

KING EDWARD VI ASTON SCHOOL

E-ZINE

2014

MUSIC | GAMES | DUOLINGO | CAMPING | COOKING | INTERVIEWS

'Semper Iuvenes'

HEADMASTER'S INTRODUCTION



It gives me great pleasure to write the introduction to the 2014 edition of the E-Zine. The picture of myself participating in "Parkour", apparently a street running sport, is a good example of what we can now achieve with digital media since I have never indulged in any form of street running and as the years pass the chance of me doing so becomes even more remote.

What the E-Zine does so well is to illustrate the role that new technology and more traditional activities such as sport play at Aston. As a school we still insist that all students have an afternoon of sport while the House competition is as eagerly contested as ever but at the same time technology in all of its many guises is pervading every aspect of life at Aston. Perhaps the best example of this is the mural on the staircase wall in the west wing of the old building; if you have not seen it yet please do, but remember that five years ago it would not have been possible.

The E-Zine itself is an indication of how the way in which we communicate and learn is changing. We can only guess at how it will develop in the future but what I am certain of is that as a school we will retain what is good from the past while not being afraid of the new. Whether that means "Parkour" becoming a House sport remains to be seen.

C. Parker

Headmaster

THE E-TEAM 2014

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SOCIAL NETWORKING

Over the past eight to ten years, social networking has become a huge part of our lives: for the better and the worse. I will be analysing several of these sites/apps and will discuss their pros and cons.



TWITTER

History: Three people set up Twitter in 2006: Jack Dorsey, Evan Williams and Biz Stone. Their goal was to revolutionise texting in a new, clean way. They had no idea that it would become this big. In fact, there are over 650 million registered Twitter accounts. Like Facebook, it makes money from advertisements. Today, Twitter is worth about \$18 billion.

Pros and Cons (+ -):

- + Free to sign up.
- Lots of Ads.
- + Lots of People are on there.
- Everyone can see your profile.
- + No minimum age (pro and con).

FACEBOOK

History: Founded by Mark Zuckerberg, a keen computer programmer in 2004. It started off as a site just used by Mark's friends in university. It was so popular that in 2005, he launched it to the world. Since then it has become the norm and millions of people use it every day. It is free to join and makes money through advertisements.

Pros and Cons (+ -):

- + It is free to join.
- It monitors your posts and history.
- + Millions of people are on it.
- There are ads.
- There are also huge companies and businesses on it.
- People can pretend to be somebody they are not.



INSTAGRAM

History: It all began in 2010 when Facebook wanted to start a sister program that focused more on photography. With 150 million users, it isn't the biggest, but it is still a substantial amount.

Pros and Cons (+ -):

- + Advert free.
- Not a lot of users.
- + Focused on the phone.
- Not available on all phone platforms.
- + Focused on photography.
- No privacy.

STICKY TOFFEE CUPCAKES

WITH SALTED CREAM CARAMEL

A Paradissis



METHOD

1. Preheat the oven to 180°C/fan 170°C/gas 4.
2. Place the paper cases into a 12-hole cupcake tin.
3. In a heatproof bowl, pour 180ml boiling water over the dates, add the bicarbonate of soda and leave to soak for 20 minutes. With a fork, gently break up the dates and stir in the vanilla.
4. Cream together the butter and sugar for a good 5 minutes until very light and fluffy. Add the eggs gradually, beating between each addition, slipping in 1 tbsp flour about halfway through to prevent curdling. Lastly, sieve and fold in the remaining flour and then the date mixture.
5. Spoon into the cupcake cases and bake for 15–20 minutes (the tops should spring back when pressed with a finger). Remove and leave to cool.
6. For the caramel Dissolve the sugar and 60ml water in a small, solid-based pan over a gentle heat, then increase the heat to a boil. Wait a few minutes, leaving the pan undisturbed but watching it like a hawk and, as soon as it changes to a wonderful caramel colour (like strong tea) and is thicker, remove immediately from the heat, stand well back, and add the cream.
7. Be very careful as it is searing hot and it may splatter a little. It will react, or 'seize', and you may think it has gone wrong; it hasn't. Keep stirring, adding the salt and the vanilla. Leave until stone cold.
8. If using shop-bought caramel sauce, such as dulce de leche simply mix it with the salt and vanilla.
9. For the buttercream Cream the butter and icing sugar for at least 5 minutes with an electric mixer and add the caramel or the dulce de leche.
10. Put the buttercream into the piping bag fitted with the star nozzle and pipe it on to the cakes, or spread it on with a palette knife.

INGREDIENTS

180 g dates, pitted and chopped
1 tsp vanilla extract
180 g self-raising flour
1 tsp bicarbonate of soda
80 g unsalted butter
150 g muscovado sugar
2 eggs, lightly beaten

For the caramel
125 g caster sugar
80 ml double cream
1/2 tsp salt
1 tsp vanilla extract
(Can also use a shop-bought caramel sauce and add the salt and vanilla extract.)

For the buttercream

1/2 tsp salt
1 tsp vanilla extract
160 g butter
200 g icing sugar

TOP TEN CAMPING TIPS FOR DUKE OF EDINBURGH

If you are taken in by the great outdoors and, like myself, by some unexplained cosmic forces you find yourself actually enjoying DofE (which apparently you aren't meant to) you may find yourself coming back for Gold. By this stage you'll have personal wilderness survival down to a pinch; however for those of you who are new to DofE, here are some bits of advice that I couldn't have done without, and which'll certainly make your trip a whole lot more comfortable, hygienic and enjoyable.

Communicate & listen: this would seem quite a basic point; however, I cannot stress its importance. In order to work effectively, reduce the risk of danger and complete the expedition it is important to communicate well with the other members of your team. On expedition, everyone will have different priorities, and more often than not, these tend to clash and cause arguments. I would advise exercising patience, pragmatism and collaboration in every situation in order to maintain good relationships whilst on expedition and make your efforts more productive – DofE is a measure of teamwork after all. This means assisting a member of the group who may be having difficulty, as you would hope they would do the same for you in a similar situation. One time this involved a team challenge of 'who can carry the additional rucksack the longest?' in order to alleviate the strain on a member of the team who had extreme difficulty in walking after twisting their ankle, and to speed up the team due to this injury slowing our progress. In a team of seven, (six carriers as the seventh had been injured) we each managed ten minutes each, equating to an hour of 'backpacklessness' for the injured team member – allowing us to reach the checkpoint and get them some assistance. It's this kind of collaboration that makes for a more effective team, and arguably keeps you safer, which reassures your mum as well!

Have a good soundtrack (sport good team morale): having created an effective team that listens and communicates effectively, it is also appropriate to maintain this through keeping spirits high. Although in the addition of unnecessary weight, one member of a team brought Ipod speakers for the group and played Fallout 3's 'Soundtrack of the Wasteland' – a rather fitting choice perhaps. This kept the team in good spirits, allowing them to overcome obstacles without cracking and continue



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to work effectively as a team, responding to the needs of the group and the individuals within it. Other teams had different approaches to keeping morale high, with my Bronze group having the ominously named 'morale officer' in the form of myself, who would attempt to keep spirits high through 'whatever means necessary'. Against a rather bleak appearance, this would often be popping open a sharing bag of sweets, distributing dextrose tablets at regular intervals or attempting to keep the conversation upbeat.

Keep energy high: it is impossible to maintain morale, communicate or even continue to walk without the necessary energy; and therefore this is one of the most important tips I have to offer. Make sure you are packing the advised daily calorific content for your expedition level, and then add some other foods that will keep energy high that can be 'dipped into' over the course of a day – a personal choice was dextrose tablets, which were extremely lightweight and gave me the necessary energy boost when I needed it, often on the latter stages of the expedition when I began to tire. Make sure you do not feel hungry at any stage in the expedition, and attempt to 'graze' – eating continuously throughout the day on various items that can be easily withdrawn from a backpack and that are lightweight.

Try to create a team of individuals with specialities and use their strengths: more often than not, the stronger teams are the ones that are better adapted to specific roles. This means that by having allocated roles, such as navigator, navigator's assistant, cook, medic and morale officer amidst others, is beneficial to a team. However, it is also important to maintain a balanced team in case of injury or separation from your group – having your 'medic' injured somewhat recreates the scene from Saving Private Ryan whereby the dying medic is hurriedly attempting to tell his clueless squad how to patch him up whilst fighting his injuries – and as we know, this doesn't have the best of outcomes for both he and his squad who are then without a medic. Whilst creating personal specialisations, it is therefore also important to be able to fulfil all roles personally to a good standard and not be reliant on that specialised member to do everything for you – and yes, this means



assisting the designated 'cook' with the cooking and cleaning! Often a team will have excess members, and these can be 'floaters' – able to step in if necessary or share a role with another member. Specialise, but don't put all your eggs in one basket .

Reduce food weight: this is a rather simple point again; however it will make the expedition a whole lot easier. By reducing weight where possible in food, your rucksack will be significantly lighter. This means buying bagged 'wayfarer' packs, a whole meal which you only have to boil, and which is quite light considering its contents. Don't be stupid and bring a heavy glass jar of pasta sauce and a whole bag of pasta which I have known people to do, only using half of it and having to carry the additional weight. Think smart; for example, take dried cereal for breakfast, pitta breads for lunch, and repack items with large of weighty packaging in order to put everything in one place – making it more convenient when you need to get it but also more weight effective. A member of another group at Gold level took a large bag of dried muesli, fruits and cereals, a personally devised 'trail mix' which was his only other source of food aside his meals, packing serious calorific content which was virtually weightless – although personally I would consider this a more hardcore option. If possible, make weight proportional

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to the calorific content of the foods packed – there is no need to carry a heavy packet for something that will not sustain you on expedition. Just be sensible.

Economise: leading on from the last point, reduce backpack weight where possible and remove non-essentials. Although this mostly comes with practice, there are surprisingly items which are listed as ‘essential’ on the DoFE list which are in fact, mostly useless. You only realistically need one spare set of clothes for emergencies. You also do not need to take a plate and bowl as you can eat out of the cooking pan, which will also keep food warm. A strong headtorch is also advisable over any larger torch model. You only also realistically need one loo roll and one set of washing equipment per team. Pack travel size toothpastes and other sanitaries, or even forego them altogether for even more lightweight alternatives – e.g. chewable toothbrushes. Communicate with your group members and forego the unessential, packing for pinpoint effectiveness. Unpack at the end of packing, and ask yourself if you really need each item – and unless part of the first aid kit or ‘essentials’ list, if you find yourself asking this question, it is probably better left out. Swap larger items for smaller ones which do the same job.

Be imaginative: in lieu of economising, think outside the box when it comes to utilising items. You do not need to pack a pillow for example, as the drawstring bag it comes in can be stuffed with your worn clothes to create one, then allowing you to get dressed inside the tent without having to go outside and get your backpack, keeping yourself warm. Think about what the item you are packing does, and then look for alternatives from other items already packed. Be creative and use your own imagination!

Pack to suit your climate: this involves packing sensibly to the climate you are walking in: sunhats, cream and bug spray for warmer months, gloves, gaiters and insulated waterproofs for the colder or wetter ones. Make your pack fit your weather; however, remember to cover for any eventuality.

Buy the right equipment: specialised equipment is often the way to go, and although some of it can be expensive, discounts and multibuy offers reduce cost. Consider collecting items for your team if they happen to be on multibuy, reducing the cost for everyone. Buy a singular or pair of collapsible walking poles, which have been found to effectively reduce rucksack weight by 20% per pole by redistributing the weight to your arms. This makes walking a lot easier, and is useful for climbing or going uphill. I would also advise on buying a self-inflating roll mat rather than using the DoFE provided sponge ones – they take up much less space in a rucksack and are significantly more comfortable, allowing you to recuperate more effectively from a good night’s sleep, which makes the expedition easier as you have more energy. In addition to this, a relatively early/sensible bedtime is also advisable: do not stay up for no good reason or expend energy unnecessarily.

Pre-wear your boots and walk: a common problem and concern on DoFE is blisters. I urge you to pre-wear any set of boots beforehand for a significant amount of time – and perhaps even take the opportunity to go walking in a park, weekly for a couple of hours a time after you’ve enrolled, carrying bottles of water to practise for the expedition if you are not used to walking long distances. A couple of hours at normal speed is 6km, which done weekly will break in your boots most effectively. I also advise using ‘double socks’ (a normal pair covered by a thicker walking sock) which also reduces chances of blistering by the two socks rubbing together instead. Someone I know on the programme also swapped his everyday shoes for his boots in order to break them in. Just make sure you’ve walked in them until they’re comfortable and don’t blister over long distances (a singular walk of 6km+).



DO YOU DUOLINGO?

Duolingo is a free language-learning text-translation application available on iOS, Android and even on the Web. The app is designed so that the user can easily learn and progress through lessons starting from simple phrases to complex structures, eventually learning to talk about things like politics and the world around you fluently. As of now, Duolingo offers Spanish, French, German, Italian and Portuguese, as well as English for Europeans. Duolingo was voted app of the year 2013, and we have to say that we agree!

Before our trip to Italy in October 2013, we were able to learn essential phrases and words to be able to survive in a foreign country. The point-based system it uses makes you want every level to be perfect, and a meter which stimulates your memory warns you when it’s time to revise. In fact, the Italian students were so impressed by our ‘semi-fluent’ Italian that they wanted to see the app for themselves. By contacting them on a monthly basis, we found out that they use Duolingo to learn English at the same time.

We think that Duolingo is an excellent tool, disguised as a game. It concentrates on all key skills on learning a language: pronunciation, listening skills, reading and forming your own sentences. We have to thank Miss Leah for telling us about this application. Learning a language is an amazing accomplishment, and there isn’t a better feeling where you can stroll around in another country without looking like a tourist!

I’m sure we have Mr McBrien’s backing (you do, it’s on my phone and I love it – Mr McB) when we say that we urge you to try the app out, either on your phone or on the computer! Go to www.duolingo.com or search for Duolingo in the Apple App Store or Google Play.

K.E. ASTON SHARP SYSTEM

What is the SHARP System?

The SHARP (Student Help Advice Reporting Page) System allows young people to report any incidents which occur within the school and local community anonymously and without fear. Aside from the reporting tool SHARP also delivers educational content to raise awareness on a wide range of subjects including: Bullying, Health, Community Issues, Weapons and Hate Crime.

Why should students use it?

It is a CONFIDENTIAL way to stop YOU or a FRIEND or SOMEONE from suffering.

For us, if it stops ONE person from being bullied, or ONE person from doing any wrong as they have thought about the consequences, or has given ONE person the confidence to speak out when they know or suspect something is wrong, then the SHARP system has achieved everything it was designed to do.

How can it be accessed and used by students?

There is a link to the SHARP System on the home pages of both the school website and Moodle.

What are its main features?

There are several really strong features of the system:

It's anonymous:

You don't have to identify yourself if you don't want to, but if you want help and support it's best to leave your details.

You can use it at home:

The SHARP System isn't just a school system; it can be used at home as well as at school.

Mobile Support:

The latest version of SHARP can be used on phones, tablets, consoles or any device with an internet connection.

You can use it anytime:

You don't have to wait until the next day to report something and you don't need to have a face-to-face conversation or be seen reporting something that is worrying you.



What is your role in the System?

As the School's Child Protection Officer, all concerns that are reported on SHARP come through directly to me - I then decide on the best course of action or how best to investigate something.

How widespread is it?

Over 330 schools have now adopted the SHARP system, as it is so beneficial in terms of enabling students or parents to report concerns confidentially, at any time.

How do you think it can be developed or improved in the future?

I would like to see it linked to the school's counselling website 'Insight 4 Schools' that we have subscribed all our students to. I would also like to add further e-safety materials and advice on there. Also, further promotion of the SHARP System is crucial; the more students can be encouraged to use the system, the more likely they will be to report anything that is worrying them - simply put, if students don't know it is there then they won't use it.

<http://keaston.thesharpsystem.com/>

Interview with Mr Welsby by Imran Marashli

FIFA 14



FIFA TOURNAMENT:

As part of the Envision scheme run at the school, our group 'It's All About M.E.' organised a Fifa tournament for all years to raise money for the charity Salus. Over the first two weeks of February over 50 students battled through five rounds (teachers included Mr Amann and Mr Jackson, who both were quickly knocked out). On Friday 7th February Will Jinks (Year 13) was crowned winner and received his £20 prize.

FIFA 14 – REVIEW

FIFA 14 has now been developed in many ways since the new consoles have come out. With loads of more cool stuff on FIFA14 on the new consoles, such as new legend cards on the Xbox One and a 3D crowd on both platforms, they are proven to be better.

Players now have realistic moves and movements. There are also new dynamic sidelines and broadcast-inspired presentations! Players also have pro instinct, are agile, athletic and move like world-class footballers! So if you have to buy a next-generation console: don't forget to buy FIFA 14!

RATINGS

Samir Mohammed	8.5 / 10
Adarsh Nair	9 / 10

STAMP COLLECTING



Stamp collecting is a worldwide hobby that started when stamps were first created in the Victorian age. It became most popular in 1860 when lots of people were swapping and collecting stamps. There are lots of stamp competitions where each collector creates a presentation sheet with descriptions of the stamps.

In the new millennium, the number of stamp collectors has got less and less. In the twenty-first century, people picture stamp collectors as old people with ancient stamps. There are many clubs and companies that try to encourage younger people to collect (eg. Kidswap). Stamp collecting can be foreign or British stamps. It is not just stamps that collectors collect; it is also First Day Covers and Air mails, miniature sheets and other covers.

I started collecting stamps in 2011. My dad used to collect stamps, and he had several packets full. He gave these to me. I collect British stamps, but I also have foreign ones. My grandad knows about stamp collecting and sometimes gives me really good things like Air mails and First Day covers. I have a stamp album, and also a folder for my First Day covers. My collection is worth over £250.

First Day covers and sheets of stamps. My First Day covers cost from 5p each to £50 each. I have two Doctor-Who-signed covers, which are £50 each.

These are definitive stamps which just have the Queen's head. I have my album full of stamps.

By Jason Shadbolt

TOP 3 PIECES OF CONSUMER TECHNOLOGY

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NVIDIA PROJECT SHIELD

The Nvidia Shield is a somewhat ambitious project; it intends to allow users to play modern PC games in 720p resolution in a handheld form factor. It manages to do this with surprisingly little noticeable lag wirelessly as long as you are connected to a network on which there is a PC running the game. This does mean that the Shield cannot play games independently of a computer but there is still something somewhat remarkable about being able to play such demanding games on a handheld device.

OCULUS RIFT

Although it has not yet had a release intended for consumers, Oculus have shown off and released a developer version of the Rift. The Rift is an attempt to make virtual reality and actual reality in video games. It is a device which sits on your head and provides a field of view of 100°. The wide field of vision is intended to make the experience immersive rather than looking at a TV and its surroundings; the Rift intends to have the user focus solely on what is happening on the screen. Oculus Rift support has already been built into some games such as Team Fortress 2 and other large game developers such as Id Software (the creators of Quake and Doom) show interest in the device. It should be noted that the Rift is still in development and improvements are still being made. Some of these have been shown off quite recently at CES 2014 in which head tracking was shown off. This essentially means that the user does not need to manually control a camera but rather the position in real space is tracked and when your head turns so does the image displayed to you.



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PEBBLE SMARTWATCH

The Pebble Smartwatch functions not only as a watch but also links up to your Android or IOS device allowing the watch to have some nice features such as controlling music without having to take your phone from your pocket or showing notifications on your wrist. Although the Pebble does these somewhat boring features very well it also has some rather more exciting functions. The Pebble has a development kit which anyone can download and use to create an app for the Pebble free of charge (as long as you own a Pebble to test your program out on.) Some of these more impressive features are things such as using your phone's inbuilt navigation app to give you walking directions, making lists of things to do and being a simple calculator. The things which can be done with the watch are constantly becoming more impressive as more and more people develop for it. Despite all this, the thing which makes the Pebble the best gadget of the last year is the ability to play Pong on your wrist.

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THREE INTERESTING GADGETS IN DEVELOPMENT



LG and Samsung both showed off flexible TVs at CES 2014. Read that again. Flexible, not curved. This means that the curvature of the TV can be controlled by the user. Although both companies claim that this is to give the user a better viewing experience, I'm still pretty sure that it's purely to show off. But we'll never know until/if we see the technology ourselves!

The Polaroid Socialmatic Camera is a device which runs on the Android operating system but the device revolves entirely around the camera. Just like a Polaroid it prints pictures just after they're taken without the device being unwieldy. Alongside all the typical social features one would expect (think Instagram) the most exciting thing about this in particular is the main feature to print pictures as they're taken. I think there is far more enjoyment to be gained from looking back over images which have been carefully placed in albums rather than the disposable way in which images are taken and looked back over with mobile phone cameras today.



1. The Sony Short Throw Ultra Projector is something which likely won't be available to buy for quite a while and will probably be prohibitively expensive when it is. Despite this I find it quite fascinating that it can throw a 4K image onto any white wall and if the quality truly is as good as a screen it's quite nice to think in a few years we won't need TV screens but rather we can just throw any image from a device that outputs it onto a wall.

By Adam Zaman

NELSON MANDELA



On the 5th December 2013 the world lost what many would call a hero of our time, a man who fought injustice and inspired thousands to participate in the movement towards freedom for all. But the inescapable truth is that Nelson Mandela was held responsible for atrocious crimes which would see him sentenced to twenty-seven years in Robben Island Prison, crimes that, though some may justify, are still deemed to be ruthless and merciless.

So why is it that Mandela is remembered so positively? Why is it that his funeral was attended by leaders across the world and viewed by millions on television and online to honour his legacy? What makes Mandela so significant?

Rather than point to events as an indication of Mandela's achievements, as I'm sure you are aware of them already, I would instead point towards the traits of the man which remained consistent with him right up until his death. There is one particular quality that Mandela exhibited which separates him from other renowned figures in history: his humility. The humility to know when you've been wrong is often taken for granted – do not mistake this as an allegation that Mandela's ends were in themselves wrong but rather the means by which he initially intended to achieve them. His violent and direct approach to overcoming the injustices that he faced in an Apartheid South Africa is not all too dissimilar than the tactics of the IRA in the struggle in Northern Ireland, or Hamas in their fight against Israel; yet society labels both of those movements as terrorist organisations. Mandela, upon release from prison, preached peace and reconciliation: a completely different approach to his previous one. This recognition of the importance of peace and of cooperation is a wonderful example of a man with the humility to appreciate the necessity for diplomatic relations and to combat the struggles his country faced.

Vanna Bonta described humility as

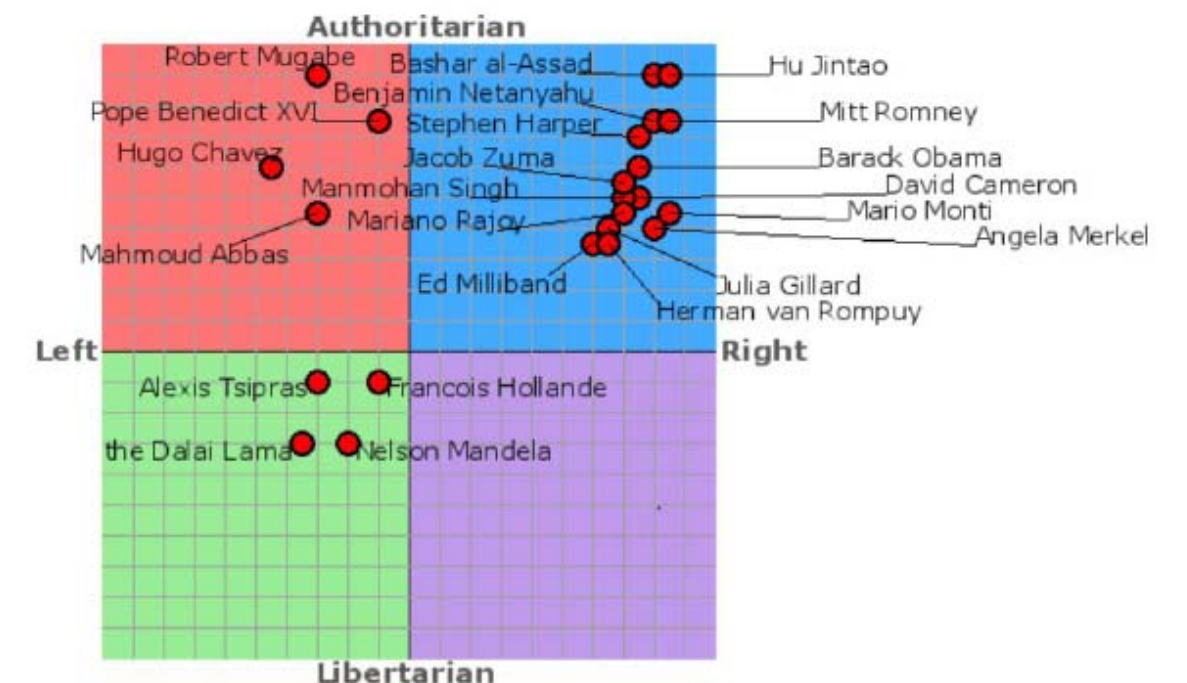
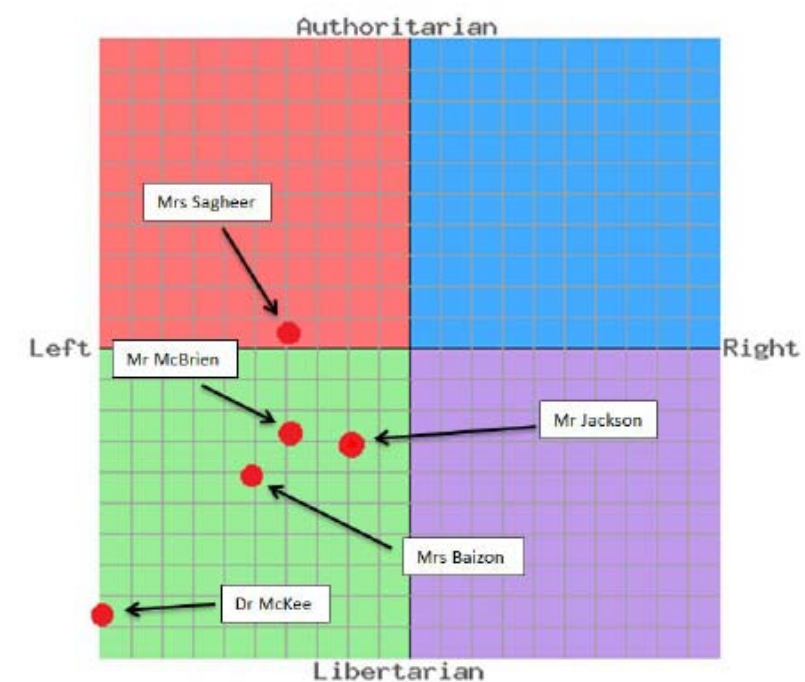
'The ability to give up your pride and still retain your dignity.'

Whether you credit Mandela with being one in a million or tend to look cynically at his actions in his pursuit for equality, I believe we can all learn something from Mandela and I hope when you pass judgement on him, acknowledge that in the end he valued peace over terror.

By Bahez Talabani

POLITICAL COMPASS

The political compass is a multi-axis political model, used by the website of the same name, to label or organise political thought on two dimensions. Why not answer the questionnaire www.politicalcompass.org to find where you might be placed.



TOP 5 GIGS OF 2014

FALL OUT BOY

Sunday 16th March (NIA)

Returning after a hiatus to tour their fifth studio album, Fall Out Boy offer you their greatest of hits, from their very first ('Sugar We're Goin Down') to the memorable 'Thnks fr th Mmr'. Joining this speeding train of reminiscence are tracks from their new album, Save Rock and Roll. This promises to be a night to remember for anyone who adores the band and the pop-punk genre in general.



FRANZ FERDINAND

Friday March 21st
(O2 Academy Birmingham)

Another band from the noughties, returning with their fourth album, Right Thoughts, Right Words, Right Action. With memorable guitar riffs and melodic turns of phrase, you would be crazy to miss out on this opportunity. Best remembered for tracks such as 'Take Me Out' and 'Dark of the Matinee', this promises to be a great gig from the Scottish rockers, once voted best live band by NME.

ELBOW

Saturday 5th April (LG Arena)

The Mercury Prize winners are touring their sixth studio album, The Take Off and Landing of Everything. The band, who class themselves as alternative rock, are known for their song-writing, both musically and lyrically, even winning the Ivor Novello award for the category in 2009. Their hits include 'First Steps' (the BBC's 2012 Olympic theme), and 'Grounds for Divorce'.



KATY PERRY

Wednesday 14th May
(LG Arena)

Ex-spouse of Russell Brand, the American pop sensation is setting out on her third solo tour, in an attempt to promote her third studio album (under her own name), Prism. Best known for hits 'I Kissed a Girl' and 'Firework'. A portion of the money made from this gig will also go to UNICEF, so there's yet another incentive to buy tickets for this unforgettable experience.

PROFESSOR GREEN

Saturday 17th May
(O2 Academy Birmingham)

Touring for his third studio album, Growing Up In Public, the thirty-year-old rapper has many hits to call from, including 'Just Be Good to Green' and 'Read All About It'. Always looking to put on a good show and, with a host of collaborations, this multi-award winner looks set to light up Birmingham yet again.



Whilst the above bands are all releasing new albums this year (or are at least touring last year's album), here are some more new releases coming in 2014 that we're keen for you to hear;

HAPPINESS IS
Taking Back Sunday

HIGH HOPES
Bruce Springsteen

FLOCAVELI 2
Wacka Flocka Flame

DO NOT ENGAGE
The Pack A.D.

WIG OUT AT JAGBAGS
Stephen Malkmus and the Jicks

JOE DAWSON



How long have you been playing cello?

I started to learn the cello towards the end of Year 2 way, way back in primary school when my mum thought it would do me well to focus my energy into something productive. Good thing she did as well. Nice thinking, Mum. So... must have been a whole decade since I actually began. Sure went by quickly, but then again I never really counted the amount of time I'd been playing, rather just accepting it was part of my daily life and would be for years many, many years to come unless I died due to a tragic illness like Jacqueline Du Pre or gave up due to sheer boredom. Fortunately, neither looks too likely.

How important is regular practice?

It's like with any hobby or profession really, if you don't practice on a regular basis you're going to get absolutely nowhere with your skill level – or at least, you'll find that you don't seem to be getting anywhere at a certain level. Also, the word 'regularly' can mean hugely different things to different people – at my level an hour's practice will just about do, but for a professional player who took the job completely seriously, an hour's practice is just a warm up. Five hours might be more like it. But then another day, maybe just a couple would do. Back to the point, practice makes perfect, or at least, as near to perfection as you be without being the great but sadly late Rostropovich (BEST CELLIST, no arguments). Private practice isn't the only way to hone your skill – orchestras (with HUGE credit to the BSSO) provide a fantastic means of sight reading practice, while just being at concerts

gives you an idea of what it's like for the musicians – plus you get all the delightful sounds of the orchestra without having to lift a finger yourself!

It's all out there, waiting for you. Let out your musical side, everyone has one – even if you think you don't. Yeah, you. I mean you in particular. Throw your Xbox or whatever you guys play these days out of the window and grab the nearest cello to play instead! OK, maybe not. But there's a lot out there for everyone to enjoy, even if you're not an experienced musician.

What is your favourite style of music?

Hard to say... on automatic pilot I'd just say 'Classical', but there's a lot more to it than that. When it comes down to it, it's more about what has a good tune – we're all a sucker for a nice melody, be it the classic 'ode to joy' tune from Beethoven or can be without tune or hook from some pop song, which in my case would probably be from ABBA. So when I say anything with a nice tune a few different genres come to mind – the previously mentioned classical which IS one of the best (please again, no arguments), rock, pop to an extent if you avoid most modern stuff and probably most of all, film music because it incorporates the best of everything from everything. Meh, I'll listen to anything once no matter the genre.

Your family all play music, what is it like playing with your family?

When all arguments about the music or otherwise have subsided, it's pretty great. There's the fun of playing itself in a group which always poses considerably more challenges than solo practice (despite the fact many shoddy performances from myself have been hidden under the sounds of everyone else!) There's timing to think about, getting the dynamics together and a ton of other stuff that just generally makes a performance better. After all, if you're playing at someone's wedding it would suck for them if the music put off the guests. Oh, did I mention we get asked to do weddings and the like? Some of it even pays! And while I know this sounds horribly cliché, it really is the playing that's worth more than the money. Just don't quote me on that, my family might get ideas.

Would you like to be a professional musician, and why?

I get asked this so much by everyone around me. The musical part of me is saying that it's the obvious choice and the right way to go – I'm not academically stupid, but it's clear I'm not exactly that clever either from my current marks. To any sensible person, taking the route you're best at is the cleverest choice. The problem – the other and probably more dominating part of me that says I can't be bothered is the real reason that I'm not to a much better standard than I am right now is because, simply put, I don't practice enough. So yeah, of course I'd like to go pro at some point – it just all depends on what goes on in the next two crucial years.

Any advice for budding musicians...

It doesn't matter what age you are really, but especially if you're in the lower school and have lots of free time on your hands (enjoy it while you can), just go for it! The school has lessons for just about every instrument you could want to play, so yeah. Sure it's hard work sometimes, but music tends to improve literally everything about you as a person: it exercises self-control, helps you to focus and relax, and arguably most of all helps you to feel content and happy – I'm yet to meet any truly grumpy musicians (my A-level music class aside). Finally, if you take the initiative and take up an instrument – cello is very heavily advised of course – try not to see it as a chore. It's good – people say music can leave you on a high, so in that way I suppose playing music's like taking drugs but without the nasty side effects, just pure happiness. Don't let the drugs analogy put you off in the slightest – rest assured that there is nothing even slightly illegal about playing the cello. Anyway, if you've made it this far through the interview, thanks for reading! Now keep calm and play the cello!

By Joe Dawson



Leavers' Video



78 J. J. Tupper, Fred Jordan, Hamilton, Jerry Morris, Joe Rossi, Speth, Rowen, Earl Tatum, Oscar H. Poiry, Stephen Brown, James Matheson, Mohammed Razaoui, Mohammed Ahmed, Louis Jeffrey, Joe Perry, Reuben Hays, John T. Leland, John H. Hales, Conrad Truett, Dan George, McDonald, Speth, Razaoui, Ahmed, William J. Lee, Matthew Baker, Mr. S. A. Smith, John Rogers, Nell Henson, John Zane, Kate Swanson



✓ Sing Maadley, Richard, James, Kiding, Samson, Jack, Math, George, Wayne, Jerald, Christy, Samson, Robert, Emma, Agnes, Tung, Ngam
 76 Ding, Octor, John, Lene, James, Robert, Tyrone, Mason, George, Bradley, Conrad, Peller, Fred, Phil, David, Bailey, Mola, Zola, James, Olor
 Goro, Byne, Stewart, Smith, David, Ross, Christopher, Upton, Mike, Cooper, Kim, Swadlow, Daphy, Turner-Love, Karen, Horton, Ku-Yai, Lu



Kabe Singh, Jaser-Jaser Shmout, Marcel Balazs, Hange Gwadi, Ivo Adilip, Doris Muggleton, Inna Salton, Luke Ruffolo, Connor Sider,
 Joe Peters, Doreen Moun, Connor Cor, Ryan-Singers, Rogers, Kyle Roberts, Ari Singh, David Robinson, Anna Kato
 Joran Yang, Neander Robinson, David Dett, Joseph Johns, Mike Carter, Lawrence Wilson, David-Jane Hays, Shelley Kordina, Robert Robinson

[illegible]

PARKOUR AND FREERUNNING

Most people don't understand that the specific sport Parkour has nothing to do with any sort of gymnastic moves; Parkour is solely about getting from one place to another as quickly and efficiently as possible. Obviously, doing multiple flips stops you from being both quick and efficient. Freerunning is a similar sport to Parkour, only it isn't about efficient movement – it's about moving however you wish in the environment you're in. Freerunning shares all the basic acrobatic movements that Parkour has as well as many other skilful movements from sports like Martial Arts or Break Dancing as well as the obvious one, Gymnastics. Today, the two sports are almost combined into one – most practitioners if asked what sport they were performing wouldn't really care too much about the term they chose. The more popular term, however, is Parkour.



Because of the many videos of people flipping off of rooftops and the sports' generally negative portrayal in the media, many people think the sport is unsafe and its practitioners end up being portrayed as adrenaline junkies or simply stupid. But both these sports don't really follow the 'No Pain = No Gain' rule, meaning they don't encourage trying to learn new moves whilst there's a high risk of getting injured. Improving, progressing and pushing your physical and mental limits are a key concept in all sports but even more so in these two, because of the non-competitive nature of both of them. Progress can't be made if you have broken bones forcing you to rest so most sensible practitioners only attempt moves that they have trained for before – this means training the move on safer surfaces such as trampolines, tumbling tracks, and crash mats or breaking the movement down into separate,

easier steps so that you can mark your progress and understand if you are really capable of that certain move.

Many people who wish to start either Parkour or Freerunning simply don't know how to begin. How do you train for Parkour? The only way for you to become a beginner is to begin, as clichéd as it sounds. Learn some moves in a gym, or simply log out of Facebook (or whatever social media site is now dominating your life) and look for some simple tutorials on YouTube. Many people start by getting inspired by films uploaded to YouTube. Others are worried about being unsafe – as well as looking like an idiot jumping over rails for no apparent reason. But in recent years many Parkour 'gyms' have been developed, making it incredibly easy for you to practise moves without worrying about breaking your neck, or embarrassing yourself in public if

that worries you...

This video shows a few guys just practising some flips on a spring track, similar to the tumbling tracks used in some Parkour gyms:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XcwfdfOjixk>

I've also put a few links to some of my favourite YouTube Parkour and Freerunning videos that you should watch too:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=S14QAAURZU4>

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BO9VuVnZKSA>

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=s4hoSbeKdes>

By Zeeshan Amjad

Face Swap By Alex Hockley

Mr Smith's



FANTASY RUGBY TEAM

HISTORIC FANTASY RUGBY TEAM

C	Graham Rowntree
2 Hooker	Keith Wood
3 Tight head Prop	Martin Castrogiovanni
4 Lock	Martin Johnson
5 Lock	John Eales
6 Blind side Flanker	Francois Pienaar
7 Open side Flanker	Neil Back
8	Zinzan Brooke
9 Scrum Half	Austin Healey
10 Fly Half	Jonny Wilkinson
11 Left Wing	Jonah Lomu
12 Inside Centre	Scott Gibbs
13 Outside Centre	Brian O'Driscoll
14 Right Winger	Jason Robinson
15 Full back	Gavin Hastings

CURRENT FANTASY RUGBY TEAM

1 Loose head Prop	Tendai "The Beast" Mtawarira
2 Hooker	Keven Mealamu
3 Tight head Prop	Adam Jones
4 Lock	Ritchie Grey
5 Lock	Alun Wyn Jones
6 Blind side Flanker	Sam Warburton
7 Open side Flanker	Ritchie McCaw
8	Keiran Read
9 Scrum Half	Will Genia
10 Fly Half	Dan Carter
11 Left Wing	George North
12 Inside Centre	Ma'a Nonu
13 Outside Centre	Manu Tuilagi
14 Right Winger	Bryan Habana
15 Full back	Leigh Halfpenny

RSPCA

The RSPCA is a charity that supports animals that have been: neglected, abused, abandoned or injured. They are the UK's biggest animal welfare charity; here are some facts about them:

1. Every 30 seconds someone rings them in England and Wales alone.
2. In 2012 they received 1,163,428 phone calls.
3. 278 Inspectors, 57 Trainee Inspectors, 82-Animal Welfare Officers.
4. Inspectors investigate 150,000 cases of cruelty and neglect every year!
5. In 2007 the Animal Welfare Act was set.
6. 16 regional animal shelters, 40 are run by the RSPCA's branches, 4 hospitals, 5 clinics that tend to those whose owners can't afford to pay for their medical help, 37 clinics run by their branches and 3 mobile clinics run by their branches.

In 2012 they:

1. Rescued and collected 194,695 animals.
2. Found new homes for 55,459 animals.
3. Micro chipped 58,922 animals, helping them to stay safe.
4. Investigated 150,833 cruelty complaints secured 4,168 convictions by private prosecution to protect animals against those who break the laws.

Due to rising tides and storms, the RSPCA has been monitoring the East coast between Great Yarmouth and Cromer (both in Norfolk) looking for seals beached due to the storms. East Winch Wildlife Centre is full with seal pups; many are less than three weeks old. It costs £22 to feed each pup per week and it is believed they must be in captivity for up to five months. They have a target amount of £50,000, yet have only earned £88.

The RSPCA rescued a cat called Sam. Sam was violently abused by his owner multiple times, (he was badly injured in the eye) until he was eventually thrown down a rubbish chute. He was then taken to the rubbish plant. He managed to escape the bin bag and a worker found him with a maggot-infested eye! He called the RSPCA. The RSPCA shortly arrived and took the cat to the nearest clinic. His eye had got worse and actually came out of the socket! He was then delivered to the clinic. After going through medical treatment, Sam had his eye removed and the socket stitched up and was then put up for adoption. Sam isn't the only animal they have rescued but was just one extreme victim of what the RSPCA fights against.

If you don't want another animal to suffer like the seal pups and Sam, I ask you to please take some time and think about what the RSPCA does and what other charities fighting to prevent the harming of animals do. So, if you know of a crime please call: 0300 1234 999 or if you wish to donate, adopt or carry out a fundraising campaign please visit their website at <http://www.rspca.org.uk/home>. Thank You!

Teacher's Pets



Milo and Shadow - Mr Lehmann



Charles and Camilla - Miss Carter



Archie - Miss Pearce

FOOD, GLORIOUS FOOD!

Jaideep Kallu – Year 12

Congratulations on winning the Healthy Eating Competition! How did it feel to be the winner?

I was mildly amused at winning it. I felt quite chuffed because of the money I received (£5.00). It was nice that my healthy eating was recognised with some monetary value.

Did you imagine that you would be the winner of the Healthy Eating Competition?

No, I wasn't even aware that there was one!

What is the best thing about our canteen?

The pictures, or rather over-dramatised pictures of food that we find there.

What do you most look forward to in the canteen?

I most look forward to not having to join a long queue.

Do you prefer hot or cold meals?

Cold – a good old southern fried chicken and lettuce baguette.

What kind of atmosphere do you think characterises our canteen?

I feel in a happy place. It is a nice environment; it is a place where you can get on with eating. It is relaxing and the staff are really friendly and helpful.

Is there anything else you would like to say about our school canteen?

I think that the canteen is underrated – more students should take advantage of the delicacies on offer.

Jonny Varma - Year 13

What do you most look forward to in the canteen?

Getting a proper meal. The catering service is phenomenal. The Dinner Ladies show passion, desire and enthusiasm for their job. I especially enjoy the canteen for this.

Is this the best thing about the canteen?

Yes, since there is no specific food. The service outdoes the food. I also enjoy socialising with friends, rather than going out to Tesco on your own. It gives me the chance to talk and socialise.

Do you prefer hot or cold food?

It depends on the menu on the day. The hot meals sometimes have a lack of variety, which means that I am forced to have a cold baguette.

Do you have a favourite meal?

It is easily Friday: fish, chips and beans. I know that on a Friday it will be there and I always look forward to it.

What kind of atmosphere do you think characterises our canteen?

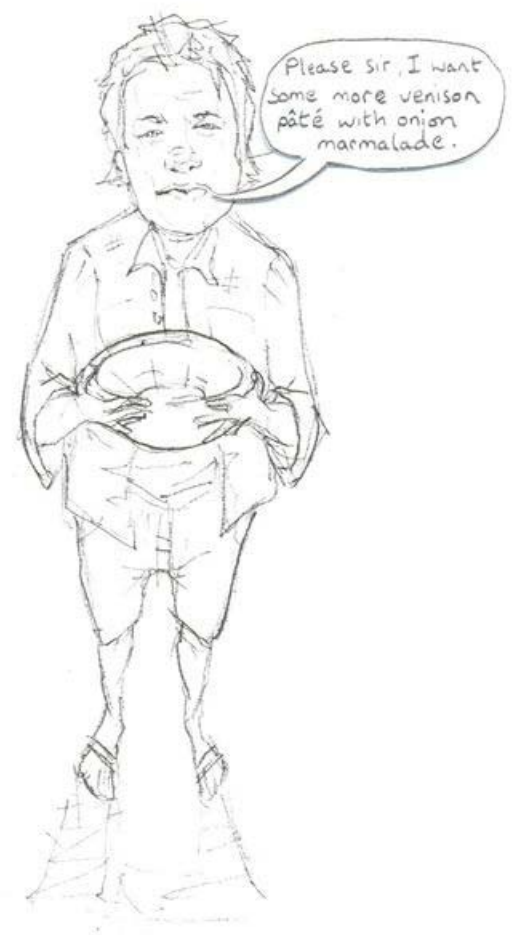
Oooh... I'm struggling for the lack of adjectives here! I would say the enthusiastic approach to service. It's an upbeat atmosphere. I rarely hear any complaints about it, even though it can't be perfect. There's always the positive feeling of being with friends, compared to the Common Room or going out to eat. It changes your day and gives a psychological boost.

Do you have any general comments to make on the canteen?

Personally, I am not always too keen on the pricing. Perhaps there could be more variety for the choice of hot foods especially.

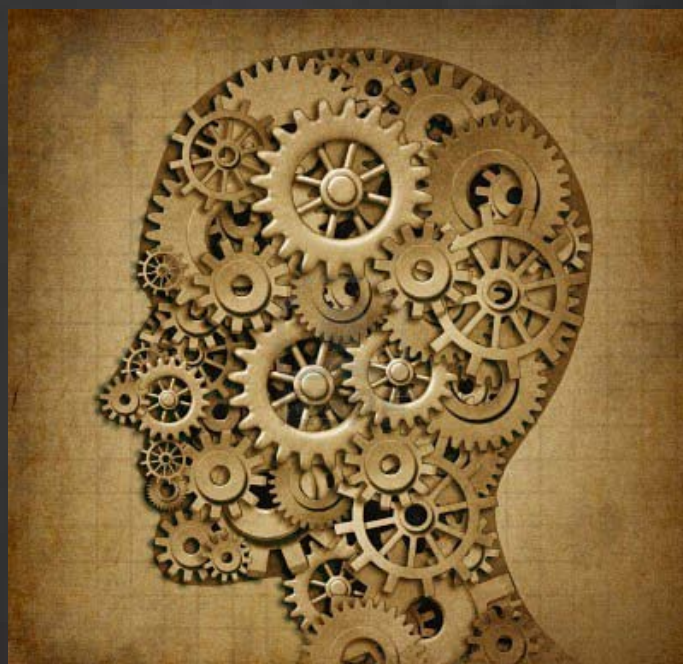
Interview by Imran Marashli

JAMIE OLIVER TWIST



QUIZ

- 1) Name a European country beginning with 'L' whose capital has the same name as the country itself?
- 2) What is the number of the "Unlucky Box" in the TV show "Deal or No Deal"?
- 3) A helium balloon is held by a light string in the middle of the back of a very powerful truck. The back of the truck is sufficiently large that the balloon cannot hit the sides if it sways forwards or backwards on the string. The back of the truck is completely enclosed with no windows or ventilation from the outside. The truck now accelerates rapidly forwards. What is the motion of the balloon relative to the truck when the truck is accelerating? Does the balloon sway forwards, backwards or remain at the same position?
- 4) Who played the part of Jay Gatsby in the 2013 film version of F Scott Fitzgerald's 'The Great Gatsby'?
- 5) At what age did Nelson Mandela die?
- 6) What does AIP stand for?
- 7) In the case of which sea animal do the males become pregnant?
- 8) Who was the last British person to win Wimbledon before Andy Murray?
- 9) What was the first war to start in the twentieth century?
- 10) Which European country currently has the strongest economy (based on GDP)?



- A: Luxembourg
- A: 22
- A: Balloon sways forward
- A: Leonardo Di Caprio
- A: 95
- A: Alliance in Partnership
- A: Seahorse
- A: Fred Perry - 1936
- A: Russo-Japanese War
- A: Germany



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