

LEADERSHIP SPEAK

Covid disruption caused uncertainty, change and anxiety. From this, we have learned that impactful learning communities can be built in any mode of learning by focussing on relationships and well-being. Pastoral care for our learners during these difficult times was vital. Educators at Neev create safe and effective learning environments keeping five elements in mind:

1) **Relationships building and wellbeing:** Our fundamental belief, 'Learning is active, social and is enhanced by collaboration and interaction!', encouraged teachers to model and practice kindness, communication, and mutual respect. As learning takes place in different ways (depending on abilities, preferences, and interests) teachers acknowledged that the transition between online and in-person varies for each child. Teachers also realized that human interaction and conversations bring the class alive for students, and had to consider—*How can students connect with one another online? How do we 'humanize' learning? What might the role of adults as teachers, facilitators, and mentors look like in each of those spaces?*

2) **Reimagining learning spaces:** Online learning is not a replication of face-to-face learning; rather, it is an opportunity to reimagine learning spaces. We helped students connect to a sense of purpose, express autonomy, and work towards mastery in hybrid spaces. Teachers used various tools and strategies to help students locate their intrinsic motivation and keep their interests alive by setting goals, reflecting, and relearning.

3) **Flexibility:** Learning and working remotely looks different for each family, student, and educator. The online learning model at Neev helped educators provide the necessary flexibility. Our goal was for learners to feel secure and valued by building cohesion and a sense of belonging. We also supported learners academically, socially, and emotionally by establishing routines to provide safety. Choice, voice, and flexibility are evident in classroom settings.

4) **Assessment and feedback-** Online assessment is different—instead of testing/quizzing students (although those can be effective at times), teachers had their students demonstrate the real application of their learning. Teachers found new ways to summatively assess learning through culminating projects, portfolios, peer-to-peer feedback, and teacher feedback.

5) **Balance:** Finally, balance is fundamental to keeping our online and hybrid communities healthy. Teachers maintain a balance between synchronous and asynchronous classes, connections and collaboration, choice and structure, and between personalized learning and direct teaching.

This all is possible because of our strong belief in the image of our children—competent, capable, and resilient learners—and our consistent effort to provide them with an environment in which to flourish!

- Kalpita Jain, Head Primary School - North Campus



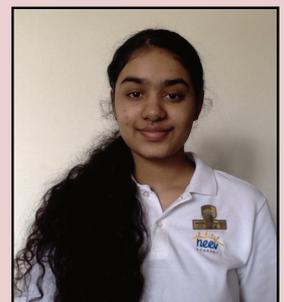
STUDENT GOVERNMENT SPEAK

The theme of safe environments is extremely important in order to create a culture where students are not afraid to be themselves.

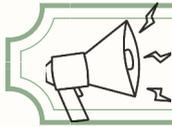
Creating an inclusive environment has been one of the primary concerns of the Student Government as we have witnessed a decline in enthusiasm and motivation in the student body as a result of online learning. With continued online learning, students are socially isolated and lack opportunities to showcase the unique aspects of their personalities.

We combatted this by highlighting inclusivity & openness during spirit week, the talent show and our art auction. The talent show catered to the interests of several of students by accepting submissions in comedy, drama, music, dance, visual arts and literature. We encouraged students who tend to shy away from participating to be themselves—completely. Our aim is to create more such opportunities for the student body by recreating successful initiatives such as the art auction. Despite the limitations of the online mode, ICLs were introduced for students to be able to create their own clubs, learn about leadership, and pursue their interests. The excitement around these new clubs is thrilling, and we hope to see this trend continue.

The culture at Neev has always been one that promotes vibrant, open discussions and encourages students to help each other. In an attempt to uphold this culture, the Student Government is promoting interaction between grades through advice sessions and aims to camaraderie amongst the houses in the future.



- Gauri Padmanabhan, Programming Director



FACE-OFF!

The **face-off** competition encouraged students to pair up with a friend and write opposing arguments for a given topic. This is the winning entry!



Are Non-Fungible Tokens (NFTs) legitimate and worth investing in?

"Its complexity breeds inefficiency"

Non-Fungible Token or NFT is a non-interchangeable unit of unique digital items. Several NFTs today are computer-generated rather than professional artists. These are often aimed to simply rake in money. Even so, the exchange of NFTs has proved to have devastating impacts on the environment. A popular NFT known as "*Space Cat*" is a GIF of a cat in a rocket heading to the moon. Its carbon footprint is estimated to be equal to an EU Resident's electricity usage for 2 months. Furthermore, the NFT universe is widely traded through a cryptocurrency known as Ethereum. Ethereum is known for its energy inefficiency and greenhouse gas emissions. Lastly, the virtual nature of the token breeds distrust. Online promotions by celebrities or influencers have caused "pump-and-dump" schemes to increase considerably. Originators encourage investors to buy an asset through false information. They then proceed to sell their own shares at an inflated value. An NFT is not a scam by definition, but its complexity breeds inefficiency and skepticism.

- Daksh Sarawgi, Grade 9

"NFTs price...from \$10 to \$10 million"

As the world relies more and more on the internet, sales of goods also transition to online mediums. However, digital art trading is very different. Between physical art and pictures of them, it is easy to distinguish the original. When digital art is published, anyone can access it for free, meaning it would have no trade value; introducing a Non-Fungible Token. NFTs use blockchain technology, storing information about the true holder of the token. Having NFTs is essentially having virtual ownership to images, videos, or audio. Designers can profit from selling NFTs that price anywhere from \$10 to \$10 million. NFTs bring smart contracts that allow the creators to set specific rules, including percent cuts on future sales. Ownership of an NFT can also help gain membership to clubs, such as the Bored Ape Yacht club. Investors could buy and sell NFTs based on trade value, like the Crypto Punk#7523, which rose from \$30 to \$11.7 million. Moreover, the investment market does not require as much knowledge or wealth as housing or stock trading.

- Rishikesh Srivatsan, Grade 9

EDITORIAL *India: A Safe Environment for Women?*

Jia Tolentino's essay *Pure Heroines* argues that literature has the power to hold up an accurate mirror to the challenges faced by women, young or old—"the stories we live and the stories we read are to some degree inseparable."

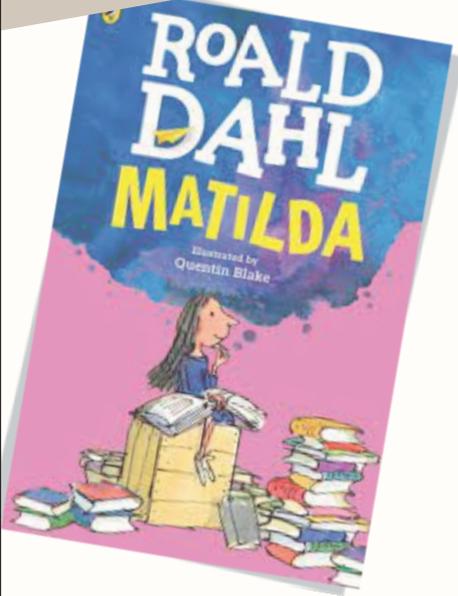
Turning to Indian literature, the Indian heroine is often placed in an oppressive, crippling society. For divorced Ammu in Arundhati Roy's *God of Small Things*, pursuing love proves to be difficult, almost deadly, in a small district in Kerala. Set in Bombay, *Feasting, Fasting* by Anita Desai illustrates Uma's suffocation in a family that values finding a "good husband" over receiving an education. The challenges of a girl in Kerala and a girl in Bombay are undoubtedly different, but they come together to question the extent to which India is a safe environment for women; are these stories inseparable from reality?

Statistics indicate that the narrative is definitely changing. In the 20 plus years since Roy and Desai's novels were published, female literacy rates have been on the rise, more women hold leadership positions, and archaic mindsets are slowly dissolving. However, two recent incidents show us that for some women, places they should feel the safest in are anything but: homes and schools.

In the past few weeks, women have been prohibited from receiving an education, a source of their empowerment, simply for wearing a hijab. The larger implication of this for India's women is that like Ammu, there are several obstacles in the pursuit of what is important to them, be it education or religion. Zooming into the primary environment of humanity, a home, India remains one of the few countries that fails to treat non-consensual sexual intercourse within a marriage as rape. While a woman could still file a report on the grounds of cruelty, there remains the matter of principle; this exception for marital rape is unconstitutional, and damages the security one should feel at home.

Both of the above matters have been brought to the attention of courts. We can only hope that in the near future, the reality for women in India diverges from literature. And when this happens, what we read, too, can reflect a better, balanced, and more equitable society.

Book Recommendations



Matilda by Roald Dahl

“Never do anything by halves if you want to get away with it. Be outrageous. Go the whole hog.”

The book *Matilda* is written by Roald Dahl and illustrated by Quentin Blake. This story is about a 4-year-old girl Matilda, her brother Michael, and their parents—Mr. and Mrs. Wormwood. Matilda is brilliant, sensitive and a quick learner. What makes her stand out is her extraordinary reading ability. Her parents are really weird. They take no interest in Matilda and treat her like a scab. Matilda finds comfort in the librarian Ms Phelps, and the class teacher Ms Honey. They create a safe environment for her to grow with the right resources and love. This book is an interesting read, with lovely illustrations and an interesting portrayal of healthy relationships.

- Samvit, Grade 1

Book Reviews

Realistic Fiction: *We were liars* by E. Lockhart (Grades 8 and above)



The Ickabog by J.K. Rowling

Do you like books about fantasy? Or do you like realistic books about love, hope, and positivity? Imagine a book with both!

Most of us know J.K. Rowling as the author of the famous Harry Potter series. But with *The Ickabog*, she has outdone herself, showing readers that safe environments play a huge role in how we feel. The book also demonstrates how our feelings affect our families, surroundings, and even the world.

The Ickabog is a story about a 'monster' of the same name. All is happy and well in the kingdom of Cornucopia, but when cruel lords lie that they saw a dangerous monster, the Ickabog, all are in fear. There is sadness everywhere and the cruel lords even collect money from the villagers for protection from the monster. This torture goes on for years and makes everyone poor and miserable. While reading, we feel very sad for all the citizens of the kingdom. When the Ickabog reproduces (called bornding), the environment around the very moment of bornding is what determines the nature of the Ickabog (baby Ickabog). If the bornding happens in a friendly environment, the baby will be friendly and if it happens in a harsh, violent, torturous environment, the baby will be violent and monster-like.

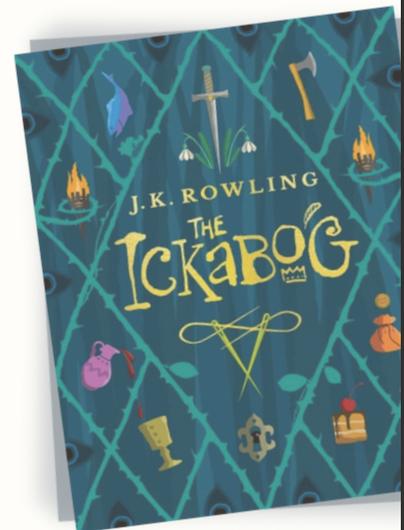
Four young children decide to resolve the situation. Will they revolt against the scared King and the cruel Lords? Will the people provide the Ickabogges with a happy or fearful environment?

- Myra Bhalla, Grade 3

Non Fiction:
Mindset by Carol Dweck

Dystopia: *The Giver* by Lois Lowry (Grades 7 and above)

Non Fiction:
Atomic Habits by James Clear



Historical Fiction:
Making Bombs for Hitler by Marsha Skrypuch

Book Spotlight

Refugee
by Alan Gratz



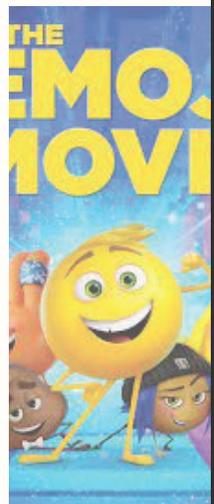
Refugee by Alan Gratz is a skilfully crafted narrative told through the eyes of 3 pre-teen characters, who live years apart, but are in the pursuit of the same things: refuge and safety.

Josef Landau is a 12-year old Jewish Boy living in 1938 Germany. After his father is arrested for his nationality and sent to a concentration camp, Josef and the rest of his family flee to Havana. Isabel Fernandez, an 11-year old, lives under the communist regime of Fidel Castro in Cuba in 1994. She flees to Miami to escape oppression and impoverishment. Mahmoud Bishara is a 12-year old Muslim boy who evades his home country of Syria after the war in 2015, and tries to find safety in Germany.

MOVIE RECOMMENDATIONS



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|-------------------------------|-------------------------|------------------------|---------------|---------------------------|
| The Babysitters Club: 13+ yrs | The Emoji Movie: 7+ yrs | Peter Rabbit 2: 7+ yrs | Lorax: 6+ yrs | Avengers Endgame: 13+ yrs |
|-------------------------------|-------------------------|------------------------|---------------|---------------------------|



The Babysitter's Club

The Baby-Sitters Club is about a group of friends who live in the fictional, suburban town of Stoney Brook, Connecticut. These friends run a local babysitting service called "The Baby-Sitters Club".

The Emoji Movie

Determined to become "normal" like the other emojis, Gene enlists the help of his handy best friend Hi-5 and the notorious code breaker emoji Jailbreak. Together, they embark on an epic "app-venture" through the apps on the phone, each its own wild and fun world, to find the Code that will fix Gene.

Peter Rabbit 2

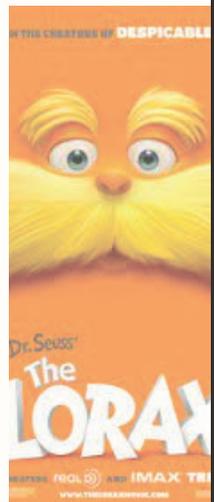
Peter and his rabbit family leave Thomas and Bea's garden for the city. When they get into trouble, Peter needs help from old friends to save the day.

- Haniyah Zubair, Grade 3

Lorax

The Lorax is a movie about a boy, Ted, who sets out to get something called a "seed", but to do that he must know the story of the Lorax. Ted lives in a city without trees and throughout the movie, we see what effect it has on the people living there. However to plant the seed he must convenience the entire city. After I watched the movie I started caring a lot for the environment around me and understanding what would happen if trees were to become extinct. I would recommend this movie to everyone, it is very interesting and has funny dialog too.

- Anika Moharir, Grade 6



Three pillars for a better world



Schools normalizing after 700 days of COVID disruptions are an opportunity to reflect on relationships in a physical world. I make the case for Acceptance, Trust, and Support

Twenty-four years ago I traveled 13,000 km for my first day at Harvard Business School to study with people who spoke in 30 different languages. I sought out Indian faces but realized that I knew more about American culture from movies, books and popular music than anyone in my class would know about India or me. Accepting the differences and valuing them was a better way to build relationships than looking for similarities.

I see similar scenes replaying at Neev in the cafeteria, bus, playground, classes, and groups meant to be teams. We justify forming groups with people like ourselves with the negativity of looking for weakness in others. But this absence of trust in the value of collaborating with the unsimilar hurts our relationships, our creativity, and our evolution. Most painfully, it hurts our ability to support each other in our growth, our pain, and our strengths.

Our collective ability to accept, trust and support makes Neev better and stronger. Of course higher multiculturalism makes it harder to exchange knowledge. But it is our differences that make the world richer more often than our similarities. Everyone has something to offer. Find it. Leave nobody behind.

A Neev preschool activity I love is the creation of books by each child on the one thing they do well enough to teach others. Our community would be better, stronger and safer if all of us did a version of this exercise everyday; finding and celebrating what each person does well. How can we trust people, support them, and see their best selves? How can we value different perspectives with an open mind, to build a community that truly believes in collaboration and friendship? These are questions that have been asked for centuries. And they have answers I hope Neev can find together.

- Kavita Gupta, Head of School

OPINION WRITING

PYP - Which global problem do you want to fight for and think deserves more attention?

The first thing that needs serious attention is PLASTIC. Even a plastic bag, for example, hurts animals. When you throw it on the road, animals, street dogs, cats come and eat it and they die. Companies such as Zerocircle and Hoopoe On a Hill have developed plastic alternatives. They decompose in mud and won't hurt animals or exist for a billion years like plastic.

Zerocircle has created a plant-based plastic alternative for uses like carry-bags. The material they use to create this is seaweed. You can eat it and it doesn't harm us or the environment!

To keep your food fresh and not use things that include plastic or cling wrap foil, Hoopoe On a Hill, developed an eco-friendly cling-wrap. They used a type of bee-wax which is put on paper and makes it a good cover that can be reused many times over, unlike plastic.

We need more companies like these to create solutions to avoid plastic and stop polluting the Earth – Save the Earth and Save Animals!

- Aarika Natarajan, Grade 3

The global problem that I think deserves the most attention is the damaging of oceans. I think the oceans deserve the most attention because they are 70% of the world. Oceans are an important source of life in the world, they contain a very large number of life forms.

Oceans are being polluted and harmed because of plastic left on beaches for oceans to swallow up. Oil also enters the water due to leaks. For example, a huge ship named Exxon Valdez dumped a large amount of oil into the ocean, harming marine life in the Prince William Sound—a small inlet in Alaska.

We can save oceans by putting our trash into dustbins and trying not to spread things that cause harm to marine life. When we protect our oceans, we protect our future.

- Sanjana Dravid, Grade 2

The global problem that I choose to fight for is hunger. One day, my Papa and I were coming home in our car and I was looking out the window. I saw a small boy who was wearing torn clothes and was asking a shopkeeper for candy. I felt sad for that boy. My Papa told me there are many children in the world who don't get food three times a day as they don't have the money for it. I thought I should do something to help those poor people because I felt all children should have food three times a day. I decided that I will give the money that I'm saving in my piggy bank to those in need so that they can have food. While I don't have enough money to give to all the people, at least I can help some and also do my part by not wasting food.

- Venpa Senthamil, Grade 1

Grade 6 and above - The Roaring Twenties (1920s) were a time of innovation, prosperity, and novelty? Do you expect changes like this in the coming decade? If yes, what kind?

The Roaring 20's were a time of innovation and prosperity. Though, this was also the time of WW1 and armed warfare was at its highest. Many countries in Europe innovated and built tanks, and improved on several inventions. This type of innovation will derive the world again. Not for warfare, but for a rapid growth. People will make artificial food. and will settle on other planets in order to not stress the one we are living in right now.

- Adidev, Grade 6

Despite not having access to technologies like supercomputers and the internet, the great minds of 1920s managed to create some of the most well-revered scientific marvels that we still talk about to this day. As a generation, I feel that it is our responsibility to carry on their legacy and propel scientific ideas to new heights. We should ensure it is applied for greater good of humans and environment. Our innovation motto should be - purpose driven, ethical and sustainable solutions.

- Jayesh Wadhwa, Grade 8

PYP - We were all new to Neev at one point; how did you feel when you first joined?

Nervous and excited, with palpable worries on my face, I sat down for my first day at Neev. A small respite from my worries was that it was online. How will my first day at a new school be?

New days, new ways, new faces—my anxious mind kept on churning these thoughts. But all the teeny weeny worries that stuck to me like limpets washed away as the class started. My teachers made everything feel quite comfortable and exciting and my peers and buddies did not feel so strange. There were hiccups on getting onto the platform that Neev uses, but soon it all got smoothed out. All in all, the day ended with a big smile on my face, rather than my weary look at the beginning of the day.

- Vihaan Agarwal, Grade 3

THE PSYCHOLOGY OF RACISM

If recent events like the murder of George Floyd and the subsequent popularity of the Black Lives Matter movement have proven anything, it is that racism still persists malignantly in the fabric of our society and threatens the creation of safe environments. Given the sustained nature of racism's existence, many psychologists have studied human tendencies to discriminate and divide.

Senior lecturer on psychology, Steve Taylor, has commented on the correlation between psychological ill health and racism; those suffering from a lack of self-esteem or some other insecurity often indulge in racist acts. Social Psychologist Karime Betacche takes a broader perspective as he suggests that xenophobia exists because of humans' tendency to fear strangers. The basis for this fear has expanded greatly over time, manifesting itself in the implicit and parasitic racism we face today. He cites the minimal group paradigm to explain how humans create categories, that however atrocious, lead to "ingroup favoritism and outgroup derogation". However, he's quick to caution his readers by explaining how race is a social construct, an invented category that is unscientific and can be eradicated with the awareness that it was created for selfish reasons by our ancestors.

Looking at racism through a psychological lens has revealed insights into how people can combat it and will hopefully pave the way for safe environments that are untainted by the retrogressive beliefs of the past.

- Navya Sahay, Grade 12

ARTS



Dealing with grief and mental health issues is a huge challenge worsened by the lack of open conversation around it. To combat this, Semeion Richardson, a suicide crisis counselor, combined her passion for mental health advocacy and her love of art to create a safe environment for self-expression.

Richardson is working towards opening a mobile art studio and gallery in downtown Leesburg, which will become the first Black-owned art gallery in the tri-county area. "My goal is to connect mental health and art, but also create fun experiences for kids and adults," Richardson said. "When we can express ourselves, we can see what is going on inside. I want to build a bridge from community to unity." While she has big plans for her gallery, it is of utmost importance to her to create an environment in which everyone experiences love. In addition to her studio and gallery, Richardson also works with SolePurpose: a project in which kids paint on shoes to represent things they are feeling or going through in their lives. The School of the Hands of God in Haiti is another such undertaking led by Richardson, where more than 400 kids are enabled to express themselves via art.



Through her work, Semeion Richardson has found that creating artwork resolves emotions and secures thoughts, allowing individuals to contemplate broader issues. Art also becomes a base from which to connect (with others and yourself). Her purpose is not to eliminate suffering, but to voice it, believing that expression is a form of transformation.

- Kriti Sarawgi, Grade 12

Do you love art and want to make awareness of our environment? There are many inspiring artists who use art to spread awareness about our environment.

Firstly, **Basia Irland** is an artist and naturalist that works closely with water, especially rivers. Her Ice Books project uses river water to form books made of ice which contains seeds. The seeds within the books help the river in many ways such as; by slowing down the erosion of the river bank. It then slowly melts away to represent the effects of climate change and the thinning of ice due to the activities of humans.

Isaac Cordal is a Spanish street artist that creates sculptures of tiny men dressed in grey suits and installs them in weird places. 'Waiting for the Climate Change' is one of his series that has 14 life-sized sculptures of these everymen covered in water. His artwork is a critique of modern society's view regarding climate change.

Aida Sulova is a street artist who started a campaign to remind people to dispose of their waste properly. The anti-plastic campaign is based in Kyrgyzstan and uses her art to send this message. Using the dustbin as her canvas, she makes artwork that inspires and makes people aware of our climate change, pollution, marine pollution, etc.

- Rhea Sinha, Grade 4

SERVICE

According to Google, safe spaces are "places created for marginalized individuals to come together to communicate regarding their experiences with marginalization." Promoting judgment-free discussion, these spaces are created to be physically and mentally safe; schools, universities, and offices often create these for the protection of their users.

These spaces reduce anxiety as people are able to openly discuss problems they face, with people who are like them. While historically these are for people who face similar oppression, these can now be used to allow like-minded people to converse and connect. It would be and is easier for people to talk to people who go through similar problems - from students to single moms to people suffering from anything. These can be clubs - for people who like similar books and movies (have similar hobbies) and other such common meeting spaces.

It is important to foster such safe spaces, as these encourage free discussion, expression of opinions, and shared and accepting understanding of diversity and similarity.

- Pranvi Khare, Grade 11

SPORTS

'Beyond Sports'

Sports are a major component of child development. It's often only been viewed as a way to stay fit and healthy, however, it also teaches us certain life lessons that we encounter in our daily lives. Accountability, leadership, confidence, self-discipline, and responsibility to name a few. The purpose of our initiative, 'Beyond Sports', is to encourage participation in sports to create a level playing field, so to speak.

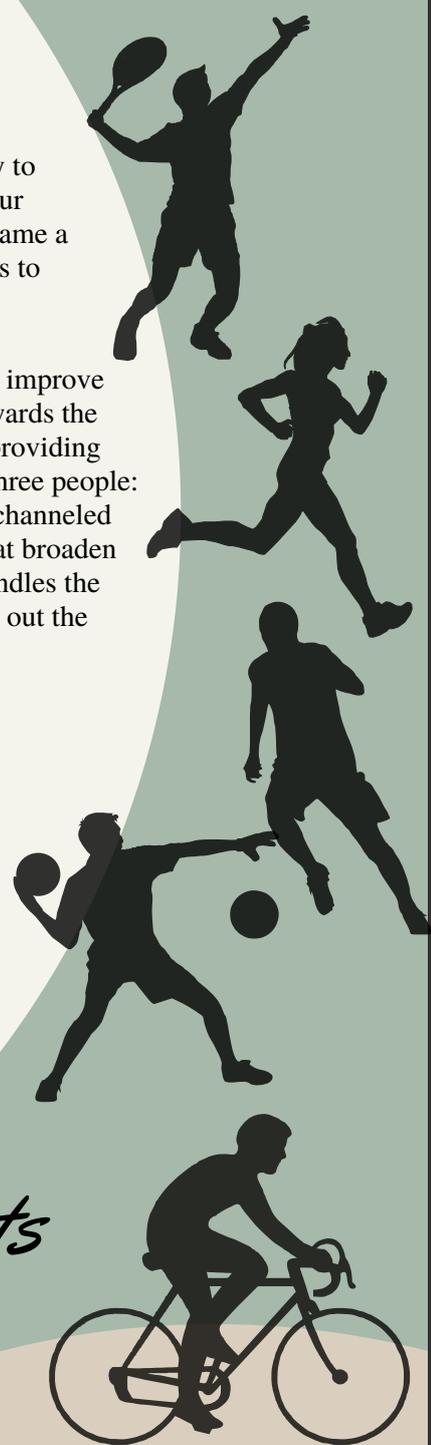
Besides imparting life skills, we aim to use sports to empower underprivileged youth and improve their life prospects. We are a student-led non-profit initiative working collaboratively towards the cause of inequality in sports by funding sporting equipment for the underprivileged and providing children with opportunities to explore different experiences. So far our team consists of three people: Tarun, Sanjeet, and myself. The initiative started four months ago, when the three of us, channeled our love for sports began to explore how we could extend our passion to opportunities that broaden perspectives on life prospects. We have divided roles amongst the three of us; Sanjeet handles the financials, Tarun contacts NGOs and caters to their requirements while I handle planning out the initiatives that the organisation will carry forward alongside the social media department.

So far the initiatives we have carried out is a book drive alongside a crowdfunding campaign. We have partnered up with CRY (Child's Rights and You), which is where we donated the funds. We have raised exactly 53,200/- INR which CRY is currently using to provide local NGOs with the sporting equipment that they require. We would be assisting with the process of providing those resources. The next few initiatives that we have planned involve the donation of old sporting equipment in usable condition which we would collect from various people who are willing to donate. We would also be looking at expanding our team and involving more volunteers, so do look out for that! In the future, as the pandemic settles down, we would also like to take sports classes for these underprivileged communities.

To reach out or to know more about the initiative of 'Beyond Sports', here are the following contacts:

Instagram: [@_beyondsports_](#)
 Email ID: beyondsportsblr@gmail.com
 - Mudit Kohli, Grade 11

Beyond Sports
 A COMMUNITY INITIATIVE FOR
 EQUALITY IN SPORTS



The Hillsborough Disaster

April 15th, 2022 marks the 33rd anniversary of the Hillsborough Disaster. On this day, in 1989, gates opened in the Hillsborough Stadium in Sheffield England. Excited fans squeezed in, eagerly awaiting the FA Cup Semi-Final between Liverpool and Nottingham Forest. To the organizer's surprise, thousands of people pushed their way in, exceeding the capacity of the stadium greatly. Many sources describe the incident as a "Fatal Human Crush", but these words are an understatement.

The crowd rushed to the fencing of the spectating area leaving those at the front under the most tension. 94 of the 96 victims of the crush died on the day, having either been suffocated, or pushed towards the fencing with the brute force of the crowd behind them. The other two passed within a few years afterward. Various individuals (including that of the Liverpool manager at the time, Sir Kenny Dalglish) over the coming years, blamed the bad management of the posted guards. They felt that more people should have been let out before the situation worsened.

In the aftermath of the incident, legal requirements concerning safety were put in place. It has had a major impact on stadiums around the world. The standing areas were eliminated, meaning they all became what are known as "all seaters", where only a ticket allows you a seat in the arena. The positive impact of such an impactful event is that people can now enjoy their favorite sports more safely.

- Naman Shastri, Grade 5

Potential world record breaker banned due to unvaccinated status

With twenty Grand Slams, Serbian tennis star Novak Djokovic is one grand slam away from breaking Federer and Nadal's record. The recent Australian open provided a perfect opportunity for him. However, Djokovic was banned from participating as he was unvaccinated. The Australian government said that his unvaccinated status "may be counterproductive to efforts at vaccination by others in Australia."

In the two weeks leading up to the Australian Open, Djokovic's visa was canceled on many occasions. When he finally entered the country, a panel of three judges ruled in favour of the Australian government, forcing him out of the country and hence, the tournament.

This ban has divided sports fans. Many people are criticising Djokovic for being irresponsible during the pandemic which has killed millions. "Goodbye Novak Djokovic. You are a great tennis player... please come back to Australia when you're double vaxxed against COVID. You'll be most welcome. It's not much to ask in a global pandemic which is killing millions and disrupting all hospital systems," said Quentin Dempster on twitter.

However, many of Djokovic's supporters are saying that Djokovic's unvaccinated status is not a health hazard. "Djokovic cannot visit Aust for 3 years. We are the only country that thinks it's ok to lock out the No. 1 tennis player on the brink of being the best in the world, not because he's a health risk, but because he 'might' make the 90+% of its citizens already vaxxed not get a booster."

This disagreement proves that perspective and situation matter especially when discussing something as subjective as a safe environment.

- Avyay Agarwal, Grade 6

SCIENCE

The Importance of Fostering Safe Environments for Scientific Thinking

The golden age of humanity began when we began thinking. Not simply processing knowledge, but thinking - questioning the world around us, asking "why". One can keep asking "why" forever, for there is no end to the knowledge that can be gained. And that is why science's fundamental purpose, to make sense of the 'unknown', is centered around questioning. Asking again and again, repeatedly, relentlessly, resolutely - "why".

Unfortunately, questioning has not been looked upon kindly, though it is the most critical reason why humanity is where it is today. Throughout history, scientists have been persecuted as heretics (a person persecuted for performing beliefs contrary to orthodox Christian values) for questioning the norms and doctrines of the time. Religion has been its biggest enemy, its primary premise being faith, while science has always been regarded as the dissenter, the contrarian.

Let us go to the very beginning. A man of times, long past looked upon a field of lush, green pasture and asked "why" and agriculture was born. With agriculture came irrigation, as more people began to ask "why" and found the answers they desired. Humble settlements grew into massive empires, as "why" echoed in the heads of the scientifically minded. The wheels of progress turned, fueled by a melody of questions. But with knowledge comes power, and with power comes fear. People began to fear the power gained by questioning, and shunned scientists, turning to religion for guidance. The earliest herbalists were burnt as witches; the earliest physicists were exploited as alchemists who could produce gold out of base metals. Copernicus was called a madman for first proposing the heliocentric theory, and later Galileo, who proved it, was sentenced to life imprisonment by the Roman Catholic Church.

Over time, the situation greatly improved. The power that came with knowledge was embraced, from the steam engine to the nuclear bomb. Today, Newton, Einstein, Hawking, and thousands of other scientists across ages are hailed as legends. So what is a haven for science? I think it must meet three critical requirements. The first is that it must encourage questioning, as you might have guessed. The second is that all observations must be judged objectively. As long as it has been scientifically proved, the judgment should be absolved of prejudice. The third and final requirement is that scientists must be prepared to question other scientists on their theories, engaging in healthy debate to further science as a whole. As human society has progressed, we have come closer to meeting these three requirements.

This brings me to schools. "Good question" is now a staple in our classrooms. Questioning in schools allows students to make their own meaning of the world around them, leading to an acquisition of knowledge. Questioning allows for the gaps in knowledge to be filled, and for students to empathize with the world around them. It is difficult to create such an ideal environment for science, for it is human nature to see one's own perspective as absolute, and that is not likely to change unless you make it possible.

- Kabir Basu, Grade 8

STUDENT VOICE

Earth Day

I am the Earth
And the Earth is me.
Each blade of grass.
Each honey tree.
Each bit of mud,
And stick and stone
Is blood and muscle,
Skin and bone

And just as I
Need every bit
Of me to make
My body fit,
So Earth needs
Grass and stone and tree
Any things that grow here
Naturally.

That's why we
Celebrate this day.
That's why across
The world we say:
As long as life,
As dear, as free,
I am the Earth,
And the Earth is me.

- Siddhant Amit Singla,
Grade 5

A safe environment is more than just the space around you or the items and stuff present. It is a mindset and a thought process, that is reflected on people. The thought process is not limited by geography but rather any place that makes them feel safe and accepted. For anyone to live in an environment that reflects otherwise impacts their past, present, and future. When people live in a place where they are not accepted and can not express their opinions, this has an impact on how they perceive themselves in the future. Such an environment takes control over their life-altering decisions. A safe environment is something every child and human being should have by law, yet many are deprived of. It's something lawyers and judges look into and make sure a child has when going through any child ownership process. It's something as simple as listening, accepting, and understanding, that many of us take for granted. As individuals, we should always work towards creating a safe environment, from our houses to our workplaces, to our communities, and eventually, the world around us. But all we need to understand is that safe spaces branch out from inculcating the fundamental principles of love, empathy, and respect.

- Amodini Waddehra, Grade 8

Save Mother Earth

Humans are destroying the environment,
Mother earth is feeling dejected,
I don't see the sun shining brightly in the sky,
Mother earth is too unhappy,
She can't hold her head high,
We, humans, throw garbage on the sparkling clean ground,
No one even notices,
Not a sound,
So c'mon everyone,
Let's be mindful,
This way,
Mother earth will never feel sorrowful

- Anezka Sequeira, Grade 2



- Saina Goenka, Grade 3

My Big School

Before joining Neev Academy, I was in Montessori. It was near my house and it was a small building. I liked going to Montessori because there was a lot of playtime. I learnt about shapes, sizes, and channa pounding that made my grip strong. Studies were called "works." Classes were called an "environment." All kids in my environment were from ages 2 to 5. After 5 years most of the kids would go to the big school.

When I joined Neev Academy, I thought it would be boring because I thought big school have more "works" than small schools, but Neev is fun. PHE has games and there are running tracks. Visual arts has painting class and I learnt two types of shapes—organic and geometrical, dot and lines, and how to use them in drawing. I also learnt about patterns in drawing. Breakout rooms are fun in online classes. In Maths, I learnt many things like fact family, turn around fact, penny, nickel and dime. In library class, Miss reads books and we share our thoughts, which is new to me. In SEL we learn about different things like feelings, Y chart and T Chart. I also like Music class and I learnt about hand signals. In UOI, I learnt about matter and its properties, manipulation and transformation. Now I know how to change the form of water by manipulation. In language, I learnt small moments, information book and review writing. In additional language, I learnt many French words.

I was not aware that big school will have so many new things for me to learn and I will make so many friends. My teachers are Miss Kajal, Miss Ria, Miss Sandra, Miss Gayathri, Oliver Sir and music Sir. I am happy that my big school is big and I have lot of space to play!

- Siddhanam Kolhapure, Grade 1

The Flower Girl, Ahimsa & I

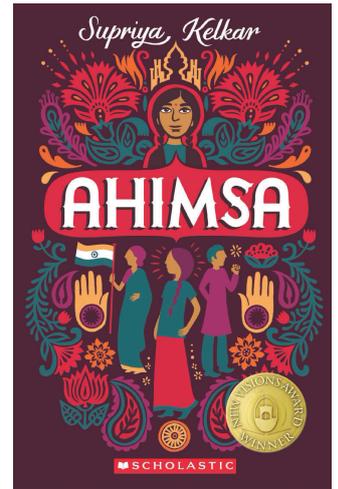
On the evening of 29th September 2021, my family, friends and I, were at a restaurant called “Daddy” to celebrate my mother’s birthday. We weren’t bored because there was lots to do: walk around, talk, watch the cricket match through the projector, look at the birds flying and the sun setting.

We were having a great time until we had to go home. It was dark and we were all tired. So we went into the elevator. When we reached down, my father went to get the car. While waiting, I saw 2 kids walking around the street, holding a bunch of thin, red roses. They were held together by a piece of cardboard, and each thin rose had a plastic cover around it. There was a boy and a girl: the girl looked like she was 7 years old and the boy looked 10. She wore a full-sleeved t-shirt and black pants, while the boy wore tracks and a striped t-shirt. But neither of them had shoes or a mask. Suddenly, the girl walked up to my friend’s mother, and tugged on her arm, showing the roses. She moved her head from side-to-side and said “don’t touch” in Hindi. Then, the girl went towards my other friend’s mother and did the same thing. In broken Hindi and a faltering voice, the girl said, “we don’t have rice to eat at home.” Suddenly, a security guard came out from behind me.

He raised a stick and hit the poor girl on her shoulder. Her eyes filled with tears, she yelled something and ran off. I turned to my friend and said, “did you see that?” I almost cried. She nodded and looked shocked. Then I softly asked my mother, “Ma, should we buy a rose from them?” But she didn’t respond. And right then, my father came back with the car and I told him the entire story. “Mamma bought a bag of goodies for the boy from the shop next to the restaurant,” he said.

Finally at home, I finished my homework except for novel study. So I grabbed Ahimsa and jumped into bed. Even after finishing reading chapters 19 and 20 which were assigned for my homework, I continued reading. I read till chapter 28 and realized something. In Ahimsa, an untouchable called Mohan gets beat up by Anjali’s neighbours. And just an hour or two ago, the girl in front of the restaurant was harmed by the security guard. The next day, I told my teachers about the connection I made between real life today, and in the book.

- Niyanta Agarwal, Grade 4



Safe Environment for Animals

We humans want safe environment for ourselves, but animals also deserve the same.

When I went for a vacation to Bandipur, I saw an extremely shocking sight of trampled electric fences, broken bamboos, and trunks of mango trees scattered around the orchard. This is all the effect of blocking the way of a hungry herd of elephants whose territory was marked. My guest house was in the middle of the forest, where it was a safe environment for animals to live in. Once the animals got to know that humans have inhabited the area, they understood that it was no more a safe environment for them. This resulted in them wanting to eagerly get back to their resting homes.

Our Indian forests have many poachers ready to take down any animal in their sight, and wealthy people who want to make houses in the forest. This makes Indian forests unsafe. Some the solutions that the government is using to stop poaching and development of housing in middle of the forest are patrolling the forests continuously and putting wildlife rangers around the forest to arrest poachers. For housing, the government is making strict laws for the permission to any construction. We must work towards making our forests a safe environment for animals.

- Sreeved Reddy, Grade 3

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