



'Reading it Real':

a collection of real life, relevant and provocative texts to get you thinking, discussing and engaging with examples of great non-fiction writing.



Name: Tutor Group:



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		<i>they argue for the rewilding of Royal Estate land.</i>
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63-64	'How the Tokyo Olympics Changed the Conversation about Athletes' Mental Health' – an article in Time Magazine by Alice Park.	<i>Following Simone Biles' decision to pull out of the gymnastic team event at the Tokyo Olympics, Alice Park reports for Time Magazine (weekly, international publication covering important issue of the day) on the increasing awareness of mental health issues in sport.</i>
65-66	'Betty Campbell's Magnificent Monument really is a new Dawn for Wales' – extract from opinion piece article on the unveiling of the first statue of a named, non-fictional women in an outdoor public space in Wales.	<i>Journalist Carolyn Hitt celebrates the unveiling of the statue of Betty Campbell, Wales' first black headteacher and champion of equality and diversity.</i>
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73-74	‘I never thought I’d say this but - thank you, Elon Musk’ – an opinion piece by Rupert Hawksley, published in ‘The Independent’.	<i>CRupert Hawksley suggests that the SpaceX launch of the first all-civilian crew into orbit could be the start of the ‘democratisation of space travel’.</i>
75-76	‘Britney Spears Celebrates the End of her Conservatorship: ‘best day ever’ - an article in Teen Vogue magazine.	<i>The article reports on the release of pop star Britney Spears from the controversial conservatorship that provoked the long standing #freebritney campaign. Following a mental health breakdown, this legal arrangement had given her father control over many aspects of Britney Spears’ finances and personal life.</i>
77-78	‘Why a Female James Bond would be Brilliant’ – an article by David Williams and Olive Pometsey, in the British GQ magazine.	<i>In response to rumours that a female actor could take over the James Bond role, after Daniel Craig, this magazine article argues why this would be a good idea.</i>

Will the woolly mammoth return?

Extinction might not spell the end for some species, thanks to genetic engineering



The woolly mammoth went extinct thousands of years ago. But it might not stay extinct. Genetic engineering may be able to bring back a very similar animal. And there's already a home waiting for it in Siberia.

DANIEL ESKRIDGE/ISTOCK/GETTY IMAGES PLUS

By **Kathryn Hulick** September 23, 2021 at 6:30 am

Eriona Hysolli slapped at mosquitoes as she helped feed a baby moose. Not far away, shaggy Yakutian horses grazed on tall grass. It was August 2018. And Hysolli was a long way from Boston, Mass., where she worked as a genetics researcher at Harvard Medical School. She and George Church, the director of her lab, had travelled to northeastern Russia. They'd come to a nature preserve in the vast, remote region known as Siberia.

If Hysolli let her mind wander, she could imagine a much larger animal lumbering into view — one larger than a horse, larger than a moose. This elephant-sized creature had shaggy reddish-brown fur and long, curving tusks. It was a woolly mammoth.

During the last ice age, a period known as the Pleistocene (PLYSTOH-seen), woolly mammoths and many other large plant-eating animals roamed this land. Now, of course, mammoths are extinct. But they might not stay extinct.

"We believe we can attempt to bring them back," says Hysolli.

In 2015, Church and the organization Revive & Restore launched a Woolly Mammoth Revival project. It aims to use genetic engineering to create an animal very similar to the extinct woolly mammoth. "We call them elemoths, or cold-adapted elephants," explains Hysolli. Others have called them mammophants or neo-elephants.

Whatever the name, bringing back some version of a woolly mammoth sounds like its coming straight out of *Jurassic Park*. The nature preserve Hysolli and Church visited even has a fitting name: Pleistocene Park. If they succeed in creating elemoths, the animals could live here. Explained Church in a 2019 interview with PBS, "The hope is that we will have large herds of them — if that's what society wants."

Genetic engineering technology may make it possible to resurrect the traits and behaviours of an extinct animal — as long as it has a living relative. Experts call this de-extinction.

Ben Novak has been thinking about de-extinction since he was 14 and in eighth grade. That was when he won first place in the regional division of the Junior High North Dakota State Science and Engineering Fair. His project explored the idea of whether it would be possible to recreate the dodo bird.

This flightless bird was related to the pigeon. It went extinct in the late 1600s, about a century after Dutch sailors arrived on the only island where the bird lived. Now, Novak works at Revive & Restore, based in Sausalito, Calif. The basic goal of this conservation organization, he says, is to look at a habitat and ask: “Is there something missing here? Can we put it back?”

The woolly mammoth isn’t the only animal Novak and his team hope to restore. They are working to bring back passenger pigeons and heath hens. And they support efforts to use genetic engineering or cloning to rescue endangered species, including a type of wild horse, horseshoe crabs, coral and black-footed ferrets .

Dinosaurs aren’t on their list. “Making dinosaurs is something we can’t really do,” says Novak. Sorry, *T. rex*. But what genetic engineering can achieve for conservation is astonishing and eye-opening. Many scientists, though, question whether bringing back extinct species is something that should be done at all. Thankfully, we have time to decide whether this is right. The science of bringing back something like a mammoth is still in its very early stages.

Mammoths once roamed throughout most of Europe, Northern Asia and North America. Most of the mighty beasts died out around 10,000 years ago, likely due to a warming climate and human hunting. A small population survived until about 4,000 years ago on an island off the coast of Siberia. Across most of the mammoth’s former range, remains of the animals decomposed and disappeared.

In Siberia, though, cold temperatures froze and preserved many mammoth bodies. Cells inside these remains are completely dead. Scientists (so far) can’t revive and grow them. But they can read any DNA in those cells. This is called DNA sequencing. Scientists have sequenced the DNA of several woolly mammoths. (Scientists can’t do this with dinosaurs.; they died out too long ago for any DNA to have survived.)



While in Siberia, Eriona Hysolli collected tissue samples from mammoth remains held in local museums. Here, she is taking a sample from a frozen mammoth’s trunk.
BRENDAN HALL/STRUCTURE FILMS LLC

DNA is a lot like a recipe for a living thing. It contains coded instructions that tell cells how to grow and behave. “Once you know the code, you can try to recreate it in a living relative,” says Novak.

To try to recreate a mammoth, Church’s team turned to its closest living relative — the Asian elephant. The researchers started by comparing mammoth and elephant DNA. They looked for the genes most likely to match specific mammoth traits. They were especially interested in traits that helped mammoths survive in frigid weather. Those include shaggy hair, small ears, a layer of fat under the skin and blood that resists freezing.

The team then used DNA-editing tools to create copies of the mammoth genes. They spliced those genes into the DNA of cells collected from living Asian elephants. Now, the researchers are testing these elephant cells to see if the edits work as planned. They have gone through this process with 50 different target genes, says Hysolli. But the work hasn’t yet been published.

One problem, Hysolli explains, is that they only have access to a few types of elephant cell. They don’t have blood cells, for example, so it’s tough to check if the edit that is supposed to make blood resist freezing actually works.

Cells with mammoth genes are exciting. But how do you make an entire living, breathing, trumpeting mammoth (or elemoth)? You'd need to make an embryo with the right genes, then find a living mother animal to carry the embryo in her womb. Because Asian elephants are endangered, researchers aren't willing to put them through experimentation and possible harm in an attempt to make baby elemoths.

Instead, Church's team hopes to develop an artificial womb. Right now, they are doing experiments with mice. Scaling up to elemoths is expected to take at least another decade.

... Novak also pursues de-extinction because he believes it will make the world a better place. "We live in a very impoverished world compared to what it used to be," he says. He means that Earth is home to fewer species today than in the past. Habitat destruction, climate change and other human-caused problems threaten or endanger numerous species. Many have already gone extinct.

Not everyone agrees. Restoring any species — mammoth, bird or something else — would take a lot of time, effort and money. And there are already many existing species that need help if they are to be saved from extinction. Many conservation scientists argue that we should help these species first, before turning our attention to ones that are long gone.

Effort and money aren't the only problems. Experts also wonder how the first generation of new animals will be raised. Woolly mammoths were very social. They learned a lot from their parents. If the first elemoth lacks a family, "have you created a poor creature who is lonely and has no role models?" wonders Lynn Rothschild. She is a molecular biologist affiliated with Brown University. That's in Providence, R.I. Rothschild has debated the question of de-extinction. She thinks the idea is incredibly cool but hopes that people will think it through carefully.

As the *Jurassic Park* movies warn, humans may not be able to control the living things they introduce nor predict their behaviour. They could end up harming existing ecosystems or species. There's also no guarantee these animals will be able to thrive in the world that exists today.

"I worry about introducing a species that went extinct. We're bringing them back into a world they've never seen," says Samantha Wisely. She is a genetics expert who studies conservation at the University of Florida in Gainesville. If mammoths or passenger pigeons were to end up going extinct a second time, that would be doubly tragic.

De-extinction should only be done with "a lot of thought and protection of the animals and ecosystems," adds Molly Hardesty-Moore. She is an ecologist at the University of California, Santa Barbara. In her opinion, we should only seek to restore species that we know will thrive and help to heal existing ecosystems.

What do you think? Genetic engineering has given humans incredible power to transform life on Earth. How can we use this technology to make Earth a better place for us as well as for the animals who share this planet?



ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES:

1. Share and research the definition of any unfamiliar vocabulary and / or cultural references.
2. 'Science News for Students' is committed to 'educating a new generation on all things science'. Can you find any evidence that shows that the journalist is clearly writing with a teenage reader in mind.
3. Highlight a sentence in the article that has challenged your thinking about this topic: be prepared to discuss why you have chosen it!
4. 'If the first elemoth lacks a family, "have you created a poor creature who is lonely and has no role models?" wonders Lynn Rothschild.' Is this view relevant? Discuss.
5. How should scientists decide on a rank order of species that need saving from extinction / de-extinction?

[Will the woolly mammoth return? | Science News for Students](#)

After Tokyo, we should bring the Olympic charade to an end

David Goldblatt

Sat 24 Jul 2021 10.00 BST

The travelling circus shows the ugly side of sport – displacing citizens, bullying athletes and endorsing cruel regimes



'With the exception of Barcelona, no modern Games has raised a host city's rate of economic growth, levels of skills and employment, tourist income or productivity.'

Photograph: Ian Waldie/Getty Images Sport

The empty seats in the stadiums of the Tokyo 2020 Olympics are a blessing in disguise, for the sporting spectacle, no matter how good, will not be able to dispel the fact that this super-spreader event is being held in the midst of an unprecedented public health crisis and against the wishes of the vast majority of the Japanese public. In so doing, the International Olympic Committee – which earnestly believes itself to be the leader of a global social movement – has been revealed as no more than the travelling circus of the global sports industry, ready to make sure the broadcasters get what they need come what may.

Not that these Games and the IOC's standing weren't deeply flawed prior to the pandemic. As at every Olympics, costs have spiralled and Japan will have to stump up more than \$30bn (£22bn), of which the IOC will not be paying a cent. Along the way there has been the usual combination of expensive white-elephant stadiums, allegations of corruption in the bid process and in allocating contracts, and the forced eviction of citizens from their homes.

Paris, Los Angeles and now Brisbane are signed up to host the next three summer Olympics, and the IOC continues to argue that its Games catalyse economic growth and leave positive urban and sporting legacies. Yet the research is unequivocal: with the exception of Barcelona 1992, no modern Games has raised a host city's rate of economic growth, levels of skills and employment, tourist income or productivity.

Similarly, the claim that the Olympics raise the level of sporting participation is a myth. After London 2012 – the only Games to actually take the proposition seriously – activity rates fell because the government's austerity programme led to the widespread closure of sporting facilities.

Olympians might inspire other Olympians – but as physical and psychological outliers they have absolutely no impact on the behaviour of the general public. Ask the Finns, who abandoned the state-sponsored pursuit of medals and spent the money instead on active transport and accessible facilities. They barely win anything any

more, but they have the most active and healthy old people in the world. In Britain we have a sack of gold and an obesity crisis.

The urban programmes that accompanied Seoul 1988 and Beijing 2008 saw almost 2 million people displaced. More recently, Rio was staged on the back of over 60,000 people who had to get out of their homes and businesses: they were often intimidated and moved to inferior and distant housing. The vast majority were barely compensated. And then there are the police sweeps that clear homeless and mentally ill people from previously public spaces.

Of course, where someone is suffering, someone else is probably benefiting, and the Olympics have proven fabulously profitable for construction companies, the corrupt officials and politicians who have handed out contracts to them, and property developers. The local police and national security agencies are also considerable beneficiaries given that security costs are now around \$2bn. Rio didn't build a single community sporting facility but its riot police got the very best in new Kevlar-plated armour and Tasers.

In a desperate search for legitimacy the IOC has championed clean sport and embraced environmentalism. But the former has been fatally undermined by the light-touch treatment meted out to Russia after its unprecedented programme of state-sponsored doping. And the environmental record of the Games has been dismal. Beijing was more polluted after its Olympics than before. Pyeongchang, Rio and Sochi all saw the destruction of protected natural habitats.

Covid has at least reduced the usual gigantic carbon footprint of the Games. However, it is hard to see how these and future emissions, however much offsetting the IOC is planning for, can be justified at a time when the speed of the climate crisis means most previous hosts of the Winter Games will soon have insufficient snow to hold them again. Tokyo, now regularly experiencing burning, humid summers, has had to shift the marathon 1,000km north to Sapporo.

Sport does offer an extraordinary canvas for the celebration of human possibilities. It is a universal language in a perilously fragmented world. It deserves better than to be captured by the IOC, better than to be drowned in its pieties and bound to its pernicious business model.

A Covid emergency aside, it is too late to abandon the Tokyo Games, but it is not too late to bring this charade to an end. The Chinese Communist party can make all the artificial snow it likes in 2022, but we should simply refuse to watch. Paris 2024 can be the final fond farewell. The IOC should dissolve itself and its assets be passed to a new democratically constituted body for global sport. Los Angeles would lose the Games, but Hollywood can take out the first option on the story.

- David Goldblatt is a journalist and author of *The Games: A Global History of the Olympics*. [After Tokyo, we should bring the Olympic charade to an end | David Goldblatt | The Guardian](#)



ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES:

1. Share and research the definition of any unfamiliar vocabulary and / or cultural references.
2. Discuss the ways in which David Goldblatt uses language to persuade the reader to agree with his point of view?
3. Highlight the sentence in the article that you think is most controversial: be prepared to explain why!
4. What arguments could be used to contradict the views in this article?
5. 'Sport does offer an extraordinary canvas for the celebration of human possibilities.' Discuss.

'I felt as though I had let my teammates down. I felt as if I'd let everyone down.

'A penalty was all I'd been asked to contribute for the team. I can score penalties in my sleep so why not that one? It's been playing in my head over and over since I struck the ball and there's probably not a word to quite describe how it feels.

'Final. 55 years. One penalty. History. All I can say is sorry. I wish it had gone differently.

'Whilst I continue to say sorry I want to shoutout to my teammates. This summer has been one of the best camps I've experienced and you've all played a role in that. A brotherhood has been built that is unbreakable. Your success is my success. Your failures are mine.

'I've grown into a sport where I expect to read things written about myself. Whether it be the colour of my skin, where I grew up, or, most recently, how I decided to spend my time off the pitch.

'I can take critique of my performance all day long, my penalty was not good enough, it should have gone in, but I will never apologise for who I am or where I came from.

'I've felt no prouder moment than wearing these three lions on my chest and seeing my family cheer me on in a crowd of 10s of thousands. I dreamt of days like this.



Rashford missed England's third penalty in the shootout (Picture: Reuters)

'The messages I've received today have been positively overwhelming and seeing the response in Withington had me on the verge of tears. The communities that always wrapped their arms around me continue to hold me up.

'I'm Marcus Rashford, 23 years old, black man from Withington and Wythenshawe, South Manchester. If I have nothing else I have that.

'For all the kind messages, thank you. I'll be back stronger. We'll be back stronger.'

[Euro 2020: Marcus Rashford speaks out on penalty miss and racist abuse | Metro News](#)

ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES:



1. Share and research the definition of any unfamiliar vocabulary and / or cultural references.
2. Analyse the impact of the last paragraph of Rashford's statement.
3. In the journalist's introduction to this article, highlight language which implies support and admiration for Marcus Rashford.
4. 'I've grown into a sport where I expect to read things written about myself. Whether it be the colour of my skin, where I grew up, or, most recently, how I decided to spend my time off the pitch.' Should this be accepted by celebrities or does something need to change? Discuss.
5. 'Your success is my success. Your failures are mine.' Is this always true of team sport?

“If You Have Inner Strength, You Can Achieve Whatever You Want”: Vogue Meets Emma Raducanu, The British Teen Taking Tennis By Storm

BY OLIVIA MARKS Photographs by SCOTT TRINDLE

7 SEPTEMBER 2021



Swoosh! Emma Raducanu’s tennis racket slices through the air to the approving coos of spectators, as dust rises from where her feet have gracefully landed on the ground. From underneath her cap, she stares straight ahead, focused, serious. Then the camera clicks and the 18-year-old from Kent breaks into a wide, toothy grin.

Whirlwind doesn’t adequately describe the life-changing days that the teenager experienced on the fabled grass courts, which saw a wild card – then ranked world number 338, she is, at the time of writing, 184 – take on three of the world’s top players (Vitalia Diatchenko, Sorana Cîrstea, Markéta Vondroušová) and eviscerate each one. Then, five days after her first match, when she was the only Briton left in the singles, Raducanu’s tournament ended as dramatically as it began, when she had to bow out of her match against Ajla Tomljanovic halfway through the second set, after she started experiencing difficulties with her breathing. It was a crushing disappointment for Raducanu and her new legion of fans. But no matter: she had already claimed the hearts of the British public, arguably the hardest-to-win prize of all.

“At one point mid-game, I just let my racket go because I just didn’t believe I made that shot,” she says two weeks later, shaking her head, still in disbelief. Throughout the tournament, her sheer, unabashed enjoyment of the game was, she believes, “genuinely shining through”, which is one of the reasons she thinks she got the public on side so quickly – “and also the fact that I feel I relate to the younger audience, you know, who are still in school”.

Until a few months ago, Raducanu was too. She’s still awaiting her A-level results when we meet, and the night before her *Vogue* shoot, she was dressed up to the nines on a golf course in Orpington at her school prom surrounded by her proud, gobsmacked classmates. To them, Raducanu laughs, she is still the “kid from year seven”, the “quiet one who didn’t really raise her hand”.

Sport has undoubtedly played its part in growing the enviable, easy self-confidence that Raducanu radiates today. Born in Toronto, an only child, she moved to Britain with her Chinese mother, Renee, and Romanian father, Ian, (both of whom work in finance) when she was two. Growing up in Bromley, from a young age she had the kind of extracurricular schedule that is exhausting merely to read – while her mother was “more traditional” and took her to ballet and tap lessons, her father introduced her to golf and the worlds of motorsports, karting and dirt biking. And, of course, tennis. “He’s all about being different,” she says, “and not caring what other people may have thought at the time.”

Being the “odd one out” was something Raducanu, at first, had to grow used to, but then took pleasure from. “When I was younger, I was the only girl in my group karting or doing motocross, and I thought it was pretty cool.” Even when she first started playing tennis, “The whole squad I was in was all boys. It was quite intimidating in the beginning to, you know, get out of my shell and actually begin to really enjoy what I was doing because I was so scared. I’m not sure of what.”



She was five when she started playing at the Bromley Tennis Centre, and as her hobby got more serious and weekends started to be given over to travelling and competing in tournaments, motorsports had to take a backseat. But it is still a great passion – her next ambition is “to get my motorbike licence,” she says, grinning. “So I can get back out there.”

That courageousness (how many people, really, do you know who want to race motorbikes?) is evident both on court and off. It is hard to fathom what it must feel like to play a match in front of a home crowd, with the nation’s hopes on your shoulders, and then be forced to retire, on medical advice, halfway through. England footballer Marcus Rashford is one of the few who can understand that unique pressure, and was among the first to reach out to console Raducanu on Twitter. It was, she says, “very comforting in that moment. I was feeling like I let people down, so for him to reassure me like that – I was extremely grateful.”



Ultimately, Raducanu knew “it was the best decision for my health and my body” to retire from the match.

Since Wimbledon, Raducanu has been invited back to her primary school to meet the students. Inspiring children and young girls is something she is already passionate about. “When I was growing up, there wasn’t a female that I was like, ‘Wow, I want to be like her,’” she says. “I feel like I want to give back to everyone who’s helped me.”

Before she leaves, I ask what tennis has given her. “I was a very shy little girl who didn’t talk much at all,” she says. “And through playing sport, and having to be bold on the court and fearless and fight, it’s given me inner strength. If you have that,” she smiles, “then you can really achieve whatever you want.”

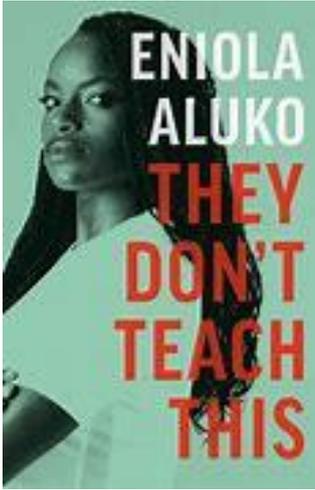
October 2021. [Emma Raducanu, The British Teen Taking Tennis By Storm, Makes Her British Vogue Debut | British Vogue](#)

ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES:



1. Share and research the definition of any unfamiliar vocabulary and / or cultural references.
2. Discuss the impact of removing the first paragraph of this article.
3. Highlight the quotation from this article that you find most inspiring; be prepared to discuss why you have chosen it!
4. ‘It is hard to fathom what it must feel like to play a match in front of a home crowd, with the nation’s hopes on your shoulders, and then be forced to retire, on medical advice, halfway through.’ Discuss your reaction to this quotation; does society put too much pressure on its sporting heroes?
5. Would the world be a better place if everyone followed Raducanu’s lead and embraced being ‘the odd one out’?

An extract from the autobiography *They Don't Teach This* by Eniola Aluko



A whistle blew. I sprinted forward, squinting against the slanting sun as the players fanned out across the pitch. My gut fizzed in expectation. We were one point away from winning the league. I could almost feel the cold, glinting silverware under my fingers. The next ninety minutes would wash away years of disappointment. No second place this time. This time, we would lift the trophy.

Everyone here on this bright autumn afternoon was as certain as I was. This was our game. On the sidelines a cluster of TV cameras was trained on the pitch, here to capture our title victory. In the stands a large away crowd waved and cheered. Even our opponents seemed resigned to our win. Way down in fifth place, Manchester City had nothing to play for. They had even rested some of their key players. This was going to be a routine win.

I had visualised it all. I would score, I would win, and I would lift the trophy.

The whistle blew once more. A free kick to City inside our half. All eyes followed the ball as it arced in towards our goal. Our keeper Marie Hourihan stormed out of the scrum and leapt, arms outstretched, as a midfielder barrelled in from the left. The players collided with a sickening crack and plummeted to the ground. Marie stayed down, clutching her head in her white gloves. Paramedics jogged on to the pitch and bundled her into an ambulance as the news ran like a shiver through the team: it was a broken collarbone.

I fought a rising wave of nausea. Marie was more than our last line of defence; she was the foundation of our morale. Eleven minutes in, this game, our game, had taken a nightmarish turn. The backline looked on, glum and shell-shocked, as a substitute keeper warmed up and stepped on to the pitch. Losing our keeper had hit us hard. All our bravado was evaporating into the pale afternoon air.

Sensing we were shaken, our opponents sent a timid, probing shot long and low across the pitch. The ball bounced slowly at the edge of the box and somehow in over our sub keeper. I stared in horror from the other end of the pitch as we struggled to register the goal. Our defence was still reeling when they attacked again. A sky-blue shirt raced down the wing and cut back to a striker who, in one flowing movement, controlled the ball on her chest and volleyed it up into the top corner. A second gut punch within minutes of the first.

I gazed around my teammates. There was no fire or fight in their eyes, only numb shock. Up front, it would fall on me to stop the freefall into despair. We wrestled back control in the second half and, pushing hard, got one back. Now it was close again; we only needed a draw. The title was just one goal away. It was down to me to claw this back.

The minutes slid away. I gave it everything I had, but their defenders closed in, a determined, grim back line. In the last minute, we took a corner. My throat tightened and my vision swam as I stood on the goal line, waiting for our final chance. The ball looped in, there was a desperate scramble, and their keeper emerged triumphant, clutching it in her gloves. The whistle blew and I collapsed on to the field, sobbing, as my world crumbled around my ears. I was inconsolable.

Slumped on the pitch that day in 2014, I still had a lot to learn. That defeat shook me to my core. It shattered my love of football and even made me question my faith in God. I felt humiliated. I felt like a failure. To climb all season to the top of the table and fall short at the last minute, on the last day, by just one goal. It was too much to bear.

People tried to comfort me. There was always next year, they said. I'm sure they meant well, but the thought of going back out there, climbing back up the table, and getting close enough to win, close enough to fail, made my stomach squirm. What if we lost again? I wasn't sure I could take that crushing disappointment a second time.

But I didn't quit. I got over it, and in doing so, I learned one of the hardest lessons of my life. The following year, when at last, not one, but two trophies came, I understood: it was the defeat that had driven us not only to win, but to exceed even our own expectations. That humiliating loss gave us an edge over the other teams, it was the extra fuel that propelled us over the finish line to claim both the title and the FA Cup. Our failure was the foundation of our success.

Since then, I've learnt to embrace failure, when it comes. It didn't happen overnight, I still get disappointed, that's only human. But I'm never inconsolable like I was that day, because I know that if I fail, a lesson will surely follow. I began to see that failure, disappointment and challenges shouldn't be feared. They are opportunities, necessary steps along the winding road to success. They are life's best teachers.

And there was a lot to learn. As a kid, I was taught to behave a certain way by my parents, coaches, teachers, and preachers. They gave me a set of a guiding principles and morals to live by. But out in the real world, things were different. Life was much messier than I had been taught to expect. I found myself in situations no one had taught me how to deal with. Situations that no one could have prepared me for in advance. These were lessons I had to learn on my own. Lessons they didn't teach.

Like everyone else out there, I've had to figure these lessons out on my own, by going through it. I've failed at times, I've got things wrong, had to go back and try again. And through each failure, I've grown, learned, and come out better equipped for the next challenge life has thrown at me. And all the successes, all the trophies, all the victories, were made all the sweeter by the obstacles I had to overcome along the way.

Life has been a series of these lessons learned from experience, each one of them hard-won and precious. I want to share them, these lessons they don't teach. I hope they are useful; I hope they resonate with what you might be facing in your own life. This is my story. It starts with a failure, because failure is the best teacher, the best lesson, and they don't teach this.

[EXCLUSIVE EXTRACT: They Don't Teach This by Eniola Aluko | The Fawcett Society](#)

ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES:



1. Share and research the definition of any unfamiliar vocabulary and / or cultural references.
2. Discuss the ways in which Eniola Aluko uses repetition to communicate her message to the reader.
3. Re-read the first page of this extract. Highlight three sentences which you think best create the emotion of the match. Be prepared to discuss your choices.
4. 'Failure is the best teacher, the best lesson, and they don't teach this.' Do you agree with this statement? Discuss.
5. Aluko describes the adults in her life as giving her a guiding set of principles and morals. What does this look like in your life? Summarise your guiding principles and morals in no more than three sentences ...

Ahead of the G7 Leaders' Summit (11 - 13th June, 2021) in Cornwall, UK, over 35 high profile UNICEF Ambassadors and Supporters wrote an open letter to the G7 leaders demanding they commit to donating doses of Covid-19 vaccines to poorer countries. The letter urges G7 leaders commit to sharing a minimum of 20% of Covid-19 vaccine dose supply urgently.

Dear G7 Leaders,

The world has spent a year and a half battling the COVID-19 pandemic, but the virus is still spreading in many countries and producing new variants with the potential to put us all back where we started. This means more school closures, more healthcare disruptions and greater economic fallout – threatening the futures of families and children everywhere.

The pandemic will not be over anywhere until it is over everywhere, and that means getting vaccines to every country, as quickly and equitably as possible. This weekend's G7 Summit is a vital opportunity for you to agree the actions that will get vaccines where they are most needed, fast.

UNICEF is already on the ground delivering vaccines on behalf of COVAX, the international vaccine equity initiative. But right now, COVAX is 190 million doses short of where it needs to be, which leaves vulnerable people dangerously unprotected. Some countries have committed to donating vaccines later this year, but doses are needed now.

UNICEF analysis shows that G7 countries will soon have enough doses to donate 20% of their vaccines between June and August – over 150 million doses – without significant delay to current plans to vaccinate their adult populations. **We're asking you to make these urgent donations by August and to set out a roadmap to scale-up donations as supplies increase.** Forecasts suggest as many as 1 billion doses may be available for donation by year end.

The hopes of the world rest on your shoulders. Together, you must rise to this challenge. Let's build a healthier, brighter and fairer future for every child and for everyone.

GIVE 20% OF AVAILABLE VACCINES BY AUGUST. PROTECT US ALL. DONATE DOSES NOW.

Signed by: *Ramla Ali; Fernando Alonso; David Beckham; Sanjeev Bhaskar; Orlando Bloom; José Manuel Calderón; Sofia Carson; Gemma Chan; Priyanka Chopra Jonas; Olivia Colman; Billie Eilish; Pau Gasol; Whoopi Goldberg; Selena Gomez; David Harewood; Keeley Hawes; Sir Chris Hoy; Angélique Kidjo; Téa Leoni; Lucy Liu; Juan Manuel López Iturriaga; Ewan McGregor; Leo Messi; Alyssa Milano; Andy Murray; Liam Neeson; Liam Payne; Katy Perry; Sergio Ramos; Andy Robertson; Claudia Schiffer; Teresa Viejo; Levison Wood; P!nk*

[Donate Doses Now: Open letter from UNICEF Ambassadors & Supporters](#)



ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES:

1. Share and research the definition of any unfamiliar vocabulary and / or cultural references.
2. Some sentences in the letter were printed in bold for emphasis. Would you change any of the choices made about the use of bold? Be prepared to explain reasons for your decisions.
3. If the last paragraph ('The hopes of ..') was only allowed to be one sentence in length, highlight which of the three sentences you would save and be prepared to discuss why you have chosen to protect it!
4. Look at the names of the UNICEF ambassadors who have signed the letter. How many do you recognise? Do these names make a difference to the impact of this letter, do you think? Whose name would you add to increase the chance of the letter being effective?
5. 'The pandemic will not be over anywhere until it is over everywhere'. Discuss.

Strictly's John Whaite 'expected more criticism' of show's first all-male couple

Former Great British Bake Off winner says people have been 'very pro' his dancing partnership with professional Johannes Radebe



John Whaite (right) and Johannes Radebe during the dress rehearsal for Saturday's live show of BBC One's Strictly Come Dancing on 4 December. Photograph: Guy Levy/PA

Nadia Khomami Arts and culture correspondent Mon 6 Dec 2021

Strictly Come Dancing's John Whaite – who made history as part of the show's first all-male couple – has said he initially intended to dance with a straight partner, and expected much more criticism and disapproval than he received.

The former Great British Bake Off winner and his professional dancing partner Johannes Radebe followed in the footsteps of Olympian Nicola Adams and Katya Jones, who formed the show's first all-female couple last year before having to pull out due to Covid-19.

But initially, Whaite told the BBC team that he thought he should dance with a straight male partner, "just to make a statement that's not about sexuality," he said in an interview with the Radio Times.

"But as I was announced, I saw that people were very pro the male-male coupling. I realised it was a big thing for the gay community. When we're on the dancefloor, I only want to be voted for based on our dancing. But to deny that our partnership is significant would be a really wrong thing."

The TV chef said he had anticipated trolling and hate mail. "But it's actually not been bad at all. It's been kind and generous. The amount of people we've had messages from saying, 'I'm proud as a straight

mum and straight dad to have children grow up in a world where two men can dance together’ has been truly overwhelming.”

He and Radebe said they had compared notes on their experiences growing up, including feelings of shame over their sexuality. Now, Radebe’s mother (his father died when the dancer was 14) gathers her neighbours in South Africa to watch Strictly together. “It’s a big celebration. They’re very proud,” the dancer said.

But the pair were aware that not everyone is a fan. In 2019, the show received 189 complaints after the “offensive” broadcast of its first ever individual same-sex routine, and this year there remains negative comments on social media.

“On Twitter this week, someone said their grandmother has to leave the room when we come on. She won’t watch us,” Whaite said. “I think it’s a fear thing. To see a world where two men can dance together, it can instil the fear of God into people. But let’s leave them behind.”

He added that he hoped straight people would start to do same-sex couple dances to send “a very clear message of inclusion”.

Though he wasn’t concerned about the Strictly curse (where dancing partners begin romantic relationships with each other), Whaite said he understood the sentiment after dancing the rumba. “I felt like I loved Johannes. And I do love him to bits ... you can see why people hook up,” he said.

[Strictly’s John Whaite ‘expected more criticism’ of show’s first all-male couple | Strictly Come Dancing | The Guardian](#)

ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES:



1. Share and research the definition of any unfamiliar vocabulary and / or cultural references.
2. The journalist includes many direct quotes from an interview with John Whaite. What is the impact of this? Are there any potential disadvantages?
3. Highlight a sentence that provokes questions that aren’t covered in the article. What else do you want to know and why?
4. ‘I think it’s a fear thing. To see a world where two men can dance together, it can instil the fear of God into people. But let’s leave them behind.’ Is leaving these people behind the best response? Discuss.
5. Whaite hopes that ‘straight people will start to do same-sex couple dances to send a very clear message of inclusion’; what else would you like to see happening in the world that you think would send ‘clear messages of inclusion?’

Should unhealthy food and drinks be allowed to sponsor sports?

19 Jun 2021



Ronaldo preferred "agua" (water) to Coca-Cola

It all started on Monday when Portugal captain and football superstar Cristiano Ronaldo sat down for a press conference ahead of his teams Euro 2020 match against Hungary the following night.

Spotting two bottles of Coca-Cola on the table in front of him, Ronaldo pushed them away and encouraged people to drink "agua!" (water) instead.

The day after, Paul Pogba removed a non-alcoholic bottle of beer from his press conference table. The Manchester United star is a practising Muslim and does not drink alcohol of any kind.

Then, on Wednesday, the hat-trick! Italy midfielder Manuel Locatelli also replaced the Coca-Cola bottle on his table with water.

All the clips got lots of attention online. And now, Uefa - who run the tournament - have warned teams that they could face fines if their players move drinks provided by sponsors at news conferences.

Why is this a big deal?

The Euros are not only a massive football event, they're also big business that generates LOTS of money.

Some of the world's biggest brands spend millions of pounds to be part of Euro 2020, and have their names and products displayed on billboards, advertising in stadiums, and - yes - drinks on press conference tables.

Coca-Cola, JustEat and Adidas are just some of the names behind this year's tournament. McDonald's has been a big sponsor in the past.

The money is used to fund the tournament, but also goes towards other areas of football - like youth teams and community pitches.

'Uefa has reminded participating teams that partnerships are integral to the delivery of the tournament and to ensuring the development of football across Europe, including for youth and women.'

However, Uefa's Euro 2020 tournament director Martin Kallen, has said he understood the actions of players who, like Pogba, did such things for religious reasons.



Paul Pogba also removed a drink from his press conference table

Should unhealthy food and drinks be allowed to sponsor sports?

Coca-Cola is one of the big sponsors of Euro 2020.

McDonalds isn't a sponsor this time, but in the past the fast food chain has sponsored the Euros, World Cups and Olympic games.

Although brands like these make a range of goods, they are known for unhealthy foods and sugary drinks - items which are at odds with a diet needed to be a top athlete.

Cristiano Ronaldo, for example, takes his diet very seriously and is known not to have carbonated drinks, which helps to explain his decision to remove the bottles.

But, the money sponsors provide is important.

England manager Gareth Southgate has offered his view: "I think there are lots of sponsors in sport and the impact of their money at all levels helps sport to function, particularly grassroots sport in our country requires investment and without some of those companies it would be very difficult to have the facilities we need.

"We're mindful in our country of obesity and health but everything can be done in moderation, and anything that is done in moderation is rarely a problem."

[Should unhealthy food and drinks be allowed to sponsor sports? - CBBC Newsround](#)

ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES:

1. Share and research the definition of any unfamiliar vocabulary and / or cultural references.
2. Discuss why you think the journalist has left the quotations from Gareth Southgate to the end of the article.
3. Highlight the sentence you think is most contentious (likely to provoke an argument): be prepared to discuss why you have chosen it!
4. 'Uefa - who run the tournament - have warned teams that they could face fines if their players move drinks provided by sponsors at news conferences.' Is this fair? Discuss your reactions and suggestions.
5. The headline of this article is: 'Should unhealthy food and drinks be allowed to sponsor sports?' What's the answer? Discuss.



How Bethany Shriever crowdfunded her way to ‘surreal’ BMX gold medal in Tokyo after UK Sport cut her support

Shriever and teammate Kye Whyte describe their joy at winning medals despite competing in one of GB’s less well-funded events



Shriever celebrates with her gold medal at Tokyo 2020 (Photo: AP)



By **Matt Butler**

July 30, 2021

TOKYO — Kids: next time someone tells you that doing jumps on your bike is a waste of time, point them in the direction of Kye Whyte and Bethany Shriever.

In the space of 10 minutes on Friday the pair added a silver and a gold medal to Team GB’s tally, in the BMX racing. That’s the discipline where a gaggle of riders hurl themselves down a slope from the start gate then battle elbows-out while negotiating a lumpy, banked course.

Whyte, a 21-year-old from Peckham, south-east London, with designs on opening a bar and a shop that exclusively sells chicken wings once he parks his bike for good, won the silver medal. Shriever, a 22-year-old former trainee teaching assistant from Essex, won the gold. Both had funding cut from UK Sport, before having it reinstated. Both have grafted their way to the top.

It was telling on a day that the British men’s rowing eight – part of the most lavishly funded Olympic sport in the country – bagged an underwhelming bronze medal, that two people on tiny bikes with intermittent funding enjoyed such success.

A few hours after their races, the pair sat down at Team GB’s headquarters in Odaiba on Tokyo Bay. And it was clear that they were beginning to realise the magnitude of their achievements, even if they were still struggling to take it all in.

“It is still surreal,” Shriever said, with her medal still around her neck. “I haven’t had a chance to think about it, I haven’t had a chance to myself since the race. I’m over the moon.”



While Shriever was speaking, Whyte, also wearing his silver medal, was just slowly shaking his head, still processing the fact that he had gone from Peckham BMX club to the Olympic podium. Once he had gathered his thoughts, he laid out in no uncertain terms that their egalitarian sport is the future of the Games.

“BMX is literally for everyone,” he said. “At my club we give away bikes for free. You have to pay a monthly fee but you get top class coaches – two of them are my brother, who is an ex-team GB rider, and my dad.

“I feel like in BMX, the black kids coming up in the sport are doing well. They see it as a way of not being in trouble, doing silliness – and when you do it, you’re having fun.”

That “doing silliness” resonates, because Whyte has spoken in the past about how BMX has kept him out of the temptations that can lead an inner-city kid into trouble. And he said yesterday: “I wouldn’t say it saved me from anything because I have been doing it from a young age. It has obviously kept me out of trouble. I wasn’t going to places where my friends were going, I was going to training. It is just a great sport. It is exciting, it is fun, it’s fast, you get adrenaline from it.”

Both Whyte and Shriever are under the British Cycling umbrella, but their journey to Tokyo 2020 was by no means simple. BMX had its funding cut by UK Sport and Shriever had to crowdfund her way to Olympic qualifiers.

British Cycling saw their potential and stepped in with funding and facilities, but Shriever said if it wasn’t for family support, she would have had to throw in the towel. “I had to rely on Mum and Dad,” she said. “The Olympics were fast approaching and I had to get to World Cup races and get some good results. So that is why I started the crowdfunding.

“My results opened up a load of eyes and Sparky [performance director Stephen Park] made me a full-time cyclist. I was able to use the amazing facilities. It was harder when I wasn’t full-time training. My effort wasn’t as much as it was when I was full-time, but when you are funded it is plain sailing. Well, not plain sailing but easier than when I wasn’t [funded].”

Shriever, meanwhile, paid tribute to her parents in helping her get to the top of the Olympic podium. And in offering advice to aspiring riders, the woman from a less than salubrious area of Essex said: “Literally just commit to it. Get out there, get your mum and dad to help you out to get to the places you need to. If you want to do it you have to commit to it stay motivated and if you put the work in you get the reward. It doesn’t matter where you are from – me and Kye are obviously results of that.”

[How Bethany Shriever crowdfunded her way to 'surreal' BMX gold medal in Tokyo after UK Sport cut her support \(inews.co.uk\)](https://www.inews.co.uk/sport/bethany-shriever-crowdfunded-her-way-to-surreal-bmx-gold-medal-in-tokyo-after-uk-sport-cut-her-support/)



ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES:

1. Share and research the definition of any unfamiliar vocabulary and / or cultural references.
2. Discuss the ways in which the opening two sentences set the tone for the rest of the article. What words could you use to describe the writer’s perspective of the story?
3. Highlight three sentences in which the journalist portrays the two athletes as ‘the underdogs’. Be prepared to discuss your choices.
4. Kye Whyte describes BMX training as ‘keeping him out of trouble’. What do you think is the best solution to young people avoiding ‘doing silliness’? Discuss.
5. The British Olympic rowing team are described as the ‘most lavishly funded sport’. Should all sports have equal funding? Discuss.

F1 drivers who refused to take the knee revealed how little the fight against racism really means to them

At the first sign of trouble, of a higher level of commitment being required, the F1 six found a reason to tell Lewis Hamilton to shove it



Fourteen F1 drivers took a knee at the Austrian Grand Prix while six chose to stand (Photo: Getty)

By Kevin Garside

July 6, 2020 (Updated October 15, 2020)

The F1 six, as they may forever be known, stood when invited to take a knee.

Charles Leclerc considered the offence that might be caused by “formal gestures that could be seen as controversial in some countries” of greater importance than assuming the universal gesture of support for black people.

Max Verstappen prized the belief that “everyone has the right to express themselves (sic) at a time and in a way that suits them” above the importance of unifying around a symbol recognised around the globe. We are not talking any old drivers here.

We are talking about the No 1 driver at Ferrari, the sport’s most celebrated marque, and in the second case, a talismanic figure, arguably F1’s most powerful human brand.

Leclerc and Verstappen were joined by Kimi Raikkonen, Carlos Sainz, Daniil Kvyat and Antonio Giovinazzi, the group said to be unsettled by the political direction taken by the leadership of the Black Lives Matter movement.

Hamilton alone broadcast the ‘Black Lives Matter’ slogan on his T-shirt during the pre-race formalities. The rest of the grid wore tops bearing the message ‘End Racism’, whatever that means.

This is what happens when the oppressed start to organise and fight back. A resistance movement that entered the mainstream by offering easy virtue to supporters, asked those who stamped timelines with black boxes to make the next conceptual move and link the subjugation of one group with another.

Hamilton has maintained a diplomatic course, giving the benefit of the doubt to a community painfully slow to acknowledge the corrosive curse of racism as it manifests in F1, and pollutes the wider world. He knows where this is sliding, back to a status quo shaped by complacency and division.

At the first sign of trouble, of a higher level of commitment being required, the F1 six found a reason to tell Hamilton to shove it in the nicest possible way. They will do their utmost, unseen but in their own way to combat centuries old injustices, but they will not be held to account aggressively by a victim, so enough of your “silence is complicity” hauteur, thanks all the same.

Leclerc went on: “I believe what matters are facts and behaviours in our daily life rather than formal gestures. I will not take the knee but this does not mean at all that I am less committed than others in the fight against racism.” Hmm. There are historic moments, and this is one, when it is important to make plain that commitment in order to make substantial change possible.



Good intentions are a necessary part of the solution but not sufficient. And to stand at the first opportunity that F1 has had to show the world it is serious about tackling racism when 14 others took the knee is hardly a sign that the sport is unified or serious about the issue.

Clearly there are some in the camp who were not happy with Hamilton’s emotive prompts in the immediacy of George Floyd’s death in police custody.

Ultimately the decision not to take the knee was a rebuke to Hamilton’s heckling, which makes his point for him.

Since they don’t experience or feel it, the six chose to take greater offence at him rather than racism itself. They care in an abstract sense, recognise racism as inherently unfair, but not enough to run the blight out of town.

They know how much this issue means to the only black driver in the history of F1, but by their actions show how little it means to them.

That they could not rise above their animosity towards Hamilton on a personal level over his impatient, petulant cajoling, perhaps demonstrates why we are in this position in the first place.

Some, including the F1 six just don’t get it. It is not about how they feel. It is about doing what is right. On Sunday in Austria they failed to do that, and by extension failed Hamilton and the cause for which he fights.

[F1 drivers who refused to take the knee revealed how little the fight against racism really means to them \(inews.co.uk\)](https://www.inews.co.uk/f1-drivers-who-refused-to-take-the-knee-revealed-how-little-the-fight-against-racism-really-means-to-them/)

ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES:



1. Share and research the definition of any unfamiliar vocabulary and / or cultural references.
2. If you could ask the journalist why the article ends with a succession of very short paragraphs, what do you think the answer would be?
3. This is an opinionated article that displays a clear bias. Highlight three examples of sentences that reveal this bias; be prepared to discuss your choices.
4. Kevin Garside argues that this incident is ‘hardly a sign that the sport is unified or serious about the issue [racism]’; is this a fair conclusion? Discuss.
5. ‘End Racism’ and ‘Black Lives Matter’ slogans are worn by the F1 drives in the photograph. Does this sort of statement make a difference to the world? Discuss.

PM speech at the UN General Assembly: 22 September 2021

Extract from Prime Minister Boris Johnson's speech at the 76th Session of the UN General Assembly.

Published and delivered on 23 September 2021 (Transcript of the speech, exactly as it was delivered)



Mr President, Your Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen.

An inspection of the fossil record over the last 178 million years – since mammals first appeared – reveals that the average mammalian species exists for about a million years before it evolves into something else or vanishes into extinction.

Of our allotted lifespan of a million, humanity has been around for about 200,000.

In other words, we are still collectively a youngster.

If you imagine that million years as the lifespan of an individual human being – about eighty years – then we are now sweet 16.

We have come to that fateful age when we know roughly how to drive and we know how to unlock the drinks cabinet and to engage in all sorts of activity that is not only potentially embarrassing but also terminal. In the words of the Oxford philosopher Toby Ord “we are just old enough to get ourselves into serious trouble”.

We still cling with part of our minds to the infantile belief that the world was made for our gratification and pleasure and we combine this narcissism with an assumption of our own immortality. We believe that someone else will clear up the mess we make, because that is what someone else has always done.

We trash our habitats again and again with the inductive reasoning that we have got away with it so far, and therefore we will get away with it again.

My friends, the adolescence of humanity is coming to an end.

We are approaching that critical turning point – in less than two months – when we must show that we are capable of learning, and maturing, and finally taking responsibility for the destruction we are inflicting, not just upon our planet but ourselves.

It is time for humanity to grow up.

It is time for us to listen to the warnings of the scientists – and look at Covid, if you want an example of gloomy scientists being proved right – and to understand who we are and what we are doing.

The world – this precious blue sphere with its eggshell crust and wisp of an atmosphere – is not some indestructible toy, some bouncy plastic romper room against which we can hurl ourselves to our heart’s content.

Daily, weekly, we are doing such irreversible damage that long before a million years are up, we will have made this beautiful planet effectively uninhabitable – not just for us but for many other species.

And that is why the Glasgow COP26 summit is the turning point for humanity.

We must limit the rise in temperatures – whose appalling effects were visible even this summer – to 1.5 degrees.

We must come together in a collective coming of age.

We must show we have the maturity and wisdom to act.

And we can.

In just 40 days time we need the world to come to Glasgow to make the commitments necessary.

... Sophocles is often quoted as saying that there are many terrifying things in the world, but none is more terrifying than man, and it is certainly true that we are uniquely capable of our own destruction, and the destruction of everything around us.

But what Sophocles actually said was that man is deinos and that means not just scary but awesome - and he was right.

We are awesome in our power to change things and awesome in our power to save ourselves, and in the next 40 days we must choose what kind of awesome we are going to be.

I hope that COP26 will be a 16th birthday for humanity in which we choose to grow up, to recognise the scale of the challenge we face, to do what posterity demands we must, and I invite you in November to celebrate what I hope will be a coming of age and to blow out the candles of a world on fire.

See you in Glasgow.

[PM speech at the UN General Assembly: 22 September 2021 - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)



ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES:

1. Share and research the definition of any unfamiliar vocabulary and / or cultural references.
2. If you were asked to give the PM advice about how to deliver this speech, what would you direct him to do in terms of pace, pauses, expression, emphasis of key words, volume, gesture etc.
3. Highlight three examples of rhetorical devices in this speech: be prepared to discuss the technique used and its impact on the audience.
4. What are the problems with the ‘coming of age’ metaphor used throughout this speech?
5. ‘Sophocles is often quoted as saying that there are many terrifying things in the world, but none is more terrifying than man’; discuss.

Ricky Gervais is right – you really are ‘stupid’ if you can’t see why those cats and dogs must leave Afghanistan

Paul ‘Pen’ Farthing has been campaigning to have all of his staff and their families, as well as his 140 dogs and 60 cats, evacuated from the country.



Chas Newkey-Burden

Wednesday 25 August 2021

Ben Wallace says he'll ‘prioritise people over pets’ amid row with animal welfare boss in Afghanistan

During times of conflict, the suffering of animals is often overlooked because people are more attuned to human casualties. Precious few of us regard the right to life of animals and humans as morally the same.

Paul “Pen” Farthing – who founded an animal shelter in Kabul – has been campaigning to have all of his staff and their families, as well as his 140 dogs and 60 cats, evacuated from the country in a campaign he has called “Operation Ark”.

With so much concern about human suffering, some have questioned the need for this campaign. Critics like this got short shrift from Ricky Gervais. Writing on Twitter, the actor pointed out that animals would be put in the hold of the plane “where people can’t go,” so this is an extra, privately funded plane that “will allow MORE people to be saved”.

Dogs and cats are sentient beings. They will already be feeling the trauma of what’s going on in Afghanistan and if they are not allowed to leave with Farthing and his team, they will almost certainly die. But as Gervais points out, if the animals are rescued that could allow more humans to also be rescued. So why would we, supposedly nation of dog lovers and cat lovers, want them left behind?

This is not the first time that animals have been caught up in a conflict in the Middle East. During Israel’s attacks on the Gaza Strip in 2008 and 2009, many animals were wiped out as “collateral damage”, including a pregnant camel that was hit by an Israeli missile. Eyewitnesses say that when Israeli soldiers entered Gaza’s zoo, they immediately shot the lions. Monkeys tried to flee or hide but were hunted down and killed by the troops.

When Israel attacked Gaza again in 2014, its air force bombarded the zoo and killed more than 80 animals. After the conflict, the zoo owner wanted to preserve the murdered animals so that local children could still see and learn about nature. But the Israeli blockade of Gaza meant he was unable to obtain good quality formaldehyde so those animals died a second death.

The exchange of fire between Israel and Gaza has also caused animal suffering on the other side of the border. Rockets have torn apart natural habitats, displaced birds and caused havoc. Earlier this year, a herd of elephants formed a protective circle around a young calf during a rocket attack from the Gaza Strip but a monkey at an Israeli zoo was hurt when it was hit by shrapnel.

The hardest part from a vegan or animal liberationist perspective is when animals are sent into the heart of military conflict — deliberately put into harm’s way. Sixteen million animals were forced to take part in the First World War.

In the Second World War, dogs were used as sentries, messengers, mine-detectors and also “para-pups” who would jump from planes behind enemy lines to save stranded troops. One dog, a mongrel named Rob who wore a patch over one eye, made 20 such jumps.

Dogs like Rob are considered “heroes” by modern standards and history books tells us they “served” in wars. But were they heroes who served – or were they victims who were abused?

The same is true for all the animals used in hideous military experiments. Even in the 21st century, animals are routinely abused by the state. As Britain and America prepared for the Iraq war, military scientists were told to research what happens to a wounded creature who receives further wounds. To do this, they attacked and slowly killed a series of pigs.

In 2012, a whistle-blower released a video of a military trauma training course in which participants and instructors laughed as live goats had their legs broken and amputated with tree trimmers. The US army has also poisoned monkeys in chemical attack training exercises, deliberately infected animals with viruses, conducted sonar tests which kill whales and shot various animals at point blank range.

Supporters of these experiments praise the animals for the “contribution” they have made to the war effort, which shows people can abuse language as happily as they abuse animals. Forcing animals into suffering and then suggesting they secretly wanted to take part is rapacious.

But from talk of “free-range” hens to “ethical slaughter”, abuse of language has always propped up animal abuse. We praise dogs as “heroes” when we push them into wars but then say “they’re just dogs” when someone wants to save them from war-torn Afghanistan. Gervais is right: we really can be stupid *****.

[Ricky Gervais is right – you really are ‘stupid’ if you can’t see why those cats and dogs must leave Afghanistan | The Independent](#)

ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES:



1. Share and research the definition of any unfamiliar vocabulary and / or cultural references.
2. How do the vocabulary choices made by the journalist reflect his attitude towards the topic?
3. Highlight two sentences in this article which challenged your thinking about this subject: be prepared to discuss why you have chosen them!
4. There are many examples given of animals suffering due to human conflict in this article. Is it possible to rank order the acceptability / unacceptability of these? Discuss.
5. ‘Were they heroes who served – or were they victims who were abused?’ Discuss.

21 September 2021

**Secretary-General's address to the 76th Session of the UN General Assembly
(Extract from opening of speech)**

António Guterres



Mr. President of the General Assembly, Excellencies,

I am here to sound the alarm: The world must wake up.

We are on the edge of an abyss — and moving in the wrong direction.

Our world has never been more threatened.

Or more divided.

We face the greatest cascade of crises in our lifetimes.

The COVID-19 pandemic has supersized glaring inequalities.

The climate crisis is pummeling the planet.

Upheaval from Afghanistan to Ethiopia to Yemen and beyond has thwarted peace.

A surge of mistrust and misinformation is polarizing people and paralyzing societies.

Human rights are under fire.

Science is under assault.

And economic lifelines for the most vulnerable are coming too little and too late — if they come at all.

Solidarity is missing in action — just when we need it most.

Perhaps one image tells the tale of our times.

The picture we have seen from some parts of the world of COVID-19 vaccines ... in the garbage.

Expired and unused.

On the one hand, we see the vaccines developed in record time — a victory of science and human ingenuity.

On the other hand, we see that triumph undone by the tragedy of a lack of political will, selfishness and mistrust.

A surplus in some countries. Empty shelves in others.

A majority of the wealthier world vaccinated. Over 90 percent of Africans still waiting for their first dose.

This is a moral indictment of the state of our world.

It is an obscenity.

We passed the science test.

But we are getting an F in Ethics.

Excellencies,

The climate alarm bells are also ringing at fever pitch.

The recent report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change was a code red for humanity.

We see the warning signs in every continent and region.

Scorching temperatures. Shocking biodiversity loss. Polluted air, water and natural spaces.

And climate-related disasters at every turn.

As we saw recently, not even this city — the financial capital of the world — is immune.

Climate scientists tell us it's not too late to keep alive the 1.5 degree goal of the Paris Climate Agreement.

But the window is rapidly closing.

We need a 45 per cent cut in emissions by 2030. Yet a recent UN report made clear that with present national climate commitments, emissions will go up by 16% by 2030.

That would condemn us to a hellscape of temperature rises of at least 2.7 degrees above pre-industrial levels. A catastrophe.

Meanwhile, the OECD just reported a gap of at least \$20 billion in essential and promised climate finance to developing countries.

We are weeks away from the UN Climate Conference in Glasgow, but seemingly light years away from reaching our targets.

We must get serious. And we must act fast.

[Secretary-General's address to the 76th Session of the UN General Assembly | United Nations Secretary-General](#)

ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES:

1. Share and research the definition of any unfamiliar vocabulary and / or cultural references.
2. What makes it obvious that this was written to be delivered orally and not as a written document?
3. Highlight three sentences you could remove from this speech and explain what is lost from doing so. Is anything gained?
4. There is a lot of juxtaposition in this speech (two contrasting things being placed close together); can you add other examples of juxtaposition that exposes the inequality of the world.
5. 'A surge of mistrust and misinformation is polarizing people and paralyzing societies.' Does this reflect your view of the world around you? Discuss.



Are electric scooters ridiculous or surprisingly chic?

Two very small, electrically powered wheels are dividing opinion on both sides of the Channel...

By [Teo van den Broeke](#) and [Stuart McGurk](#)



‘C’est degueulasse!’

*Stuart McGurk is **AGAINST** le scooter*

Let’s be clear about something: no human, since we left the trees, has looked anything but ridiculous by moving horizontally while standing stationary. Here’s the complete list of them: Segway riders, Airwheel riders, “hoverboard” (ie, two-wheel) riders and Hannibal Lecter when they wheeled him from high security to meet the senator. (Although, let’s be honest, the latter does make a killer Halloween costume if you have too much time on your hands.)

To that we can now add the riders of electric scooters or, specifically, the ones the fashion mafia zoom around on during Paris Fashion Week. Leaving aside that they’re illegal to use on UK roads – they may as well be smoking a crack pipe – what’s worse is how, for scooter riders, whatever their location, any surface is *their* surface. The electric scooter rider sees the city much as a toddler does when pushing a toy car over a surface in which the roads are painted on. Nwwwwwwrrrr! Over a crossing, down a pavement, through a main road, across the back of a pensioner that another scooter has just knocked over – wheeeee!

I swear, I once saw someone on an electric scooter veer diagonally from a pavement, across a road, onto the other pavement, into a shop and stay *on his scooter the whole time*. “Mate!” I wanted to shout, “They’re not *hovershoes*! At least when cycling you have the small hope it’s the bike that’ll take the brunt if a car decides to career into your path, leaving you deposited on the bonnet. With a scooter? Good luck: the traffic is essentially playing a game of meat-bag whack-a-mole with the suckers. Still, silver lining and all that.

‘C’est incroyable!’

Teo van den Broeke is **FOR** le scooter

First off, let’s get one thing straight: there’s a big difference between *micro-scooters* and *electric scooters*. Everything about micro-scooters – from their foldability and the fact that they’re foot-powered to those stupidly tiny wheels – makes them ridiculous. And that’s before you get to the fact that micro-scooters, once the preserve of Nineties toddlers and noughties tweens, have more recently been adopted by a certain facet of the adult population. I mean, no crowded Tube carriage can be *that* bad...

The nippy little electric scooters that have recently taken over the streets of Paris, on the other hand, are, in my opinion, the diametric opposites to their micro cousins. Nippy, economical and surprisingly chic, Paris’ new scooters are to the French capital’s transport infrastructure what micro-scooters are not to anyone’s social standing.

On a recent work trip to the French capital I decided to give up on my car and driver in favour of short, whizzy trips on these rent-by-the-minute scooters, which can be found on any street corner from the Marais to the Trocadéro and picked up and dropped down at leisure. Weaving through traffic at a cool 12mph (speeds have been capped following a number of accidents), I felt like Marty McFly on his hoverboard, only cooler (and perhaps slightly less protected from angry French drivers), free from societal constraints and open to anything – Serge Gainsbourg on a scooter, if you will.

There are currently 20,000 scooters in Paris and though there are issues – inconsiderate parking, pavement mounting, reckless scooting – the overriding benefits for not only individuals but for the city as a whole are manifold. From the positive impact on the environment (fewer fossil fuel-guzzling vehicles on the roads will never be a bad thing) to the fact that less cars means fewer traffic accidents, in my opinion the fact that we don’t have more of them in London is *ridicule* indeed.

[Are electric scooters ridiculous or surprisingly chic? | British GQ \(gq-magazine.co.uk\)](http://gq-magazine.co.uk)



ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES:

1. Share and research the definition of any unfamiliar vocabulary and / or cultural references.
2. This article has two different narrative voices; whose argument is the most witty? the most convincing? the most vocabulary rich?
3. You have to reduce this debate to just one sentence per person. Highlight which two sentences you would pit against each other: be prepared to discuss why you have chosen it!
4. ‘Fewer fossil fuel-guzzling vehicles on the roads will never be a bad thing.’ Is this an indisputable statement? Discuss.
5. ‘Are electric scooters ridiculous or surprisingly chic?’ Discuss.

UPROOT THE SYSTEM!

On the 24th of September, climate activists around the world will unite for a global strike based around #UprootTheSystem. But what does it exactly mean?



When we say Uproot The System, the climate movement puts an emphasis on the intersectionality of the climate crisis. The dominance of the Global North over MAPA (most affected people and areas) through different systems, such as: colonialism, discrimination, and climate injustice – and particularly the Global North’s outsized contribution to global emissions, is at the root of this crisis. **Without listening to MAPA, embracing intersectionality, and uprooting this system, we have no hope of stopping the climate crisis.** As the published narrative of the strike states, “Other socio-economic crises such as racism, sexism, ableism, class inequality, and more amplify the climate crisis and vice versa. It is not just a single issue, our different struggles and liberations are connected and tied to each other.”

Mitzi Jonelle Tan, a climate activist from the Philippines says – “With both the COVID, climate, and every crisis in history, overexploited countries and marginalized sectors of society are systematically left behind to fend for themselves. The time to join the masses and follow the lead of our environmental defenders and workers has been long overdue.”

As MAPA Activist Maria Reyes puts it – “When we always say things like system change and how we need to go deeper, to understand that the climate crisis intersects with different social inequalities and amplifies its effects. Uproot The System is a more specific way of changing the system, Because to change the system we have to tackle it from the roots, from the beginning and those roots are capitalism, imperialism and more.”

The core of the narrative can be divided into six main points:

1. VACCINE INJUSTICE

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, vaccine injustice is a pressing current issue that highlights the inequality between the Global North and MAPA. This inequality is also present in every facet of the climate crisis, because vaccine inequality isn’t just about vaccines – it is a symptom of the wider issue of MAPA being devalued and allocated less resources on the global stage, making it harder for them to mitigate health crises such as the current pandemic and future climate-linked diseases and disasters. In addition, vaccine injustice impacts the ability of MAPA to participate in important climate decision-making forums such as the upcoming COP26, which is only admitting fully-vaccinated participants.

2. CLIMATE REFUGEES

In 2020, 3 million people were displaced due to climate disasters – yet international law does not recognise climate refugees. The 1951 Refugee Convention does not recognise climate refugees at all. Furthermore, the refugees are often from MAPA, which means that even prior to being displaced, they are facing increased levels of systemic marginalisation. This exacerbates the impacts of the crises on them. It is essential that the experiences of climate refugees inform any future climate action, starting with international recognition!

3. INDIGENOUS PEOPLES

Indigenous peoples protect over 80% of the global biodiversity. But the fossil fuel industry is stealing their lands and destroying the ecology around which their cultures rely. Around 40% of the world's plant species are currently at risk of extinction due to climate change, and deforestation is responsible for 10% of the global CO2 emissions. Indigenous peoples are fighting for their homes, their culture, their way of life in sync with mother nature. Without working with and listening to Indigenous activists, our attempts to avert the climate crisis will never succeed.

4. VARYING CLIMATE RESPONSIBILITIES

It is essential that the Global North commits to greater emissions reductions than the Global South, as they are currently producing 92% of the planet's excess carbon emissions and their systemic and historical exploitation of MAPA has fueled the climate crisis. But instead of addressing their systemic impacts, the global north chooses to push the blame on MAPA while simultaneously engaging in risky "net-zero" pathways. These include techniques which have not been proven effective enough and are damaging for the surrounding ecosystems and Indigenous people, such as untested carbon capture systems.

5. CLIMATE REPARATIONS

The Global North holds a climate debt to MAPA, both because of its historical exploitation of MAPA and its current excess contribution to climate change. Hence, the global flow of money must be redirected away from the global north and toward a green recovery – one that focuses on preparing the most affected to withstand those elements of the coming crisis that we cannot mitigate.

6. SOCIAL IMPACTS ON MINORITY GROUPS

The climate crisis will affect certain areas of the world more than others, but even within communities that are equally affected, social factors such as racism, sexism, homophobia, transphobia, and ableism mean that certain people will feel the impacts more harshly than others. Any response to the climate crisis must listen to these different voices and take into account the additional struggles caused by the intersections of their identities. As Yusuf Baluch, a climate activist from Balochistan says – 'Climate activism is (inherently) intersectional. We won't be able to achieve climate justice when we ignore the communities affected by social, racial inequality and oppressed by the mighty oppressor!'

So, now that you know the plan and why success is so essential – what next? The 24th is fast approaching and we need all the participation we can have. If you want to **participate in a local climate strike** (or register one of your own!), check out the FFF strike map.

[Uproot the System! - Newsletter - Fridays For Future](#)

ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES:

1. Share and research the definition of any unfamiliar vocabulary and / or cultural references.
2. Award each paragraph a 'readability' rating out of 3: 3 = very engaging & easy to understand; 2 = interesting at times & mostly clear; 1 = not at all engaging & difficult to understand. Can you identify what exactly is needed to achieve a rating of 3?
3. Highlight a statistic from the article that you found most alarming; be prepared to discuss why you have chosen it!
4. In the article, 6 points are listed as relevant to the climate protest. How would you rank order these in terms of importance? Discuss.
5. Is students' non attendance at school to attend a climate strike a worthwhile action? Discuss.



When will women feel safe on UK streets?

The murder of Sarah Everard shone a spotlight on a culture of male harassment and violence against women and girls, sparking protests and calls for reform.

Lisa Bachelor

Sun 26 Sep 2021

Tanya was only 12 years old when it first happened. It was a sunny afternoon in Birmingham and she was just getting off the bus she took from school every day. The bus was busy and she was keen to get off – that’s when she noticed the two men standing just behind her. “As I was passing by the stairs, I felt one of them pushing me to the side, then before I knew what was happening the other one quickly started taking pictures and videos underneath my skirt. I was wearing my school uniform and everyone could see but nobody said anything.”

Tearful and shocked, Tanya got off the bus and called her cousin. “She said, ‘You know what, these things happen. It’s a shame that we live in a world like this but that is the way things are.’” She went to her school but this was their response: “They told me ‘you should start wearing longer skirts’.”

Eleven years and a number of other incidents of sexual harassment later, Tanya has had enough. She doesn’t want to be told that it’s just the way life is. She wants something to change. And she’s not the only one.

What has been described as an “epidemic” of sexual harassment, primarily against girls and women, has slowly been revealing itself in the last few months in this country – and millions of people like Tanya are angry. A sense of the scale of this abuse became evident when the website Everyone’s Invited, which encourages survivors to share their stories, revealed thousands of testimonies, many from school-aged girls, cataloguing abuse ranging from unwanted sexual comments, cyberflashing (the sending of unsolicited explicit images) and harassment, to sexual assault and rape.

But it’s not just harassment and assault that have been pushed into the spotlight like never before, it’s serious violence against women and girls, and, in the worst cases, murder ... none were as high profile as the murder on 3 March 2021 of 33-year-old Sarah Everard. Some argued that the focus on her death was because she was white. Others said it was because of the perpetrator, a man who it transpired was one of the very people whose job it is to protect women. Met police officer Wayne Couzens pleaded guilty and will be sentenced on 29 September.

Whatever the reason, her death became a watershed moment. Women recognised the vulnerability of Everard’s situation as she walked home alone, they felt the fear she may have felt even before being accosted, and too many recognised the pain of the subsequent violence.

Grief turned to anger. There was a vigil in her name on Clapham Common in London, which only increased the backlash against the police when they were accused of being heavy handed with female protestors. Enough is enough, women seemed to collectively say, and politicians found themselves forced to respond.

Things will change, they promised. But six months on, what, if anything, has actually changed? We are now faced with another act of femicide, with the murder of primary school teacher Sabina Nessa last week, and the outpouring of anger and frustration is audible once more.

One of the other key messages that came out of all the sharing of stories on Everyone’s Invited following Everard’s death was the role that schools play. The schools inspection body Ofsted was so concerned by the volume and detail in the testimonies that came out on the website, largely from school-age children, that it carried out an emergency investigation at the end of the last school term. It concluded that sexual harassment of girls had become a way of life and that schools were seriously lacking when it came to helping identify and prevent it.

For 21-year-old Phoebe, the first signs of harassment began with boys twanging the girls' bra straps at the ages of nine or 10. Then, when she moved into sixth form and she could wear what she wanted, she was horrified by comments some of the boys would make about her body. "Things that would make you kind of retreat into your shell and think, 'I don't want to wear [this] any more'."



Phoebe, a Girlguiding advocate, believes that boys should be educated from a young age to respect women and girls.

Photograph: Antonio Olmos/The Observer

Recent research carried out by Girlguiding, which wants to see better education in school around consent and acceptable behaviours, found that almost 70% of girls have experienced sexual harassment at school from another student.

"Education, for me, is key from a young age, and this needs to start from within schools," says Phoebe, who is an advocate for the organisation. "It's not just 'oh, boys will be boys'. It needs to be 'No, you shouldn't be doing this'. We need to be constantly reminded, firstly through school and then in the workplace."

The NSPCC, which opened a helpline for schools following the fallout on Everyone's Invited, has listened to some harrowing testimony in the last few months. It was given funding until the end of October by the government for a helpline dealing specifically with cases of peer-on-peer abuse in schools. It has received more than 650 calls in the last five months.

Sandra Robinson, a manager at the helpline, says she and her colleagues have taken calls on everything from sexual name calling and inappropriate touching, to sexual abuse and rape. "With many of the calls, the caller has told somebody but it either hasn't been taken seriously or hasn't been escalated appropriately within the school," she says. "This leaves the child feeling very confused about what's appropriate or not."

The NSPCC believes one of the key things to take out from what happened on Everyone's Invited is that the government needs to help provide schools with better training for teachers on the subject of sexual abuse and harassment so that they can teach this effectively as part of the new mandatory relationships, sex and health education (RSHE).

Darren Gelder is head of Grace Academy, a state secondary school in Solihull. He believes that schools need to make sure there are measures that extend beyond the curriculum to deal with issues such as sexual harassment. At Grace Academy there are QR codes around the school that students can use to anonymously report their concerns, for example, and twice a year parents are invited to attend "building healthy relationships" meetings off the school premises. When Ofsted comes knocking this year, Gelder says it's these sorts of things schools will need to get right.

Young people and adults can contact the NSPCC helpline, Report Abuse in Education on 0800 136 663 or email help@nspcc.org.uk

Extract from: [When will women feel safe on UK streets? | Crime | The Guardian](#)

ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES:

1. Share and research the definition of any unfamiliar vocabulary and / or cultural references.
2. Contributors to this article include Tania, Phoebe, Sonia and Darren. If you had to remove one of these voices from the article, whose would it be and why?
3. Reduce this article to a summary of five key sentences – highlight these.
4. The article cites comments such as 'boys will be boys' and 'you should start wearing longer skirts' as responses to complaints of sexual harassment and abuse. How do we remove this language and these attitudes from society? Discuss.
5. 'Schools need to make sure there are measures that extend beyond the curriculum to deal with issues such as sexual harassment.' How do you think that this should happen?



This is how the generation that cares about the planet left Reading Festival

 Sam Petherick

Tuesday 31 Aug 2021



The scene at Little John's Farm after the festival [drew to a close](#) (Picture: Reuters)

Thousands of tents and acres of litter were dumped by campers as they left Reading Festival.

As many as **90,000 people** flocked to the festival over the bank holiday weekend with performances from **Stormzy** and AJ Tracey, Liam Gallagher and rock band Biffy Clyro.

As the dust settled on its first event since 2019, drone footage at 5pm today showed the scale of the waste they left behind.

At least six fields were each littered with hundreds of abandoned tents, vast numbers of beer cans, bottles and unwanted clothes.



Similar pictures were captured at Reading's slightly smaller sister festival in Leeds.

Every abandoned tent contains the equivalent of 9,000 plastic straws and requires 25kg of carbon dioxide to make – the same amount of pollution as a car driving 100 miles.

The mess left behind is in sharp contrast to research suggesting people from Generation Z (born from 1997 to 2012) care deeply about the environment and sustainability. According to a **recent**

Leaving behind tents seems like self-indulgent, "first world" and lazy behaviour' (Picture: Paul Jacobs/pictureexclusive.com)

study, Gen Z shoppers are willing to pay 10% more for environmentally sustainable products. The generation is more likely to consider environmental factors when shopping than Millennials (anyone born 1981 to 1996). Gen Zers are also well ahead of people from Generation X (born 1965-1980), while Boomers (1946 to 1964) are the least concerned about sustainability, the research shows.

Reading Festival's sustainability manager Lily Robbins said clearing up 'always takes time, because we want to do it properly'. She told the BBC: 'We take off as much as we can but unfortunately the rest does have to be taken off site to a recycling plant. That involves an incredibly lengthy process. Unfortunately tents are one of the worst things to try and recycle'.

Clean Up Britain founder John Read said: 'Leaving behind tents seems like self-indulgent, "first world" and lazy behaviour.

'All of us must become more aware of the need to protect and cherish the environment. Dumping perfectly good tents runs contrary to this.

'Festival organisers need to get more socially responsible too, and insist on festival goers taking tents home with them.

'Some sort of deposit return scheme is required, but they have been very slow to act on this.'

Reading and Leeds are known as rite-of-passage festivals for students celebrating exam results and an end of summer blowout.

The managing director of the group which runs the two festivals, Melvin Benn, previously said his aim had been to offer young people a chance to live 'freely' without having to think about Covid-19.

Festival Republic group have been contacted for comment.

[This is how the generation that cares about the planet left Reading Festival | Metro News](#)

ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES:



1. Share and research the definition of any unfamiliar vocabulary and / or cultural references.
2. Discuss the impact of the penultimate sentence of the article being an indirect, rather than direct, quotation.
3. Highlight the photograph you think has most impact: be prepared to discuss why you have chosen it!
4. 'Festival organisers need to get more socially responsible too'; how far do you agree that they are partly to blame for this situation? Discuss.
5. Is the representation of Generation Z, in this article, justified? Discuss.

[Afghanistan update: letter to MPs - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk) signed by *Dominic Raab MP Foreign Secretary, Priti Patel MP Home Secretary and Ben Wallace MP Defence Secretary. This is a slightly abridged version of the letter.*

Dear Colleagues,

The developments in Afghanistan over the last few weeks have been extremely difficult to witness. We know many of you, like thousands of people around the country, have been closely involved in working to make Afghanistan a better place over the last two decades and have a deep connection with the country and its people.

Yesterday's callous attacks on innocent people outside Kabul airport brought into stark relief the fragility of the situation in Afghanistan. It was also a terrible reminder of the challenges we face both in getting people to safety now and supporting the country in the long-term.

Our thoughts are with the families of all those who lost their lives, including several US service personnel and many Afghan civilians.

We have worked at unprecedented pace to facilitate the largest and most complex evacuation in living memory. The Armed Forces, MoD, FCDO and Home Office staff have worked incredibly hard in very difficult circumstances to bring out over 13,000 people over the last two weeks.

This number includes British nationals and their dependants, Afghans who worked for the UK government and military and their dependants, and other Afghans who are at particularly high risk. We have also supported our allies and partners to help their nationals to safety wherever possible.

This has only been possible thanks to the extraordinary efforts of UK troops and government officials on the ground, who put themselves in harm's way and worked around the clock to evacuate as many people as possible.

We are grateful to you for all your efforts to direct those in need of support towards assistance. Our consular teams have been able to reach many in need thanks to your help.

A whole government effort will support and integrate our Afghan friends into UK society through this traumatic period.

What follows next – safe passage

We have always cautioned that the nature of the security situation in Afghanistan and our responsibility to keep our people safe meant that we would not be able to evacuate everyone we wanted to. We know that every single one of you will have been contacted about heart-breaking stories of those left behind in unimaginable circumstances.

That is why once we have finished the immediate evacuation our efforts will turn to doing all we can to help any remaining British nationals and Afghans who have supported us and who we were not able to evacuate over the last fortnight.

We continue to offer support to all those in that situation or who have left Afghanistan and are now in a third country.

We are clear that the Taliban must ensure safe passage for these people out of Afghanistan and any engagement with them will emphasise this first and foremost.

The Home Office is working quickly across government and with international partners to establish the details of the new Afghan Citizens' Resettlement Scheme (ACRS). This scheme will provide protection for Afghan citizens

identified as most at risk, such as women and girls. The government has committed to take around 5,000 refugees in the first year and 20,000 over the coming years.

This is one of the most comprehensive resettlement schemes the UK has ever established. We know how important it is to get the most vulnerable people to safety quickly. That is why during this period of acute crisis, while we had the ability to bring people out on military aircraft, we made the decision to evacuate as many of these people as possible.

Where we have managed to evacuate people to the UK who are not covered by ARAP or otherwise entitled to remain in the UK, they will fall under the new Afghan Citizens' Resettlement Scheme. Those that were called forward by FCDO, but who we are sadly unable to evacuate before ceasing operations in Afghanistan, will also be guaranteed a place under ACRS.

Now that we are moving into a new phase for resettlement, we are looking at options to ensure that ACRS provides a safe route for those who are most vulnerable and at risk. Much will depend on the ability of individuals to receive safe passage from Afghanistan, and it is vital that the scheme dovetails with similar efforts being taken by our international partners. We will also work alongside Local Authorities to identify accommodation for those that arrive.

Our future commitment to the Afghan people

While the current phase of our engagement in Afghanistan is coming to an end, our commitment to the country will endure. We are supporting the Afghan people in the long-term through a renewed humanitarian effort and by ensuring the Taliban are held accountable for the pledges they have made to respect human rights.

At this time, it is more important than ever that we stand united with our allies. The G7 agreed to produce a roadmap for engagement with the Taliban and agree standards they must be held to, including protecting women's rights and ensuring humanitarian access. All agreed on the need for unity of message and purpose amongst the international community, and the UK will continue to lead this effort.

Let us reassure you that we will continue to use every lever at our disposal to secure the safe passage of those who wish to leave Afghanistan and to hold the Taliban to account. We will also do all we can to support the people who remain, including through our increased commitment of humanitarian assistance. We thank you again for your continued support.

ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES:

1. Share and research the definition of any unfamiliar vocabulary and / or cultural references.
2. Discuss the ways in which a defensive tone is established in this article.
3. Highlight three sentences that make you want to find out more: what would you ask / research if you had the opportunity to do so?
4. The government state in the letter that they 'would not be able to evacuate everyone we wanted to'; what criteria do you think should be used when deciding on the priority list for evacuation of crisis situations like this. Discuss.
5. Is 'safe passage' between countries a basic human right? Discuss.



An open letter to the world's children

8 reasons why I'm worried, and hopeful, about the next generation.

Dear children of today and of tomorrow,



Thirty years ago, against the backdrop of a changing world order – the fall of the Berlin Wall, the decline of apartheid, the birth of the world wide web – the world united in defence of children and childhood. While most of the world's parents at the time had grown up under dictatorships or failing governments, they hoped for better lives, greater opportunities and more rights for their children. So, when leaders came together in 1989 in a moment of rare global unity to make a historic commitment to the world's children to protect and fulfil their rights, there was a real sense of hope for the next generation.

So how much progress have we made? In the three decades following the adoption of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, in spite of an exploding global population, we have reduced the number of children missing out on primary school by almost 40 per cent. The number of stunted children under 5 years of age dropped by over 100 million. Three decades ago, polio paralyzed or killed almost 1,000 children every day. Today, 99 per cent of those cases have been eliminated. Many of the interventions behind this progress – such as vaccines, oral rehydration salts and better nutrition – have been practical and cost-effective. The rise of digital and mobile technology and other innovations have made it easier and more efficient to deliver critical services in hard-to-reach communities and to expand opportunities.

Yet poverty, inequality, discrimination and distance continue to deny millions of children their rights every year, as 15,000 children under 5 still die every day, mostly from treatable diseases and other preventable causes. We are facing an alarming rise in overweight children, but also girls suffering from anaemia. The stubborn challenges of open defecation and child marriage continue to threaten children's health and futures. Whilst the numbers of children in school are higher than ever, the challenge of achieving quality education is not being met. Being in school is not the same as learning; more than 60 per cent of primary school children in developing countries still fail to achieve minimum proficiency in learning and half the world's teens face violence in and around school, so it doesn't feel like a place of safety. Conflicts continue to deny children the protection, health and futures they deserve. The list of ongoing child rights challenges is long.

And your generation, the children of today, are facing a new set of challenges and global shifts that were unimaginable to your parents. Our climate is changing beyond recognition. Inequality is deepening. Technology is transforming how we perceive the world. And more families are migrating than ever before. Childhood has changed, and we need to change our approaches along with it.

So, as we look back on 30 years of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, we should also look ahead, to the next 30 years. We must listen to you – today's children and young people – about the issues of greatest concern to you now and begin working with you on twenty-first century solutions to twenty-first century problems.

With that in mind, here are eight reasons why I'm worried for your future, and eight reasons why I think there is hope:

1. You need clean water, clean air and safe climate
2. One in four of you are likely to live, and learn, in conflict and disaster zones
3. We must make it ok to talk about mental health
4. Over 30 million of you have migrated from your place of birth
5. Thousands of you will officially never exist, unless we act
6. You need twenty-first century skills for a twenty-first century economy
7. Your digital footprint must be protected
8. You might be the least trusting generation of citizens ever

Why there is hope:

There is some evidence to suggest that adults should place their trust in children and young people not to fall for fakes. A recent research study published by the American Association for the Advancement of Science found that social media users over 65 shared nearly seven times as many articles from fake news domains as the youngest age group. While the reasons for this are as yet unexplained, it may indicate that a higher level of digital and media literacy among 'digital natives' acts as a protective filter.

While social media platforms appear to be serious in their attempts to combat misinformation and work with news organizations to clearly label trusted sources, we cannot rely on the supply side for solutions. Children have a right to an education that prepares them for the world they will live in, and today, this includes much improved digital and media literacy, critical thinking and weighing up evidence. Moreover, we must work hard to build meaningful connections between young people and institutions, rebuilding trust, if we are to preserve democratic societies in the future.

A final word... Finally, the biggest reason for hope is because you – the children and young people of today – are taking the lead on demanding urgent action, and empowering yourselves to learn about, and shape the world around you. You are taking a stand now, and we are listening.

Just as the children of 1989 have emerged as leaders of today, you the children and young people of 2019 are the leaders of the future. You inspire us.

We want to work together with you to find the solutions you need to tackle the challenges of today, to build better futures for yourselves and the world you will inherit.



Henrietta H. Fore
UNICEF Executive Director

ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES:

[An open letter to the world's children | UNICEF](#)



1. Share and research the definition of any unfamiliar vocabulary and / or cultural references.
2. An open letter is published so that the general public can easily access it. Discuss what you think is the purpose and intended audience of this open letter. Is it effective, do you think?
3. Highlight two facts / statistics in the article: one that surprised you and one that didn't. Be prepared to discuss your choices.
4. When you look around the children / young people in your life, do you see them 'taking the lead on demanding urgent action' and being inspirational? Discuss.
5. Do you feel listened to as the younger generation? Discuss.



Neurodiversity in the workplace

Catherine Bean tells us her personal story of working in the Office for National Statistics

From: **Government Analysis Function**

Published 7 April 2021

Catherine Bean, a Fast Stream social researcher at the Office for National Statistics (ONS) is a member of the Analysis Function Diversity and Inclusion working group, and co-chair of the ONS Neurodiversity Support group. Here Catherine tells us what life is like for her working in ONS;

“You probably can’t tell by looking at me, but my brain works very differently to yours. If you were to meet me, you’d probably notice that I’m short and my hair is in a bob. You might notice that I don’t often make eye contact. But you won’t see that I’m also extremely sensitive to bright lights and loud noises, I often miss conversational cues, and I’m hopeless at reading body language. Like around 700,000 people in the UK, I am autistic.

This isn’t an apology or an explanation for my ‘faults’; I’m proud to be autistic. I think autism makes me a strong analyst, and an asset to teams I’ve worked in. I love coding and problem solving, and I’m good at it too. I feel very fortunate to work in the Civil Service, and proud of the encouragement I’ve had here as an autistic person to succeed in my career.

I am part of the neurodivergent community, a group of people whose brain is wired a bit differently to the ‘average’ person (someone who is neurotypical). Neurodivergent people can be autistic like me, or have ADHD, Dyslexia, Dyspraxia or a range of other Neurodivergent experiences. As a co-chair of the ONS Neurodiversity Support group, and a member of the Analysis Function Diversity and Inclusion working group, I want to share how teams can best support their neurodivergent members.

Valuing the contributions of neurodivergent people and having different neurodivergent experiences represented is known as neurodiversity. Neurodiversity is an important and often overlooked aspect to diversity at work; but we bring huge strengths to our organisations, and there’s a lot that can be done to be more inclusive of our needs. The working world supports neurotypical people by default, and often neurodivergent people are left to advocate on our own behalf to get reasonable adjustments. Without good support, neurodivergent people like me may not progress in our organisations or may even leave jobs altogether.

If you’re not sure what I mean, think about the modern office. Nearly everywhere I’ve worked, most teams hot desk. As an autistic person I find this stressful; not knowing where I’ll sit can put my whole day out of step. This might sound baffling to some, but changes in my environment impact me more than most. To counter this, I like to have a reserved seat. Without being mindful of neurodivergent colleagues’ needs, you may unknowingly add extra stress to their days.

So, how can you create an inclusive environment and encourage neurodiversity?

As an analyst, I spend a lot of my day working at a screen. Inclusive technology is vital. Specialised technology to adjust for different ways of reading is incredibly useful, like colour filters for screens. I use dark mode on apps to reduce visual strain, and most coding environments support this functionality.

Additionally, managers must be mindful of different ways of working and communicating. Not everyone's ideal working hours are nine to five; some people find they are more productive in the evenings or early mornings. Some people may find written summaries of meetings essential or might need to have a verbal conversation after receiving tasks via email to properly process the information. Some may need tasks explained more literally than others. Many neurodivergent people have Workplace Adjustment Passports that travel through their Civil Service career with them. This gives information about their workplace adjustments to ease transitions between jobs. Crucially, managers shouldn't feel unable to talk about neurodiversity! When conversations are initiated by managers about working more inclusively, the burden is taken off individuals. Employees may not know the full extent of resources available to them, so it's important for managers to be proactive in helping their teams succeed.

The past year has shifted how we communicate, and remote working has become the norm. To make online meetings more inclusive, make sure long meetings include breaks, minimise the use of the chat function as this can be distracting, and don't always expect people to use their cameras.

These adjustments aren't all specific to being neurodivergent, but instead suit a wide range of needs. The curb-cut effect. shows that by making positive changes to support disadvantaged members of society (in this case, making dipped curbs to allow wheelchair users to more easily cross the street), the whole of society benefits. Dipped (or 'cut') curbs also support parents with pushchairs, tourists with suitcases and people on bikes. In the workplace, flexible working hours, which work well if you have fatigue problems (a common condition alongside being neurodivergent), can suit early birds and night owls, working parents and those with medical appointments and caring responsibilities. Being supportive of diversity in the workplace has positive impacts for everybody.

The best advice I can give is to have conversations with your colleagues to understand how work can work best for everyone. Make sure that everyone's thoughts and opinions are listened to. You may find there are better ways of working that you hadn't even considered, or the answers to problems you didn't even know existed. A more diverse workplace means more innovation, more problem solving, and a better Civil Service. So, what are you waiting for? Start talking today!"

Catherine

[Neurodiversity in the workplace - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk)

ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES:

1. Share and research the definition of any unfamiliar vocabulary and / or cultural references.
2. When Catherine was asked to write her piece for this article, she would have been briefed to current certain ideas. Summarise, in no more than 4 bullet points, what you think was in the brief.
3. Reduce this article to the five most important sentences. Highlight these and be prepared to discuss your choices.
4. Catherine suggests that in online meetings, 'don't always expect people to use their cameras' – does this seem fair and without other complications? Discuss.
5. Is your school doing enough to celebrate neurodiversity? Discuss.



'A library for homeless people can offer more than books, it's a space to be'

Streetreads Library has launched to offer homeless people a purpose-built facility in Edinburgh. Coordinator Emma Jardine explains why the service offers a safe space that other libraries can't.

EMMA JARDINE 3 Sep 2021



For a number of years, I led a current affairs discussion group for a charity supporting people experiencing homelessness.

To be honest, 'current affairs' was a bit of a highfalutin title for a weekly hour of animated chat and banter about anything vaguely topical. One week the subject was libraries.

As usual, I'd prepared some stimulus material – some quotes about reading, pictures of different types of libraries all over the world, newspaper articles about the importance of libraries – and was looking forward to facilitating the conversation from there.

During the class, I asked if any of the guys had ever been in Central Library on George IV Bridge, and one of them said, "Nah, it's not really for people like us."

"But it is," I replied earnestly. "It's a public library. That means it's for everyone. Libraries are paid for through council tax, the same way as bin collections and street lighting. You've as much right to be in them as anyone else. If you want to go into a library, there's nothing to stop you".

"Aye there is," he said good naturedly, "it's full of folk like you".

Later, one of the other guys in the group took me aside and told me that he used to love going to Central Library, but that he wasn't allowed in anymore.

"How come?" I asked. "I was there too much and I asked the staff too many questions," he said with a shrug.

Eat your heart out, Joseph Heller. I've found you another Catch-22.

Despite my protestations that they're meant to be for everyone, a bit of digging taught me that much of the public library reform of the 1850s was in fact, founded on the principle that "Education [was] the enemy of revolution".

Libraries were thought to be able to offer something that would distract the working classes from "more dangerous pursuits such as drinking and socialism".

Despite their outwardly benign intentions, it was beginning to look like early libraries weren't primarily designed so much for personal enjoyment, as much as to keep the working classes exactly where others wanted them.

Mmmm not quite the place of democracy I thought they were then or now.

Today, many of the ways in which members of the general public access books are closed to members of the homelessness community.

They're unlikely to be able to purchase books, and let's face it, you can't eat a book and it's not going to keep you dry. But that doesn't mean that they're a luxury either.

At Streetreads, now a part of Streetwork at Simon Community Scotland, we've been taking donated books out to individual rough sleepers, soup kitchens, night shelters and refuges since 2016.

It's always been about connecting people to books. Taking books to people wherever they may be and in whatever way they need to access them. Providing them in foreign languages, or large print, or popping a pair of reading glasses in with them.

But deep down, the hope had always been that we could provide a safe, welcoming, cosy place for the ultimate enjoyment of books.

A place where there was the rare opportunity to trade the unfavourable identity of being 'homeless', with the more favourable one of being just a 'reader' for a few hours.

The Streetreads Library was launched on August 24. It's a beautifully designed, purpose-built space, where solace and comfort can be found in its books.

It's not just where books are kept and lent or gifted. Our library doesn't just provide books to read, but rather a space to be.

As the writer Caitlin Moran puts it so perfectly: "A library in the middle of a community is a cross between an emergency exit, a life-raft and a festival. They are cathedrals of the mind; hospitals of the soul; theme parks of the imagination. On a cold rainy island, they are the only sheltered public spaces where you are not a consumer, but a citizen instead."

Emma Jardine is the Streetreads Coordinator for homelessness charity Simon Community Scotland. ['A library for homeless people can offer more than books, it's a space to be' \(bigissue.com\)](#)

ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES:

1. Share and research the definition of any unfamiliar vocabulary and / or cultural references.
2. Discuss why you think that Emma Jardine starts her article with anecdotes from her interactions with homeless people.
3. Highlight a sentence in the article that you find emotionally powerful: be prepared to discuss why you have chosen it!
4. Revisit the concluding quotation from Caitlin Moran. Do you agree with what she is saying about libraries here? Discuss.
5. Is access to books a luxury? Discuss.



The Big Issue is turning 30 but our work is far from done



After three decades of The Big Issue, founder John Bird reflects back on the early days of the magazine and one key figure. The Big Issue is needed now more than ever – of that its founder is certain.

JOHN BIRD 20 Sep 2021

OPINION

John and three vendors recreate the press image from the launch of the magazine Photo: David Parry/PA Wire

Among the various people thanked in the first edition of The Big Issue was a man who reminded me of the comedian Tony Hancock. He had the same type of tubby figure, the same slightly pissed off look. I loved Tony Hancock's face, his kind of sardonic "nothing surprises me" manner.

I first met the person who is listed in the inaugural Big Issue in The Prince's Head next to our Richmond editorial office. He sat at the bar and we fell into conversations on numerous occasions as our team was struggling to create The Big Issue. It was a very strained atmosphere, largely because we were not quite sure what we were doing. And not sure whether it would succeed.

We became friends and I often bought him pints. He never seemed to have much cash on him. Yet on most evenings he would be there, sitting on a stool at the bar; smiling, reflecting and at times talking. And it was because he was so different in his preoccupations in life – none of which resembled mine – that I felt a kind of tranquillity around him. Then I decided to include him in the launch and put his name down as a supporter in The Big Issue.

He was a relief from the serious. He was comic and could see humour where it did not seem to exist. That day at the crypt of St Martin-in-the-Fields, where we launched, he ate a load of sandwiches and drank countless cups of tea. And he talked to everyone.

The Big Issue is so relevant today, to ensure we campaign to stop people slipping into homelessness and facing a growth of mental illness and other deep health problems

It's so interesting when I look back to that first day. I can remember very little other than my bar friend eating many sandwiches with great joy, and other similar incidents – nothing earth-shatteringly big. An angry man who declared, when I asked him if he wanted to sell The Big Issue, that he had been homeless for 25 years! As if it was my fault, his dog toothless and snarling at me. Or a woman asking me for my autograph because she mistook me for a TV comedian with the same name as me.

In some ways it seemed like a non-event. A tame, uneventful event. The press were in abundance. I watched and felt perhaps the best part of The Big Issue was over. That it would all be downhill from now on. How could we ever turn this seemingly flat event into the beginnings of something incredibly big and useful?

But that is how life is. The significant is hidden in the everyday, with me remembering my pub friend more than a host of other things.

Thirty years later we face the biggest of big challenges. We face the problem of Boris Johnson saying that nobody would be made homeless by Covid-19, with precious little evidence that the government is rallying in the face of the mass evictions that are coming down the line. Even now, in the early stages of people being unable to pay their rent due to losing their job, someone is apparently being made homeless every three and a half hours.

Whatever promises the government makes, we do need to campaign for people to keep their homes – their rent or mortgage paid, their arrears paid – and be given enough money to keep their home together. Supported until they get out of the emergency.

And most of all, helped to get another job or trained and reskilled to improve their chances. Recognising at the same time that it is cheaper to keep people in their homes than it is to let them slip, often with their children, into homelessness.

To me one of the biggest challenges we face is working to prevent mass homelessness occurring in the coming period. That's why The Big Issue is so relevant today, to ensure we campaign to stop people slipping into homelessness and facing a growth of mental illness and other deep health problems.

Not long after the launch of The Big Issue we turned into a more serious, more task-orientated social business and we moved office. I lost touch with the man who cheered me up. The last time I saw him he was cycling on his rusty bike for his daily visit to The Prince's Head to charm and serenade another lot of people who needed taking out of themselves. He was, in my opinion, an essential ingredient in my role as founder of The Big Issue.

John Bird is the founder and editor in chief of The Big Issue. [The Big Issue is turning 30 but our work is far from done](#) (abridged)

ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES:



1. Share and research the definition of any unfamiliar vocabulary and / or cultural references.
2. Discuss the impact of John Bird starting and concluding this article with references to the man who cheered him up.
3. If one sentence in this article would persuade someone to stop and buy a copy of the Big Issue, which would it be? Highlight this sentence and be prepared to discuss why you have chosen it.
4. 'But that is how life is. The significant is hidden in the everyday.' What does this mean? Discuss.
5. Will the work of the Big Issue, and other charities that support and campaign for the homeless, ever be done? Discuss.

Dyslexic graduates: 6 job hunting tips you need to know about



Nov 28, 2017 |

NEW ADVICE ON CVS, APPLICATIONS AND INTERVIEWS FOR GRADUATES WITH DYSLEXIA

Being a dyslexic graduate can make a tough job market feel even tougher. Graduate applications, CVs, covering letters, assessment days and interviews are all more stressful if words swim on the page in front of you and reading, writing and spelling aren't your strong suit.

But in some cases, having dyslexia can actually be an asset when job hunting – if you handle the situation correctly. Don't believe us? Here, careers expert Anne Wilson shares her best tips for dyslexic graduates...

Be proud. "If you're a dyslexic graduate, be proud of it!" says Anne. "You're clearly not just intelligent, you're also persistent. That's something that employers love – so work it. You can even use your dyslexia as an example of how you tackle problems and overcome challenges. People who aren't dyslexic will have to think of something else, but your example is probably stronger."

Help yourself. "It's important to be objective about your strengths as well as the things you find difficult. In writing applications, use every strategy you've learned about what works for you – and keep exploring new tools that can help you, like mind mapping and voice activated software. The best way to check any document is to read it out loud. Also seek help from others with writing your CV and covering letters and in preparing for interviews."

Chloe, 24, who is training to be a midwife after working in a medical support role after graduating, says: "Don't hide your dyslexia. Use the interview as an opportunity to show the strategies you've used to get round it. It shows that you have initiative and are pro-active about ways to improve."

Present it as a positive. "It's entirely your choice whether or not to disclose your dyslexia, but if you do, don't apologise, do it with confidence. Employers will be impressed that you have taken charge of the situation and are happy to discuss your dyslexia openly. You can even give them the opportunity to ask any questions they have about how your dyslexia impacts your work. They won't be expecting that, and it demonstrates real confidence and maturity."

Graduate Leo, 28, who works for a charity, says: "If there's a timed task as part of the selection process, you normally get extra time if you tell them you're dyslexic. Dyslexics often have wonderful, creative, out-of-the box ideas but forget that other people sometimes can't see the thinking which gets them there. Try not to get frustrated if no-one 'gets' your genius ideas immediately. Instead, work on explaining the logic behind them."

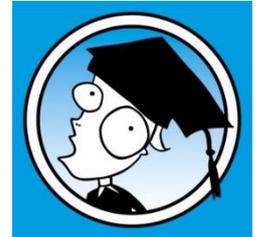
Know your rights "In the UK, employers have to make 'reasonable adjustment' for people with dyslexia, which means making allowances in selection and interview and providing certain kinds of support in the job (like special software). Of course, some employers may be less understanding. If you meet one, don't take it personally. But you might want to think hard about whether you really want to work there."

TO DISCLOSE, OR NOT TO DISCLOSE? *There's a strong case for declaring your dyslexia on your application, but it's your choice. If you're not sure, take advice from someone you trust, who understands the culture in your chosen industry.*

Play to your strengths “Okay, so you’re not great with words, spelling, sequences and a few other things. But employers are increasingly aware that lots of dyslexics are creative, visual thinkers, with big ideas (Jamie Oliver and Sir Richard Branson haven’t done too badly for themselves). If you feel you’re a creative thinker, make sure you say so – and back it up with examples.”

Keep smiling. “For all jobseekers, confidence is key – but it’s particularly the case for people with dyslexia. Spend time with people who make you feel good – and invest in building your knowledge and contacts in your chosen field. Believe in yourself and what you have to offer, and it will suddenly feel easier to convince an employer.”

AUTHOR BIO: Anne Wilson is an independent careers counsellor and is currently RLF Fellow at Brunel University www.graduatejobmentor.co.uk



***ARE YOU DYSLEXIC?**

How is your job hunt going? Do you have any tips or wisdom to share with other dyslexic graduates who are looking for jobs? Tell us about your experiences below...

[Dyslexic graduates: 6 job hunting tips you need to know about - Graduate Fog](#)



ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES:

1. Share and research the definition of any unfamiliar vocabulary and / or cultural references.
2. Discuss the ways in which the blogger creates a reassuring and positive tone throughout this article.
3. If you could only take one of the pieces of advice from this article and share it, which would it be? Highlight this sentence / paragraph and be prepared to discuss why you have chosen it!
4. ‘In some cases, having dyslexia can actually be an asset when job hunting Discuss.
5. ‘To disclose or not disclose?’ What do you think is the best advice around this? Discuss.

OPEN LETTER: IT'S TIME TO REWILD ROYAL LAND

*c/o The Private Secretary to Her Majesty The Queen
Buckingham Palace
London, SW1A 1AA*

*The Private Secretary to His Royal Highness The Prince of Wales, KG, KT, GCB, OM
The Private Secretary to His Royal Highness The Duke of Cambridge, KG, KT
Clarence House
London, SW1A 1BA*

To the Private Secretary to Her Majesty The Queen; the Private Secretary to His Royal Highness The Prince of Wales, KG, KT, GCB, OM; the Private Secretary to His Royal Highness The Duke of Cambridge, KG, KT; The Estate Managers of the Royal Estates,

As concerned members of the public, scientists and experts, we respectfully call upon you to rewild your lands.

The UK ranks 189th in the world for the intactness of its living systems. As Britain prepares to host world leaders for COP26 in Glasgow, the ecological paucity of our country makes hollow our claims of global environmental leadership, while also undermining the morale and wellbeing of its citizens.

Taken together, the Royal estates — the Crown Estate, the Duchies of Lancaster and Cornwall, and lands owned privately by the Sovereign — are larger than those of any other single landowner in the UK. HRH The Prince of Wales has spoken of a 'duty to the planet that is absolute' and HRH The Duke of Cambridge has said it is our 'responsibility' to avoid 'crucial... tipping points', while Sir David Attenborough has called on us to 'rewild the earth'. The Royal Family, as figures of moral stewardship and as ambassadors for our nation, is perfectly positioned to now lead the charge in the great task of our age: planetary repair.

We believe therefore that you have a unique and historic opportunity to radically address the degraded state of nature on these islands. Making a public commitment to restore the biodiversity of the Royal estates through rewilding would send a signal that a new chapter has begun: a chapter in which nature is honoured and cherished rather than eroded and exploited. Of the biggest UK landowners, you are already amongst the leaders of habitat restoration, with a number of inspiring projects already being undertaken on Royal land, notably in the Duchy of Cornwall estates. But committing publicly to the idea of enriching biodiversity, as a first principle of long-term land stewardship throughout your lands, would be both ground-breaking and game-changing. Others would undoubtedly follow.

To take but two examples, large parts of Dartmoor, owned by the Duchy of Cornwall, and of Balmoral, owned privately by Her Majesty, would, if nature took its course, be covered by rare temperate rainforest. Today, only tiny fragments of this precious, diverse habitat remain in places like Wistman's Wood on Dartmoor and Ballochbuie at Balmoral. We are a rainforest nation bereft of its rainforests — and in desperate need of leadership that shows how it can be restored. Across Britain, in lands owned by the Royal estates, we could also see the restoration of flower-rich grasslands, bird-filled heathlands, swamps, fens, and meandering rivers.

Anywhere else in the world we would recognise many of the exhausted landscapes in Britain today for what they truly are: ecological disaster zones. How can we consistently condemn the destruction of nature in Brazil, New Guinea or Indonesia, and urge them to keep their remaining forests intact, whilst in England, only 10% of our forests remain — the lowest figure of any country in Europe? We despair when we see palm oil plantations and

beef ranches in what was once pristine tropical forest, yet romanticise the bio-bereft mono-cultures of our own deforested grouse moors and sheep-grazed uplands.

The good news is that recent detailed analysis by Friends of the Earth and others has demonstrated that significant proportions of the Royal estates are perfect for rewilding and restoration. Even after excluding Grades 1-3 high-quality agricultural land, Priority Habitats and Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs), the Royal estates contain thousands of hectares of Grade 4 and 5 land ideally suited to being relinquished to self-willed wilderness, or managed for low intervention habitat restoration. Their research also suggests that these major benefits could be brought about without significant impact on food productivity.

There is growing consensus that rewilding and restoration are critical tools in mitigating global heating. In addition to sequestering carbon, the biodiversity benefits would be enormous. In an analysis of 89 habitat restorations across the world, restored sites had one-and-a-half times more biodiversity than degraded sites, and had nearly as much biodiversity as pristine sites (86%). Even as we wait for our Government to deliver on its oft repeated promise to incentivise such an enlightened approach in its new agricultural policy, committing to take such positive action on Royal land would set a powerful example for others, both in the UK, and all around the world, to follow.

We recognise that restoring ecosystems to a historical baseline will not always be possible. Self-willed ecosystems may take many centuries to find equilibrium and in certain circumstances a more active land management approach may achieve biodiversity and carbon capture benefits in the shorter timeframes demanded by today's crises. As such, more research is needed to measure the comparative gains for people and planet of differing rewilding and restoration pathways. The Royal Estates could be instrumental in developing this evidence base and leading others.

Increasing research has also demonstrated beyond all doubt the mental health benefits of access to wild nature. Rewilding the Royal estates would perfectly complement the good work being done by their Royal Highnesses to address the mental health epidemic.

Collectively, we are in danger of forgetting the all-but-lost natural wonders of these lands. But today's young people are urging us not to let this happen. With clarity of vision and purpose they are determined to tackle climate change, and build back the beauty we all need to help us thrive. But they cannot do this without the help of those who own and control the land and can deliver this change.

As our nation recovers from the Covid-19 crisis, and we look to the world outside our windows to nourish and inspire us, we call on you to lead the way in healing our land. We ask you to seize this moment to restore and rewild the Royal estates, bringing the hope of renewal and regrowth to the people of this country. Protect us, guide us, rewild us.

Signed: 120 names listed, including scientists, naturalists, broadcasters, actors, ecologists, authors etc. [Wild Card](#)

ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES:



1. Share and research the definition of any unfamiliar vocabulary and / or cultural references.
2. This is a campaign letter; what techniques are used to try and persuade the royal family to respond to the request to rewild their land.
3. Highlight the section of the letter which you find most convincing in arguing for royal land to be rewilded; be prepared to discuss your choice.
4. 'Protect us, guide us, rewild us'. Is this a fair request to make of the royal family? Discuss.
5. 'The Royal Family ...figures of moral stewardship and ... ambassadors for our nation.' Discuss.

Opinion: It's okay if you shop fast fashion

WRITTEN ON 23RD OCTOBER 2020. POSTED IN FASHION & BEAUTY



Fast fashion is undeniably bad for the planet and workers' rights – but for many people, it can be their only option.

Sustainable brands and thrift stores often don't stock an extensive selection for plus-sized consumers, for example. ASOS, however, caters to a whole range of sizes, and the See My Fit feature they trialed earlier this year made it easy for consumers to make informed purchases.

In addition, people with disabilities may find it easier to navigate online retailers such as ASOS and Pretty Little Thing, rather than thrift stores. It is these societal biases that make fast fashion more accessible and feasible for many people.

To be clear, I am not justifying the business of fast fashion. It is undoubtedly harmful to both our planet and society. But I do think we can all be more sympathetic to the people who shop at these retailers out of necessity, even though it is arguably better not to do so.

Many students find themselves depending on fast fashion retailers as they are unable to find sustainable alternatives that are both affordable and inclusive. I spoke to a selection of UoM students to shed light on the diverse ways that people approach fast fashion.

For many, fast fashion is a constant temptation that can be difficult to resist. Jimena, a second year Business and French student, says:

"Fast fashion has become a sort of addiction to me. I know it is bad for the environment and I know that I have many more clothes back at home that I could wear instead, but somehow I always manage to buy something."

Jimena's struggle is one that many of us face – we are aware of the negative effects of fast fashion, yet quitting it can be difficult. This is often increased by the prevalence of social media that creates constant pressure to look 'trendy'.

Even those students who manage to avoid fast fashion are understanding of why some people feel reliant on it. An anonymous English and French student, who mostly swaps clothing with friends or browses charity shops, says:

"I can see why people who feel more pressured by social media/fashion than I do may wish to constantly renew their wardrobe, something which [fast fashion retailers] enable and market to."

The pressure to not repeat outfits feels real for many students, and I have often experienced the guilt of shopping from fast fashion brands in an attempt to impress my more 'fashionable' seeming peers.

This is especially true in moments of convenience. I always look towards high street brands when it comes to outfits for social events or nights out. I feel pressured to look fashionable in these situations, but I can't afford to spend a lot of money on something that I might only wear a few times.

Lifestyle Editor, Lauryn, believes that the main barrier for many people is also a financial one:

"The thing about fast fashion is that you no longer need thousands to look expensive, well put together or to simply express your personal style. These shops have made it accessible to everyone, but we have to think about the larger impact.

"I think sustainability needs to find a way to remain cheap, so that sustainability itself can be accessible to all and not those with more money."

Lauryn is right. The reality is that cheap brands such as Primark are all that some students can afford. If we want people to stop shopping fast fashion, then sustainable brands need to be more affordable.

Another issue is that we are often unaware of the explicit consequences of shopping from fast fashion brands. Third-year History student Freya, says:

"I'm sure most people are guilty of seeing something nice in a shop and buying it without sparing a thought for the people who have actually made it."

I am definitely guilty of this, and will often shop from fast fashion brands without thinking about the negative impacts.

However, being an environmentally conscious shopper and having fast fashion items in your wardrobe doesn't have to be mutually exclusive. After all, sustainability is not only about where you shop, but also how you use the clothes already in your wardrobe. Reduce, reuse, recycle – remember?

Fashion Editor Daisy strikes the balance between being sustainable and shopping from fast fashion brands:

"I'll admit that I'm guilty of shopping from cheaper, less sustainable stores, but what many people don't realise is that it's not the stereotypical 'wear once and throw away' that people presume. I have items in my wardrobe that I bought back in 2015 and still regularly wear, despite being from fast fashion brands."

Cutting out fast fashion entirely can be difficult; but someone can still be a conscious consumer while shopping on the high street. If this is something that you are struggling with, you are not alone.

<https://manunion.com/2020/10/23/opinion-its-okay-if-you-shop-fast-fashion/>

ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES:

1. Share and research the definition of any unfamiliar vocabulary and / or cultural references.
2. What word best describes the tone of this article?
3. Highlight a sentence in the article that best illustrates your answer to the question above; be prepared to discuss your choice.
4. 'However, being an environmentally conscious shopper and having fast fashion items in your wardrobe doesn't have to be mutually exclusive.' Discuss.
5. Social media creates a 'constant pressure to look 'trendy''. Discuss.



Extract from Kamala Harris' speech after historic election win

Harris is set to make history after being elected vice president.

By **ABC News**

8 November 2020



Vice President-elect Kamala Harris delivers speech ahead of Joe Biden "You delivered a clear message, you chose hope," the senator said.
Tasos Katopoulos/Getty Images

Kamala Harris addressed the nation Saturday night after her historic election as vice president of the United States.

Harris, the California senator and daughter of immigrants who broke many barriers in her political career, is set to become the first female vice president in the nation's history after her apparent win with former Vice President Joe Biden in the state of Pennsylvania.

That victory put the Biden/Harris ticket over the threshold of 270 electoral votes needed to defeat Donald Trump and Mike Pence and head to the White House, according to ABC News analysis.

"You chose hope and unity, decency, science, and yes, truth!" Harris told the ecstatic crowd in Wilmington, Delaware.

During the speech, Harris paid tribute to her late mother, Shyamala Gopalan Harris, Biden's late son and her good friend, Beau, the women who struggled for the right to vote and "the Black women who are often, too often overlooked but so often proved they are the backbone of our democracy."

"This is a country of possibilities," she said.

Here is an extract from her speech:

And to my husband Doug and our children Cole and Ella and my sister Maya and our whole family.

I love y'all more than I can ever express. We are so grateful to Joe and Jill for welcoming our family into theirs on this incredible journey. And to the woman most responsible for my presence here today, my mother, Shyamala Gopalan Harris, who is always in our hearts. When she came here from India at the age of 19, she maybe didn't quite imagine this moment.

But she believed so deeply in an America where a moment like this is possible, and so I am thinking about her and about the generations of women, Black women, Asian, white, Latina, native American women, who throughout our nation's history, have paved the way for this moment tonight.

Women who fought and sacrificed so much for equality and liberty and justice for all. Including the Black women who are often, too often overlooked but so often proved they are the backbone of our democracy.

All the women who have worked to secure and protect the right to vote for over a century. One hundred years ago with the 19th Amendment. Fifty-five years ago with the Voting Rights Act and now in 2020 with a new generation of women in our country who cast their ballots and continued the fight for their fundamental right to vote and be heard.

Tonight I reflect on their struggle, their determination and the strength of their vision to see what can be unburdened by what has been. And I stand on their shoulders. And what a testament it is to Joe's character that he had the audacity to break one of the most substantial barriers that exists in our country and select a woman as his vice president.

But while I may be the first woman in this office, I will not be the last. Because every little girl watching tonight sees that this is a country of possibilities and to the children of our country regardless of your gender, our country has sent you a clear message: dream with ambition, lead with conviction and see yourselves in a way that others may not simply because they've never seen it before.

But know that we will applaud you every step of the way. And to the American people, no matter who you voted for, I will strive to be a vice president like Joe was to President Obama, loyal, honest, and prepared, waking up every day thinking of you and your family, because now is when the real work begins, the hard work, the necessary work, the good work, the essential work to save lives and beat this epidemic.

extract from [Read Kamala Harris' full speech after historic election win - ABC News \(go.com\)](#)

ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES:

1. Share and research the definition of any unfamiliar vocabulary and / or cultural references.
2. Would it possible to rewrite the introduction to this article in a way that didn't celebrate the positive messages and celebratory tone of the speech? Discuss.
3. Using the speech extract only, highlight the sentence you would expect received the loudest applause from supporters; be prepared to discuss why.
4. Kamala Harris' message to young people is to 'dream with ambition, lead with conviction and see yourselves in a way that others may not simply because they've never seen it before'. How does this make you feel? Discuss.
5. Whose shoulders do you stand on - and why? Discuss.



Founded back in 1889, Forest Green Rovers has a long and vibrant history, bringing the excitement of football to our local community and fans everywhere.

Beginning at county level, we have climbed the football ladder, leading to our victory over Tranmere Rovers in the National League play-off final at Wembley and inauguration into the Football League in 2017. From the Dursley and Stroud leagues in the early 20th century, through the Gloucestershire Northern Senior League in the 1950s to the Hellenic in the 1980s, FGR reached the Southern League Premier Division in 1997 before ascending to the National League a year later.

The club has solidified its position in EFL League Two, reaching the play-offs in 2019 and establishing an attractive style of high-tempo football alongside our friendly club atmosphere. Off the pitch, we have spread our sustainable ethos to the sporting world, winning numerous awards in green business, leisure and catering, groundsmanship, sustainability – and let's not forget: The British Pie Awards!



Sustainability is central to everything we do at Forest Green Rovers. From solar panels and electric vehicle charging points at The New Lawn to our vegan menu, we are proving that sports clubs can lead the fight against climate change. And it is working.

In 2017, FIFA described FGR as 'the greenest football club in the world'. We're the first and only vegan football club and the first to be certified as carbon neutral by the United Nations.

Our green stadium

The New Lawn might look like any other football stadium, but we do things slightly differently. Here are some of the things that make us the world's greenest football club.

Green energy – The entire club is powered by 100% green energy from [Ecotricity](#), some of which we generate ourselves with the solar panels on our stadium roof and the solar tracker at the ground entrance.

Organic pitch – The grass we play on is sustainable, free from pesticides and weed killers.

Electric 'mow-bot' – We cut the grass with a GPS-directed, solar-powered lawnmower.

Rainwater capture – We collect rainwater that lands on the stadium and use it to irrigate the pitch rather than using mains water.

EV charge points – We recommend sustainable travel to all games and provide electric car charge points at The New Lawn.

Since 2011 we have been measuring our carbon footprint, and between the 2017/18 and 2018/19 seasons we reduced it by nearly 30%. When you visit The New Lawn, you can see what makes FGR the world's greenest football club by following our Eco Trail.

100% Vegan

Livestock farming has a huge impact on carbon emissions and on animal welfare, which is why we decided to become a vegan football club back in 2015. That might seem strange to fans used to burgers and pies at half time but as a vegan club we offer our players, staff and fans healthier food that tastes great and is better for the planet.

On match days, we serve our award-winning Q Pies, delicious plant-based burgers, spicy pasties, vegan fajitas and plenty more, all made using locally sourced ingredients. Just like Sergio Aguero, Lionel Messi, Venus Williams and Lewis Hamilton, our players benefit from improved performance thanks to a vegan diet.

In 2017, we were recognised as the world's first vegan football club when we were certified with the Vegan Trademark by The Vegan Society.

Eco Park

Our next step is to build Eco Park, which will be the greenest football stadium in the world. Designed by the world renowned architects at Zaha Hadid, it will be made entirely from wood and will be something pretty special in world football. Eco Park will have a capacity of 5,000 with parkland containing 500 trees and 1.8km of hedgerows planted all around it.

Planning permission has been granted, and construction will be starting soon, just off the M5 near Stroud. We can't wait to play our first match in what will be the world's greenest football stadium.

[Vegan Food | WE ARE FGR](#)



ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES:

1. Share and research the definition of any unfamiliar vocabulary and / or cultural references.
2. FGR claims to have a 'friendly club atmosphere'. How does the writer of this website information use language and style to reflect this? Discuss.
3. Highlight where you would expect hyperlinks to be used so that readers can navigate their way round the website or to other linked sites.
4. 'On match days, we serve our award-winning Q Pies, delicious plant-based burgers, spicy pasties, vegan fajitas and plenty more, all made using locally sourced ingredients.' Should all football clubs follow this model? Discuss.
5. Who should be leading the fight against climate change? Discuss.

Concerned about a friend?

Drugs can be a hard subject to discuss, especially if you think your friend or relative has a problem.

Try to stay open-minded and remember that, with the right help and support, most people overcome their use before any serious harm is caused. Also, even if you do offer support, they might not change their behaviour.

You or your friend can call FRANK anytime on [0300 123 6600](tel:03001236600) for confidential advice.

Why do people take drugs?

People take drugs for lots of reasons. Having a better idea of why your friend takes drugs will help you when you talk to them.

To socialise

Some people take drugs occasionally to have fun, socialise and relax. Taking drugs might not become a problem for these people, and they'll probably stop when they're ready to. You can still remind your friend that some drugs are illegal and can affect their physical and mental health, especially if they're still growing.

To 'escape'

Some people use drugs to escape difficult feelings that they're struggling to cope with. They might be depressed, anxious or insecure, and they might think the drugs are helping them - when they're actually making things worse. If you think this is the case, talk calmly to your friend and look for ways to help them think about why they're using drugs and ways they can manage without them. If necessary, suggest that they look for professional help.

To fit in

Some people take drugs to fit in, or because they're under pressure to do so by their friends. You could offer to do things with them that don't involve using drugs.

To experiment

Some people are just curious. They might try drugs once or twice to see what it's like and then decide to leave it. Remember that most people who try drugs don't continue using them.

How can I stop my friend taking lots of drugs?

You can't force your friend to do anything they don't want to do, but you still might be able to help.

Start by encouraging your friend to stay away from the places where they'd normally take drugs (like the pub or a mate's house), and suggest other activities.

You can also remind your friend of the potential dangers involved in taking lots of drugs and tell them where they can get accurate information about what they're using. Whatever happens, make sure your friend knows you're around and happy to talk – that you're there to help and not judge.

What should I do?

Worrying about a friend's drug use is stressful, and how you choose to deal with it is up to you. You might try to help your friend, you might decide to put up with it and not say much, or you might decide to step back and not offer much support.

There are pros and cons to each of these choices, and it's essential you think of your own wellbeing when you decide on which approach to take. It may be that you need support and/or professional help yourself too.

Feeling pressured to take drugs? Here are 10 ways to deal with it

1. Remember that you're not alone. It's easy to think you're the only one who's not tried drugs but, actually, most young people don't take drugs.
2. Work out where you stand on issues like sex, drugs and alcohol. Knowing your own mind makes it easier to stay true to yourself.
3. Prepare yourself. Think about how you'd like to respond when someone offers you drugs so you know what to say.
4. Try to understand who's offering you the drugs and why. Friends should understand if you say no, people you don't know you very well may expect something in return.
5. Say no firmly but clearly and without making a big deal about it. If they try to persuade you, don't feel like you have to change your mind.
6. Remember that, although they may not show it, your mates will respect you more if you're assertive and clear about what you do and don't want to do.
7. Take a look around. You'll soon see that you're not the only one worrying about what other people think of you. Try to focus on your own opinion of yourself - in the end, that's all that matters.
8. Worried about your mates being pressured? Don't keep it to yourself, talk to them, or someone you trust.
9. If you're finding it hard to be yourself within your group, take a step back, and think about whether it's time to find a new crowd to hang out with.
10. Before trying anything new it makes sense to know what's what. You can find out more about different drugs on the Drugs A to Z or call FRANK on 0300 123 6600 at any time, day or night.

<https://www.talktofrank.com/get-help/concerned-about-a-friend>

<https://www.talktofrank.com/get-help/dealing-with-peer-pressure>

ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES:

1. Share and research the definition of any unfamiliar vocabulary and / or cultural references.
2. This extract from the charity's website is aimed at young people. How successfully do you think the structure and style of this advice is aimed at this target audience? Discuss.
3. From the ten pieces of advice about how to deal with the pressure to take drugs, highlight the three you think are most useful. Discuss.
4. How would you improve this article? Discuss.
5. 'Make sure your friend knows you're around and happy to talk – that you're there to help and not judge.' Is this realistic? Discuss.



How the Tokyo Olympics Changed the Conversation About Athletes' Mental Health

BY ALICE PARK/TOKYO

AUGUST 8, 2021 12:54 PM EDT

Even before Simone Biles threw the Olympics off its axis, Jessica Bartley knew mental health issues were weighing heavily on the athletes in Tokyo. Bartley, a psychologist and the director of mental health services for the U.S. Olympic and Paralympic Committee, says her team received about 10 requests daily during the Games to support athletes' mental health needs.

Most of the calls did not come directly from athletes, but from "a tip from someone around the athlete, who alerted us to a situation," she says. These requests involved everything from struggles while in quarantine due to COVID-19 protocols, to receiving unexpected news from back home, to not performing as anticipated at the Games. Of the requests that Bartley's mental health team received, there were a handful of cases that indicated a potentially more serious issue, so Bartley or a member of her team immediately called the athlete and inquired about their mental state to determine if they needed additional mental health support, and to ensure they were in touch with their regular support team from home if they had one. If they didn't have one, Bartley was ready to connect them with resources to help.

"The Games are really an incredible opportunity to start to have those conversations," says Bartley, whose group is the first to travel with Team USA specifically to support the mental well-being of athletes. The Tokyo Olympics, taking place amid a pandemic that has had a massive impact on global mental health, was always going to present additional challenges for the competitors. But once Biles pulled out of the women's gymnastics team event to focus on her mental health and physical safety, the issue became a defining theme of the Games. And her courageous choice, amplified by the global spotlight of the Games, created a rare opportunity for moving the discussion from raising awareness to positive action.



Simone Biles of Team USA looks on as she warms up prior to the Women's Balance Beam Final at the Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games at Ariake Gymnastics Centre on Aug. 03, 2021 in Tokyo, Japan. Laurence Griffiths—Getty Images

Throughout the Olympic Village, athletes supported Biles—and recognized some of their own struggles in hers. "I know what it's like to have severe mental health issues," says Kate Nye, a U.S. weightlifter who earned silver in Tokyo. "As someone with bipolar disorder and ADHD, I could definitely relate to the overwhelming nature of sport. I'm of the opinion that you have to put yourself first. She should have done what was best for her, and she did."

"To be able to overcome your own ego and step aside, that's huge," says Alex Bowen, a member of Team USA's men's water polo team, of Biles' decision. "That's a mental marvel. It's something we all try hopefully to do all the time, but I don't think many people can do that."

Biles certainly isn't the first athlete to experience the crushing pressure that comes from being an Olympic favorite, nor the first to open up about struggles with mental health. Michael Phelps, the most decorated Olympic athlete in history, has been candid about his struggles with depression. Like Biles, Phelps bore the weight of a nation as the face of an entire Olympics—unique pressures he detailed in a 2020

documentary *The Weight of Gold*. And leading up to the Olympics, tennis star Naomi Osaka withdrew from the French Open and skipped Wimbledon in an act of self-protection and mental preservation.

For Olympians, the burden of expectation can be particularly debilitating. Not only is their performance the culmination of four years of training, sacrifice and emotional and physical struggle, but the personal stakes are amplified exponentially by having their individual success held up as the symbol of a nation's hopes and expectations. "People have no idea what is going on behind the scenes, and just judge us from our social media," Biles said. "You guys have no idea what we are going through."

Simone Biles touched a nerve far beyond athletes, releasing a seemingly pent-up reservoir in the broader culture. Data from NewsWhip, a data analytics company that measures the impact of media reports, showed that coverage of Biles' decision to withdraw generated more social interactions than Meghan Markle and Prince Harry's interview with Oprah Winfrey or Osaka's withdrawal from the French Open. Google searches related to mental health on the day Biles pulled out hit their highest peak in two months.

For the American athletes that Bartley and her team worked with at the Olympics, Biles and Osaka are helping to create a new path—one that can value results and medals but doesn't put them above all else. This path, Bartley and other mental health experts say, may leave fewer mental scars and go a long way toward ensuring that more athletes at the elite level have longer and healthier careers than before. "One of the most important coping mechanisms is giving yourself permission to take time off and to take a break and care for yourself," says Gordon.

But we're still far from that becoming the norm. Few athletes feel able to take a step back without risking their place on the team or a deal with a sponsor. Biles herself pointed out that the attention is welcome but long overdue. "I definitely think it's a little late in the game to have this conversation," she said. "I expect it to be at the forefront a little bit more because I think athletes kind of suppress their emotions and how they are feeling. At the end of the day, we are not just entertainment, we are humans."

"Hopefully this reframes how people look at athletes," says Bowen. "We aren't born great. But what we do to be great is relentlessly pursue greatness. It's not all about what you are, but what you are trying to be. We are all human; the Olympics are about trying to become your best self. And it's O.K. to get help to become your best self."

Extract from:

<https://time.com/6088078/mental-health-olympics-simone-biles/>

ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES:

1. Share and research the definition of any unfamiliar vocabulary and / or cultural references.
2. Would you describe this article as portraying an overall negative or positive picture of the issue of the mental health situation for Olympians? Discuss.
3. Not everyone would support the views in this article. At the time, controversial commentators described this event as the 'death of sport'. Highlight a sentence in this article which you think would most aggravate those who supported this sort of reaction.
4. 'We [athletes] aren't born great. But what we do to be great is relentlessly pursue greatness'. Does this only apply to athletes? Discuss.
5. Is social media responsible for the 'pent-up reservoir' of mental health issues? Discuss.



Carolyn Hitt: Betty Campbell's magnificent monument really is a new dawn for Wales



Betty Campbell's statue has made a monumental impact – just like the woman herself.

From the moment Betty's family pulled the purple silk away to reveal sculptor Eve Shepherd's creation in all its bronze beauty and magnificence, it felt like a new dawn for Wales.

Gasps, cheers and tears greeted its unveiling from the crowds gathered in Cardiff. The first statue of a named Welsh woman – a real female who had actually lived – in a public space in Wales.

It had been three years in the making, five years since the Monumental Welsh Women group had formed to address the lack of female statues and suddenly it felt 100 years overdue.

Finally, Wales had acknowledged we live in the Land of Our Mothers as well as our Fathers. At last, a young girl can walk through the centre of our capital city and see herself represented in public art as boys have been able to do for centuries.

Historians and journalists have drawn passionate attention to the invisibility of Welsh women on plinths and pedestals in towns and cities across the nation for many years. But only one woman did something practical about it.

She'll hate me shining the spotlight on her because she was never in this for the glory, creating a sisterhood of fabulous females to help her get the job done. But credit where it's due – Wales' first female statue would not have happened without the indefatigable leadership of Helen Molyneux.

This Caerphilly -born lawyer and former chair of the Institute of Welsh Affairs, gathered a gang of like-minded women in a Cardiff bar one wet winter night and set out her mission to right the wrong of the lack of representation of women in Welsh public art.

And so began the multi-faceted process of creating a statue from scratch – from liaising with Cardiff council and building contractors, to sourcing sculptors and sponsorship.

But the most fundamental issue, of course, was the statue's subject. From Gareth Edwards, via Jim Driscoll, Ivor Novello and Nye Bevan, to that chap in the Hayes who always ends up with a traffic cone on his head, male statues are so commonplace in Cardiff there would be no pressure surrounding the choice of yet another bloke.

When no Welsh woman has ever been given the honour, however, the weight of expectation would be considerable and the debate intense. Everyone had a view on who should be the first... which meant everyone should get a say. Engaging the public was crucial and would serve an educational purpose too.

A longlist of 50 historical females was drawn up and an expert panel whittled it down to five trailblazing Welsh women : Elizabeth Andrews (1882-1960) the valleys political activist who put women and children at the heart of her campaigns; Betty Campbell (1934 -2017) Wales' first black headteacher, a community icon and a pioneering champion of equality and diversity; Sarah Jane Rees aka Cranogwen (1839 -1916) the "most outstanding Welsh

woman of the 19th century” who excelled in everything from being a master mariner to a poet and editor; Elaine Morgan (1920 – 2013) the superb television dramatist who switched to the science of evolution and influenced global feminism and Margaret Haig Thomas aka Lady Rhondda (1883-1958) suffragette; world-renowned businesswoman and ground-breaking journalist.

Across a single week in January 2019 the public were bombarded every day with the story of each woman on this shortlist of “Hidden Heroines” as Cerys Matthews fronted films, radio packages and social media clips in both languages.



WalesOnline/ Rob Browne Young girls can finally see themselves represented in Welsh public art - as boys have been able to do for centuries

It captured the public imagination and sparked passionate debate. Feminist historians discussed who was off the list as much as who was on it while grumpy old men tweeted: “Haven’t heard of any of them” – which we laughed at, because that was kind of the whole point.

Schoolchildren held their own Hidden Heroine polls, sending us colour-pencilled pictures of their statue designs. And the story spread beyond Wales – we even got a retweet from Bianca Jagger. The momentum built towards the reveal of the winner.

The rain was lashing down on a dark Central Square on Friday, January 18, 2019, but as the announcement was made via a live broadcast on Wales Today, the smiling face of Betty Campbell was projected onto the wall of the BBC and it felt like a moment of pure sunshine.

And I was smiling too, knowing this remarkable woman who always broke the mould was the perfect choice to be Wales’ first female statue.

[Carolyn Hitt: Betty Campbell's magnificent monument really is a new dawn for Wales \(msn.com\)](#) - extract

ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES:



1. Share and research the definition of any unfamiliar vocabulary and / or cultural references.
2. Find and discuss the impact of a literary technique used by Carolyn Hitt in this article e.g. a metaphor or simile.
3. Highlight your favourite sentence in the article: be prepared to discuss why you have chosen it!
4. ‘At last, a young girl can walk through the centre of our capital city and see herself represented in public art as boys have been able to do for centuries’. Are statues really this important? Discuss.
5. What sort of person do you feel remains underrepresented by public monuments / statues?



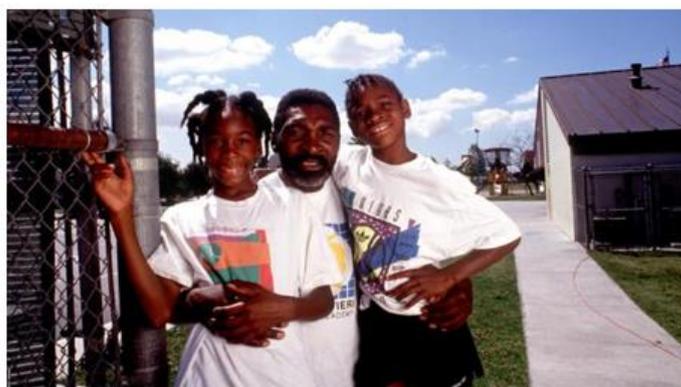
Black History Month: The sporting heroes who changed our lives

Who is your black sporting hero? Who is the sportsperson who first meant everything to you, brought you boundless joy, conquered the world and changed your life in the process?

To kick off Black History Month, we asked BBC Sport staff who their personal hero is, who helped shape their identity, who made them fall in love with sport.

Serena Williams - by Karinah Turner

I grew up in north London a stone's throw away from a tennis court. My mum played netball so that was my sport of choice growing up, but I remember one day watching Serena play against her sister at Wimbledon and this was a game-changer - to see two women of colour in a major tournament final playing a game I never knew much about.



Venus (left) and Serena Williams (right) have won 30 Grand Slam singles titles between

I recall from this point forward, forever finding myself over at the courts with my brother and cousins playing tennis games what felt like every weekend. If you see it - you can be it, and that was what we were all thinking.

Serena's determination in coming back year after year is what really inspires me. I love the fact I have been able to follow a sporting star all the way through her career.

Seeing her become a mother and still go back to playing was a deal-breaker - Serena Williams is the black sporting hero I want to shout about.

Kobe Bryant - by Sam Harris

Kobe Bryant wasn't just a basketball player, he was a superhero. The will to win, the desire to make real change, the ability to not feel pain - an icon the likes of my 10-year-old self could only dream of becoming.

Emulating his patented fadeaway with a screwed-up ball of paper tossed into a rubbish bin while exclaiming 'Kobe!' was the closest I ever got.



Bryant won five NBA titles with the Los Angeles Lakers, is an 18-time All-Star and is considered to be one of the greatest basketball players of all time.

Kobe had the making-free-throws-on-a-ruptured-Achilles level of drive. He set the example of how hard you need to work to achieve, and get better every single day. A better person, ally and father.

For me it will always be Mamba forever.

Anthony Joshua - by Patsy Goodwin

The athlete who encouraged me most recently is Anthony Joshua. I respected his words after his heavyweight title loss to Oleksandr Usyk in September.

The world was watching, listening and commenting on AJ, and that alone can be a huge pressure to take, but he was able to keep his head held high and use his loss as a foundation to do better.



Joshua is a two-time heavyweight world champion and won gold for Team GB at the London 2012 Olympics

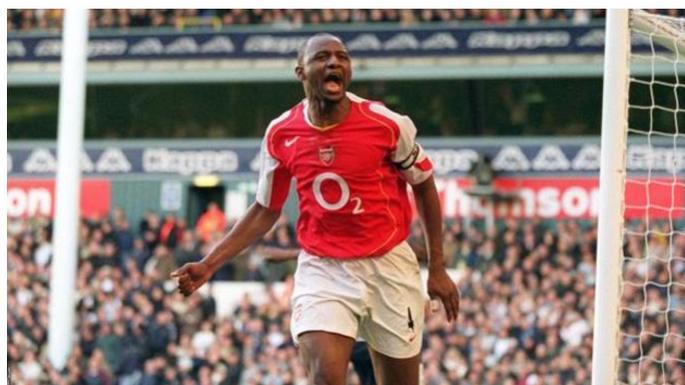
"I can't go back and sulk - that's wasting time," he said. "It was a great lesson today. I know we can look at it from a negative point of view but I've got to take it as a great lesson and build on that situation."

I appreciate his fighting stamina, to continue to grow, build and learn. As humans that's all we can do and it's a reminder that life isn't always on the up, there's swings and roundabouts.

Patrick Vieira - by Adam Samuel

The long striding gallop. The poise. The leadership. The ability to block out all the noise.

Growing up in east London as an Arsenal fan, there was only one man who stole my imagination - Patrick Vieira.



Vieira lifted four FA Cups and three league titles at Arsenal, also winning the 1998 World Cup and 2000 European Championship with France

To see him effortlessly create, destroy, and all the things in between, all while being the beating heart and captain of the most dominant team of the era; it would be impossible to choose anyone else.

He taught a generation of black boys it was possible to lead from the front, to conduct yourself with poise and class, and to be unashamedly yourself. No 'rar rar' or bling, no headlines or declaring himself a king, just the coolest cat on the pitch, and purring in every way.

My generation was blessed to have witnessed Patty V in his prime, and I'll always be thankful for that.

30 September 2021

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/sport/58733022>

ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES:

1. Share and research the definition of any unfamiliar vocabulary and / or cultural references.
2. Each journalist writes in a different style about their sporting hero. Which writer would you award with a prize for 'engaging and ambitious vocabulary use'? Be prepared to discuss and explain your choices!
3. Highlight your favourite sentence in the article: be prepared to discuss why you have chosen it!
4. Patsy Goodwin suggests that as humans, all we can do is 'continue to grow, build and learn'. Do you agree or would you tweak these three verbs? Discuss.
5. Thinking through the lens of equality, diversity and inclusion, who is your hero?





My Cousin has Tourettes!

Posted Tue 6th Jul 2021 by Alex Winstanley

Award-winning social entrepreneur and best-selling children's author, Alex Winstanley, shares the story behind his most recent book, 'My Cousin Has Tourettes'.

Growing up, I spent a lot of time with my older cousins, Tom and Sam. We would do all sorts together and I really looked up to them both. I vividly remember my tenth birthday, when I noticed that Sam, who is a couple of years older than me, was tapping my shoulder. I looked to him for a response but he was just looking away and chatting to family. I assumed he was just joking. I later noticed that he was putting his mouth to my shoulder, which as a child I found confusing but never really questioned it. It was only when my parents told me a few months later that Sam has been diagnosed with Tourettes that it all started to make sense.

I found that Tourettes quickly became part of Sam's personality and was never really noticed or commented upon by any family members. Seeing him have the urge to put his tongue towards a kettle or repeating words I would say didn't bother me. However this was different for Sam's peers at school. I remember my Mum telling me that Sam had been being bullied at school, at which point his older brother Tom had decided to encourage Sam to inform school staff. This resulted in Sam speaking in front of his peers about how Tourettes affected him, which actually led to the one of the former bullies becoming friends with Sam. This is reflected in my latest children's book, 'My Cousin Has Tourettes'.

The book is inspired by Sam's story and informed by the experiences of Sam and other people who live with Tourettes. The book tells the story of two cousins who grow up together, with one of them having Tourettes and being supported at times by his cousin. Using rhyme and engaging illustrations, the book aims to highlight some typical symptoms of Tourettes, whilst also starting the conversation about how people can be affected by Tourettes in many different ways. The illustrator, Adam Walker-Parker, has done an amazing job of depicting tics in a visually engaging way for children. My favourite illustration from the book is probably right at the end, where the reader sees the cousin who has Tourettes with his family, living the life he always dreamed of. This was the key message that I wanted to get across to children and young people, that just because someone has Tourettes, they can still achieve their goals just like someone who might not have Tourettes. I also really like the assembly scene, where the reader might spot that a particular character, who has not been quite so nice to the cousin in the past, actually begins to realise that the cousin is a lovely person and as the book continues, you might spot that the character actually becomes the cousin's partner.

My other favourite scene shows the cousin on the bus, clearly looking quite anxious. This scene gives the reader a real feel as to how it might feel being stared at just because you might move, sound or act differently to others (as you might be able to tell, I'm very passionate about championing and celebrating difference, rather than challenging it!). Adam made it obvious that there are a number of characters staring at the cousin, making him even more stressed and therefore bringing on his tics. An interesting early change that I made to this page was to change the words from 'anxious or stressed' to 'excited or stressed', to reflect that tics can be brought on through a range of emotions, not just stress. All of this was informed through feedback from many different people living with Tourettes.

I am very passionate about starting the conversation about long-term health conditions that aren't spoken about enough, such as Tourettes. I hope that this book does that, in a child-friendly and supportive way, whilst depicting an inclusive and diverse range of characters. There are lots of subtle messages for children and families to pick up on together, whilst remaining as positive and realistic as possible. I didn't want the book to just show somebody shouting or swearing, as is often assumed when people hear the word Tourettes. Instead, I wanted to try to suggest a range of ways that people can be impacted by Tourettes, whilst still leading a great life. There also a number of characters and crossovers from the other books I've written on conditions such a dementia and depression – so keep an eye out for those!

'My Cousin Has Tourettes', and the rest of the series, is currently available on Amazon worldwide, with sales directly supporting the work of my non-profit organisation, Happy Smiles Training CIC, which delivers inclusive training to schools, businesses and more, led by disabled young adults. During a recent school workshop, a teacher asked me if I would be writing about tics and Tourettes as 'more and more children are presenting with tics', which really emphasised the need for this book. I hope that you're able to purchase the book and, if so, please let me know your thoughts!

Take care!

Alex

<https://www.tourettes-action.org.uk/blog-160-.html>

ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES:

1. Share and research the definition of any unfamiliar vocabulary and / or cultural references.
2. One of the challenges of writing in 1st person is the overuse of sentences that start with 'I ...'. Challenge: how many of these sentences can you find and tweak in two minutes?
3. Highlight the sentences which can be described as anecdotal in this article: what would happen if all of these were deleted? Discuss.
4. 'An interesting early change that I made to this page was to change the words from 'anxious or stressed' to 'excited or stressed' – discuss whether or not you think that this edit was worth it.
5. Alex Winstanley hopes that his book depicts 'an inclusive and diverse range of characters'. What sort of characters do you think are still missing from the range of literature / television / film / computer gaming etc. that you are exposed to?



David Attenborough COP26 Climate Summit Glasgow Speech Transcript



Your excellencies, delegates, ladies and gentlemen, as you spend the next two weeks, debating, negotiating, persuading and compromising, as you surely must, it's easy to forget that ultimately the emergency climate comes down to a single number, the concentration of carbon in our atmosphere. The measure that greatly determines global temperature and the changes in that one number is the clearest way to chart our own story, for it defines our relationship with our world.

For much of humanity's ancient history, that number bounced wildly between 180 and 300, and so too did global temperatures. It was a brutal and unpredictable world. At times, our ancestors existed only in tiny numbers, but just over 10,000 years ago, that number suddenly stabilized and with it, Earth's climate. We found ourselves in an unusually benign period with predictable seasons and reliable weather. For the first time civilization was possible and we wasted no time in taking advantage of that. Everything we've achieved in the last 10,000 years was enabled by the stability during this time. The global temperature has not wavered over this period by more than plus or minus one degree Celsius, until now. Our burning of fossil fuels, our destruction of nature, our approach to industry, construction and learning, are releasing carbon into the atmosphere at an unprecedented pace and scale.

We are already in trouble. The stability we all depend on is breaking. This story is one of inequality, as well as instability. Today, those who've done the least to cause this problem, are being the hardest hit. Ultimately, all of us will feel the impact, some of which are now unavoidable.

Is this how our story is due to end? A tale of the smartest species doomed by that all too human characteristic of failing to see the bigger picture in pursuit of short term goals. Perhaps the fact that the

people most affected by climate change are no longer some imagined future generation, but young people alive today, perhaps that will give us the impetus we need to rewrite our story, to turn this tragedy into a triumph. We are after all, the greatest problem solvers to have ever existed on Earth. We now understand this problem. We know how to stop the number rising and put it in reverse. We must recapture billions of tons of carbon from the air. We must fix our sights on keeping one and a half degrees within reach. A new industrial revolution, powered by millions of sustainable innovations, is essential, and is indeed already beginning.

We will all share in the benefits. Affordable, clean energy, healthy air and enough food to sustain us all. Nature is a key ally. Whenever we restore the wild, it will recapture carbon and help us bring back balance to our planet. And as we work to build a better world, we must acknowledge, no nation has completed its development because no advanced nation is yet sustainable. All have a journey still to complete so that all nations have a good standard of living and a modest footprint. We're going to have to learn together, how to achieve this, ensuring none are left behind. We must use this opportunity to create a more equal world and our motivation should not be fear, but hope.

It comes down to this. The people alive now, the generation to come, will look at this conference and consider one thing. Did that number stop rising and start to drop, as a result of commitments made here? There's every reason to believe that the answer can be yes. If working apart, we are force powerful enough to destabilize our planet, surely, working together, we are powerful enough to save it. In my lifetime, I've witnessed a terrible decline. In yours, you could and should witness a wonderful recovery. That desperate hope, ladies and gentlemen, delegates, excellencies, is why the world is looking to you and why you are here. Thank you.

[David Attenborough COP26 Climate Summit Glasgow Speech Transcript - Rev](#)

ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES:



1. Share and research the definition of any unfamiliar vocabulary and / or cultural references.
2. Discuss the structure of this speech. Why does the organisation of ideas work so well?
3. Highlight the three examples of emotive language that you find most persuasive and impactful: be prepared to discuss your choices!
4. 'Our motivation should not be fear, but hope' – do you agree with this view? Discuss your thoughts.
5. 'Is this how our story is due to end? A tale of the smartest species doomed by that all too human characteristic of failing to see the bigger picture in pursuit of short term goals.' Discuss.

I never thought I'd say this but – thank you, Elon Musk



SpaceX has successfully launched the first all-civilian crew into orbit – and it could be a genuinely ground-breaking moment in human history

Rupert Hawksley, 17 September 2021

It has not always been easy to get behind the billionaires' space race. Let them have their midlife crisis. Some of us have taxes to pay. If Jeff Bezos, Elon Musk and Richard Branson want to get as far away from our planet as possible, at the greatest expense imaginable, well, good luck – and good riddance. You go on ahead, lads, we'll be right behind you. It's all just so embarrassing.

But then SpaceX, Musk's space company, goes and does something really quite remarkable and you have to stand back and applaud, while picking crumbs of humble pie off your jersey. It sucks.

At 8pm last night in Florida (1am BST, Thursday), SpaceX successfully launched the first all-civilian crew into orbit. The four-person team, led by billionaire Jared Isaacman, will spend three days orbiting Earth at an altitude of 575km, which I'm told is 150km higher than the International Space Station. Not only that, but the crew will conduct health research during the trip to try and better understand how humans can survive in space.

The Inspiration4 mission is not, then, a pointless bit of willy waving. It could be a genuinely ground-breaking moment in human history. Why? Because the crew is not made up of professional astronauts. Two members of the team – Chris Sembroski, 42, a data engineer and Sian Proctor, 51, a community college educator – secured their spots via a sweepstake. Beats a dusty bottle of Babycham. Space travel suddenly seems a whole lot more accessible. Inspiration4 feels inclusive, as if we are all invested in its success.

As my colleagues Anthony Cuthbertson and Vishwam Sankaran explained: "If the mission is a success, it will mark a major step forward for space tourism, and for Elon Musk and SpaceX's plans to make it accessible to anyone with the money to fund a rocket and spacecraft to carry them to orbit."

Okay, so you could argue that the key phrase there is "anyone with the money" but today is not the day for cynicism. This mission very much feels like progress in the democratisation of space travel. And Nasa astronaut Shane Kimbrough agrees. "To me, the more people involved in it, whether private or government, the better," he said from the International Space Station.

Space travel and tourism cannot become yet another thing from which the vast majority of us are excluded. Of course we aren't all going to head off into orbit, but we need to feel that these missions are for the benefit of mankind. That they are research-led, not a game for the rich kids. Which is why we need less of Bezos and Branson in their shiny space suits and more missions like Inspiration4, which has helped to normalise the idea of space travel for all and should throw up a whole heap of interesting scientific analysis.

Elon Musk, man of the people. Never thought I'd write that. Funny old world.

[I never thought I'd say this but – thank you, Elon Musk | The Independent](#)



ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES:

1. Share and research the definition of any unfamiliar vocabulary and / or cultural references.
2. Discuss the ways in which Rupert Hawksley persuades the reader to agree with his point of view.
3. Highlight three examples of an informal tone in the article: be prepared to discuss the impact of this stylistic choice.
4. Do you agree with the view that 'the more people involved in it [space travel], whether private or government, the better'?
5. 'Elon Musk, man of the people'. Are you convinced by this conclusion? If not, who would you nominate as an alternative?

Britney Spears Celebrates the End of Her Conservatorship: “Best Day Ever”



After more than 13 years in a conservatorship and many months of high-profile legal battles, Britney Spears is free.

CNN reports that Judge Brenda Penny dissolved Britney's conservatorship in court on Friday, November 12. "As of today, effective immediately, the conservatorship has been terminated as to both the person and the estate," said Britney's attorney Matthew Rosengart. "This is a monumental day for Britney Spears."

Britney herself was not present at the hearing, though she did post an Instagram video of the celebrations, writing, "Good God I love my fans so much it's crazy !!! I think I'm gonna cry the rest of the day !!!! Best day ever ... praise the Lord ... can I get an Amen?" Her fiancé Sam Asghari also posted an Instagram of the word "FREEDOM," writing, "History was made today. Britney is Free!" He had also recently shared a video of Britney in a #FreeBritney tee that read "It's a human rights movement."

The conservatorship was initially created in 2008, and Britney remained under its control as she released music, toured the world, and headlined an extremely successful Las Vegas residency for several years. Over the past few years, however, much attention has been paid to the conservatorship via the #FreeBritney movement and several highly-publicized documentaries. In June of this year, Britney herself spoke out against the conservatorship and her father's involvement in her life and finances, saying she was "traumatized" and "angry" about the situation.

"I deserve to have a life," Britney said at the time after sharing that she was not allowed to get married or have a child. "I deserve to have the same rights as anybody does by having a child, a family, any of those things, and more." She also began posting more openly about her situation on Instagram, including discussing ways she felt hurt by her family.

In August, Britney's father Jamie Spears stepped down as the conservator, and shortly thereafter filed to end her conservatorship. A judge officially suspended Jamie from the conservatorship in late September. "The time has come after more than a decade for the conservatorship to be terminated in its entirety," Rosengart said after the termination was announced.

What happens post-ruling? *CNN* notes that a "safety net" will be put in place for Britney's finances and that her assets will be moved from the conservatorship to her personal trust. They also reported that two more court dates will take place on December 8 and January 19, but Britney is now effectively free from the conservatorship's control and able to live life on her own terms.

[Britney Spears is Free of Her Conservatorship | Teen Vogue](#)

ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES:



1. Share and research the definition of any unfamiliar vocabulary and / or cultural references.
2. Improve the headline of this article; be prepared to discuss what techniques you have used to make it more impactful.
3. Highlight two sentences that you think could be removed from the article without losing any of its meaning.
4. 'I deserve to have the same rights as anybody does by having a child, a family, any of those things, and more.' What do you think the counter arguments might be to this statement from Britney Spears?
5. Sanchez Hayden, the directing attorney of caregiver services at Los Angeles legal aid organization Bet Tzedek Legal Services, expressed concern that conservatorships have been stigmatized due to the Spears case 'when the system is vital to others, such as a parent whose severely disabled child becomes an adult in the eyes of the law but is incapable of making decisions for themselves'. Discuss.

Why a female James Bond would be brilliant

Even Pierce Brosnan is on board with a gender switch-up in the Bond franchise...

By David Williams and Olive Pometsey

9 September 2019



The idea of having a female Bond is by no means a new one, but with the recent rumours that *No Time To Die* will feature Lashana Lynch taking over from Daniel Craig as 007, it seems that the years of hopeful speculation might finally pay off. Lynch is said to only be taking on the code name, not the lead role itself, but that hasn't stopped fans of the franchise from getting excited about the gender switch-up – in fact, even the four-time Bond vet Pierce Brosnan has backed the change.

"I think we've watched the guys do it for the last 40 years. Get out of the way, guys, and put a woman up there. I think it would be exhilarating, it would be exciting," said Brosnan in a recent interview with *The Hollywood Reporter*. "The Me Too movement has been relevant and significant and well needed in our society, so they'll have to address that," he said, arguing that the film series must adapt to keep up with our changing society.

But if we do get a female Bond, how should she be portrayed? Let's get one thing clear: leave the name alone. Fortunately, a woman named James is not only feasible but fashionable: unisex monikers are all the rage.

Bond Girls would stay

So what would a female-led James Bond film actually look like? What, say, happens to the Bond Girls? Well one obvious answer is nothing whatsoever. Why shouldn't our Bond be lesbian or bisexual? *Skyfall* hinted at Bond's potentially fluid sexuality when Bond flirted with Silva: "What makes you think this is my first time?"

Bond Boys could be introduced

Of course Bond Boys could also be introduced! Frankly, if the series wants to retain cultural relevance, it should consider this idea regardless of Bond's gender. Not so long ago most female characters who pursued casual sex would either turn out evil or be massacred by Freddy Kruger. Happily we live in more enlightened times, and a healthy sex life can be a trait of a heroine without being her defining feature. Would the unimportant conquests be killed horribly soon afterwards? Of course – it's a Bond film.

Key Bond relationships wouldn't change

Crucially the central dynamics would remain unaltered. M and Bond would share a deep if occasionally brittle respect, the spymaster sometimes frustrated by 007 but aware she's the best agent for the job. Q would still provide the gadgets, still be irked by their failure to be returned in good condition, still chastise Bond for mucking around when she should be listening to his briefing. The flirtation with Money Penny (Mr Money Penny?)

Works either way) would continue unconsummated, a mixture of lust and affection. A female Bond might add an interesting new dimension to these relationships but fundamentally nothing need change here.

Masculinity not required

What else? Combat should not be a problem: the best Bond fights tend to involve a larger and stronger opponent (Jaws, Oddjob, Mr Hinx). Technique may take precedent over brute force but is that a bad thing? Craig's physicality was a defining feature but Bond wasn't always thus – go and watch a Roger Moore. The Vodka Martinis, the Aston Martin, the bad quips – none of these require a masculine touch. Whether or not Bond wears a tuxedo or an evening gown is a matter for the wardrobe department: either way, she'll look fantastic.

The difference between a female and male Bond

Would Bond herself be different? Well of course she would – just as Timothy Dalton portrayed a notably different character from Roger Moore. But she would remain recognisably James Bond: ruthless, reckless, supremely capable, devastatingly suave, more than a little snobbish. Cold one moment, witty the next, always alert to the possibility of danger. Trading barbs with villains across the card table, flirting outrageously with anybody she desired or required. Yes, there would be cries of “sacrilege!” just as there has been for every Bond since Connery, and for some people she just wouldn't be James Bond, even if Ian Fleming's ghost wrote her a letter of endorsement.

Bond has always adapted

The Bond franchise has endured for 50 years – to endure for another 50 it must continue to evolve and experiment, be willing to remix the formula. This doesn't mean casting a woman for the sake of it, but nor should the notion be dismissed out of hand. The feasibility of a female James Bond has been discussed above. Now consider the creative possibilities. A film where Bond and the villain might sleep together, perhaps even share a genuine attraction; where Bond appears the underdog in every fight; where an extra chip is placed on Bond's shoulder due to her gender in a man's world; where every tired old trope, every “shaken not stirred”, every “Bond, James Bond”, is given fresh life. Even if the casting proved unsuccessful – and, like all bold moves, it carries no guarantees – then at least the failure would be a new and interesting one, glorious in its ambition. James Bond: are you ready for her?

[Why a female James Bond would be brilliant | British GQ | British GQ \(gq-magazine.co.uk\)](#) - extract

ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES:

1. Share and research the definition of any unfamiliar vocabulary and / or cultural references.
2. GQ (Gentlemen's Quarterly) is a men's fashion and lifestyle magazine. Discuss the ways in which this article seems aimed at its target readers.
3. Highlight three sentences which you think succeed in adding humour to the article: be prepared to discuss your choices!
4. In order for the Bond franchise to endure another 50 years it must 'continue to evolve and experiment'. Does this mean stories can never be timeless? Discuss.
5. In 2021, Daniel Craig commented on this debate: 'Why should a woman play James Bond when there should be a part just as good as James Bond, but for a woman?' Discuss your views in response to this debate.



