

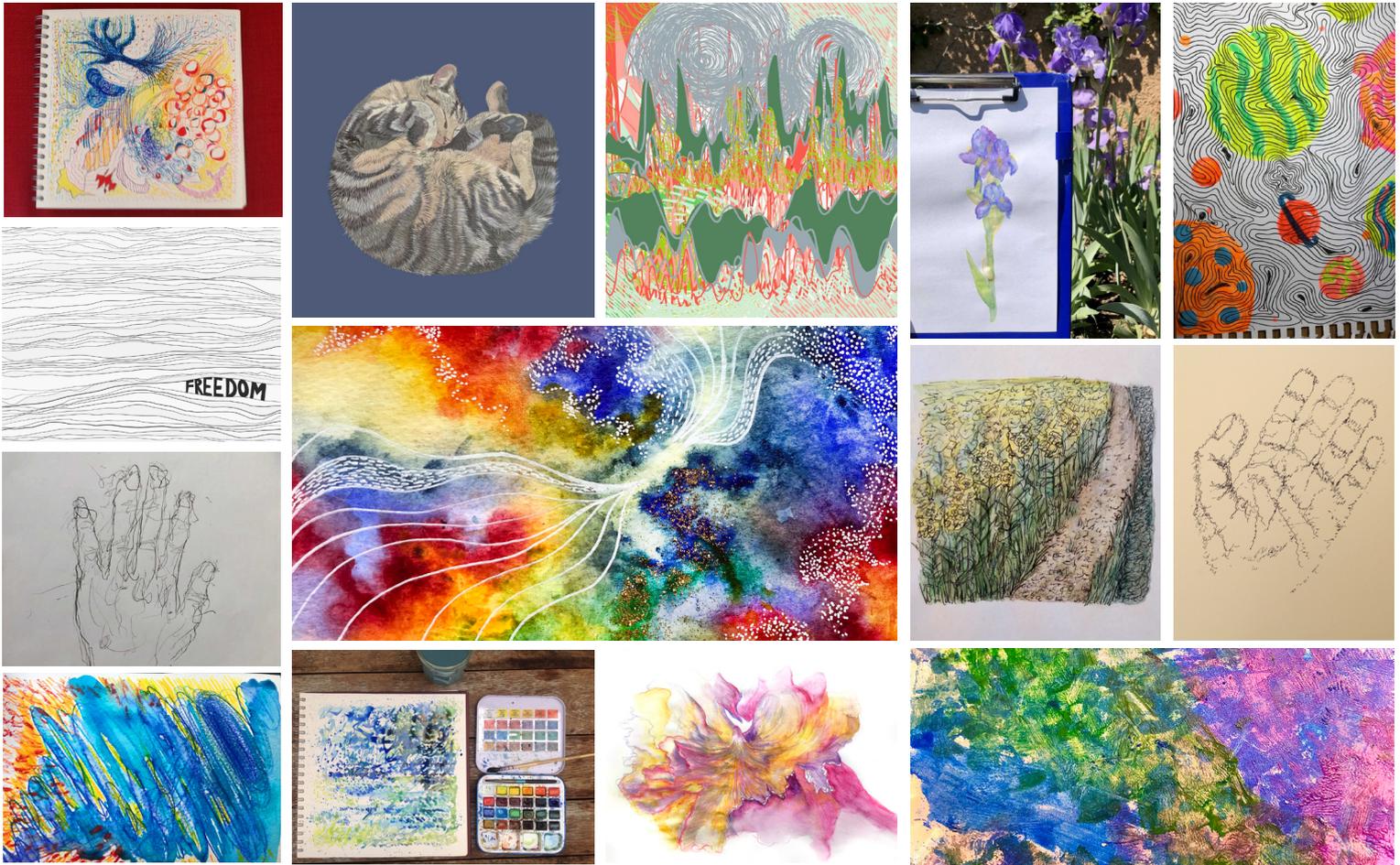


Senior Courier

22nd May 2020

#REMOTELearning

Channelling Your Inner Artist



MORE ART CHALLENGE PIECES ON PAGE 10

Our daily drawing challenges set by our Art Department continue to go from strength to strength and we are building up quite a gallery. Please enjoy the submissions we were delighted to receive from the past few weeks. Make sure you follow their twitter account @tsartdepartment to get involved.

More Inside

Miles for MS Challenge Update

Who wants to be a Quillionaire?

Australia Exchange

PRE-U Course

...and much more

Next Senior Courier: 12th June 2020



Taunton School Gone Virtual...

by Elliston Ensor, ICT Manager

I have worked in IT support in School and Colleges for many years. Up until COVID-19, the most challenging technical issue I had experienced was in a previous job when a roof blew off during a bad storm and water came pouring in over the server racks. Looking back now, that week no longer seems that bad!

In February, quietly in the upstairs offices in Red Cottage where IT are based, we started planning for the potential of a School closure and the move to a digital platform.

The IT engineers and I started rapidly planning our To-Do list and just as quickly started implementing those plans. When you work in IT you must have the ability to be quick thinking, adaptable and be a strong problem solver. The team delivered on all fronts.

Like many offices around the country, once the school closed, we set up our services remotely with IT staff working from home. It was impressive to have the first online department meeting over Microsoft Teams. The group picked up the conversations that had taken place in the office on the previous day, now in the virtual world, without skipping a beat.

I think it's clear to see that the school has adapted at the same pace. In the last 90 days on the Teams platform there have been over 2,600 online class video calls, over 480 online video meetings, and over 1,400 one to one video calls. The Taunton School hustle and bustle has gone virtual!

As a result of all the teachers and pupils hard work using the Virtual Learning Environment, we have seen our printing onsite

reduce from using 5.31 trees over this period last year, to just 0.24 of a tree during the same period this year. As an IT Manager I would love to see this trend continue into next year.

Our IT Helpdesk continues to offer support to all that need it. The number of support tickets we have logged during this period has been three times higher than average. It has been great for the team to play such a key part in these changes and to be able to support the school community over the last term.

Whether you are a pupil, parent, or member of staff, we will continue to be here to support you. I would encourage anyone needing technical support to contact our IT Helpdesk team who will be very happy to help.



Taunton Independent Market



Information subject to change - please check our website

OVER 200 PRODUCTS	OVER 30 ARTISAN / INDEPENDENT BUSINESSES	DELIVERIES EVERY WEDNESDAY AND SATURDAY
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WWW.TAUNTONMARKET.CO.UK

TAUNTON MARKET

Taunton School is proud to be supporters of the Taunton Independent Market. Normally held on the second Saturday of every month, this market has now adapted to add an online offering for deliveries within the wider Taunton area. Please do take some time to browse their new website and support a fantastic range of local suppliers.

An update from the Taunton School Foundation

Memories Project

Remember when...

For all OTs, Parents, Teachers and Friends around the world

Our new online "Memories Project" is available now! We are asking people to share their stories, photos and videos, to be collated, shared and ultimately used to celebrate our 175th anniversary in 2022. There's also a questionnaire for all OTs, parents and staff just for fun!

Share your career story with our students

We are asking members of our professional community, all parents and OTs included, to talk about their knowledge and experiences in a 3 minute "video selfie", to be shared with our students- many of whom would welcome some inspiration right now.

[THE TAUNTON SCHOOL MEMORIES PROJECT: CLICK HERE TO JOIN IN!](#)

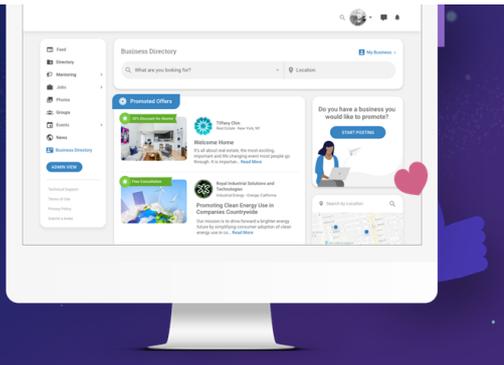
Click here

Foundation Team

The Taunton School Business Community

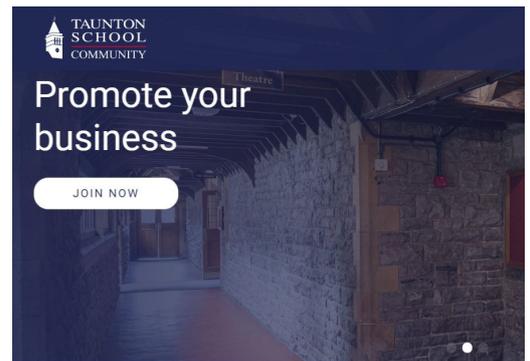


Announcing the Launch of our new Business Directory

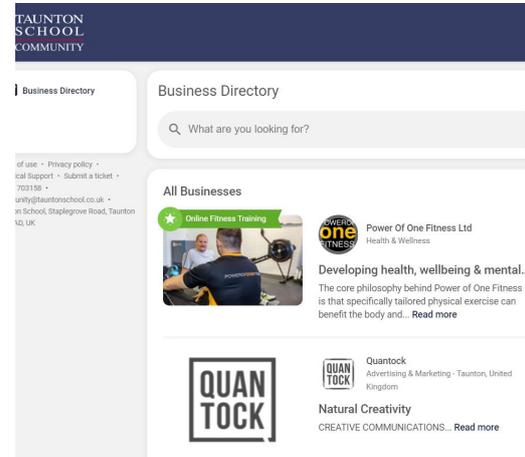


Showcase and Promote Your Businesses

Click on **Business Directory** in the navigation bar and post your information TODAY!



Connect
Connect with a world-wide business commu
Support
Find and support independent businesses.



The Taunton School Business Community

Our free online platform creates opportunity for local independent businesses to promote their products and services, share advice and ideas and generate increased support from a wider Taunton School community of alumni, parents, friends and suppliers.

[Promote your business here](#)

Contact us:

Community@tauntonschool.co.uk

The Foundation Team: Nadine Latte and George Cockburn

Australia Exchange



On Sunday 23rd February four Year 9 students (Charlie Carruthers, Morgan Gunter, Rosie Imm and Scarlett King) embarked on the first leg of their Australian exchange with students from Carey Grammar School, Melbourne.

The first leg was to be a six week stay with their exchange partners (Benjamin, Lucy, Mia and Lucy) and host families out in Australia; they departed with much excitement and little knowledge of the global drama about to unfold.

Whilst in Melbourne Charlie, Morgan, Rosie and Scarlett attended classes and were treated to a programme of activities in the locality and further afield. Some highlights from the students were:

"I loved the Australian lifestyle; we spent lots of time outside socialising with our new friends at the parks and meeting at each other's houses to swim in their pools. School days were a lot shorter. Even though our exchange was unexpectedly cut short I made great friendships and was looking forward to them all being at Taunton School for the Summer term. My exchange Mia had asked lots of questions about boarding and was very excited to be spending time in Weirfield." (Rosie Imm)

"My highlight was when we went to the twelve apostles, I am looking forward to spending more time with Lucy and showing her how different England is to Australia." (Morgan Gunter)

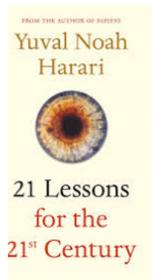
"The highlight of my trip was the activities we did every week. I also enjoyed just how nice and welcoming everyone was in Australia. If my exchange Lucy was able to come I would have wanted to take her to London." (Scarlett King)

Though the exchange has now been interrupted due to COVID-19 (and Charlie, Morgan, Rosie and Scarlett had to arrive home two weeks early) both schools hope that the second leg can happen at some point in the next academic year though in the meantime our students will cherish the memories and friendships they have made and the spirit of independence they have gained.

Adrian Roberts

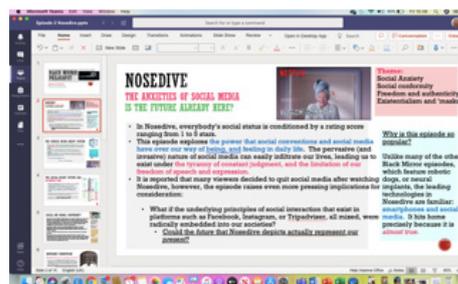


Philosophy, Religion and Ethics Pre-U courses



To ponder...

- What do you make of the interplay between 'history' and 'philosophy' as presented by this author?
- What do you make of the author's claim that "I am yet to meet a single person who dreams of emigrating to Russia"?
- What do you think about the author's use of nostalgia in finding political solutions? What are you nostalgic about, is it helpful?
- What do you make of Ab Lincoln's saying on democracy? Why?
- Who is the 'German from Iran' and a 'Manchester industrialist' (p.14)?
- What does 'spec' is a form of 'hubris' mean? Do you agree?



Nothing quite makes you want to ponder your life's philosophy like an international lockdown and a crisis in the form of a pandemic. Now, more than ever, people are struggling to come to terms with their place in this world and have turned to philosophy for help. Publishers reported a sales boom in novels about fictional epidemics, notably Albert Camus, the famous existential philosopher's, *The Plague*. It really does force you to get your priorities straight, it forces you even to ponder questions you thought you'd never have to: Is it really right for my government to have prioritised the economy over the lives of their own people? Is it ethical for me to carry on living my life normally if I'm putting the lives of others at serious risk? If I die, what happens to me? If God is omnibenevolent why is there so much suffering in the world at the moment? You may not have realised it but if you've pondered any of these questions during this crisis or even at any time before, you are a philosopher. But philosophy is often an overlooked subject; this may be because its true nature is unbeknownst even to the most prolific philosophers in the history of thought. So, maybe it's the fluid parameters of the "subject" that is off putting to many people or maybe it's the fact that it can be intimidating to toil with such enigmatic questions about the human experience.

Yet, at its very least philosophy to me is the intricate use of the tools of logic and reason to analyse the ways in which humans experience the world. It teaches critical thinking, close reading, clear writing, and logical analysis which can then be utilised in understanding the language used to describe the world, and our place within it. To cheesily quote Socrates, "the unexamined life is not worth living". Now, you may still be questioning, "Why philosophy?" Well, whether you like it or not philosophy is frighteningly (sometimes) relevant to your everyday life. Philosophy is all about ruling the choices you take in your approach to life and ultimately how your choices will affect other people.

To keep everyone in IB sufficiently philosophically infused over this period of quarantine the PRE department had put together three "Pre-University courses", namely Ethics, Theology and

Politics. The ethics course explored the issues brought into light by the Netflix show *Black Mirror*, which lead us to discuss a large variety of topics from the implications of the use of VR in the real world to the issues of social and moral conformity and even our moral obligation to other people. Being, personally, a humanist the theology course explored many topics that were relatively new to me but inspired me to delve deeper into the issues surrounding religion and its relations with everyday themes such as class equality and feminism. Finally, the political philosophy course explored intricate political issues such as altruism, Egoism, Marxism, Fascism as well as the issue of Chats who tried to argue that History was more important than Philosophy. Overall the courses organised by the philosophy department have been great at keeping everyone on their toes as well as helping anyone who is looking to study a PRE subject next year at University to solidify some knowledge in these subject areas.

Philosophy and PRE in general come highly recommended, by me, as subjects to be studied both in the Sixth form and at University level. So, finally, if you are going into year 12 next year and you are looking to study philosophy or you are looking to study any of the PRE subjects at University I suggest a read of any of the following books to keep you busy over this half term:

Sophie's World by Jostein Gaarder

If the Mind Had toes by Lucy Eyre

Justice by Michael Sandel

Democracy and Its Crisis by A. C. Grayling

Confronting Christianity: 12 Hard Questions for the World's Largest Religion by Rebecca McLaughlin

Mimi Longchamp, Year 13 IB Student

The Bridport Prize



The Bridport Prize is an international writing competition and we have a young writer award worth £500 for budding writers aged 16 to 25.

Deadline for poetry, short story, flash fiction and the novel is 31 May.

You can find out more at the link below or please, get in touch.

<https://www.bridportprize.org.uk/news/young-writer-award-worth-500/>

An update on the Miles for MS Challenge

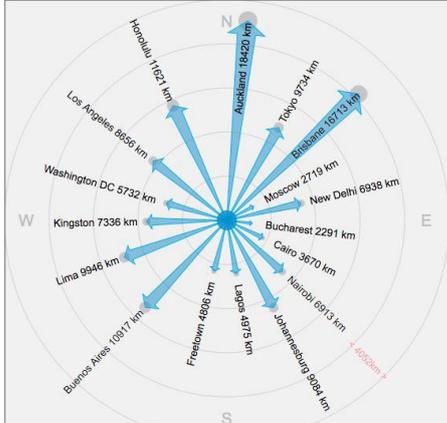
Multiple Sclerosis Trust

MS

Money Raised : £1992 (Let's hope we can make it over the £2000!)

Distance from Taunton to ...

Graph showing distances and directions to other locations. Click arrows to see the route on a map. Learn more about the distance graph.

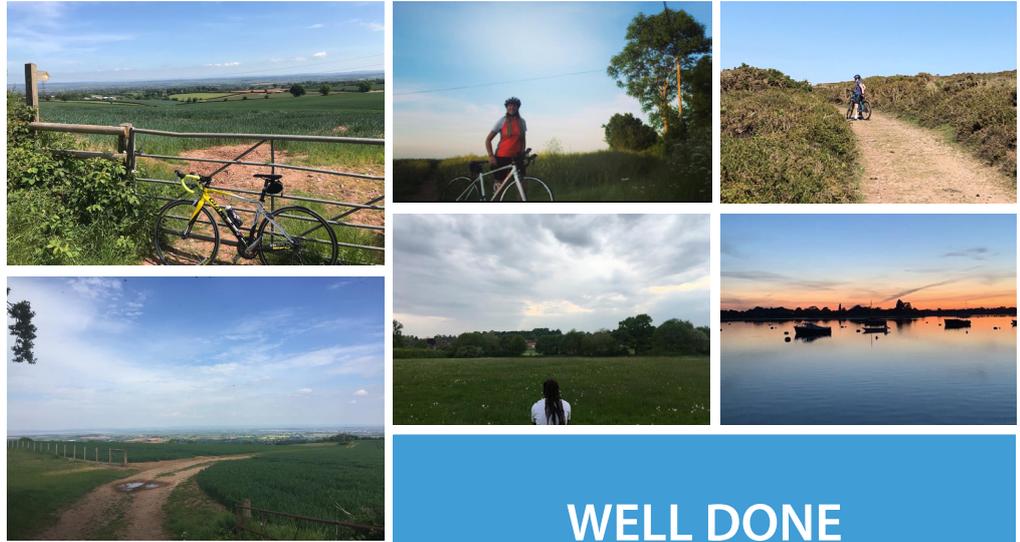


Distance completed: 4740km (equivalent to Taunton To Freetown in Sierra Leone or Abuja, Nigeria)

Well done to Archie Tyler who completed a Home Triathlon last weekend in his garden and around his village.

Well done to everyone currently walking, cycling and running their way through May. Why not see how we are getting on and help us complete our individual goals this month? Can we make it to Chicago in USA which is 6210km away or New Deli in India which is 6939km away from Taunton?

Thank you for all of the support- Miss Stancer



WELL DONE to our Top Fundraisers....

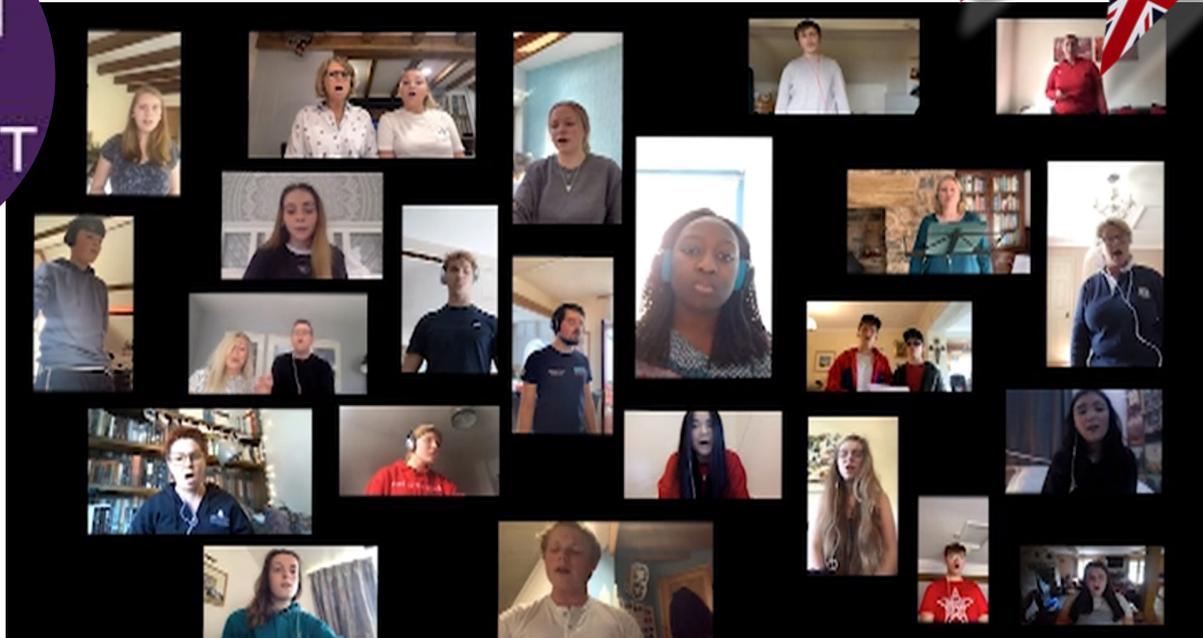
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| Mr Pring | Miss Brayley |
| Mr Sanderson | Freya Chandler |
| Freya Tyler | Mrs Chaffey |
| Flora Collier | Miss Lewis |
| Emily Lawton | Miss Mortimer |
| Mr Godfrey | Miss Davey |
| Mrs Wilcox | Sophie Clough |
| Miss Stancer | Ms Pike |
| Miss Aston | Miss Manley |
| Rhiannon Lee | Tia Chaloner |
| Mr Marriage | Tom Dollery |
| Issy Hogevoold | Nick Payne |
| Archie Tyler | |

<https://give.everydayhero.com/uk/team-TS>

"You are not alone"

Taunton School Community Choir

BBC
RADIO
SOMERSET



The Taunton School Music Department managed to produce an incredible large-scale choir performance remotely with over 60 singers in spite of lockdown measures.

Mr Cracknell and his team have been holding virtual rehearsals for the past three weeks with the School's Community Choir – a group which includes students, staff and the wider Taunton School community. Their efforts culminated in a moving rendition of Michael Jackson's "You are not Alone" shown for the first time on Taunton School's social media on VE Day, encouraging listeners to take a moment to reflect, remember and bring together the whole community on an important day.

As we go further into the lockdown period and virtual schooling we are now producing a contrasting upbeat song – Elton John's classic and apt – 'I'm Still Standing!' . Keep a look out for the next virtual Whole School Community Choir video.

Mr Cracknell, was recently live on air with BBC Somerset's Claire Carter, talking about the Whole School Community Choir's rendition of 'You Are Not Alone'.

To hear his interview, click here and forward to approx 1:47.

<https://bit.ly/TSbbcchoirstory>

Virtual learning at Taunton School



*"Coming together is a beginning;
keeping together is progress; working together
is success" - Henry Ford*

It's amazing what you can achieve when you work together as a team. We hope you enjoy the short film that has been made celebrating some of the highlights, so far, from our Remote Learning Summer Term in our Senior School.

To watch the short film, click the link below:

<https://www.facebook.com/tauntonschool/videos/722837395147731/>



Virtual learning at Taunton School



Who wants to be a Quillionaire?

Keep a look out on the English Department Teams for the weekly challenge!

Challenge 1 (Summer 2020)

Start date: Monday 4th May: Closing date for this week's entries: Monday 11th May 5pm...

Write a description of a precious possession using the following opening and concluding paragraphs to book-end your response.

You should aim to write between 250 and 300 words...

Opening:

My father's desk is a thing of beauty. I've always admired it. Its style may be considered a little outdated, but I love it and I don't particularly care for what's 'in' and what's 'out'. It's pretty unspectacular at first glance and typically 1970s: pinewood and functional. But there's something extraordinary about it...

(Your part goes here...)

Conclusion:

...Over time these possessions become even more precious. They're our connection with the past; they give us a sense of history or belonging. I suppose that's why we keep them polished and loved.

Welcome to the new Creative Writing forum: 'Who Wants to be a Quillionaire?' – an opportunity for all our staff and students to showcase their creative writing skills on a regular basis.

Each week there will be new, usually short creative challenges set by the English Department, and each week the best pieces will be chosen by our enthusiastic editorial team and put forward for potential publication in next year's journal.

All staff and students are welcome to join the Teams channel where weekly details and updates will be posted regularly. Also, watch this space for internal and external competitions...

New challenges will be posted each week giving you a week to submit your responses by the Monday 6pm deadline.

The results of Week 2's micro-fiction challenge will feature in our next courier...in the meantime, keep your entries coming in!

TS English Department

Last week's inaugural challenge: 'My father's Desk' inspired some superb submissions. Here is just a small selection of some of the best pieces received for Week 1...

WEEK 1 QUILLIONAIRES

My Father's Desk- By Annabelle Lewes

My father's desk is a thing of beauty. I've always admired it. Its style might be considered a little out-dated, but I love it and I don't particularly care for what's 'in' and what's 'out'. It's pretty unspectacular at first glance and typically 1970s: pinewood and functional but, as I drum my fingernails against the swirling grain, my eyes begin to glaze. A silver ring perches in the centre of my hand. The band itself holds little meaning, but it winks at me as I hold it up to the afternoon light that creeps in through the curtains. Its numb metal is cold in my hollowed hold. I roll it between my fingers; shards of light bounce from its mournful face. I study the soft glow radiating from its tranquil silver while the worn metal pools in my palm like bitter rain. Such an expanse of emptiness contained in this sliver of silver. A serpent binding them; my father stubborn and unyielding, my mother refusing to shed the placid cuff that held her to him. As if their two very souls were coiled inseparable strands of moonlight. But now now there is emptiness. Separation after all these years. Now, Time offers me a gaping nothingness and yet still I sit at his desk, cherishing the gnarled grain of its tarnished wood and treasuring the soft cold metal in my petalled palm, for these two items and the handful of fading photographs that I keep in my bedside drawer are my only connection with the past, their past. And I suppose that's why we keep them polished and loved and protected from the light."

My Father's Desk- By Maisie Raven

My father's desk is a thing of beauty. I've always admired it. Its style may be considered a little outdated, but I love it and I don't particularly care for what's "in" and what's "out". It's pretty unspectacular at first glance and typically 1970s: pinewood and functional. But there's something extraordinary about it. Maybe it's the bloodstain on the side that my mother refuses to scrub off, staring back at me, like I'm the one to blame.

If one were to pull the rusted brass handle that hung as proud as a lion's mane, you would find a menagerie of weird and wonderful objects that my father collected over his living years. It slightly creeped me out from time to time. The contents looked more like an offering at his gravestone rather than a way to honour his memory, yet I had grown to care for these objects, like he had never cared for me. My father had lived and died at this desk, scribbling away frantically at parchment with the silver pen that I now balanced upon my open palm.

The light glinted off the precious metal and danced around the room, as if calling the other objects to join in its glee, but they were not ready, their daily polishing hadn't yet begun. I let out a small chuckle, had my father been alive I wouldn't have been able to set foot in the precious study that he valued over all else, and yet, here I am, keeping his collection alive and well. Over time these possessions become even more precious. They are our connection with the past; they give us a sense of history or belonging. I suppose that's why we keep them polished and loved.

My Father's Desk- By Anonymous

People have opinions especially at dinner parties..... sitting round a once immaculately set table, now a litter of empty glasses, cheese crumbs and chocolate wrappers.

"What do you think of the government ...? "

"How on earth did she end up with him?"

"If your house was on fire what is the first thing you would rescue?"

Well, in answer to the latter, for me, it would be my dining table ...I love it, so many memories over forty plus years, scars from dancers, cigarette burns, the rings from coffee mugs, wine stains, children's drawing imprints, ink marks and so much more; evidence of a table's life lived.

The real reason though is its origin and why we came to own this lovely rustic polished gem with legs like my mother's best friend from years ago, round at the top, sturdy comforting legs, built to last.

A local newspaper dropped onto my doormat. I decided to look at it later; see what fun there was to be had in this new rural haven which was my first marital home. Sitting quietly later that evening, glass of wine in hand, I pored over the latest fetes and coffee mornings and then, quite by chance, spotted the 'for sale' column.

It read simply: "Much loved table sadly for sale... too large for our flat !!!" I needed a large table ...could this be it ?.....

Picking up the phone I arranged a meet at 7pm. I could hardly wait for my new husband to get home and without further ado (by this I mean no supper) we set off for our roundevous.....

There it was in their garageOh! Love at first sight for me. Rectangular, old wood, years of polish and use behind its lustre.

"Try not to seem too eager darling," my husband whispered. But I couldn't help myself "I love it!" I gushed "When can we have it? Oh, by the way, how much?". Cue big sigh from my husband...

Suffice to say it was delivered by tractor the next afternoon I might add the vendors were in tears as they left, how could they bear it? Some memories surely were already ingrained in this weathered but majestic table.

I polished and buffed, set it and unset it, added flowers and candlesticks. And now, almost 40 years later, it's colour, its smell, its presence, its sheer character have not diminished. There can be two sitting there or twenty two; it simply expands and contracts whenever necessary. It is both rustic and grand. Each year together we write our Christmas cards on it ... I chat with friends over coffee, help with homework, cut out patterns, have singsongs round it , sit on it, play cards and scrabble on it and it is at the very heart of every home we have had together - my new (ish), (I say that to keep him on his toes) husband and I.

How I love my beautiful old table, trouble is, with a fire, it would probably be the first to ignite, It's quirky that way

My Father's Desk- By Sophie Fisher

My father's desk is a thing of beauty. I've always admired it. Its style may be considered a little outdated, but I love it and I don't particularly care for what's 'in' and what's 'out'. It's pretty unspectacular at first glance and typically 1970s: pinewood and functional. But there's something extraordinary about it...

Hung delicately on the handle of one of the heavily varnished drawers is my mother's woollen waistcoat. It is knitted ever so carefully into twists and turns that fade away into a smooth tight knit stitch, its colour like a cloud brimming with water just before a storm. As my finger traces the plaited strands the minute fibres stand up on end with a certain excitement. I watched as her hands slipped away from it, my hands pincered to it, my fingernails digging between each rope. Its wool soaked up the salted drops, the whiskered strands dazzling amongst the blurred landscape. I hold it close to my cheek now; its hessian fibres nurture me, cradling my aching head and swollen eyes. Those long arduous weeks I wore the waistcoat with pride its sleeve often sliding off my narrow shoulders. It became a vessel, every so often for a feeling incapable of being conveyed through words, of complete reminiscence. The kind of feeling that has the power to infiltrate your soul, take hold of all your senses. I wore it at an age where I was deaf to biting whispers, a battle I have long since lost. The sturdy wool still holds her scent; a sweet lingering smell of vanilla and Chanel No. 5; the scent that has the power to teleport me into her arms. The trundle of the washing machine will eventually beat out that smell. But when her remembered silhouette drifted towards me through the crowds of anxious travellers; I tossed the waistcoat to the ground. I no longer needed the feeling it had given me, it was here.

Over time these possessions become even more precious. They're our connection with the past; they give us a sense of history or belonging. I suppose that's why we keep them so treasured and so loved.

How to submit:

All submissions please to be sent as a Word Document to: alex.carter@tauntonschool.co.uk (formerly Ms Cutts). Feel free to ask Miss Carter or any of the English Department on the Teams Chat page (or via email) if you have any questions or would like more details.

Please note: Only complete, edited and spell-checked submissions will be accepted and entries must be sent before the weekly closing date. No late entries will be accepted. Anonymous responses are also welcome for the more shy amongst you...

#TSArtChallenge

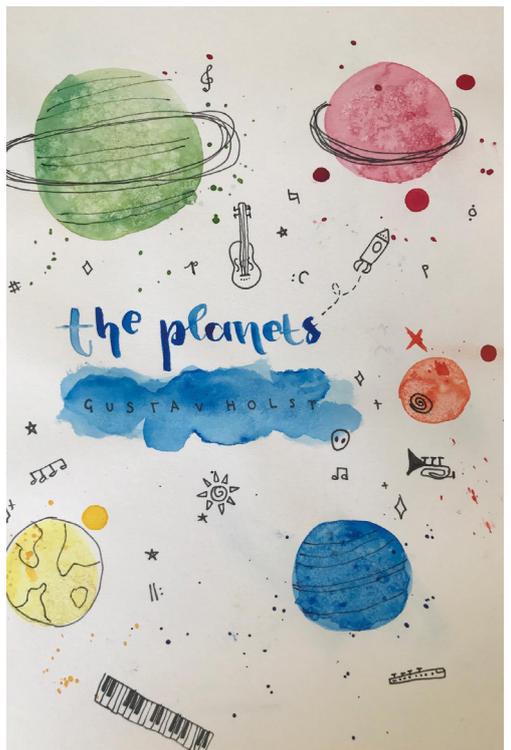
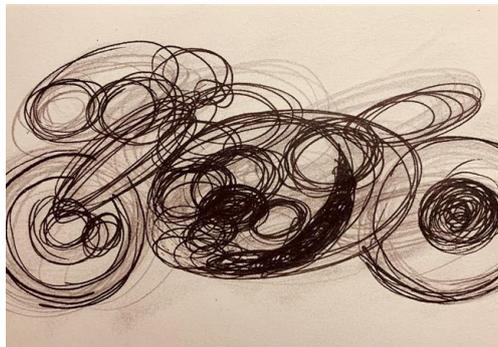
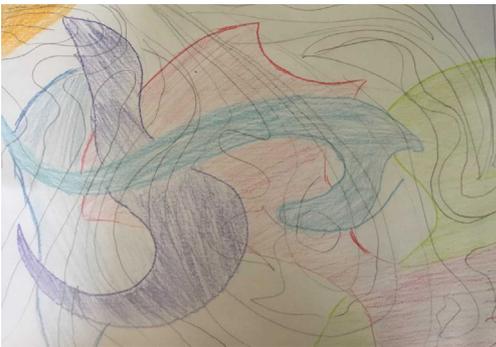
Daily Art Challenge

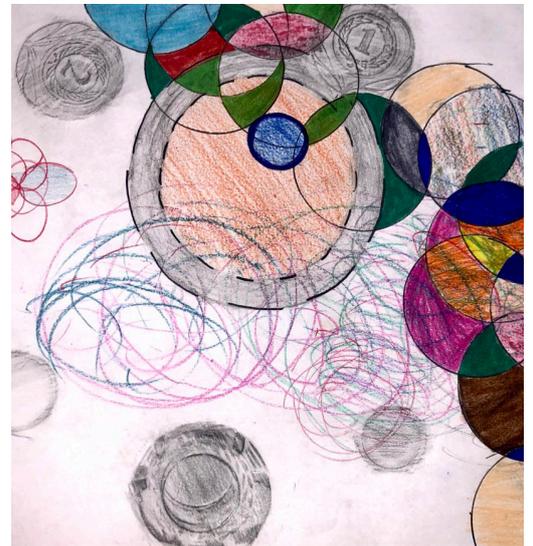
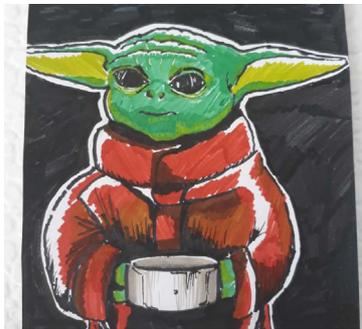
Find a new challenge each day on twitter...

@TSArtDepartment

No specialist knowledge or materials required

Tag us in your entries using:
#TSArtChallenge #TSDrawingChallenge
#ArtTherapy #ArtIsTherapeutic





KEEP SENDING IN YOUR ART CHALLENGE DRAWINGS