

LOCKDOWN VOLUNTEERING

Many of our students chose to spend some of their time during lockdown helping others. Here are the stories of just 4 of our students:

- Kipp Mann Benn and Monty Pegrum, both Year 13 students, spent a week volunteering for a hydroelectricity company, working on two projects in the Highlands, each generating enough electricity to power 1,000 homes. The engineers on site had encountered some issues, which required a 250kg piece of vital equipment to be couriered up from Yorkshire – the first job for our students. They then worked alongside the engineers to fix the problem, learning electrical and mechanical engineering skills.
- Two of our students were recognised by The Rotary Club of Malton & Norton for their achievements and work to help others:
- o Holly Hargreaves, another Year 13 student, volunteered to help vulnerable and isolated residents in Ryedale, delivering vital medication and food parcels. Additionally, Holly was part of a group which provided daily telephone conversation for residents who may not otherwise have had anyone to talk to. Holly nominated Yorkshire Air Ambulance as her charity. They received a donation of £80.00.
- o Daisy Browne and her sister, raised over £600 for local keyworkers by performing and filming a poem they had written and uploading it online. Viewers could then watch the performance by making a donation to the charity. Daisy and her sister have nominated the Friends of Malton & Norton Hospital as their chosen charity to receive a donation.

We are very proud of the resilience shown by our students during this period – adjusting very quickly to remote learning and continuing to focus on their studies, whilst also being inspired to reach out to others. We would also like to thank parents and our Malton School community for supporting us in our efforts – it has been a great example of what can be achieved by working together.



Malton School

A Specialist Science School

SUPPORT INSPIRE THRIVE

THE MALTONIAN LOCKDOWN SPECIAL

2020: THE MALTON COMMUNITY RESPONDS TO CORONAVIRUS

There was nothing special about lockdown and the ongoing adjustments we have continued to make in response to the Coronavirus pandemic, yet it seemed appropriate, given that the first edition of the Maltonian was published in April 1917 at the height of the First World War, that we should nevertheless capture as a reminder for ourselves, and for posterity, the spirit and endeavours of our school community last year in the face of the most daunting challenge of our times.

The school closed its doors to all students on Friday 20th March 2020 and did not re-open to all students until the start of the new academic year in September – an unprecedented period of closure, even when compared to the experience of the two World Wars.

However, this was a 21st century crisis and the school was well-placed to deliver a robust technological response.

We started our iPad for Learning scheme in 2013. Seven years on all students and staff have an iPad and are increasingly adept at their use for the delivery of high quality education and learning.

At 8.45am on Monday 23rd March, the first day of the first lockdown closure, our students logged on and registered for their lessons from home. The school made a conscious decision, from the start, that the lockdown would probably be lengthy and that therefore we had to press on with the delivery of the curriculum in all subjects. The teaching staff prepared and delivered lessons on-line. The students studied the new materials and responded by completing the work set.



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The staff team used Showbie or OneNote to provide feedback to the students on the quality of their work, and the students responded to this feedback on-line. Parents were kept informed of how well or otherwise their child was doing through a daily email. Students who worked well had this recognition and praise delivered through Good and Excellent remote learning points added on to their House Point totals; whilst any who failed to complete work had this recorded too and parents were informed.

The school remained physically open for the children of key workers and for those who were potentially vulnerable for any reason.

The students facing GCSE and A Level exams had to cope with their cancellation and a subsequent period of uncertainty around how they would be awarded grades. Mr Fenwick, our Deputy Head, led this process and the staff team to deliver an excellent set of robust centre assessed grades, based on strong evidence, that were upheld and that served our young people well to move on to their chosen next career steps.

The daunting challenge of bringing every student safely back into school in September saw the introduction of year group "bubbles" and physical zones, maximising the use of our large site and two wings. But this was achieved with the minimum of fuss and a

fantastically positive and mature response from the students.

The huge support from the parent body, with an unprecedented mail bag of positive feedback and goodwill messages has played a significant part in sustaining the morale of the staff team who have been putting themselves selflessly at risk every day. In short, the response of the entire community of Malton School to the intense pressures and stresses caused by Coronavirus has been truly magnificent!

The old saying is true: you learn a lot about people in a crisis.

This crisis has shown how special our community is: demonstrating the best of British values - resilience, togetherness and generosity of spirit - and that we are genuinely **"stronger for being one"**.

We don't yet know the route to the end of the pandemic, but we do know how to travel the road.

I feel immensely proud, honoured and privileged to have been able to lead this community for the last 14 years and through these very difficult times. I can't thank the staff team, the students and all associated with the school enough. I look forward to the days ahead and how we can all share the benefits of what we have learnt and capture the new opportunities that will present themselves.

Rob Williams
Headteacher

SPRING SPRUNG SOME SURPRISES & SO DID SUMMER TOO

Who would have known when we returned to School in January 2020, how the term - and eventually the year - would end. The last two weeks of the Spring Term were a journey into uncharted territory

However, with the majority of the Spring Term completed by the time School closed, there were a lot of activities that did take place - some of which continued, albeit at a virtual level, throughout the summer term as well.

So here are some reminders of life pre-lockdown as well as some encouragements of the many, varied and fascinating activities undertaken by our students during the closure period.



GOING FOR GOLD PLUS

As we have reported before in The Maltonian, for the first time in 2019, a number of our students achieved their Gold Duke of Edinburgh Award which is a tremendous achievement and one of which both we and our students are rightly proud.

Not content with just Gold, two of our students, Megan Clibbens and Holly Hargreaves have also successfully trained to be D of E Assessors. Writing of their experience, Megan said,

"Following the completion of our Gold DofE, Holly and I were given the opportunity by school to complete our Assessor's Accreditation. Not only did this mean that we would become official assessors for the DofE programme, but we were also able to maintain our involvement in DofE at school as well as wherever we ventured next.

The accreditation course itself was held at Peat Rigg (an outdoor centre near Pickering), and we also attended a Supervisor's Course. Throughout the whole programme, we were taught both the official guidelines and also how to manage different groups of people and how to assess and identify qualities in other participants."

We wish both Megan and Holly every success as they move on from Malton School, and hope we may see them in School sometimes to support and encourage other D of E Students.



FABULOUS FUNDRAISERS



Whilst many things in life may have ground to a halt in early April, some things continued. The financial year end arrived as it always does, and amidst the hours of calculations and reconciliations, there was plenty of good news to report.

Over the course of the financial year 2019/20, students at Malton School raised over £4,750 for a variety of good causes including:

- £683 for BBC Children in Need
- £515 for Young Minds as part of World Mental Health Day
- £523 for Save the Children as part of wear a Christmas Jumper Day
- £696 for Cancer Research raised by Year 10 students as part of their Archbishop of York Youth Award Trust activities
- £632 for the Australian Red Cross following the devastating bush fires
- £560 for Sport Relief



Many of these stories have been reported in previous editions of The Maltonian, but it's good to stop occasionally and remind ourselves how much our students have been inspired by the plight of others less fortunate than themselves to do something positive and make a difference.

DREAM END TO FOOTBALL SUCCESS - TEAM OF THE YEAR



The Malton School U16 Girls' Football Team were crowned Ryedale District Sports Award Team of the Year at a Ceremony held at the Best Western Forest & Vale Hotel in Pickering on 13 February.

The Award is the crowning glory for what has truly been a legendary team. They started as the U12s and progressed through the School growing in confidence and adding constantly to a growing list of notable and impressive wins. The list of competitions the team won over 5 years is too long to mention, but key successes include: 4 times winner of both the County Cup Final and the District Knock-Out Cup and of the District One-Day Festival.

Whilst the group no longer play together as a team, their legacy lives on in School and members of the team are very active in passing on

the mantle to younger players. Five former members of the Team, now in the Sixth Form at Malton School, help run and coach the Girls' Football Personal Development Activity; one helps out with lunch-time football practices having obtained her Level 1 FA Coaching, and two regularly help the PE Department in School with the hockey and netball clubs.

Jay Rowley, Community Sport & Facilities Manager at Malton Community Sports Centre, who managed and coached the Team throughout their five years, was delighted with this final success. He commented, "The team have been inspirational from the start. They've achieved so much - but this has come about through hard-work and a determination to both learn and succeed. I couldn't be prouder of them. I'm also delighted that they're now helping others develop their own sporting abilities."



STUDENTS TAKE TO THE SLOPES

The ski trip is a long-standing tradition at Malton School. Ordinarily, the group would travel in March but last year the date was changed to January - which in hindsight was a very good decision. So, on a dark and cold early January morning 80 students and 8 staff assembled at School for a 4am departure.

Arriving at the resort in France the group experienced beautiful sunshine and quiet slopes - perfect conditions

for the students to really enhance and develop their ski-ing. Both on and off the piste, student behaviour and attitude was impeccable making the trip an enjoyable and memorable experience for everyone involved. Tilly & Jess Angus were inspired to write the following poem about their experiences:

A sea of white on the ground,
An air of excitement all around.
Helmets on, ski's on feet,
Heading for the checkpoint meet.
Some had experience, some had none,
Put in our groups, then we begun.
Skiing down was great fun,
Gliding in the midday sun.

Learning new skills everyday,
Instructors showing us the way,
Pushing us on to do our best,
Many slopes, no time to rest.
Great experience, we won't forget,
Night time is when we all met.
Teachers dancing, funny to see,
Didn't leave till they "Got the key".

Bingo, movie night, hunt round town,
A great way to wind down.
Dorms sleeping four to six,
Groups were a really good mix.

The week went by in no time,
Bet the teachers need a glass of wine.
Soon we were on the plane,
Can't wait to ski again.



VIRTUAL PASSING OUT PARADE FOR FORMER STUDENT

One of our former students, Thomas Warburton, who left Malton School after having completed his A Levels, has just passed his Phase 1 Training for the Royal Navy. Thomas is a Royal Navy apprentice assigned to HMS Raleigh.

Having seen the advert for degree apprenticeships with the Navy, Thomas applied for a place and, after numerous interviews, fitness tests and medicals, was offered the opportunity to become a "fast track apprentice weapons engineer".

Following 10 weeks of training in Plymouth, Thomas now moves on to Phase 2 training in Portsmouth, before joining his ship and completing his degree in Weapons Engineering. Unfortunately, due to lock-down his family were unable to be with him in person for his passing out ceremony - but were able to watch 'live' from Malton. Our congratulations go to Thomas and we wish him every success with his studies and his Naval career.



RAISING SUPPORT THROUGH TIME



As well as raising valuable funds to support others, our students have also given of their time to encourage other people in the local community. Students in Year 10 and above have the opportunity as part of our Personal Development Activities to work towards their Duke of Edinburgh Awards - from Bronze right through to Gold (see also the article on page 3 about two of our students who have obtained Gold). One of the categories at each level of the Award requires students to volunteer their time and services to help others - with the number of hours and the level of commitment increasing as students progress through the levels. Between 1 April 2019 and 31 March 2020, our students donated 715 hours of voluntary service to the local community, equating to over 10 hours per student. The D of E has calculated that this has a social impact value of £3,110.25.

A PDA PREMIERE



Our Personal Development Activity Sessions are incredibly wide-ranging and really do offer something for everyone. Students from one of the Spring Term's PDA sessions performed a Premiere in the Drama Studio in late February.

Each year The National Theatre commissions 10 new plays for young people to perform, the aim being to bring together some of the UK's most exciting writers with the theatre-makers of tomorrow. One of this year's plays - "The Changing Room", written by Sheffield born Chris Bush - is a story about growing up. Set in and around a swimming pool, it follows a group of teens full of excitement, impatience and uncertainty.



The School's production of "The Changing Room" was directed by Miss Coyne. Her and the team of Year 9, 10 and 11 students, had a lot of fun putting on the play, which combines choral sections with physical theatre. The School Premiere was also viewed by one of the National Theatre's Directors who was very positive in his feedback.

Unfortunately, the lockdown meant students missed the opportunity to take their play to the stage of the Theatre Royal in York. We hope that in the months ahead there will be other opportunities for our performers to further enhance and develop their theatrical acting, directing and producing skills.

POSITIVE PERFORMANCE RESULTS

The official 2019 school performance tables were released by the Department for Education in February 2020. These confirmed that students at Malton School made "above average" progress in their GCSEs, which places the School in the top 31% of schools in the country for performance. The Department for Education also produces a table of "similar schools" to Malton. This is a list of the 55 schools across the country with the closest prior attainment to that at Malton. The list is then ranked on performance and Malton comes 12th out of the 55.

Headteacher Mr Williams commented on the results:

"This has been an excellent year for the students at Malton, both at GCSE and at A Level. I am proud of what they have achieved. I am also proud of the performance of the school which continues to strengthen. We sustain a broad curriculum offer, retaining 4 option blocks at GCSE, which we know our parents value greatly and we have still delivered excellent performance in adding value to student outcomes."



TOURING PRODUCTION A ROARING SUCCESS

Staying with the Drama Department, a group of 50 Year 9 students took to the road at the end of January, visiting local primary schools. As part of their Drama studies, students were asked to devise their own version of traditional British pantomimes. Working in groups as actors, designers and theatre technicians they brought their stories to life on stage - not just in school but at a number of different primary school venues around Ryedale. The mini pantomimes included Little Red Riding Hood, Peter Pan, Aladdin, and Goldilocks & the Three Bears.

Mr Lee who put the students through their paces was very impressed by all the performances: "It was great to see them up there, performing in classic panto style. They really achieved the conventions of a traditional pantomime. What's really special about these pantomimes is that they offer all students the opportunity to shine - whether that be on stage or backstage. We have some emerging talent in costume and lighting design this year too."

This annual event offers so many opportunities. It provides Year 9 students with the chance to bring together in one

show all they have learned in Drama since joining the School in Year 7; it inspires younger students - both in primary schools and our own School - as to what they can achieve. It is also a real encouragement to those who take part, as well as being tremendous fun. No doubt many of those who took part will continue to showcase their skills at other School performances over the coming years.



BRIDGING THE GENERATION GAP

As well as the national fundraising days, such as Children in Need, much of the fundraising that is done in school is part of the students work towards the Archbishop of York Youth Award, which is undertaken in Years 7 and 10. The Award aims to build leadership skills and character virtues in young people which can be applied in a variety of settings.

Just before lock-down, as part of their Awards, students from Year 10 visited 3 local care homes (Deansfield Court, Rivermead and The Abbey). The aim was to provide company and activity for the residents, which studies have shown improves both physical and mental health. The students therefore played card games with the residents, ran quizzes, organised a puppet show and set up craft activities. The response from the residents and the students was very positive, with both sides making new friends. The students were even asked to visit again, which they very much hope will be a possibility at some point over the coming year.

One student described the visit as "a very rewarding activity, giving us the opportunity to communicate and interact with the older generation". Students found the trip to be educational as well as fun - meeting and getting to know the residents.

We are very aware of the value and importance of inter-generational conversations and activities, and are acutely aware how difficult the Coronavirus has made such contact, especially for the older generations. We would like to thank all the homes involved for facilitating the visits, and making them possible. If it proves to be more difficult in the future to safely organise similar visits because of restrictions, our hope would be that working together we may be able to find innovative ways to enable interactions between our young people and the older generations.

Our thanks also go to Lauren Houlston and Isaac Gardner for their help in writing this article.



SPEAK UP AND SPEAK OUT

Another group of Personal Development Activity students also celebrated a triumph in the Spring Term. This time it was a group of Debaters who took part in the English-Speaking Union Public Speaking Competition, the largest public speaking competition for Schools in England and Wales.

As a School we entered two Teams who attended the Area Heats at St Peter's School in January. Both teams had to choose from a list of 6 motions for which they put forward their arguments 'for' or 'against'. Our group chose "Sex education in schools should cater for all sexualities" - agreeing with the motion. They fought off stiff competition from both St Peter's School and Harrogate Grammar School to triumph in the Heats.

The second team chose the motion "Modern technology is making us ever more self-obsessed", electing to oppose the motion. This was the first time they had entered the competition and performed very well, although unfortunately didn't make it through to the regional final.

We're delighted that our students have taken such a keen interest in learning the skills of good debating - putting across a point, listening to the counter-arguments and

defending their position well. We wish our current teams of debaters and speakers well and trust they will be inspired to put their skills to good use in all areas of life.

However, we are not the only ones to be encouraged by the skills shown by our students. Malton & Norton Rotary Club who sponsor a public-speaking event which our teams have also taken part in have offered the School funding to develop public speaking skills across all year groups. Our passionate debaters have jumped at the chance to encourage others in this and before lock-down were looking at options for inter-house competitions and designing a special badge for students who have represented the School in this field.



LOCKDOWN INSPIRATION

Lockdown will have created different issues and changed lives in different ways for everyone - and we will all have our own story to tell of this particular period in history. Being an iPad School meant all our students were able to continue with their studies remotely - or for those whose parents are keyworkers, in school itself. Having spent the last week in school ensuring all our students had a working iPad and charger, plus access to the internet, students started their normal timetable on Monday, 23 March. Only this time, for the majority of our students, it was working from home - in their own choice of clothes!

The summer term started - and ended - in the same way, although we were able to welcome our Year 10 and Year 12 students into School in the last few weeks of the year. As regular events and activities in the calendar were cancelled, we sought to provide alternative ways to connect with students and keep learning 'fresh'. The second half of the summer term saw the introduction of some live learning and the creation of transition work for the Year 11s joining us as A Level students in September. We also tried to be creative in providing virtual activities for those due to join us in Year 7. However, it wasn't all work. The Head issued 12 Challenges to our students - one for each of the school weeks of lockdown - encouraging them to be creative in a variety of ways. There were prizes awarded to the best 3 entries each week which were then posted on the student blog - The Navy Blazer. Sadly, space does not permit us to list all the winners here, however, we hope you will enjoy seeing and reading the 1st prize entries. (If you would like to see all the winning entries visit: <https://thenavyblazer.maltonschool.org>):

- **Challenge One: Best Lockdown Self-Help Article Winner - Lorna Lee**
- **Challenge Two: Best Recipe Winner - Harry Culkin**
- **Challenge Three: Best Original Composition Winner - Jonathan Stockill**
- **Challenge Four: Best VE Day Commemoration Idea Winner - Emma Allen**
- **Challenge Five: Best Book Review Joint Winners - Tom Fowler & Harry Culkin**
- **Challenge Six: Best Found Poem Joint Winners - Shannon Williamson & Daisy Browne**
- **Challenge Seven: Best Artistic Response Joint Winners - Belle Graham & Hannah Copley**
- **Challenge Eight: Most Inspirational Sports Personality Winner - Isabella Stockill**
- **Challenge Nine: Beat the Head of Maths Winner - Joseph Banks**
- **Challenge Ten: Best Recorded Dramatic Monologue Joint Winners - Eleanor Holmes & Alex Clibbens**
- **Challenge Eleven: Best Design Concept for a Home Improvement Winner - Isabella Stockill**
- **Challenge Twelve: Most Inspirational Message (in French) for Bastille Day Winner - Charlotte Walker**

Students also took part in competitions organised by other groups. Jonathan Stockill, who won one of the lockdown challenges also entered a competition run by Oxford University to write a short story in French. With nearly 500 students around the country entering, the judges had a difficult job selecting the winners and said they were "blown away by the imagination and linguistic inventiveness on display". We are delighted therefore that Jonathan's story was commended by the judges. You can read Jonathan's entry - and the translation on page 15.

GARDENING GROUP GROW FROM STRENGTH TO STRENGTH

The Gardening Group, another highly successful PDA activity which benefits both the School and wider community through the role it plays in Malton in Bloom, continues to go from strength to strength.

Whilst the group work quietly behind the scenes, and often unnoticed, the fruit of their labours is highly visible throughout school. Anyone who walked around the School last summer would have found numerous visual clues - from beautiful hanging baskets to vegetable beds laden with produce as well as flowering plants. There were even some scarecrow 'students' hiding in the beds. But it wasn't just a visual feast - anyone who bought their lunch from the school canteen may even have tasted the produce!

It's not just plants that the club has been growing - they are also cultivating an impressive list of awards and achievements. In early March (before School closed), the

Gardening Club were awarded the RHS Five Star Award. This is the highest level a School can achieve and has taken a lot of planning and hard work.

From growing plants to sell at Malton Show to playing an active role in Malton in Bloom, the Club has 'greened' more than just the School. We're very proud of them and the many hours they have put in - over and above PDA time - to support the School, the local community and the town.



LOCKDOWN INSPIRATION

LOCKDOWN CHALLENGE FIVE: BEST BOOK REVIEW

Wonder, written by R.J Palacio is based on the main character, a young boy called August Pullman who was born with a deformed face. At the start of the book, the author highlights how August's life so far had predominantly been spent in isolation with just his family. His obsession with space saw him wearing an astronaut helmet as a way of hiding his disability. The book is based on his disability and follows his journey through starting high school, making friends and overcoming diversity. This leads up to him being very happy at the end and having lots of friends. This I think also makes the reader very happy, too.

The synopsis of Wonder entices the reader by saying "My name is August. I won't describe what I look like. Whatever you're thinking, it's probably worse." This is quite upsetting because he is saying he doesn't want people to know what he looks like because of his disability and deformed face. He's insinuating that it will be worse than what anyone could think which makes us think he is bringing himself down because he believes he's too ugly for people to see him. This grabbed my attention and made me want to read it. I was drawn to the emotion of the book from the outset.

The language used by August made him appear ugly inside and out yet as you read the story further you realise he's a very special boy and you should see past his physical appearance.

Surprisingly, I really liked this book. It was a surprise to me because I usually go for fantasy books or horror books with action and magic such as the Harry Potter books. The reason I liked it, despite not usually reading this type of book, is because it has a really strong and positive message — to not judge a book by its cover — but it also contains lots of emotions. It's funny, serious and extremely emotional at different points of the book.

After reading the book multiple times, I decided to watch the film. I must admit I preferred the book to the film. I felt the film directed the watcher too much whereas when something is in writing, especially first-person, it makes it easier to understand what emotions the characters are feeling. I feel this was done extremely well by the author of Wonder as I felt like I could understand August's and most of the other characters' feelings.

I would recommend this book to everyone! It came as a surprise to me that I really enjoyed it and I feel everyone should read Wonder due to its strong message and the emotive content it contains. I would give this book 9/10 stars because of all the different emotions it shows and the fact that it is written to tell a really important and kind message.

By Tom Fowler.



LOCKDOWN CHALLENGE SEVEN: BEST ARTISTIC RESPONSE JOINT WINNER

This photo is entitled 'Lockdown'. In this photo, the grey, large locks and heavy chain are representing that we have limited freedom and we can be weighed down by it. It was important that I included the teamwork and kindness that has been brought to this situation, and the rainbow padlock represents hope and the people who are saving us and adding a bit of colour into the grey situation. Also, the rainbow was an important feature due to how iconic it has become. The green crops on the left hand side represent the environment, and us, recovering. I compared this to the right side with less crops, which represents the beginning of lockdown. I included the small hints of colour on some of the grey locks to show hope in some of the worst situations.

By Hannah Copley.

LOCKDOWN INSPIRATION

LOCKDOWN CHALLENGE FIVE: BEST BOOK REVIEW

Star Wars Novel.

As a Star Wars fan my whole life, it seem an unusual choice that I would pick up the book of the film I know so well. However, Star Wars the novel is more than just the story I know. It captures a moment in history which forty years of fandom have turned in to a universe beyond the confines of its pages.

Written alongside the filming of the movie, in 1976, this adventure of Luke Skywalker was written by the original director George Lucas. The movies went unchanged until a 1997 special edition was released that included many deleted scenes. Some of the most notable additions, that did not see the light of day for 20 years are included in this novel. It certainly gives weight to speculation that George Lucas chose to go back to the tale when special effects were advanced enough to allow him to do so. We all know the story- but written before Empire Strikes Back or Return of the Jedi (not to mention prequels, sequels and spinoffs) were ever conceived, this is very much Luke Skywalker's story. A large percentage of the story is told from the perspective of the farm boy as naïve in his galaxy as the reader is. Boy wants to escape mundane farming life. Boy meets droids. Boy drinks blue milk. Droids run off. Boy meets mysterious old man. Boy's family are slaughtered. Boy flies off into space on an adventure to destroy an evil space station shaped like a moon. A tale as old as Shakespeare...

The focus on Luke means that there is more of his whinging and I found the Tatooine sections a bit 'talky' and boring. New characters such as Biggs Darklighter expand Luke's story and help you to understand why he whinges so much. He is frustrated and unlike his friends he is left at home while they go off to war. Good and Evil are clear from the outset, with the all dominating Empire the only way for Luke to escape the moisture vaparators of the Dune Sea. The book also features the first appearance of Jabba the Hutt, in his human form- a scene that was introduced into the 1997 remaster and further tweaked to turn the human actor into a CGI slug.

One of the big questions in Star Wars fandom is the puzzle of who shot first, Han or Greedo. The book resolves it unquestionably. Han definitely murders Greedo in cold blood. This is a good example of how the book characters and the film characters differ. The book gives more time for them to explain their motivation and leaves less grey areas. Are they good, are they bad. Everything is clear.

My favourite character is Darth Vader and in truth he has been my favourite character across all of the films, TV series and other franchise. The book does not go out of its way to expand too much on Darth's character or motivation. He is very much the bad guy we would get to know and recognise from the first film. Back to that moment in history though. There are no references to Padme's death or to the climactic fight on Mustafar between Obi Wan and Anakin. Even less of a sniff that Darth is father to two of the book's main characters.

As I said at the start of this review, the book captures a moment in history and there are simply no considerations for what comes next, what came before and what the history of this franchise would bring. This is a new, fresh and excellent story on the edge of greatness, before its 1980 sequel had been green lit or even planned and conceived. This is a newly born Empire and the start of something great.

Tatooine is certainly not the most exciting part of the story, until the droids run off and the action begins. The second half of the book feels rushed in comparison to the movie. Almost half of the story is taken up with Tatooine. But it is all there. And in these pages written before the world changed forever, is the promise of a world to come. I would happily rate this story 10 out of 10; the characters, the settings, the plot, enable the reader to transport and escape into a whole other universe. Star Wars fans must pick up this book and the force will be with you - always.

By Harry Culkin.



LOCKDOWN INSPIRATION

LOCKDOWN CHALLENGE EIGHT: MOST INSPIRATIONAL SPORTS PERSONALITY

In 2009 Mark Colbourne was forced to make an emergency landing while paragliding. Falling 35 feet, he broke his back changing his life forever. He spent a year learning how to walk again and still needs assistance to walk.

Nonetheless, he has become one of the best ever para-cyclists to compete for Great Britain. Before this, between 1990 and 1993, he played volleyball at an international level. After his accident, Mark began cycling with Disability Support Wales. In 2010 only a year after his accident he made his first appearance on the track in the Wales Grand Prix. In the next year, he won his first medals at the VCI Para-cycling World Cup. In 2012 Mark won his first world title winning a gold medal at the VCI Para-cycling track championships. In the same year, he was selected for the GB Paralympic cycling team. At the 2012 Olympics he brought home both a silver and a gold medal, he even broke a world record!

He is an inspiration to me because I am in awe of what he has achieved as I can relate to the sheer amount of effort he has put into his recovery. When I was in year 6 I was rushed into hospital to have an emergency operation on my knee which should have been a straight forward procedure. Unfortunately, my nerves were damaged. As a result of this, I spent a couple of months in a wheelchair, then I had to retrain myself to walk using crutches, Three years on, I am still undergoing physiotherapy to strengthen my muscles and I have now been told that my cartilage was also damaged.

Mark Colbourne is a huge inspirational sports personality for me because he has shown incredible determination to carry on and must have felt like giving up at some points. He has had to go through much pain and suffering to get to where he is today. He must be very disciplined to not only train to this high standard but also to complete all the exercises he must have to do to constantly improve his recovery from such a horrific accident. My experience was nowhere near as life-changing as his yet I can appreciate the struggles he faced every day. He inspires me to know that I can achieve whatever I set my mind on, not necessarily in sport, as he has overcome far more challenges to achieve outstanding things.

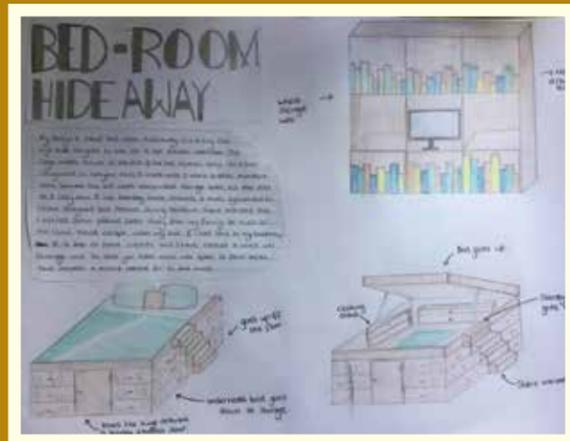


Mark Colbourne with one of his medals.

By Isabella Stockill.

LOCKDOWN CHALLENGE ELEVEN: BEST DESIGN CONCEPT FOR A HOME IMPROVEMENT

My design is called Bed-room-hideaway. It is a king-size high bed designed to look like it has drawers underneath. The large middle drawer at the foot of the bed, however, opens like a door (disguised to everyone else).



It leads into a whole hidden miniature room beneath the bed, which incorporates storage space but also acts as a cosy den. It has beanbag seats, drawers, a music system and a TV. I have designed this because, during lockdown, I have realised that I needed some personal space away from my family as much as I love them. I could escape under my bed if I had this in my bedroom. It is also to store clothes and I have created a whole wall storage unit so that you have more wall space to store books. This includes a media centre for TV and music.

By Isabella Stockill.

LOCKDOWN INSPIRATION

LOCKDOWN CHALLENGE ONE: BEST LOCKDOWN SELF-HELP ARTICLE

Self-isolating can be really difficult and it can often feel like your life has been put on hold. I have been bedbound with a long term illness for four years, so lockdown isn't exactly a new thing for me. During my first two years of being ill, it was like I had been thrown in at the deep end and I had to figure out for myself how to have a life stuck in bed. Over the years I have found lots of little hacks to help me get through it. But although they work really well for me they might not necessarily work for you, everyone is unique and everyone's mind works differently. So instead of suggesting a specific activity that may only interest or work for a small number of you, I am going to give a broader piece of advice. Find something that you are passionate about, something that you have wanted to learn or do for a long time but never had the chance because schoolwork is more important (e.g. learning a language, knitting, cooking, reading a book that you haven't got around to reading yet), and do it.

I understand that the idea of learning something sounds like work; but trust me, I have been on lockdown for 4 years and if you are truly passionate about something it is not boring. It is really fulfilling and it keeps your mind active and focused on something other than the fact that you are inside all day. It is a wonderful feeling working towards something that you have always wanted to do and instead of your life being on an indefinite pause, you're achieving something.

Even if that thing you want to do isn't possible at the moment, try find something to do that is associated with it. For example, if you really want to visit a certain country e.g. Japan, immerse yourself in it as much as you can; so research Japanese history, culture and traditions, cook Japanese dishes (if you can manage to get hold of the ingredients whilst self isolating), learn to speak Japanese; even planning your trip and researching cities and places you might want to visit when you eventually get to go can be surprisingly fun.

So if you are thinking of something that you have wanted to do or learn for a long time but never had the chance, my advice is give it a go; you have nothing but time right now and nothing to lose.

As a side note: If you are struggling to think of something, or are still stuck for something productive to do; about a year ago I found an amazing website called post pals. Through this charity you can write letters, emails, draw pictures and send little presents to seriously ill children to make their day a little brighter. It doesn't require much of a commitment, just however long it takes for you to draw a cute picture or write a nice letter. It is really rewarding and it is so nice knowing that you are doing some good, even if you are stuck indoors. Here is the link to their website if it sounds like something you may want to take part in:

<https://www.postpals.co.uk/>

By Lorna Lee.



LOCKDOWN CHALLENGE SEVEN: BEST ARTISTIC RESPONSE JOINT WINNER

"My art is picturing a world that is dark, ill and sad. This world is big because it is where we are now. Then there is another world that is bright, well and happy. This one is smaller because it is in the future. This to me represents that it will get better even though it seems bad."

By Belle Graham.



LOCKDOWN CHALLENGE TWELVE: MOST INSPIRATIONAL MESSAGE (IN FRENCH) FOR BASTILLE DAY

"We can learn much from the French Revolution. Hope, equality and most of all strength of joining together to accomplish bigger and better things."

"Nous pouvons apprendre beaucoup de la Révolution française. Espoir, égalité et surtout force d'adhésion ensemble pour accomplir des choses plus grandes et meilleures."

By Charlotte Walker.

LOCKDOWN INSPIRATION

LOCKDOWN CHALLENGE TWO: BEST RECIPE

Harry decided that Yorkshire pudding pizza (one of his favourites!) would be a great practical dish for students to cook for their family during the current isolation period.

Harry's Lockdown Yorkshire Pudding Pizza Recipe! You will need:

- Yorkshire puddings (you can use either ready-made, or you could make your own if the ingredients are available. We found, however, that we were unable to get any flour during the current situation, so I used ready made yorkshire pudding bases instead).
- Pizza sauce topping & Pizza cheese (I used four cheeses).
- Toppings: you can use whatever you fancy! On this occasion, I used sweetcorn, peppers for the NHS lettering, sausages and pepperoni.

Method:

- Preheat the oven to 200 degrees.
- Prepare your chosen toppings (be extra careful if using a sharp knife).
- Top your pizza bases firstly with pizza sauce, followed by your chosen toppings.
- Cook in the oven for around 10 minutes (check and continue cooking if needed).
- Serve and enjoy!

By Harry Culkin.



LOCKDOWN INSPIRATION

LOCKDOWN CHALLENGE SIX: BEST FOUND POEM JOINT WINNER - SHANNON WILLIAMSON

Covid-19,
It's like a crime scene,
It been really mean,
And can't always be seen.

I really thought I was in a dream,
It makes me want to scream,
Putting on these gloves and masks,
To carry out our daily tasks.
The NHS are working hard,
So why not write them a card?

We wave through the glass,
Remembering to step back,
We have to stay 6 feet away,
We really want to meet they say,
Schools will return in June,
I don't think so but I hope it's soon.

Worry and anxiety are heightened,
Everyone is frightened,
So contact your family and friends,
We want to see you smiling and don't pretend,
So stay safe and follow the guidelines,
So we have no more of these headlines,
Once again thanks for the nhs and key workers,
And remember we all have purpose!

LOCKDOWN CHALLENGE SIX: BEST FOUND POEM JOINT WINNER - DAISY BROWNE

This has never happened before!

This has never happened before, it is all new,
Maybe this all just a bad dream,
I am sure we'll wake up soon,
Who knows what will happen next,
We are walking into the unknown,
With quarantine forcing us to be all alone.

It's impossible to get it off my mind,
It has taken more than 10,000 lives,
And all I want to know is why?
But I know it's going to be just fine.
So to all the brave hero's out there.
I just want to say thank you,
For doing all you can,
Whilst putting your life at risk too.

People thought it was all a joke,
That it was just a hoax,
Trump made up a random cure.
I bet now he feels a bit unsure,

But one day, everything will be back how it was,
Before the chaos and trauma,
And one day it will be alright,
Everybody will be able to socialise,
One day we will not be in fear of the worst,
And we can go out and explore the earth.

LOCKDOWN CHALLENGE FOUR: BEST VE DAY COMMEMORATION IDEA

Emma Allen produced a booklet full of ideas for celebrating VE Day. We've reproduced a couple of the pages here:



OXFORD UNIVERSITY SHORT STORY SUCCESS

FRENCH:

Je cours. Je n'ai pas beaucoup de temps. Je bessin de le faire avant ils réalisent je suis parti. J'arrive à le pont. H y a les voitures au-dessous de moi. Il y a l'excès de vitesse le long de l'autoroute. J'arrive à la barrière. J'escalade. Je saute. Je me réveille. Je retourne à le pont. J'arrive à la barrière. J'escalade. Je saute. Je me réveille. Je retourne à la pont. J'entends un moteur vrombissement. Un camion vient a moi. Il me frappe. Je ne vois rien. Certaines choses vous ne pouvez pas échappé.

ENGLISH:

I run. I do not have much time. I need to do it before they realise I am gone. I reach the bridge. There are cars below me speeding along the motorway. I read the barrier. I climb. I jump. I wake. I run back to the bridge. I reach the barrier. I climb. I jump. I wake. I run back to the bridge. I hear an engine. A lorry comes towards me. It hits me. I see nothing. Some things you cannot escape.



Jonathan with his certificate from Oxford University.