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COVID Hot Meals Appeal

By Humairah Choksi, 9T4

The recent pandemic has left many struggling, with those who are already at a disadvantage from poverty, ill-health or loneliness suffering the most. Star Academies has involved the local community in funding an appeal to provide hot meals to those who need it.

In the kitchens at Tauheedul, steaming hot cauldrons of delicious food are cooked up by the catering staff. In come the volunteers, socially distanced at various stations; a serving of rice travels to receive a healthy dollop of curry, then skips along for a generous side of salad, before being sealed and handed over to be stacked neatly into boxes. Then, it's out for delivery. The COVID Hot Meals appeal is supported by donations from parents, staff and the wider community. With these donations, lovingly prepared hot meals are distributed to local asylum seekers, refugees, and anyone in need of help. Around 240 meals have been provided a day, with the appeal expected to span over 12 weeks.

As a school, we have raised over £2000 and distributed thousands of meals to the local impoverished, with donations still coming in and meals still being distributed. Aside from the 'Little SLT' (Student Senior Leadership Team), staff and student volunteers and the admin team, local organisations and businesses have also pitched in to help prepare and deliver the meals.

The generosity and wholehearted spirit of those involved in this appeal has been a spark of positivity during these straining times, emphasising the strength of humanity regardless of the circumstances. Exercising one of the key Star values - service - further allows us to implement the teachings of our beloved Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), in the Hadith (saying of the Prophet), *"The best amongst people is he who helps others."*



Mrs Tasneem, teacher of Science, reflects on the importance of giving charity:

"In these difficult times, we should take a moment to think of those who are less fortunate than ourselves. Opportunities like this give us the chance to not only remember, but also make a difference. By giving, we are representing the true spirit of Islam, one of real service to mankind."



Star Academies have also set up a helpline in which expert information and advice for parents and carers is offered. Though we are all affected by the current crisis to different degrees, the chance to reach out to others is greatly valued by our team at Tauheedul, and we look forward to future schemes which enable us grow as individuals and as a supportive community.





Chair's Reflections...

All praises to the Almighty, Lord of the Worlds and the Master of our fortunes, and salutations to our beloved Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), the Seal of the Prophets and the guide for all our actions.

Parents – the unsung heroes of COVID-19

During this pandemic, the unexpected opportunity to spend endless days in each other's uninterrupted company has undoubtedly brought golden moments for some families. Parents are their children's first educators and lockdown, for some, brought a chance to pause, prioritise and learn together. However, as the weeks of confinement stretched into months, the organisation of home learning brought a number of challenges that testify to the inherent complexity of parenting, teaching and growing up.

Three conversations illustrate the point well.

The first was with a father of a 13-year-old who had been asked to read *Oliver Twist* at home. Delighted that his son was being challenged to grapple with classic literature, he was frustrated at not having the strategies to make this gem of a book with its rich seam of didactic messages more accessible. Like many parents, he was searching for the specialist subject knowledge that would help him to inspire his child to tackle new and complex material.

In the second, a mother explained that she was running a business from home and trying to support her children with their schoolwork. The school had provided extensive study packs and made regular supportive phone calls to the family, but the packs were unwieldy and needed navigation. The mother was increasingly exhausted by the multiple demands on her time that were creating tensions in family relationships and affecting her own work.

The third conversation was with a teacher who explained that although she had no problem commanding the attention of a class of 30 children, she was struggling to get her own two out of bed in the morning, let alone establish a learning routine: being a professional is no guarantee that your own children will be inherently self-motivated, nor that they will listen to you. The indignant reminder that 'You're not my teacher!' will be familiar to many parents.

We can all appreciate the stress and anxiety experienced by parents whose 'new normality' included making sense of the curriculum, motivating their children, defusing tensions and keeping up with their own work demands, all against a backdrop of profound uncertainty about the future.

First and foremost, parents have made amazing sacrifices to support their children's education. Many had to completely reconfigure their own lives to make time for their children's learning. They are the unsung, un-applauded heroes of the coronavirus crisis.

Secondly, bolstering their children's confidence and

protecting them from anxiety has taken its toll on parents' emotional wellbeing. Parents know that children quickly sense worries and react to them, so they have tried doubly hard to remain positive and upbeat.

Thirdly, it is becoming increasingly clear that the past few months has seen many parents struggling to put food on the table before they can think about feeding their children's minds. Inevitably this pandemic, like all other public health disasters throughout history, has hurt disadvantaged families disproportionately. Online learning is impossible to manage when there is no internet access, or when laptops are shared. Hunger, overcrowding, temporary accommodation and chronic illness have not disappeared simply because they have been overshadowed by COVID-19.

Finally, our experiences over the past three months have shown us the power that great teachers have to shape children's lives and ambitions. Parents have told us how much they miss the staff at their children's schools, not just because of their specialist knowledge, understanding of the curriculum and expertise in assessment, but because of the way that teachers can stand back from a situation objectively and use their wealth of experience to reshape children's thinking.

As schools re-opened, parents have experienced a new rollercoaster of emotions. Many wanted their children to return to school – for the sake of their education and the social benefits of seeing their friends. Many were dependent on schools reopening in order to resume their own jobs. All have been concerned about their children's safety.

Our parents need to know that their sacrifices have been worthwhile and without their input the chasm between actual and virtual school would not have been bridged.

We need to look forward with optimism: the home learning revolution has not been easy, but it has taught us many lessons.

I hope that you enjoy this edition of the *As-Sawt* magazine and remember the school in your prayers.

(Mufti) Hamid Patel

Chair of the Local Governing Body, TIGHS

Editor's Reflections...

I'll tell you how it ended.

They said, "Please return all your textbooks tomorrow and anything else borrowed." They said, "We're not sure anymore, about anything really." And most importantly, they said, "That's right, you won't be sitting a single exam." Sounds anti-TIGHS to me.

We grow every year: gain perspective, experience, character, regrets and lessons. The head gets heavier, stronger, wearier, sharper. Whether this was your final year in any stage of education or not, here's a timeless truth: academic exams are not the end of the world. Clear the air, clear your mind; you gain more than grades after years of schooling.

I think the irony is that we're so used to being prepared, scripted and alert – that's our style. How then, are we surviving, succeeding – excelling in fact – despite being thrown into uncharted waters, despite being evicted from what became a home of sorts, a place to laugh, complain and, undeniably, improve.

Let's call it a sharp realigning of focus, a new angle on what we should hold dear. We have favourite memories, friends, staff, subjects, corners and lunch menus. Some common knowledge among us: the lesson before lunch on a Wednesday, behave, avoid detention... RUN for the canteen when class is dismissed. Oh, the sanctity of what is precious. A plate of chips. Through our passion and appreciation, we create an essential culture of respect. We forge human relations and connections so that, in the end, when it all goes awry and the script runs short, we are anything but alone. If we have been naïve in believing nothing could get in the way of our usual academic

schedule, at least we have been naïve together.

As students, we subconsciously archive the guidance, support, friendship and kindness of those within our school environment. Outside of that building, we pour through our archives, memories and experiences: we become a product of them and suddenly, we are glad – in any degree – for the years spent here.

We, the human race, are the most addictive TV series or novel saga out there at the moment; I can't get my eyes away from the next plot twist. No piece of literature can compete with the story of our lives, the unpredictable turmoil of existence. Each day a new episode, each actor living their own spinoff series. Within the purple walls and hot pink accents of our school, we allow a part of us to be moulded into better people, looking up to those who have been there before us. And still we learn, from our collective confusion and helplessness at what lies beyond our control: we are humbled.

As the author of your own novel, take control of what you can. If you tire of the current episode of your life, take a look at someone else's – you'll be back soon enough.

To those who have influenced the writing of my chapters, I thank you. Though we may often feel inexperienced as we write the story of our lives, know that we are surrounded by volumes of unparalleled biographies to learn from; we are constantly guided.

Humaira Toorawa

As-Sawt Editor, TIGHS





The Online Learning Experience

By Mayra Shiraz, 10M3

Monday morning. March 23rd 2020. Awoken by the dreaded blaring of their alarm clocks, students once again sat up and rubbed their eyes blearily. A weekday, yes, but not a school day anymore. Gone was the need to rush out of bed, dash manically to the bathroom and hightail it to school. Reaching for workbooks and laptops from bedside tables, lesson begins. The hazy mirage of letters and numbers float before their eyes, algebra, iteration and coordinates blurring with bedroom posters, floral bedsheets and the humming of the Hoover on the landing outside.

Transporting hands-on education into virtual classrooms has been a colossal mission. A teaching alternative that seems deceptively simple, yet so far from that. Identifying and providing for students who need tech support is only the start; next, the training, setting up classes, reconfiguring hardware and software, providing pastoral care in a whole new manner, and of course, securing a trusty game plan to combat all eventualities. The nightmare of hearing 'technical difficulties'

never ends, with each new issue leaving pretty much everyone running to Miss Rehmat, our mastermind technician, for help. Trying their hardest to replicate a classroom environment, students and teachers have ultimately excelled in doing so, soldiering on and adapting to the new system.



Miss Laher, Maths teacher, when asked for her perspective, commented,

"Online learning has been a fantastic and invaluable tool, and it has been great to teach, set work and help students continue with their studies."

Banished from school as we know it, only now do we see the incomparable benefits of physical classrooms and schooling. The obvious issues? Well, that student who simply 'can't log on', the student who joins a class and pops off for a nap, the genius with a movie playing in another tab, the one who can't seem to unmute themselves (or can they?), and their opposite, the one who can't seem to mute themselves: what on earth is going on at theirs?

Unfortunately, the loss of support from school staff, physical classrooms and contact with friends has also had much graver impacts. Although school closures initially felt like an escape, students have been isolated from their peers, which has had a profound effect on their wellbeing. Furthermore, those with mental health issues have lost an anchor in their lives, which could cause a relapse in their previous development. Children with special educational needs have had imperative resources, such as speech therapy, halted for the time being. For many, school has become a safe haven from their lives outside of it, and the magic of being surrounded by a reliable education and support system is evidently irreplaceable.



Giving her opinion on the online learning experience, Salihah Zaman, a Year 10 student, explained,

"Sometimes it's hard to concentrate but once you actually do, it's like being in a normal lesson. It's just the technical difficulties that sometimes occur are frustrating. But I'd much rather be in class. Things would be clearer than they are through a screen."



Knowledge is power, and at this moment in time, technology allows that knowledge to be widespread. Though no flashy, paper thin device could compete with the life-changing, somewhat parental guidance teachers provide for students in areas far beyond academia, we must lunge at our chance to make this work, to overcome our obstacles and compromise, if only for a moment, until life can return to its best.

Perhaps we are now on the road to a perfected combination. In the words of George Couros:

"Technology will not replace great teachers but technology in the hands of great teachers can be transformational."

Anti-Racism: Learning from the Best

By Aneesah Kholwadia, 13B8

Beating up a Singaporean student as a 'stand' against coronavirus. Drowning a black child on his school trip. Chanting anti-Semitic slogans on the football terrace. Attacking a Pakistani boy on his walk to his grandma's. Profiling a bearded traveller under the guise of security. Racism, in all its hateful and ugly manifestations, still exists. It is a dynamic that requires conscious, consistent and active tackling to move towards a fairer future wherein race is no longer a motive for discrimination. Employing anti-racist efforts is a step towards this and is best presented through the actions of the Prophet's (peace be upon him) Companions.

During his Caliphate, the Companion of the Prophet, Umar ibn al-Khattab (may The Almighty be pleased with him), sent an army of Muslims to Egypt, led by Amr ibn al-A'as (may The Almighty be pleased with him). An envoy of 10 men, the leader of which was Ubadah ibn as-Samit (may The Almighty be pleased with him), was sent to al-Muqawqis, the ruler of Cairo. Ubadah was a black companion of the Prophet who is described as handsome, with defined features and an incredible eloquence. **As Ubadah stepped forward from the envoy, al-Muqawqis fell back in alarm, declaring, "Take this black man away from me and let someone else speak to me."**

Consider: this exchange occurred in the wake of an impending battle, with tensions running high as each party vied for dominance. It is telling that al-Muqawqis forgoes his image as a ruler - a monolith of strength - and expresses a fear of colour instead. Perhaps it was a means to incite the humiliation of Ubadah, yet Ubadah was not perturbed and the Companions merely pointed out the ruler's ignorance by responding, *"This black man is the best of us in knowledge and wisdom. He is our leader and the best of us and has been appointed over us. We all refer to his opinion, and our leader has appointed him over us and ordered us not to go against him. And to us, a black man and white man are the same."*

Unable to comprehend their response, Al-Muqawqis



replied, *"How can you accept this black man as the best among you? Rather he should be the least among you."*

The Companions said, *"No, he is black, as you can see. He is the best in status among us, one of the foremost among us and one of the wisest. Blackness is not something bad among us."*

The Companions of the Prophet (peace be upon him) were not silent bystanders when faced with racial abuse. Rather, they asserted their unity and loyalty to their Muslim brother, forthrightly allegiant to the verse, *'Verily, the most honoured of you in the sight of [Our Lord] is he who is most righteous of you'* (Qur'an 49:13).

'Verily, the most honoured of you in the sight of [Our Lord] is the one who is the most righteous from you...'

(Qur'an 49:13)

To truly uphold the doctrines of Islam regarding race, it is necessary to affirm that colour is not a factor for dominance; we must redefine the qualities that determine *'superiority'*. It is not Ubadah's colour which made him superior or inferior; rather, it was his character and intellect which marked him as a leader to the rest.

We must not ignorantly march along to the racist anthem of imperialist ideals and supremacy rife within the very constructs of society. Racism is a direct contradiction to the unity that Islam calls for. It is a part of the Muslim character, as shown by the Companions, to denigrate ideas of racism that are demonstrated, be it on an overt level or within our own psyches. Let us stand with each other, authentically and not performatively, in a way that truly reflects the teachings of the Prophet (peace be upon him) regarding the equality of humankind.



Unexamined Results

By Hurmat Shahzad, 13B1

The cancellation of national exams, that timeless rite of passage, appeared to make time itself come to a halt. As the global pandemic reared its head higher, students in Year 11 and 13 foggily stared at obsolete revision notes, timetables and textbooks. The reaction spectrum has varied: sweet relief from the ruthless snare of exam revision, mocks, and all-nighters to a numb and deeply unfulfilling end to years of careful preparation and study. For most students, both sentiments are shared at once.

Retrospectively, many have come to appreciate the cancellation. *“A huge weight was lifted,”* says **Faheema Bohra, 11E2**, using her time in lockdown to spend time with family, relax and learn new skills.

“A huge weight was lifted,”

says **Faheema Bohra, 11E2**

And yet students cannot shake off that feeling of gnawing anxiety; the fear of whether exam cancellation will slow down our futures is well-founded and unforgiving. What if predicted grades may not reflect the usual rigorous period of study over the final few months of term? And what about the loss of that undeniable sense of achievement that comes from earning the grades by sitting final exams? Or what if those wild rumours circling social media may be true and antagonised teachers were relishing the new-found payback opportunity?



Laiza Dar, 13B9, said,

“The stress about university places and whether I should adjust my choices only increased as time went on, though the opportunity to spend this extended summer researching the universities and making a more conscious choice was welcome.”



Across the country, universities and colleges have been caught heavily off-guard by the dramatic turn of events, initially leading to endless debates about which students to



accept into their institutes the following year. And once this conundrum was settled, plenty more followed all too soon: worries that students will be grossly unprepared for the more elevated and intense studies ahead of them, and the near certainty of them missing out on effective education while being out of school.

Among obvious strategies, online classes have been confirmed for most universities and colleges, which will allow many students to study from a safer environment. However, for many students whose courses require a more practical, hands-on approach, such as those hoping to study medicine, the road ahead remains unclear on how they will be able to thoroughly progress through the next academic year. Reduced class sizes, staggered timetables and summer classes are also on the cards, as educational institutes are keen to find a way to compensate for so much lost time, with fear of the new academic year also being sabotaged. With multiple safety procedures, completing curricula and the welfare of staff and students to look out for, it is evident schools, colleges and universities have much to figure out.

For now, we must simply be patient.

“If there is one thing I have taken from this situation, it is to take each day as it comes, and see the good in whatever the The Almighty decrees for us,” concludes **Year 11 student, Faheema Bohra**. In keeping up with the conduct upheld by our school, students’ unwavering strength and courage in the face of uncertainty, as well as our faith in that which is written for us, have proven true even in this unforeseen challenge.

Queen Elizabeth II

By Rayhana Gajaria, 13B8



Iconic, instantly recognisable and the face of our country through tragedies and triumphs, Queen Elizabeth II continues her dedicated service to the people. For many, she has become an anchor against the tide of time, bearing the troubles of a nation that is ever changing.

Her story begins almost a century ago; born in London, 1926, Elizabeth was educated at home along with her younger sister, Margaret. Initially, she was not recognised as an heir to the throne. However, after the abdication of her uncle, Edward VIII, her father, King George VI, acceded to the throne and Elizabeth became first in line. Thus, Elizabeth was crowned Queen Elizabeth II at the age of 27, on June 2, 1953, in Westminster Abbey.

Queen Elizabeth II has become the longest ruling monarch in British history. Aside from answering letters from the public and having daily meetings with

her staff, she has been devoted to a life of sustained service not only through acting as the Head of the Commonwealth, but also as an ardent patron for over 600 charities, making her an inspiring role model to thousands across the country and beyond.

A reign spanning multiple generations, the Queen has ensured her connection with the nation remains both consistent and relevant. Delivering an uplifting message to mark the 75th anniversary of VE Day (Victory of Europe Day, marking the end of World War Two) the Queen urges all, *“Never give up, never despair.”*

Her Majesty also paid tribute to the transformative qualities of the British people, conveying her sincere gratitude for their remarkable resilience and declaring how we have become,

“A nation those brave soldiers, sailors and airmen would recognise and admire.”

In a more recent speech, the Queen offered bracing words of comfort to the British people amidst the coronavirus crisis. As the nation battles a turbulent storm of misfortune, she empathised strongly, appreciating the fortitude of the NHS and care workers, and highlighting the staggering financial difficulties and grave distress the virus has brought to many.



Addressing her people, she said, *“I hope in the years to come, everyone will be able take pride in how we have responded to this challenge.”*



Her Majesty's position in British history is most certainly unparalleled: from a young girl who did not imagine she would someday lead a nation, to an iconic sovereign who has ruled for more than 60 years. Through her character, resilience and even her fashion choices, Queen Elizabeth II continues to inspire others around the world.



Do Superheroes Really Need Superpowers?

By Hana Ali, 10M3

Superheroes exist in comic strips, novels and movies; most of the time they have superpowers – right? Well maybe we misjudged what it takes to be a superhero; perhaps we have forgotten the ones that have been around all along.

Across the country, thank-you notes, rainbow symbols and warm applause fill the air as society's real superheroes put on their uniforms and masks, ready for another day of surreal, life-saving missions. They make survival during this perilous time easier, sacrificing their safety and comfort to keep us safe.

Merely months ago, we would pass these people in the street without a second glance, without that gratitude we now feel and that smile we now consciously give, without that awe-filled vision of seeing a hero walk amongst us. Unsung before, hailed now: though difficult to believe, the traumatic pandemic has sparked a positive change within us - finally, we have come to recognise the backbones of our society.

It is strange to think that the 66.65 million inhabitants of this country could be held together by something that seems so ordinary; key workers surround us in our day to day lives, whether family, friends or neighbours. Our society flourishes through the hard work of dedicated social

workers, those essential to the justice system, committed doctors and paramedics and devoted school staff. The same 66.65 million inhabitants are now united under one simple fact: **key workers are anything but ordinary. They are extraordinary people who form the beating heart of the nation, the foundations to a house and a vital support system in this time of need.**

Only now do we notice these hidden pillars that support our worlds. Hidden because of the work they do so effortlessly and uncomplainingly. Hidden because they may not coincide with our day to day lives. Whilst we sit still, the world outside teems with those who cannot - will not - abandon their missions: these are the pillars we cannot do without. And so, we salute journalists and broadcasters. We praise the police and fire departments. We admire shelf-stackers, delivery services and countless others for providing us with something no one else can: **hope**. And this hope fuels the community through its turmoil, acting as the one and only necessary source of motivation.

One thing novels and movies got right is that superheroes are committed and dedicated to an important cause. People see them as role models, an inspiration. But I think that in a few days, weeks, months or whenever that may be, we will walk down the street and see key workers without their uniforms and masks, and they will still be superheroes in our eyes. Because one thing that novels and movies got wrong is that **you don't need superpowers to be a superhero.**

Superheroes exist in novels, movies and now in real life.



Quarant-Eid

By Mariya Pennells, 11E3

The auspicious month of Ramadhaan and joyous day of Eid is usually celebrated with family and friends, making this period one of the most social times of the year. Fasts are broken in family gatherings, and the focus on Muslims attending communal prayers at mosques multiplies, again emphasising the spirit of togetherness during this period.

But this Ramadhaan took a different turn. The ongoing virus and social distancing measures meant Muslims could no longer gather with families or friends either in homes or mosques, creating an unnerving anxiety at the termination of practices upheld for as long as we can remember.

Despite the obvious downsides of a quarantined Ramadhaan, Muslims did not let this dampen their spirits. An impressive array of new initiatives meant members of the community prevailed in sustaining key practices usually exercised in Ramadhaan; prayers continued within homes, charity appeals flourished as usual, aided through social media, and a plethora of daily sermons and Islamic lectures, usually delivered in mosques, circulated throughout the community, ensuring the annual drive to fortify one's faith was maintained.

As schools transported themselves to online spheres, students and staff were quick to adapt to new routines. Replacing the usual bombardment of exams, students took advantage of the spare time to reflect upon lifestyles and habits, rearranging priorities accordingly as exam-stress was lifted. With the pandemic challenging all beyond their limits, many used their time for self-improvement and selfless service to others in their communities who required assistance, companionship or simply reassurance during these times.

Naeema Dukandar, 11E2, said, "Eid in quarantine definitely made me appreciate and cherish every moment with my family and all the spare time allowed me to be very productive during Ramadhaan in terms of worship."

Motivating daily-reflection videos and opportunities to support families in need through the school fundraiser were made available to students and staff. An impressive £7000 pounds was raised, as well as the distribution of hundreds of meals.



Mrs Modan, Assistant Principal, commented,

"Our Purple Lanterns Student SLT (Senior Leadership Team) were keen to raise spirits and provide a platform to engage with students at home, building a virtual sense of community. They shared recipes, 'Keeping up with TIGHS' photos and inspiring teachings from the Qur'aan. We also delayed morning remote-learning sessions so students could benefit from the night prayer and pre-dawn meal."



The joyous occasion of Eid undeniably lacked its usual hubbub of family gatherings and excited children running wild. Although cordoned off into individual houses, people refused to be disheartened and worked hard to keep the spirit of Eid alive; dressed in their best attire, exchanging gifts, sharing plates of delicious baked goods with neighbours, cooking up magnificent feasts, and of course, those mandatory video calls to each relative where you can hardly see more than a few flashes of colour and hear crackling speech – what's not to like?

A special Eid video message was also shared with students, in which teachers across the school sent heart-warming messages of hope. Making a surprise guest

appearance in the video, **singer Zain Bhikha also shared his well-wishes**, which was received with much excitement.



Masters of the Lockdown

By A'Aishah Patel, 13B8

I think we can all agree that penning 'lockdown' in our diaries for 2020 was certainly not planned. Thinking about it, it seems apocalyptic: living in a period where leaving the house can be illegal, waging war against an invisible enemy, each individual fearing for their life and, God-forbid, supermarkets running out of toilet roll!

But there's no need to fret. Although we may have run out of toilet roll, the good news is

that students at Tauheedul have not run out of creativity. Capitalising on what could have been the stress of exams, but is now the stress of boredom, many are expressing their inner artistry.

Furthermore, pupils have been busy broadcasting their own radio show, *'Keeping up with TIGHS'*, which airs every Wednesday during registration time. With a little something for everyone, the show includes melodiously sung nasheeds, soothing recitations of the Holy Quran, spiritual guidance via explanations of Hadith (sayings and actions of the Prophet, peace be upon him) and a little humour to elevate moods and alleviate stress.



Using maths to solve intricate jigsaw puzzles and crafting elaborate origami, Mrs Azeema, teacher of Maths and head of the Maths Club, explained,

"Students may not realise, but they use these skill sets when enjoying their free time playing brain games on phones or tablets, or for other activities such as origami, cooking, knitting or crocheting."

She further adds, *"Maths enables students to develop not only good thinking and problem-solving skills, but creativity and a willingness to take risks."*



The Voice



One of the radio hosts, Aneesah Kholwadia, said:

"It was really enjoyable collaborating with the Student Senior Leadership Team outside of school, as the show was a pleasure to watch. We hope it is a means of keeping students at TIGHS feeling involved and entertained in these difficult times."

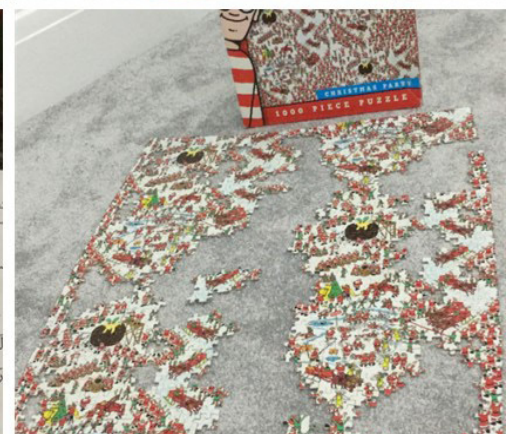
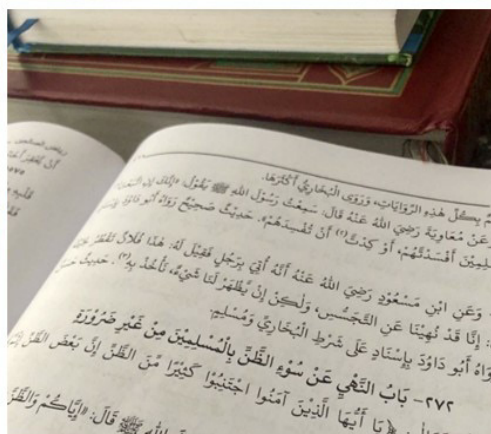


Students have not only been working hard at schooling online; they have also been exhibiting a great deal of effort and endurance in the kitchen. Baking sweet delicacies like brownies, doughnuts and French toast, to mastering dishes such as biryani and roasted meals – the lockdown has granted free rein to budding chefs and bakers.

Compensating for the absence of usual PE lessons, students are making the most of their limited allowance of outdoor activities with daily runs and engaging in various home-workouts to maintain health during this period of stagnant isolation.

Albert Einstein's historic words sum up this demonstration of creative flair perfectly:

"In the middle of every difficulty lies opportunity."





Keeping Us Connected: How the 'Little SLT' Has Brought Us Closer

By Ghofran Alarbi, 13B1

Whilst Tauheedul was forced to close its doors to most students on the 20th March, the role of the '*Little SLT*' (*Student Senior Leadership Team*), didn't come to a stop.

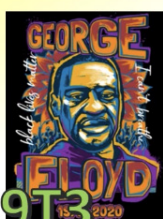
The Little SLT is a leadership team consisting of 10 students who are committed to their regular roles of Senior Prefects, Form Representatives, Deputy Head Girls and Head Girl. In school they are usually seen speaking to students in the hallways, attending assemblies or liaising with the Heads of Years.

With a change in lifestyles due to the national lockdown, however, came an adjustment in roles for the Little SLT, who were now charged with the responsibility of keeping Tauheedul and its students connected.

The Little SLT collaborated over Microsoft Teams and decided to organize weekly broadcasts and a text bulletin that would be released online for students to read and watch. Launched in the first week of the blessed month of Ramadhaan, initially as a Ramadhaan special, the Little SLT collectively presented their '*Purple Lanterns*' broadcast to all students and staff.



The broadcast was arranged to reflect the weekly assemblies to which students are accustomed and eagerly anticipate. Segments included spectacular acapella performances, an insightful discussion on the Hadith of the Week (sayings and actions of Prophet Mohammed, peace be upon him), and a quick newsflash to keep listeners updated. Given that most students were at home, the segment '*Keeping up with TIGHS*' was also introduced; inviting all contributions, students could email pictures of various activities they had been enjoying, which would feature in the next broadcast. The Little SLT were also keen on introducing a weekly challenge that students could participate in with their families. The challenge answers were revealed the following week and grew instantly popular with students eager for new puzzles to battle their boredom.



Aaliyah Patel 9T3

AS-SAWT
THE VOICE الصوت



Head Girl's Message

Maryam Sidat



Huma and Asrah Sayed
'Eid-un Saeed'





Book Review: 'The God of Small Things' by Arundhati Roy

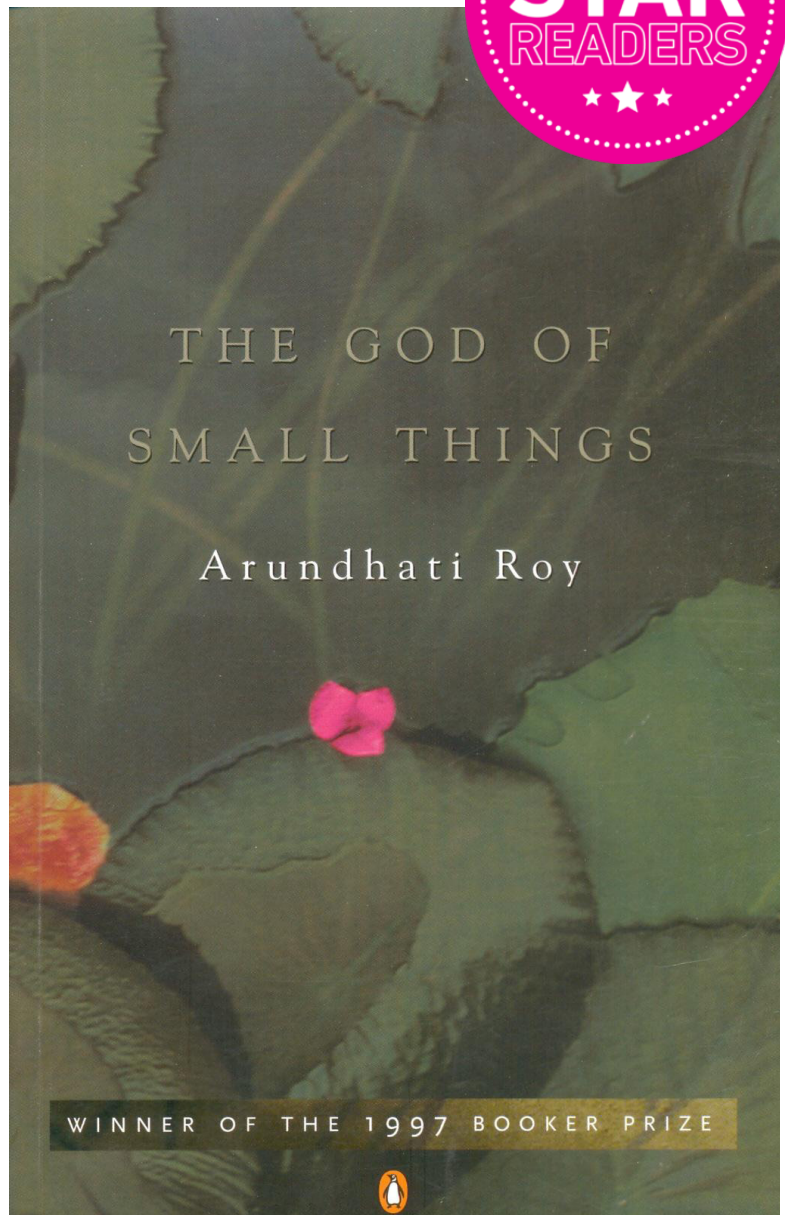
By Noorulanne Younis, 12B6

In all honesty, when I was tasked with finding a text for my English Literature coursework, I didn't think for a moment that I would stumble upon the gem that is *The God of Small Things*. I found that the book has an incredibly personable tone. The descriptions are so vivid, author Arundhati Roy eliminates the need to think between pages. Together we explore the *essence of human nature and the universal sense of despair* we all face in the aftermath of troubling experiences. After reading the novel in its entirety, I found that the genius of this book is the way the main characters were cultivated; Roy encourages us to *empathise with even the antagonists*.

The book is set in Kerala in the late 1960s, a time when Marxism plagued the air and caste-infused judgement lurked on every street corner. The story's *protagonists are telepathic, dizygotic twins* – Rahel and Estha. I know, we're a sentence into the plot and I've sprung the existence of telepathic twins on you. To ease your cynicism, think of it as a metaphor providing an insight to matters of the human condition. Cynicism swiftly eased, the gates of the plot opens with the funeral of the twin's young cousin, Sophie Mol. Roy weaves her plot, thread by thread, into a *colourful, multifaceted story*, revealing the family's well kept secrets which led to the twin's irrationality on the night of Sophie's death.

The plot blankets the deeply entrenched roots of guilt and shame inflicted upon characters by society's unspoken rules. Events like the death of a cousin; a killing in the shadows of an outdated caste system all happen in the same casual fashion with which you just read this sentence. Roy demonstrates how her characters are conditioned to see these events as *ordinary occurrences in their otherwise chaotic lives*. Her ability to capture the candidness of the children's naked observations in such a complex plot, busy with the strife of adults, is a true testament of her writing capabilities. By the end we are given a greater insight into the rationale of consciousness; an understanding of what lurks beneath our well-built facades.

As the plot unfolds, events load emotion onto phrases. Words came alive and for a week I was transported and lived in rural India with Estha and Rahel. The book is a literary masterpiece which provided me which a much-needed distraction during this seemingly eternal period of quarantine. I shall leave you with final words from Rahel and those are: *"At times like these, only the Small Things are ever said. The Big Things lurk unsaid inside."*



Book Review: 'City of Bones': The Mortal Instruments

By Aaminah Issa, 9T3

"All the stories are true." This is a saying of the Shadowhunters that Clary often refers to as she discovers and explores the hidden new world she now belongs to: the Shadow World.

City of Bones is the first book of six in *The Mortal Instruments* (a young-adult urban fantasy series), as well as Cassandra Clare's first full-length novel.

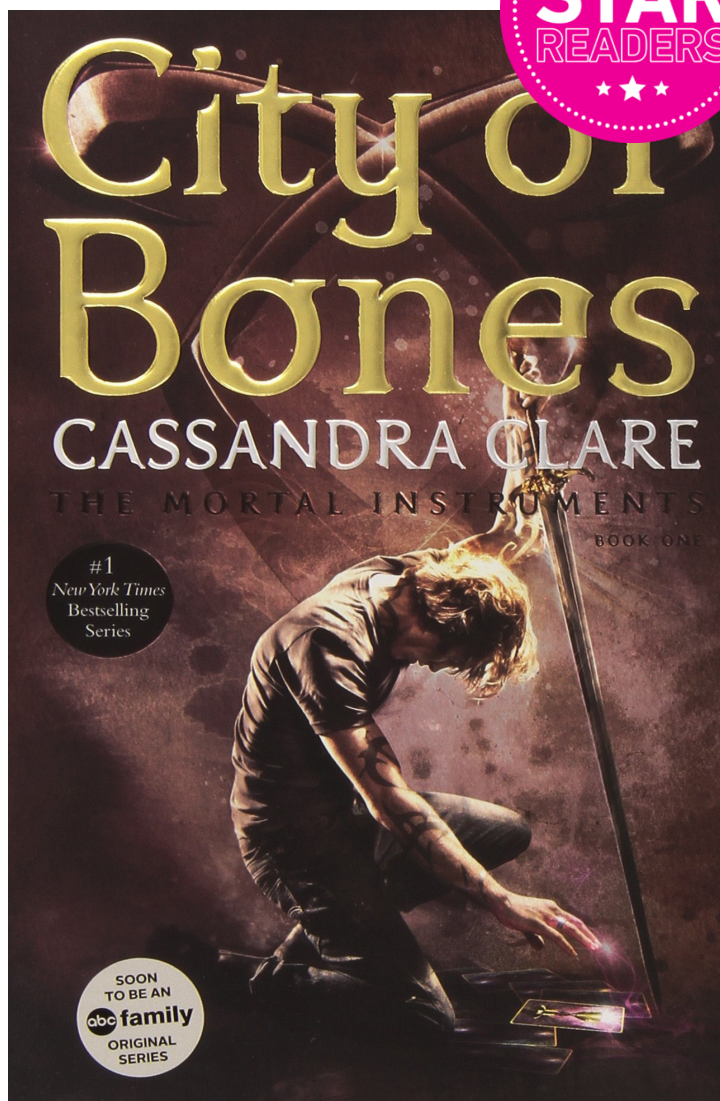
The novel starts off fairly comfortably (or so we believe), as our protagonist, fifteen-year-old Clary Fray, intends to enjoy a night out in New York City with her best friend, Simon, at an all-ages nightclub. Within moments, she finds herself witness to a gruesome murder by three teenagers branded with mysterious markings who, to her bewilderment, nobody else seems to see. Then, the body vanishes into thin air! Isolating Clary with her horrific account of a crime she may as well have invented, Cassandra ensures her **readers are deeply unsettled from the very start**. As she flees the scene, Clary is yet to understand her life has irreversibly changed as she plunges into a series of horrific catastrophes, from her mother's sudden disappearance to fighting for survival after being injected with demon poison. Before long, we realise Clary, born with the vision to see the Shadow World, belongs to the same race as the murderers she encountered earlier.

This is where our journey starts, peering over Clary's shoulder as she **enters the mysterious Shadow World running parallel to the one she has known so far**. As we discover later, Clary has in fact belonged to this world all along, though her memories, erased and removed, hold her prisoner as she struggles to recall vital information others are desperately searching for.

The Shadowhunters are a secret cadre of warriors existing to fight demons and rogue Downworlders (supernatural, hybrid creatures) in order to protect Mundanes – the humans that are blind to the Shadow World. Clare's fantasy creation endlessly **unlocks new realms of imagination**: from the Shadowhunters' part-human part-angel genetics, to their powers of healing, memory enhancement, and imbuing weapons with angelic magic, all conducted through a complex runic language. I never thought I would like a book full of monsters, angels and magic, but Clare's Shadow World certainly changed my mind. Her attention to detail throughout ensured the imagery of her universe felt as real as the one we live in. Wrapped with gripping action told in a vivid, occasionally melodramatic narrative, Clare truly enchants her readers in what becomes an unforgettable, immersive read.

Clary, despite the circumstances, is surprisingly relatable, perhaps because **Clare explodes her world onto her protagonist as well as her readers**. She is an art student who is described as having a, 'gift to see the beauty and horror in ordinary things.' She analyses her problems, recalls once-erased memories and explores this new world as well as its past with an artist's mind, layer by layer. Following our inexperienced protagonist quickly becomes both a hilarious and nerve-wracking journey, as we watch her innocently land herself in grave trouble each time, falling into despair, love, and most importantly, focus, as her mission to find her mother, face her nemesis and recover the Mortal Cup drives her forward.

All in all, I thoroughly enjoyed reading *City of Bones* and *The Mortal Instruments* series, making my journey through the other series from the Shadowhunters franchise somewhat compulsory. I guess the only thing left to say is - enjoy reading! I know that I did.



Poetry Wins a Prize: Stars of Hope Poetry Competition

By Faiqa Murtaza, 8S1

"Ring around the rosy, pockets full of posies, ashes, ashes, we all fall down." The verses to the prominent nursery rhyme, 'Ring around the Rosy', came about at the time of the Black Death pandemic, which, unrestrained due to low hygiene, claimed millions of innocent lives. Now, the world must battle another disease: coronavirus.

Just like this popular nursery rhyme, poetry and art convey thought-provoking messages through syllables collaborating harmoniously in set stanzas or silken smears of paint on canvas. In a competition across all Star schools, Star Academies challenged students to use the powerful mediums of art and poetry to 'capture the spirits of the nation'. The contest was created to give thanks to key workers and those who have contributed during this difficult time and to share a message of promise for the future.

Primary students had the task of creating an art piece to inspire hope and gratitude. The pupils were split into categories of Early Years, Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. Judges then chose the winning pieces of work, congratulating all entries as "thought-provoking, inspiring and filled with messages of thanks." Winning students were awarded a set of art materials to further channel their skills.

Secondary students were challenged to write poetry on the events that have occurred over the past months, with Britain at its peak of coronavirus cases. Producing an outstanding array of poetry pieces, entries were both wise and contemplative, as seen in a finalist entry by **Bushra Sharief, Year 11**, where she writes, 'But let us keep hope, look for the future in history.' Other entries also excelled in their uplifting perspectives on what we could call a 'transformative tragedy'. **Safiyah Hasan, a student in Year 7**, summed up her view in her final stanzas: 'We will have had Time. Time to slow down, Time to reflect, Time to pray. Time to change.' Winners of the competition received tablet computers as a reward for their fantastic efforts.

Secondary finalists' poems were collated in the 'Stars of Hope Poetry Collection', an anthology which is evocative and poignant. **Mrs Ali, Assistant Principal**, explained, "The aim of this is to spread hope, and to give assurance to people."

It is important to remain positive in these difficult times, no matter how hard it seems. Now, more than ever before, we must rally to remain an example of hope and inspiration for future generations.



Upcoming Events

Wednesday 15th July
School Closes for Summer Break

Thursday 13th August
A Level Results Day

Thursday 20th August
GCSE Results Day
Y12 Enrolment Begins

Monday 24th August
Year 11 Return To School

Tuesday 25th August
Summer School Begins

Wednesday 2nd September
School Re-opens for All Other Students

Thank you, Humaira Toorawa, Editor of As-Sawt 2019-20. The powerful voice of this year's newsletters is a reflection of your leadership and linguistic prowess.



Tauheedul Girls



Part of Star



SERVICE

Being a responsible citizen
in our community



TEAMWORK

Working together
for excellence



AMBITION

Aspiring to be
our best



RESPECT

Treating others as we
wish to be treated