

February  
2021

# NEEV TIMES

## Revival

Issue no.  
22

I know a place where the  
sun is like gold,  
And the cherry blooms  
burst with snow,  
And down underneath is  
the loveliest nook,  
Where the four-leaf  
clovers grow.

But you must have hope,  
and you must have faith,  
You must love and be  
strong – and so—  
If you work, if you wait,  
you will find the place  
Where the four-leaf  
clovers grow.

**Extract from 'Four-Leaf  
Clover'**  
By Ella Higginson



"I dive into the future, but I'm blinded by the sun, I'm reborn in every moment, so who knows what I'll become?" 2020 was a year like no other, and in the way that seasons cycle through year after year, we often find ourselves looking for a similar fresh start. With this edition, we hope to foster new ideas, individual dignity, and a renewed self-interest. The design is inspired by the renaissance: a period during which humanity was ambitious to seize the beauty of the world as it truly is.

*"It was the joy of admiration and of one's own ability,  
growing together"-Ayn Rand*

This artwork symbolizes the beginning of a new era with the new year. This piece aims to illustrate the connection that we have developed with the novel digital world during these times; times during which we came together as a community to persevere and grow. The color scheme and style were influenced by artwork from the Renaissance-era, however, I also included elements that represent the modern age that we live in.

**Gauri Padmanabhan (G10)**

**Sneak Peek :**  
Survival Kits, Words of  
Wisdom, Lessons from  
2020, and so much more!

# LEADERSHIP SPEAK

## Leadership Speak

### A Watershed Moment

12th March 1930, a sixty-year-old dhoti clad man led a march with several dozen followers on a trek of some 240 miles to the coastal town of Dandi in Gujarat. Through the historic Dandi March, Gandhiji communicated the message of Swaraj to his audience in India and abroad. 90 years since, another march made history on Indian soil: the march of the migrant laborers. If the Salt March of 1930 symbolized *freedom from exploitation*, what does the Migrant March of 2020 symbolize? COVID-19 has exposed the existing inequalities like never before, chief among them is the education of more than 1.5 billion students (according to a report published by UNESCO) whose learning has been hampered due to school closures. Can we permit this level of inequality on our shared planet? As the world is reviving the damaged economic and social systems, education needs to be at the heart of the post-COVID world. Education is a rampart against inequalities.

Guy Claxton in his book, 'What is the Point of School', expounds education as "a tale of trials and adventure, of learning derring-do and learning heroism". Numerous narratives can be woven of the derring-do and heroism of our educators and students as they maneuvered through uncharted waters of remote learning. The renewal of education in the post COVID world needs to focus on the social interaction and well-being of individuals. The pandemic has made us realize the importance of the physical space of school as the locus of learning. School is the place where we understand the 'global tapestry of being human'. Equipped with our enhanced understanding of instructional approaches, now is the time for educators to engage in deep reflection on the curriculum as learners have become bold, resilient, resourceful, and creative. With the novel coronavirus forcing education to digitize fast, it is hard to imagine a future where online learning is not a core component of teaching and learning. In the face of adversities, we need to be optimistic about the dramatic situation and build narratives for what the new reality could look like. The pandemic needs to be considered as a watershed event to build a more resilient and courageous education system for the future.



I find myself relishing the noisy classrooms; the blue, black, white, pink sneakers; the hurried footsteps in the corridors; the gleaming eyes behind the masked faces; the unkempt hair; and the bag packs hanging awkwardly off their shoulders. I feel happy, and I feel alive to see my students back in school.

**Gouri Kar**  
Head of Middle School

## EDITORIAL

# Editorial

### The Modern-Day Renaissance Man

*Does history make heroes, or do heroes make history? Are we products of our circumstances, are we victims of fate, or do we control our destiny?*

The Renaissance was a time of rebirth: an era during which some of the greatest thinkers, authors, scientists, and artists in human history thrived. However, crediting their achievements to their times is a soft explanation at best. In the world that we currently live in, we too find ourselves amid a comparable revolution where new thinking and values are spearheading across every industry and sector. This era has given rise to individuals that question, challenge, and shift our ideas on what it means to be human, and as a society, we have the license and ability to be thought-provokers and agents of change. Essentially, we are the modern Renaissance Men.

The concept of a Renaissance Man was developed from the sentiment expressed by Leon Battista Alberti that "a man can do all things if he will." This embodied the basic principles of Renaissance Humanism: a movement that realized man's limitless capacity for development. It led to the notion that men must try to embrace all knowledge and push their limits to reach new heights. Leonardo da Vinci, revered for his creative ingenuity, is often described as the typical Renaissance Man as he demonstrated qualities, skills, and traits required to succeed in today's increasingly changing world: lifelong learning, practical exploration, curiosity, and awareness. While we can't hop into a time machine, head back to 15th-century Florence, and gain mastery of fresco painting, ancient Greek philosophy, and civic scale architecture, we most definitely can be the Renaissance Men of today. Therefore, when asked if history makes heroes or heroes make history, I would say it's the latter.

*Note: The editorial represents the views of the Neev Times Editorial Board and is written by the editor. It is informed by research and certain longstanding values.*

# PTA Corner

## Pupae to Butterfly? - Not Quite Yet

I am inspired by my son's current UOI unit 'The Life Cycle,' and it seems a befitting metaphor for the metamorphosis Neev Academy is entering with face-to-face classes. Certainly, there is much jubilation for this stage because it signifies an environment that is both comforting and known; this after months of our dalliance with a creepy fellow known only as Corona. After these arduous months, we have finally broken through our cocoon. There is hope for a flutter of a wing to emerge, finally broken free from the shackles of home quarantine. The vaccine now provides some hope to regain a footing in the world we once knew.

Awareness on all fronts is already known to us: mask, sanitizer and distancing. That should be easy enough. What will be a challenge for Neev students is that their physical space, chock-full of memories and denied them for all this time, is a tantalizing reality! Here is where the protocol for abiding by the precautionary measures will be a challenge. How to hone in on the notion that one-for-all is all-for-one? Elaborating on this point is Dr. Vin Diwakar, Director for London, NHS, stating, that "this is the biggest health emergency to face [the UK] since WWII, breaking the rules is like switching on a light in the middle of a blackout in a [German] blitzkrieg. It doesn't just put you at risk in your house, it puts the whole of your community at risk." But let's face it, seeing someone that has been a virtual being, frazzled with a digital interface, the tendency will be to run up to them, and hug them, or give a high five or elbow bump. Where's the "all" when your BFF is standing in front of you?

Ultimately, it's better to be sensible and not throw caution to the wind. The butterfly may want to emerge strong and reckless. But it is better to heed the temperament of the wind when the cocoon is cracked and act accordingly, in alignment with our environment. Remember the butterfly and the formidable journey ahead, so open your wings slowly.

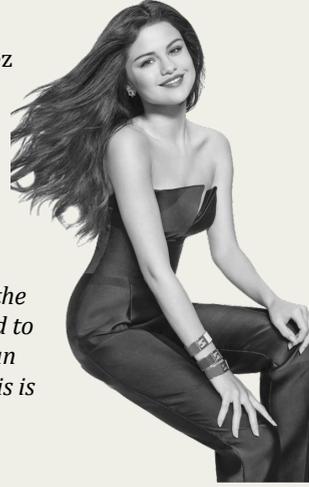
Veronica Devos (PTA Member)

# Hand me the AUX

*"Music cleanses the understanding; inspires it, and lifts it into a realm which it would not reach if it were left to itself." -Henry Ward Beecher*

These are three of our favorite tracks about revivals and new beginnings. You can either search these songs up or scan the Spotify code provided.

Revival  
Selena Gomez



*"Reaching for the truth, not afraid to lose; more than just survival, this is my revival".*

Rise Up  
Andra Day

*"It feels like it's getting hard to breathe, but I promise we'll take the world to its feet".*



*"Little darling, the smiles returning to the faces, it feels like years since it's been here".*



Here Comes the Sun  
The Beatles



# Buckets of Popcorn

Who doesn't enjoy a good movie to end the week? We sure do! These three films are our top picks for you. While we have made a sincere effort to ensure that the content is appropriate for the school community, please follow the age guidelines (and your parent's approval)!



Soul

Age 8+ (Review & Age Rating)

*"I'm just afraid that if I died today my life would have amounted to nothing."*



Mulan (2020)

Age 11+ (Review & Age Rating)

*"When employed correctly, four ounces can move a thousand pounds".*



Wonder Woman (1984)

Age 12+ (Review & Age Rating)

*"Sometimes you can't see what you're learning until you come out the other side".*

# Between the Pages

Between the Pages

## The Perks of Being a Wallflower

Novel by Stephen Chbosky

This novel, *The Perks of Being a Wallflower* is a contemporary novel about what it's like to grow up in high school. It follows Charlie, the teenage protagonist of the story, after a traumatizing experience that took place a few months: his best friend's suicide. Charlie enters the overwhelming world of high school, alone and vulnerable; the only refuge he finds is writing letters to a certain "friend" as he calls it.

The narrative of this story is beautifully weaved through these letters, as he navigates through unusual friendships and situations. Stephen Chbosky portrays one of the most crucial, yet the most confusing aspects of our lives in a raw, and real manner, and that's what makes the book so special. Charlie also suffers from an unhealthy mental state, the cause of which is revealed towards the resolution. The book's high regard for mental health and its importance makes it a necessary read. Despite being published in the late '90s the *Perks of Being a Wallflower* also explores taboo subjects such as LGBTQ+ relationships.

The most memorable part of this story is its characters. It was magical to see them transform, and turn into a different person at the end of the year. I loved how the authors didn't make the characters one-dimensional and didn't have the same cliché characteristics that stuck until the end of the book. Rather, distinct bits of their personalities were revealed as the plot thickened. Surprises like these, are sure to keep you hooked until the very last page.

**Mihika Gupta (G9B)**



## Where the Mountain Meets the Moon

Novel by Grace Lin

This is a story, set a very long time ago, is about a girl who lived with her mother and father. They were quite poor and lived in a dry and barren village called Fruitless Mountain. The girl dreamt of making her family prosperous because she saw her parents grapple every day. Even though they struggled, her father was always positive and enthusiastic and told her legends and stories every night.

One day, her dad told her a story about a man called the Old Man of the Moon who knew everything: the past, present, future, and can answer any questions. The girl was not able to forget the story and believed that the Old Man of the Moon would help her and her family. So one morning, she set out to go and find him. On the way, she meets interesting creatures and faces a challenge upon her arrival that she has to use her wit to overcome.

I loved this book because it was fiction yet seemed realistic. I also relished all the different stories that the girl's father tells her. I would recommend this book because it is very interesting and has many details that hook you on.

**Kabir Dandapani (G4B)**

## The Witch Boy

Graphic Novel by Molly Ostertag

In Aster's family, girls are raised to be witches, while boys grow up to be shapeshifters. It has been this way for many generations, however, However, Aster is drawn towards practicing witchcraft and still hasn't shifted. His gender identity did not match the norms, and his family's disapproval made him unhappy. Hence, he was forced to hide his magic. He finds comfort in an unlikely friendship with a non-magical girl, Charlie. They help each other a lot. Aster also receives a mysterious offer of help with shape-shifting. Suddenly, not one or two, but three boys go missing during shape-shifting lessons. Aster decides to take action. Can Aster help his family or damage its reputation like his great uncle?

Ostertag weaves a heart-warming tale, rich with illustrations. Her central message is that you don't have to fit a certain mold to be great and valued.

**Nirbhav Naveen (G4C)**

# Let's Talk

## Opinions on How 2020 Changed our Lives

This past year has taught us more about ourselves and the world around us than we could ever want to know. From being catapulted out of our sense of normalcy to navigating classes from home, 2020 has changed all of us. What do the students of Neev Academy think? Let's talk!

In the year 2020,  
There was quite a lot of mess,  
For the world had stopped,  
Screached to a halt,  
As work-from-home became the default,  
Hoarding groceries was on the boom,  
And all our learning was on Zoom.

In March the only task,  
Was to buy a mask,  
And wear it till covid lasts,  
In the lockdown,  
Dishes, mopping and chopping was a trend,  
That seemed to never end.

Many of our near and dear ones were away,  
So we learned to hug them the online way,  
As time passed,  
With patience, kindness, and prayer,  
Mother Earth also cleaned the air.

As time turns its wheel,  
Humans have begun to heal,  
And now the world has restarted.

**Ira Dwivedi (G4B)**

Everyone, at some point in time, has dreamt of being a hero. We see it in the wars and plagues and crusades we've bought upon ourselves. Someone who could survive everything the world threw against them, whether it was Batman or Achilles or Gandhiji. As the ancient Greeks would say, these people seemed to be made purer than the rest. After reading these stories, I assumed the win would be easy. Heroes would rise and conquer as they always had. We would win. We have all grown up on myths of heroes, but during these unprecedented times, there were seemingly none. This forced me to let go of the fantasy and look at reality as it was. I thought it would be horrifying. I was wrong. I saw my best friend who never failed to make me smile every day. I saw my mum who balanced work and home and found time to go on five-kilometer walks with me every day. I saw our teachers, relentlessly continuing with our courses and not giving up even when the going seemed tough. These people might not make it into legends or poems or history books, but they are heroes all the same.

They are what heroes are made of.

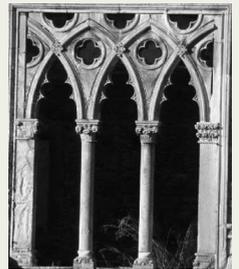
**Aditi Magesh (G9B)**

# Hall of Fame



**Daksh Sarawgi  
(G8B)**

Winner of Neev  
Runterland



**Nia Nagal (G6A)**

Participated in a  
national cooking  
competition and  
won the 'Special  
Prize' for the most  
spectacular dish



**Abhay Avinash  
(G4C)**

Won first place at  
'SCRAT-A-THON'



**Arav Krishnan  
(G9B)**

Second EP has been  
released to all major  
music retailers and  
has received good  
reviews from verified  
metal music  
reviewers



# Student's Voice



## Revival

When she looked down,  
She saw an age's worth of scars  
and bruises,  
She traced them and remembered  
the stories behind those callouses,  
She wondered if finally, she was in  
the clear.

But then she thought about the  
fights she fought,  
And though they helped, how they  
are far from won.  
And how no matter the pain of the  
past,  
She can know not what is to come.

She beamed with pride at her  
victories,  
However small they may have  
been.  
And though the past year had been  
tough,  
Countless good memories will live  
within.

She looked back down at her scars,  
And knew she would see them  
fade.  
Yet, they no longer caused her  
sorrow,  
They reminded her of the person  
they made.

How she now was stronger,  
Than she ever thought she could  
be.  
How though this year felt longer,  
She will always remember this  
story.

Because, to her, this story was not  
one of pain,  
Of remorse or hate or anger.  
It was a difficult year with storms  
and rain,  
And it was a year of survival.

Yet now what will come,  
She knows it will be her revival.

**Seiya Mutreja (G9A)**

## Western Media Needs to Start Taking South Asians Seriously

*We are not your Bollywood fantasy stereotypes. It's time to stop treating South Asian characters as tired tropes.*

Growing up Indian in early 2000s America, it was hard for me to find any representation of my culture, whether it be on TV or in the books I read. I clung to any slightly brown-skinned character I could find, regardless of whether or not they were Indian because I was just happy to see someone who looked like me. As time went on, canonically Indian characters started popping up more frequently, and I reveled in seeing characters like Baljeet from *Phineas and Ferb* and Ravi from *Jessi* because finally, there was someone who was Indian, like me. And maybe this was enough for my eight-year-old self, but looking back almost 10 years later, I can't help but feel disappointed that this was what I had to settle for.

To read the full article, please click [here](#)

**Aditi Kanchibhatta (G12)**



## The Cycle of Souls

It was dark, dark, and dry. The room, wherever we were, illuminated by six candles lit by the palms of their hands, one in between each of us and one exactly in the center. The light flickered back and forth and shadows danced across their faces, whatever they were. The first one lifted its sleeves and exposed grainy, white skeletal arms, the veins protruding recklessly from its hands. In the other, it held a knife and slowly traced its hand before slicing cleanly through the skin, without a flinch, dripping blood all around the entirety of the circle created by our bodies. My eyes wandered around the room and I noticed an unsettling cloth woven doll of some sort, my stomach dropped. Its head slowly, almost as if it wasn't moving at all, turned. I blinked. The doll was back in its original position against the wall. "Child. You must never look that way. Do you understand me?"

To read the full story, please click [here](#)

**Samah Syed (G11)**



## Slavery Still Exists in India

*India earned its freedom in 1947. Or so we thought.*

In 1947, after centuries of struggle, India claimed its independence from the British. This meant we no longer found ourselves in the clutches of the Western world, and we could act and think as we wished. One would think we would relish the opportunity, and do everything we could to protect our culture and autonomy. In reality, however, this is far from the truth. Although we broke away from Britain in a physical sense, mentally, it seems as though we still harbor a slave-like mentality towards the west, with much of the population infatuated with having a "Western" way of life, as though luxury could not come in other forms. This mentality manifests itself in countless forms, appearing frequently throughout our everyday lives.

To read the full article, please click [here](#)

**Sudhanva Bharadwaj (G12)**



## The Sports Show

### Out of the League

There are two types of people in the world. One who follows the procedure and is right in what they are working on. Others are the ones who do not follow normal procedures but they leave a mark for others to follow. The point to observe here is both are right in what they do. The only difference is first one is seen as right when the work is in progress whereas, the other is understood right after the outcome. So, think in your mind deeply and understand what type of leader are you? Now think of the most impressive personalities of mankind. I am sure whoever comes to your mind is from the ones who took a different path and were understood only after the outcome. So, keep working, keep thinking till you become out of the league.

**Mr. Gurpreet Singh (PYP Head of PHE)**

## Student Leadership

### Renaissance at Neev

Whenever I hear the word revival, the image of a phoenix being reborn from the ashes appears before me. The concept of rebirth or revival is directly related to the Renaissance period, a time that has never failed to fascinate me. I decided to integrate this fascination with my vision for the Student Government. I want to create a renaissance-like atmosphere for artists, musicians, scientists, writers, programmers, dancers, sportsmen, etc at Neev. Much like the original renaissance in Florence long ago, I want to create a rebirth of interest in talent-based skills at Neev. With the rest of the Executive Council, I am working towards creating a cultural renaissance through the different events and competitions we organize. Whether it is doing Spirit Week, quiz competitions, or the Neev-A-Comedy fundraising event, the Student Government hopes that such events would give rise to true Renaissance men and women who have a multitude of diverse interests that they can satisfy through such programs/competitions. We, the Executive Council, constantly strive to include a variety of competitions, each different from the other, so that students do not feel restricted by one-dimensional categories that may limit them to conventional stereotypes expected of them.

**Navya Sahay (G11)**

## Teacher Spotlight

### Mr. Neill Braganza - The Journey of an Artist and Educator

*Mr. Neill Braganza, our zealous music teacher, who always has some sick tunes ready to play on his guitar, tells us that teaching is his calling, and music is his passion. When asked about his journey as an artist and educator, this is what he had to say.*

My grandmother and mother would always say that I had it in me to teach, but this is something I never understood until one of my mom's friend's son wanted to learn the guitar. He learned pretty quickly, and I realized it was a channel for me to put out my knowledge, and that's when I started teaching. Teaching made me recognize that I was getting better at the instrument myself because I was learning concepts, and practicing them. It was rather a revelation for me.

I come from a family of music listeners, but not musicians per se. My dad had a huge music library and every morning just before he would leave for work, he would put on a track. It was in grade 4 that I told him that music was something I wanted to do; he made it his mission to ensure that I take it forward. And here I am, living that dream!

To listen to the full interview, please click [here](#)



## Words of Wisdom

"They say we all are like a bird that flies. The only difference is that we all fly at different levels. But, we all do it in the best way we can, in a different way, a beautiful way, in a unique way! Most people give up easily but what they do not realize is that the only way we grow is when we face challenges. So, it is OK to have a day that does not go your way. It's OK to not get it right. It is OK if you just need to take a moment to breathe. It is OK to ask for help. It is OK if you are going slower than you imagined. But, just know as long as you are moving towards your dream, then you are doing something right. Remember, when you look at a mirror, what reflects should be a heart full of love, an ear ready to listen and a hand ready to help others, for what the world needs the most is a happy heart and a beautiful soul."

**-Ms. Madonna Joy**

"Breathe...and remember that you have managed to make sense of a year that was a challenging one for all. Remember the lessons this year has taught you: patience, empathy, grit, resilience, and perseverance. Don't focus on what you could not do and achieve, take a look at the progress you have made, and remember that sometimes the process itself is the achievement and the reward. Take a bow, all of you, because all of you have been fabulous. The new year is going to be one where you will put all that you have learned last year into practice. Don't ever give up...breathe."

**-Ms. Rukmini Sodhi**

"Be wary of too many labels. I am stressed, depressed, socially awkward, or 'not made for maths' are some such labels. The more we draw such conclusions, the more we get attached to them and eventually, might even manifest them in our lives. It is okay to feel a certain way but times change and so do these phases. Stay easy, stay committed and the moment such labels begin to stare at you, stare back at them and say shoo!"

**-Ms. Amrita Roy**

"Whirlwinds of uncertainty are passing by. We survived a collapse now time to build, rebuild and get back to winning again. The field is waiting for you all!"

**-Mr. Samrat Chakraborty**

"During these times, stay connected through words, actions, and emotions. We are born ready to be in relationships with the people around us and the environment we grow. We all need people who notice, talk, listen and respond to our emotions. Developing relationships requires us to listen and be fully present for others, thus, creating a secure attachment. Engage with intellectual and emotional connect that empowers you to deal with the rigor of day to day life."

**-Ms. Shanthi Raghunath**

"Times have been tough, things are unpredictable. Many of you have risen to the occasion and given in your best. It's in times like this that 'what we are' comes out. Try to think positive always, be in the company of people who are positive, and like to face life as it comes. Stay away from negativity. Choose the right kind of people who bring out the best in you at all times. Focus on the outcome and put in your best in the process. Remember this mantra always especially during stressful times like submissions and examinations. Remember that the battle is yours and you can do it lest you would not have been put through it."

**-Mr. Francis Chirayath**

"Stay strong by setting SMART Goals. This is not limited only to physical health but mental, emotional, and social wellness. Your goals should be specific to what you want to achieve; you should be able to track the progress to motivate yourself; it should be challenging to you but not impossible; you must be aware of your abilities and plan accordingly; give time to yourself to achieve your goal."

**-Dr. Honey Bhatia**

"Start your day with a 15-minute meditation where you focus on your breath. There are different apps for guided meditations too."

**-Ms. Aparna Joshi**

"Students, please feel free to talk to people you know and who are good listeners. This will be one of the ways to cope up with stress. Also, find time to engage yourself with a hobby or any creative pursuits."

**-Ms. Dorothy Bosco**

"If it's something you like to do, give it your 100% but if it's something you don't like to do, give it your 200%!"

**-Ms. Maitreye Tambekar**

"Life requires a balanced approach. One such balance required to grow is satisfaction vs pursuit. Be thankful for what you have at present and keep pursuing your dreams to grow further. Remember nothing is achieved without a try and if you try you are sure to learn something from the outcome."

**-Mr. Gurpreet Singh**

# Survival Kit Survival Kit

*School life is an unforgettable experience. However, it can be quite challenging at times. During these times, it helps to have someone to turn to for guidance and support. While teachers and parents are always available, our very own seniors have years of first-hand experience and an armload of tips up their sleeves. Hopefully, this 'survival kit' offers you some advice to help ace your courses!*

## For the PYP Students

As a PYP student, it is very important to start building on skills that will become the basis of your MYP journey. These skills include reading and research. Developing good reading habits and setting reading goals for yourself is an excellent way to expand your literacy skills while improving vocabulary and enhancing your ability to be imaginative.

As you will come to find out, English in the MYP is a skill-based subject, meaning simply knowing content will not suffice. Applying your prior knowledge and the tools acquired in class, however, will allow you to both understand and enjoy the subject. Furthermore, developing good reading habits at a young age will likely carry forward throughout your life, benefitting you not only in the MYP but in the years beyond as well. The second important skill you should focus on is research. MYP students are expected to display information and media literacy skills while showcasing academic honesty. To build this, one can practice making research questions and finding relevant and reliable information on the same. The ability to tell whether a source is reliable will be especially useful in I&S and science classes. Hence, building on reading and research skills when young will create a strong foundation for you to develop in the coming years.

**Gauri Padmanabhan (G10)**

## For the MYP Students

Our lives are a series of choices; some are trivial, like choosing a breakfast cereal, while others are relatively more significant, like choosing which subjects you want to study. While this is a choice that may seem like a daunting decision to make as a teenager, it is an important one. Through your years in MYP, you have to make three such choices: the art you immerse yourself in, the sciences you explore, and eventually the subjects you study in DP.

Starting with the arts, I would suggest, chose the one that you genuinely enjoy the most. Do keep in mind that the arts extend beyond just practical exploration, so pick something that you are curious to learn more about. For some of you, this may be your last opportunity to explore this subject in such a manner, so make the most of it. When it comes to the sciences, taking more than the recommended number of sciences is an option, however, I say with experience that it will be extremely challenging and time-consuming; weigh the pros and cons before going down that ambitious path. Lastly, with DP subject choices, try striking a balance between subjects that reflect your abilities, strengths, and interests; taking subjects that you are passionate about makes the journey a whole lot easier. This is of course while keeping in mind your long-term plans. That being said, remember that even if a subject doesn't line up with your academic goals but you're still keen to learn it, the IB is a good opportunity to try it out. After all, your time in school is the best time for self-exploration. Reach out to your seniors, and I'm certain that they would be happy to share first-hand experiences with their subjects.

**Kriti Sarawgi (G11)**

## For the DP Students

The IB Extended Essay, or EE, is a mini-thesis written under the supervision of an IB advisor, which counts toward your IB Diploma. You would be required to choose a research question as a topic, conduct the research independently, then write an essay on your findings. While the process can be grueling at times, it is a wonderful opportunity to do an in-depth investigation about a topic that genuinely interests you.

Firstly, you can't expect to write a compelling essay if you're not devoted and intrigued by the topic on which you're writing. Ensure that your topic gives you a good scope of research, and is something that you would enjoy devoting a good amount of time to. Secondly, this is a long-term research paper, and while you may be comforted by the fact that you have a lot of time to finish it, do not procrastinate. To avoid last-minute stress and produce work of good quality, get organized, break down the process into smaller goals, and set aside time every week to work on your EE. When it comes to your advisor, remember that the IB only allows them to *suggest* improvements to the essay, however, as they are experts in your chosen subject, make sure you reach out to them and take make the best use of their advice. On that note, expect criticism and take feedback in stride; it is only going to make your draft stronger. Lastly, use effective research skills and pay close attention to your sources. Ensure that your work is original and your arguments are well supported. In conclusion, while the extended essay can be challenging, if you are dedicated and plan well, you would find that this journey can be quite pleasant and fulfilling.

**Compilation of Advice**

# Campus Buzz

## In Conversation with Ellen Hagen

Ellen Hagen is an acclaimed Young Adult author, writer, performer, and educator who joined us on World Read-Aloud Day from New York to read to us. She is the recipient of a New York Foundation for the Arts fellowship in poetry and has received grants from the Northern Manhattan Arts Alliance and the Kentucky Foundation for Women. She is also the director of the poetry and theatre departments at the DreamYard Project and directs their International Poetry Exchange Program with Japan, South Korea, and the Philippines.

The first excerpt read to us, from "Reckless, Glorious Girl", surrounds 12-year-old Beatrice Miller who lives in Kentucky with her parents and grandmother with whom she shares her name. Through the novel, Beatrice goes on a journey of self-discovery and blossoms into her sense of identity. The novel, written in verse, is about all the good and bad that come with middle school, growing up as a girl, and the strength of family that gets you through it. The enticing performance from Hagen left the audience yearning for more and asking questions like whom does Bea become?

The second excerpt was from a stirring and empowering read about friendship and what it means to be a woman today. A book called "Watch Us Rise" was written in both poetry and prose. The book is about how best friends Jasmine and Chelsea use their art to speak to the world. Tired of how young women are treated even at their 'progressive' New York City high school, they decide to start a Women's Rights Club. Through the supporters as well as the trolls, Jasmine and Chelsea change the sexist and racist mindset of millions.

As Hagen shared her stories with our school, every word yielded power and expression. There was a sense of celebration in each verse. Something came alive in the text that impacted the audience greatly. Her work often dealt with "teenagers being teenagers", a common thread through humanity. Ellen wrote about themes like finding ones' self so people would be able to connect with her work. Especially since most of her work was written in verse, it was important to Ellen that her audience read her work in a way that spoke to them. She left us off with this last piece of advice: *"If you want to create art, look to the people around you"*.

## Lara Nambisan (G8B)



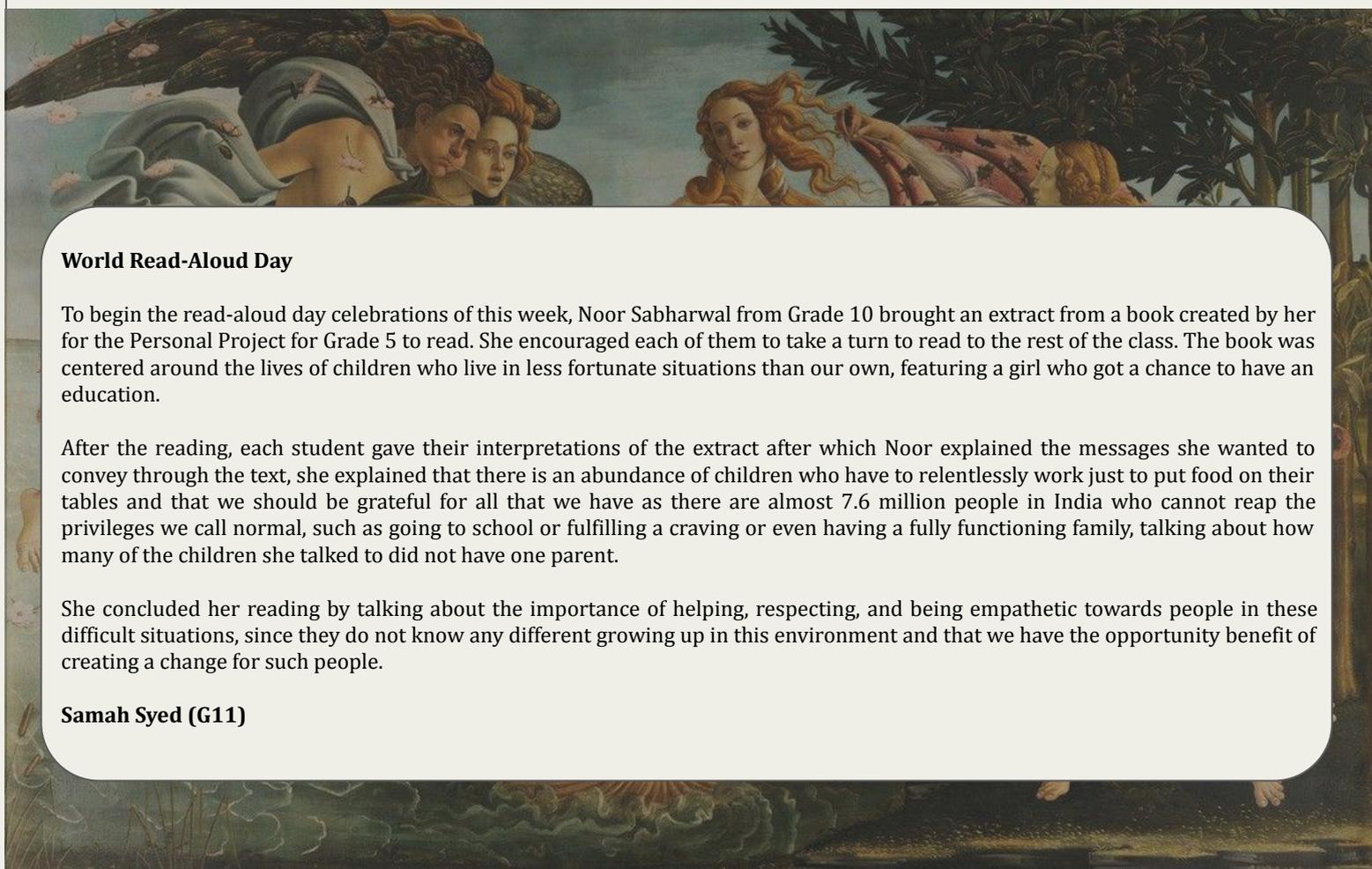
## World Read-Aloud Day

To begin the read-aloud day celebrations of this week, Noor Sabharwal from Grade 10 brought an extract from a book created by her for the Personal Project for Grade 5 to read. She encouraged each of them to take a turn to read to the rest of the class. The book was centered around the lives of children who live in less fortunate situations than our own, featuring a girl who got a chance to have an education.

After the reading, each student gave their interpretations of the extract after which Noor explained the messages she wanted to convey through the text, she explained that there is an abundance of children who have to relentlessly work just to put food on their tables and that we should be grateful for all that we have as there are almost 7.6 million people in India who cannot reap the privileges we call normal, such as going to school or fulfilling a craving or even having a fully functioning family, talking about how many of the children she talked to did not have one parent.

She concluded her reading by talking about the importance of helping, respecting, and being empathetic towards people in these difficult situations, since they do not know any different growing up in this environment and that we have the opportunity benefit of creating a change for such people.

## Samah Syed (G11)



# Lessons from 2020

*Looking back at the past year is paradoxically exhausting and energizing at the same time. 2020 was seemingly defined by the COVID-19 pandemic, but the year has also yielded unmatched opportunities for personal growth. It was a year that forced us to redefine ourselves outside of our routines and face the future with a new sense of purpose and much-needed hope. As we walk out of 2020, we take with us lessons that will hopefully change our lives for the better. I wish I could say that they are easy and painless to learn, but you know what they say: no rain, no flowers.*

## Take Time to Fill your Cup

For many of us, it's so easy to pour into others. Interestingly enough, the harder challenge is finding the time, the courage, and the willingness to fill your own cup. A year in isolation has taught us that taking a few mindful minutes each day for ourselves is exceedingly beneficial. Whether it is reading a novel, getting overdressed just to dance in your room, or making a cup of fancy coffee, spending time with yourself is important. This will help you realize that your success, happiness, and peace are not contingent upon what happens in the lane next to you. Rather, give yourself grace, and run your own race. Additionally, this time away from our friends and family has taught us to appreciate the people who are close to us, but more importantly, it is taught us to choose people who feel like home. While we may not always be able to control our circumstances, we can control who is with us for the journey. For many of us, spending time alone can be a daunting experience. Society and social media don't help us with this either as being alone can often carry a social stigma, implying isolation, or being on the outside. During this pandemic, we have come to realize the value of having real human interaction but even more importantly, having meaningful experiences with ourselves; take time out for yourself and be comfortable in your own company.

## The Little Things Matter

Before 2020, I never really understood why people said that the little things matter the most. I would pass it off as yet another quote from the internet, that had little to no meaning. However, with this year and the obstacles that it brought with it, I began to appreciate a lot of things: I began to appreciate kindness, I began to appreciate people checking up on me, I began to appreciate all that I have. The impact of a random text, a meticulously crafted playlist, or a Zoom message -the little things- has had the largest impact. It's comforting to know that you are never really alone. Whether it is your family, best friends, therapist, the person in class who always makes you laugh so hard that you have to turn your camera off, they all served as reminders that you never have to walk through anything alone. Working and studying from home quickly became monotonous, but we had to find a way to find magic in the mundane. Small acts of kindness, for others and even yourself, can completely transform your day.

## Time is Precious

Weeks will go by, and your hair will grey; time is precious, don't let it pass away. This year has made us realize that almost everything is as fleeting as a dream, and the lives we choose to live are determined by how we choose to spend each day. Whether it is trying dancing or playing chess, the opportunities to try things that you may never have considered doing before are endless. Finding new hobbies and discovering new interests can be both refreshing and rewarding. Remember that old dogs can learn new tricks! That being said, it isn't easy to start a journey with something new. More often than we would like to admit, we find ourselves procrastinating on the simplest of tasks. 2020 was a year of isolation where many people seemed to feel out of control, overwhelmed, and exhausted. It has become extremely apparent that we must learn to make the most of our time and value each second.

That being said, do remember your productivity doesn't determine your worth; some of the best moments are not marked with exhaustion, but rather with stillness. Just make a genuine effort to look at each day as an opportunity to reach your goals and better yourself as a person.



To read the full article about procrastination by Gauri Padmanabhan, please click [here](#)

## Neev Circles

Inspired by TED Circles, Neev Circles is a community to engage in conversations about big ideas. It is an opportunity to share perspectives, and engage in thought-provoking discussions with your friends, teachers, and family.

We have specially curated a list of TED talks for you, pertaining to the theme of revival. We hope that the videos serve as stimulating provocations and you enjoy watching them!

**Eduardo Briceño:**

How to get better at the things you care about



**Rev. William Barber & Rev. Liz Theoharis:**

A call for a moral revival



**Yannick Roudaut:**

How today's truths shape tomorrow's possibilities



**Tim Ferriss:**

Why you should define your fears instead of your goals



**Jia Jiang:**

What I learned from 100 days of rejection



**Karen Armstrong:**

Let's revive the Golden Rule



**Shonda Rhimes:**

My year of saying yes to everything



**Emily Esfahani Smith:**

There's more to life than being happy



**Astro Teller:**

The unexpected benefit of celebrating failure



As always, Neev Times is dedicated towards improving, and staying connected with its readers. We would love to hear your thoughts and feedback about this edition. Please feel free to reach out us at [neevtimes@neevschools.com](mailto:neevtimes@neevschools.com).



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