To cherish hopes





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