



# BEST OF THE BETHS



# THE BEST OF OCTOBER



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# Black History Month

By Nathaniel 11A

Black History Month (UK) is the annual celebration of black heritage and culture. It provides us with the opportunity to learn new things about African and Caribbean culture, but also to reflect on key figures in Black British History. Generally, the contributions to society made by black people in British history have often been overlooked and underappreciated, with only a small selection of the general public knowing key events in Black British History. This was mostly because for many children in the UK, this month would be the only month of the year which they would have learnt about black history. However, in 2022, Wales became the first nation in the UK to introduce mandatory changes to its curriculum, including lessons about the contributions of figures from ethnic minority groups. England, Scotland and Northern Ireland are yet to do the same. Luckily, I had the opportunity of learning about some of the key historic events/figures in Year 8, some of which I have detailed below:



## Bristol Bus Boycott



In 1963, a young black man named Guy Bailey was refused an interview for a job at the Bristol Omnibus Company because of the colour of skin. This sparked a boycott of the company's buses, led by youth worker Paul Stephenson and the West Indian Development Council. Eventually, this boycott attracted national attention and ultimately paved the way to the country's first ever race discrimination law, the Race Relations Act, five years later. This act banned all discrimination in the workplace, meaning that companies could not reject people from jobs on the basis of race.

## **British Black Panther Movement**

In September 1967, a group of west Indian and west African settlers identified themselves as the British Black Panther Movement. The party focused on issues of racial discrimination in jobs, housing, educating, medical and legal services. As part of their community work, they engaged in legal support for black British people in certain cities. This included the defence of a restaurant in Notting Hill, called the Mangrove Restaurant, which regularly fell victim to police harassment and raids due to the police targeting the restaurant under the claim that there were drugs there (they never managed to find drugs there).

## **Notting Hill Riots**

After the Second World War, there was a large amount of migration of people from the Caribbean to London. Notting Hill is located in North Kensington, an area which had high rates of poverty, crime and violence. This, along with the competition for housing between low income black and white families, caused tension between the two races. This tension eventually led to the breaking out of violence and eventually led to the riots taking place. A group of working class youth known as the Teddy Boys were often hostile to the black newcomers in Notting Hill. In August 1958, violence broke out when properties owned by Caribbean immigrants was vandalized and the owners were subject to physical harassments. It escalated when 9 'Teddy Boys' attacked 5 black men in shepherds bush and eventually lead to the Notting Hill Riots starting on the 30th August 1938. Crowds of white youth chased the Caribbean population in the area, petrol bombs and milk bottles were launched as missiles and rioters even armed themselves with iron bars . The rioting stopped after a week and sparked an ongoing debate about race discrimination and the levels of immigration to urban areras. The Notting Hill Carnival is an annual celebration that was initiated as a direct response to the riots. It occurs each year on the Bank Holiday Weekend at the end of August.



# Champions League By Alastair

## 23/24

## 10H

As the football season restarts for another season, heads will turn to the biggest competition in Europe, the Champions League. Groups were decided and up until now, there has been two match weeks so far. Matchday 1 started off with RB Leipzig cruising past Young Boys 3-1. The first English team to play this year were Newcastle with their campaign starting with a 0-0 bore-draw with Italy's AC Milan. Nothing else huge happened on the first day, a big game being PSG 2-0 Borussia Dortmund. Moving onto Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup> September, and Arsenal's return to the competition started with a massive 4-0 win over PSV Eindhoven. However, arguably, the game of the week was between Bayern München and Manchester United with the match finishing 4-3 in favour of the German giants.

Moving onto Matchday 2 and there were two huge shocks on the first day. Firstly, Arsenal had travel issues due to bad weather as they were meant to travel to France to face off against RC Lens. With this being the French team's first home UCL game in 20 years, the fans were up and ready for the game. The gunners went ahead through Gabriel Jesus but eventually fumbled and lost 2-1. Also, at Old Trafford Manchester United ended up falling short 3-2 to the hands of Galatasaray. Surprise of the season will find itself in Newcastle as the Geordies smashed PSG 4-1 at St. James' Park.

The group standings are as followed:

1	Bayern Munich	2	2	0	0	6	4	2	6	W W
2	Galatasaray	2	1	1	0	5	4	1	4	D W
3	FC Copenhagen	2	0	1	1	3	4	-1	1	D L
4	Manchester United	2	0	0	2	5	7	-2	0	L L

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Group B

Team	Played	Won	Drawn	Lost	For	Against	GD	Points	Form
1 - Lens	2	1	1	0	3	2	1	4	D W
2 - Arsenal	2	1	0	1	5	2	3	3	W L
3 - Sevilla	2	0	2	0	3	3	0	2	D D
4 - PSV Eindhoven	2	0	1	1	2	6	-4	1	L D

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Group C

Team	Played	Won	Drawn	Lost	For	Against	GD	Points	Form
1 - Real Madrid	2	2	0	0	4	2	2	6	W W
2 - Napoli	2	1	0	1	4	4	0	3	W L
3 - Sporting Braga	2	1	0	1	4	4	0	3	L W
4 - FC Union Berlin	2	0	0	2	2	4	-2	0	L L

Group G

Team	Played	Won	Drawn	Lost	For	Against	GD	Points	Form
1 - Manchester City	2	2	0	0	6	2	4	6	W W
2 - RB Leipzig	2	1	0	1	4	4	0	3	W L
3 - Young Boys	2	0	1	1	3	5	-2	1	L D
4 - Red Star Belgrade	2	0	1	1	3	5	-2	1	L D

1 - Real Sociedad	2	1	1	0	3	1	2	4	D W
2 - Inter Milan	2	1	1	0	2	1	1	4	D W
3 - FC Red Bull Salzburg	2	1	0	1	2	2	0	3	W L
4 - Benfica	2	0	0	2	0	3	-3	0	L L

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Group E

Team	Played	Won	Drawn	Lost	For	Against	GD	Points	Form
1 - Atlético Madrid	2	1	1	0	4	3	1	4	D W
2 - Lazio	2	1	1	0	3	2	1	4	D W
3 - Feyenoord	2	1	0	1	4	3	1	3	W L
4 - Celtic	2	0	0	2	1	4	-3	0	L L

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Group F

Team	Played	Won	Drawn	Lost	For	Against	GD	Points	Form
1 - Newcastle United	2	1	1	0	4	1	3	4	D W
2 - Paris Saint Germain	2	1	0	1	3	4	-1	3	W L
3 - AC Milan	2	0	2	0	0	0	0	2	D D
4 - Borussia Dortmund	2	0	1	1	0	2	-2	1	L D

Group H

Team	Played	Won	Drawn	Lost	For	Against	GD	Points	Form
1 - Barcelona	2	2	0	0	6	0	6	6	W W
2 - FC Porto	2	1	0	1	3	2	1	3	W L
3 - Shakhtar Donetsk	2	1	0	1	4	5	-1	3	L W
4 - Royal Antwerp	2	0	0	2	2	8	-6	0	L L



# Halloween

By Femi 11C

Halloween, a beloved holiday celebrated on the night of October 31st, has captured the imagination of people around the world for centuries. With its ghosts, ghouls, and playful frights, Halloween offers a unique blend of ancient customs, cultural influences, and modern festivities. To truly appreciate this bewitching holiday, it is essential to delve into its rich history and explore the origins that have shaped this cherished tradition.

## The Ancient Origins

The roots of Halloween can be traced back thousands of years to the ancient Celtic festival of Samhain (pronounced "sow-in"). Samhain marked the end of the harvest season and the beginning of winter in the Celtic calendar. It was believed that on the night of October 31st, the boundary between the living and the dead would blur, allowing spirits to roam the earth. To ward off these roaming spirits, the Celts would light bonfires and dress in costumes made from animal skins. These costumes served a dual purpose: disguising themselves from vengeful spirits and appeasing the spirits by offering them food and sweets. The Celts also believed that the presence of spirits made it easier for Druids, their religious leaders, to predict the future.



## Christian Influences

In the 9th century, Pope Gregory III designated November 1st as All Saints' Day, also known as All Hallows' Day. This Christian holiday honored saints and martyrs and incorporated some elements of Samhain. The night before All Hallows' Day became known as All Hallows' Eve, eventually shortened to Halloween. As Christianity spread, it absorbed various pagan customs and practices, blending them into the religious calendar. The practice of lighting bonfires and wearing costumes on Halloween survived, albeit with a Christian twist. The bonfires represented purification and were associated with the souls of the dead, while costumes were now seen as disguises to ward off evil spirits.

# Halloween

By Femi 11C

## Halloween in America

The modern version of Halloween that we are familiar with today took shape in the United States during the 19th century. As Irish and Scottish immigrants brought their Halloween traditions to America, the holiday began to evolve. With time, Halloween transformed into a community-centered holiday, emphasizing parties, games, and the exchange of treats. Trick-or-treating, a practice that has become synonymous with Halloween, can be traced back to European traditions. In the early 20th century, it became popular for children to dress in costumes and go door-to-door asking for food or money. This tradition was influenced by the British practice of "souling," where the poor would go house to house on All Souls' Day asking for soul cakes in exchange for prayers for the dead.

Today, Halloween has become a widely celebrated holiday, known for its festive decorations, haunted houses, costume parties, and the carving of pumpkins into jack-o'-lanterns. It has also expanded beyond its Celtic and Christian origins to incorporate elements of various cultures and popular folklore. Vampires, witches, zombies, and other supernatural creatures have become iconic symbols of Halloween, fueling the imagination of people of all ages.



# Premier League:

# By Favour

## Man Utd's Appalling Start

## 10C

When you think of the club Manchester United, the usual connotation is a club with an exciting squad that would be challenging for the Premier League title, but that has not been the case so far for the Red Devils. After having spent over £200 million in the summer transfer window, they have not met the expectations of many football fans across the globe. Currently, they sit 10<sup>th</sup> in the Premier League this season, only winning 3 out of 7 games and losing the remaining 4.

Before the 2023/2024 Premier League season started, Manchester United had a fairly decent pre-season campaign, winning 4 games, drawing 3, and only losing 1. They scored 12 goals and conceded 8. Many people had seen this as a sign of a great season, given that they were playing good football. People were predicting a strong top 4 finish, with a trophy to add to that, but so far, it seems their dreams will not become a reality.

The reason for the unexpected downfall of the Red Devils is unknown, but many suspect it may be due to Ten Hag's decisions. The Dutch manager has dropped wingers Jadon Sancho and Anthony after problems within the players' personal lives and a lack of training effort. Many believe this has caused problems within the squad leading to problems on the pitch.

Another speculated reason for Man United's downfall is due to the departure of the 2<sup>nd</sup> best player of all time, Cristiano Ronaldo. Even though he was their best player in the 2021/2022 season (and saved the Red Devils from dropping points on numerous occasions), he fell out with the manager and left shortly after he appeared publicly in an interview with Piers Morgan, where he spoke about bad treatment towards him from Ten Hag and other high-status personnel.

In my opinion, I believe the reason for this unexpected start to their season is due to the lack of vision. Going into this season, Manchester United had no proper organization in terms of finding the right players at the right time. Pre-season was a time to test this, but they wasted their chance and they started to experiment during the Premier League season, meaning when their plan failed, that would cost them valuable points, which could have set their Premier League/Champions League campaign on the right track.





# Reviewing the iPhone 15

By Eden  
10H

On September the 22<sup>nd</sup>, Apple released their latest batch of iPhones, the 15 series. There have been many major changes differentiating the 15s from the 14s, such as the new addition of USB 3 on the pro models, and USB 2 on the non-pro models. This was due to a new European regulation which was



meant to reduce landfill waste. The change does mean you can carry one USB cable to charge all your apple products, however it now means any lightning ported gadgets made specifically for iPhones are now useless.

There is also a cool new action button which is in the position of the traditional ring/silent slider we've seen since the iPhone 2G. Not only does it do the same functions as the ring/slider, but it also allows us to quickly launch an app or do a specific task, custom to whatever we programme it to do. All iPhones have a larger battery and all come with dynamic island and are all lighter than their predecessors. However, only the Pro models come with titanium sides. The titanium helps with the lightness and durability of the phone, but it is only 1mm thick and it only wraps around the phone, so you still get standard aluminium on the back. They have also supposedly made iPhones easier to fix, something that people have been waiting ages for. This is because you can open it from the front, back and you can easily access the internals of the phone.

As for photography, all phones come with a 48 megapixel main lens, the non-standard ones having a f/1.6 aperture and a 26mm focal length. Furthermore, they can now digitally zoom in twice and get a clean 12 megapixel shot as the resolution has been quadrupled from last gen. The Pro Maxes have a f/1.78 aperture, however they have implemented a new technology into the main cameras which means it can have a 24, 28 and 35mm focal length points. The Pro Max model also has a telephoto lens which can do up to 6x optical zoom.

# Reviewing the iPhone 15

By Eden  
10H

For the screen on non-pro models you have your OLED 60Hz display, something which has caused much controversy as you are spending £800 on a phone with only a 60HZ display, while budget phones can do better than that. They can go up to 2,000 nits in peak brightness. The 15 Pro Maxes can also do 2,000 nits peak brightness in sunny conditions, but have a 1,000 typical peak brightness.

As for the internals, that's where things get interesting. The 15 Pro models have insides that rival PCs with their all new A17 Pro chip, and now they have support for some games with their ray-tracing technology. The games include Resident Evil 4, Resident Evil Village, The Division: Resurgence and Assassin's Creed Mirage which can be tackled with an average of 146 FPS on ultra settings which is quite impressive for a phone. Impressively, the phone lasted 23 hours and 42 minutes from 100% with all wireless connectivity disabled.

However, nothing is perfect, and neither are the 15s. There have been reports of the phone being "too hot to handle" during social media scrolling, or photography. However, Apple said they would release an update to fix this. There is also a number of question marks about the durability, as the back glass easily cracks with little to no thumb pressure. Furthermore, Apple's Fin-eWoven cases are known to easily scratch and stain.



At the end of the day it is your choice whether or not to buy it. That said, I would suggest waiting for the next model in which Apple would have hopefully fixed all the issues instead of spending £1,200 on this one.

# Barcelona Tour

**By Thomas**  
**10A**

What percentage of kids want to be professional footballers? Research shows that 23% of boys' childhood dreams are to become professional footballers, the most sought after job worldwide.

Beths had a lucky taste of this last week when the year 8 and year 10 football teams along with Mr Webb, Mr Waite and Mr GS embarked on a three night trip to Barcelona in order to participate in the world schools games competition. Sad to say, I had a broken collarbone so had the honour of recording and watching the games.

The weather, the bungalows we all stayed in and the facilities were great, with a basketball court, mini golf, a bar, a swimming pool and a five a side football pitch. We ate at a buffet and the weather was almost always hot and sunny (except on the last night when there was a massive storm) and although we had a great time lounging in the pool and filling up on chicken and fish, the main thing we came for was the football, something our school has a great reputation for. We just had to let Beths work their magic.

The multiculturalism and diversity at the small sporting complex was incredible, there were schools from Dubai, Kazakhstan, Germany, South Korea and others scattered across the world, just showing how big this tournament was.

On the first day we arrived, after an early start for a flight from Gatwick, the under 15s played their first match. Beths won 3-0 against a school from Malaysia, which was to set the tone for what was to come. The under 15s team rampaged through the rest of the tournament, winning all eight of their matches over three days. The goals rained in from all directions, with Raynon Richmond and Daniel Francis leading the way.

# Barcelona Tour

**By Thomas  
10A**

The year eight teams were similarly impressive. Playing seven a side, Beths entered two teams and they did well to progress to the quarter finals, with them finishing in 4th and 5th place, a strong finish considering the large amount of teams competing in comparison to the year 10s

Resolute defence and some creative approach play were characteristic of the under 15s run to the final, with Mr Webb orchestrating proceedings from the touchline. Ahead of the final on Sunday, there were nerves in the air as the teams lined up to the strains of the Champions League anthem.

The teams lined up either side of the trophy they were competing for, with Beths taking on GEMS Wellington from Dubai. Both teams were unbeaten on their way to the final but it was Beths who sealed the trophy with a close range finish from Bradley Shepherd proving the only goal of the game.

The team celebrated with a synchronised rowing celebration before sealing the win in the final moments with some last ditch defending. Mayhem greeted the final whistle as the Beths team celebrated and their opponents fell to the artificial turf.

Monday brought a trip to Barcelona's interactive museum (and of course a trip to the club shop). All in all, it was a fantastic experience for everyone involved and all the players and staff went home buzzing - with a trophy in their hand luggage.



# Year 11 Work Experience

## By Damilola 11H

**Day 1** - On my first day at Hollytree Pharmacy I was quite surprised by how quickly the employees got busy the moment I entered. The dispensary was full of deliveries and everyone was focused on a task; the environment was quite overwhelming at first to say the least. However, I spent most of my day at the front counter, learning how to question a patient so they knew exactly what medication they needed. This was achieved through memorizing the acronym WWHAM - Who is the medication for, What are the symptoms, How long has it gone on for, what Action have you taken, and what other Medications are you currently taking. With this information, you could always identify the needs of the patient.

**Day 2** - On this day I was getting more familiar with the dispensary, arranging deliveries, which came pretty often, ticking off invoices and filing them away as well as organising dosette boxes. At first it was quite tricky popping the medicine out the blister packs with gloves on, especially the miniscule tablets and fragile capsules. However, due to a strategy one of my co workers taught me, using tweezers to cut open the packet and gently take out the tablet/capsule, I was able to arrange dosette boxes very quick and efficiently.

**Day 3** - On Day 3 I was mostly arranging prescriptions, gathering the correct medicine with the correct dosage and correct amount of tablets or capsules. This allowed me to get familiar with many common fast moving drugs such as amlodipine, omeprazole and lansoprazole. I was highly curious as to what these medicines do so I went to the bookshelf and picked up the BNF 82. The BNF - British National Formulary is a book that contains a variety of advice when it comes to prescribing medicine and pharmacology, describing conditions in great detail as well as course of action to treat these conditions. The book is updated every so often, latest being the BNF 86 for September 2023 — March 2024. I was quite hooked when I was reading the BNF (despite not understanding everything) due to the in-depth explanation of all these conditions and how they are treated.

# Year 11 Work Experience

By Damilola 11H

**Day 4** - I continued to sort out deliveries and work in the dispensary for most of this day and I was getting highly familiar with the pharmacy setting. It felt really good working at the pharmacy as all the employees work hard and have fun at the same time, having conversations with the elderly customers, delivery men and amongst themselves too while staying on top of their tasks. To be honest at first I was quite nervous and shy but after a while I warmed up to them and they were really friendly and kind. Whenever I made a mistake they made sure to show me how to do the task correctly so it didn't happen again. However, the boss taught me making mistakes in this line of work is costly, especially when dealing with control drugs and end of life patients. One mistake can cost a life.



**Day 5** - On my last day, I was given a little insight onto how deliveries are ordered on a system and continued with the tasks I was doing on previous days. At the end of my last shift I was told by the boss to give a little speech where I displayed my appreciation for the generosity and kindness of the staff at Hollytree to take their time and show me how rewarding working there can be.

# Earthquakes in Morocco

## By Adriel 11W

I'm sure we've all seen the devastating impacts of the earthquake that hit Morocco on the 8<sup>th</sup> of September, but I want to provide some history behind Morocco's earthquakes, why they occur, and how this most recent one has impacted the lives of those living in Marrakesh-Safi.

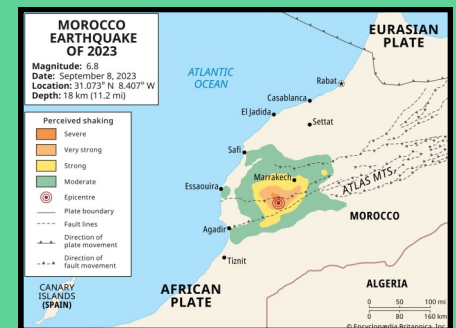
### A History of Shaking Ground

Morocco's history is deeply intertwined with seismic activity. The North African region is situated on the boundary of two tectonic plates, the African Plate and the Eurasian Plate, making it a hotspot for earthquakes. Over the centuries, Morocco has experienced numerous notable seismic events. One of the most destructive earthquakes in Moroccan history occurred in 1755. Known as the Lisbon earthquake, this catastrophe's epicenter was off the coast of Portugal but was felt as far away as Morocco. It triggered a devastating tsunami, causing significant damage in coastal towns like Agadir.

Another significant earthquake struck the city of Al Hoceima in 2004, registering a magnitude of 6.3. The event left over 600 people dead and thousands injured. This disaster served as a sobering reminder of the persistent threat of earthquakes in Morocco.

### Earthquake Vulnerability

While Morocco does not experience earthquakes on the same scale as some of its neighboring countries, it remains vulnerable to seismic activity. The country's proximity to the convergence of the African and Eurasian Plates means that earthquakes can strike with little warning. The northern region, including cities like Al Hoceima and Tetouan, is particularly susceptible to seismic events.



# Earthquakes in Morocco

## By Adriel 11W

Moreover, Morocco's rapidly growing population and urbanization have raised concerns about earthquake preparedness. Many older buildings were constructed without proper seismic considerations, leaving them susceptible to structural damage during an earthquake. The country faces a critical challenge in retrofitting these structures to meet modern seismic safety standards.

### Impact on Residents

At least 2,960 people were killed and 5,674 were injured, and over 2,500 of the injured were seriously hurt. Many fatalities occurred in remote locations south of Marrakesh, such as in Al-Haouz and Taroudant provinces. Respectively, the death toll stood at 1,684 and 980. Some homes in older parts of Marrakesh and portions of the city walls collapsed, leaving families trapped beneath debris. At Jemaa el-Fnaa, a minaret of the Kharboush Mosque and parts of its walls collapsed, crushing vehicles below. People in Marrakesh removed rubble by hand while awaiting heavy equipment. Many residents remained outdoors for fear of another earthquake. Posts on social media showed people evacuating a shopping Centre, restaurants, and apartment buildings. Residents of the city spent the first three nights outdoors; filling up roundabouts, car parks and a public square.



In conclusion, we can all see the horrible impact the earthquake has had on the residents of Marrakesh-Safi, and we can only send our prayers to those who have been impacted by this, in hopes that they are able to rebuild what they have lost.



# Libyan Floods

By Gabriel 11H

The Floods in Libya have been one of the few major disasters this year, claiming around 4,000 lives so far and around 10,000 people deemed still missing, even a month later.

The source of the disaster was from 2 dams above the town of Derna bursting open, destroying a large part of it. Not only are the people missing a problem, but also that ‘Libyans need to be assured that public funds are used transparently, accountably and assistance goes to those in need,’ says Richard Noland, US ambassador to Libya.



There seems to be a much larger focus on where the foreign aid money is going to instead of finding where missing people are and fixing infrastructure from foreign powers.

Late last week, European powers in conjunction with the UN special mission for Libya called “for the establishment of an independent mechanism to oversee reconstruction in the east.” It added: “The status quo of political and institutional divide, and the lack of accountability for national resources and funds, cannot go on.” Some diplomats hope to use outrage over the dam catastrophe to force Libyan politicians to agree to stage repeatedly postponed national elections.

It has been made privately clear to politicians in Libya’s east that donation levels from European governments will depend on clearer stewardship of the funds. It also follows demands, echoed inside Libya, for the inquiry into the causes of the disaster to include an international element since there is widespread distrust over the internal inquiry currently under way.

The inquiry focus is on what happened to money allocated for the reconstruction of the dams, and why the work contracted to a Turkish firm was not pursued. Libya is an oil-rich country but suffers from rampant corruption, particularly in construction contracts. In September the Central Bank of Libya (CBL) announced that the country’s oil revenues in the first eight months of 2023 amounted to 59.8bn Libyan dinars (£10.2bn).

# Rugby World Cup Knockout Phase Review

By Riley 11W

With the rugby world cup entering the semi-final stage, four teams have a shot at glory following dramatic wins in the quarter finals. England, New Zealand, Argentina and South Africa all scraped through their respective matches



to set up two intriguing matches. New Zealand put on an awesome display to beat world number one team Ireland once again at the quarter-final stage, as they held off a spirited Ireland attack at the death to win 28-24. They will face Argentina, who pulled off a shock win against Wales following an ill-disciplined display by Warren Gatland's men. On the other side of the draw, England went through thanks to a good first half performance. They showed good composure to get the win despite two quickfire Fiji tries which saw them briefly level the match late on. They will play South Africa, who won a back-and-forth thriller against host nation France 29-28, in one of the closest matches of the tournament so far.

New Zealand come into the Argentina match as heavy favourites to go through, especially after dispatching Ireland on Saturday. They have grown into the tournament since suffering defeat at the hands of France on the opening day of the tournament. They qualified comfortably with huge wins over Namibia, Italy and Uruguay. Many questioned whether the match against Ireland would be a step too far, but the All Blacks had just enough to hold on for a memorable win in Paris. They will be buoyed by the result and will look to attack the fixture against Argentina with a strong lineup to get the win on Friday.

# Rugby World Cup Knockout Phase Review

By Riley 11W

Argentina will hope to produce an upset like the one they produced in the quarter finals against Wales. The Pumas took advantage of silly mistakes and a lack of cutting edge shown by Wales to get a well-deserved 29-17 win. Nicholas Sanchez intercepted a pass with the game at 19-17 to Argentina, and was able to score under the posts in the 77th minute to wrap up the win. Argentina showed big improvement following a difficult pool stage, losing to England on the opening day and squeezing past Japan to secure qualification on the last match. They will need to be at their very best and more to stand a chance of beating New Zealand and making it to the final.

South Africa broke French hearts on Sunday after their tightly fought quarter-final match. They were able to go toe-to-toe with an exciting attacking French team with both sides scoring three tries apiece during the first half. But South Africa were able to muster another try and a penalty in the 67th and 68th minute, which gave them a four point lead that proved decisive despite a late France penalty. South Africa will come into the England match confident that they can repeat the 2019 final result on Saturday.

England are the only northern hemisphere team left in the draw, and remain the only unbeaten side in the tournament. They played well to beat Fiji, surviving a late scare thanks to Owen Farrell's drop goal and penalty which sealed the win. Whilst England have not set the world alight so far, they have shown that they are able to find a way to win. However, they will need to improve all aspects of their game if they want to get revenge over South Africa at the weekend.

For the semi-final matches, I am predicting both South Africa and New Zealand to show their quality and ease to fairly dominant victories against England and Argentina respectively.

# Olivia Rodrigo: GUTS

## By Ronnie 11H

On the 8th of September 2023, Olivia Rodrigo released her sophomore album 'GUTS' - that of which followed her 2021 debut album 'SOUR'. When making this album, Rodrigo had a lot to live up to. SOUR was virtually an overnight and international success, some more notable tracks on the record being 'drivers license', 'good 4 u', and 'deja vu', becoming the fastest album in history to have all of its songs go platinum, the only debut album of this century to spend over a year on the top 10 of Billboard 200, and gaining over 10.6B+ streams to this day. Subsequently, a lot of pressure was put on Olivia Rodrigo's shoulders when she decided to release a new record, but she most certainly lived up to the expectations and unarguably surpassed them.



GUTS is a record which explores many different subgenres, encapsulating more emotion and variety of styles than SOUR. With a mix of pop tracks, pop-rock tracks and simple ballads, Rodrigo shows that her presence in the music industry is here to stay, solidifying her reputation and her capabilities as an artist. From 'all-american b\*\*\*\*' of which plays on the stereotypes women are forced into, to 'ballad of a home-schooled girl' that speaks about social anxiety, to songs like 'making the bed' that speak about self-sabotage, and even songs like 'pretty isn't pretty' that discusses themes of low self-esteem, this record is one that addresses contemporary society in a fun and listenable way.

There is no doubt that Olivia is *not* a one-hit-wonder. She is slowly but surely becoming a household name through tracks like 'vampire' - which I'm sure you've heard somewhere, perhaps on the radio – and bringing something new to the otherwise dry music industry. With inspirations like Lana Del Rey and Lorde, Rodrigo ensures that her discography has no skips. She has a song for every mood, for every emotion, and I strongly recommend you to give her a music a go if you ever have the chance; regardless of what those around you would have to say about it.



# Mahsa Amini

## By Mustafa 11H

Tehran, Iran; 16<sup>th</sup> September 2022. 1 week before her birthday, Mahsa Amini, 22, was murdered in the capital city Tehran by the Morality Police. Beaten into a coma. Tortured for days continuously. The hashtag #ZanZindagiAzadi (#WomenLifeFreedom) exploded on social media during the following year as hundreds of protests arose from the tragedy.

Mahsa Amini was forced to register under the Persian name Mahsa instead of her Kurdish name Jina. Iran's government and mentality leans towards the oppression of the Kurdish (an ethnic group split mainly between Iraq and Iran) - and the women. As she ventured into the world, Mahsa became acutely aware of the challenges and injustices



faced by women in Iran. The patriarchal society she lived in had limited opportunities for women, stifling their aspirations and potential. Mahsa, however, refused to succumb to these constraints. Fuelled by an unwavering belief in equality, inspired by her family and justice, she chose to be a voice for the voiceless.

The hijab, something meant to give women peace and security through modesty and remind others that their looks and beauty are not telling of their worth. Something religiously not meant to be enforced in such a manner, Chapter Baqarah: Verse 256 (translation) – “Let there be no compulsion in religion... And God is All-hearing, All-knowing”. But it's not about the hijab, it's all about the survival of the new dictatorial merciless government for the past 40 years. It's about the hundreds of mothers and fathers left with the heart-wrenching grief of knowing that their children are not safe, even in school.

But it hasn't ended with just Mahsa, as the regime of Iran has continued to murder countless of their own for speaking out against them. What good is simply knowing about tragedy? What good is being complacent in the poisoning of 700 young school-girls by toxic gas? People globally have been fighting courageously for their safety by protesting and actively defying what the totalitarian state ordains. Efforts have even been collated into a critically acclaimed song called “Baraye” by Shervin Hajipour. People globally facing injustice will not be complacent.

# Conflict in Ukraine:

## Summer 2023

By Victor 11H

Summer 2023 was supposed to be where the cards were shown, and the tide of the war would turn to Ukraine and the West's Favour – A counteroffensive that was hyped up in the West for many months before any boots even hit the ground; there was discussion about the offensive to win the war since Winter and early Spring of 2023. However, this has proven to be a delusional view, as Russian Defences have organised themselves and held back the offensive much better than Western think-tanks and political scientists had predicted. Ukraine faces a plethora of problems as we approach the infamous winter that stopped great armies of the past, such as Napoleon's or Hitler's invasions.

Firstly, Ukraine's Counteroffensive in the South has been mostly declared a failure by most independent sources on both sides of the conflict, as the Armed Forces of Ukraine (AFU) have only captured a small pocket of territory in the Zaporizhzhia region. They have taken some small villages, but with horrendously massive casualties, reminding us of the massacres of World War One. For the first time in the war, notable numbers of Ukrainian Soldiers have begun surrendering to Russian Forces, as morale slowly degrades for the members of the AFU due to the futility of military offensive action and the fatigue of war setting in.

On the other side, Russia has been grinding away in a brutal war of attrition. They have drastically ramped up wartime production since the start of the War. Because of this, Russia is progressing this war at a reasonably sustainable pace, despite huge human and material casualties, especially in 2022. This sustainability is due to its population being many times larger than Ukraine's and the steady income from its numerous natural-resources industries allowing it to keep up production. Additionally, North Korea's Kim Jong Un has reportedly offered Russia ammunition and military aid in return for food, money, as well as astronautical technology, which it sorely lacks due to international sanctions. North Korea sorely looks to revive a post-COVID economy, hampered down by sanctions from the same countries that condemn Russian-North Korean co-operation.

# Conflict in Ukraine:

## Summer 2023

By Victor 11H

On the ground, Russia has performed noticeably better than in the beginning of its Military Operation. Russia is appearing to launch a counter-counteroffensive in the North of Ukraine, where they have appeared to have had noticeable success – both sides in the conflict have recognized a Russian offensive is taking place with relatively large advances. However, since there is little physical evidence or press coverage, little can be concluded from here.

Recently, Poland, one of Ukraine's staunchest allies, has now stopped sending military aid to Ukraine as tensions spiked between the two countries over cheap Ukrainian grain flooding the markets. In retaliation, Ukraine has tried to sue several EU countries through the World Trade Organisation (WTO), which hasn't amounted to anything significant – a spokesperson for Poland has said "A complaint before the WTO doesn't impress us." This could be one of the first signs of Western Support beginning to fracture, as it gets increasingly tired of fighting an endless war without a decisive victory in sight.

In conclusion, this Summer has been a turbulent time for both sides, however, it is clear the clock is ticking for Ukraine, as the Autumn and Winter have notoriously harsh conditions for fast-paced mechanised warfare. It seems the war can only continue from here a stalemate, as different viewpoints argue on who is winning the war; Western Propaganda insists Ukraine is on the offensive, while Russian Propaganda points to the failure of the counteroffensive to say the opposite, stating Russia has the upper hand.

# An Interview With Ms Brobbey

By Edwin  
11C

Hiya Readers! When looking back at my articles from the last academic year, I found a significant lack of interviews that explored our Sixth Form. So, for the first edition of the year, I decided to interview Ms. Brobbey, Assistant Head of Year, to find out more. Here's what we spoke about:

## What is it like being Assistant Head of Year?

*We have a very large 6<sup>th</sup> form of almost 800 students, so it makes my job very busy and interesting. I deal with academic support, attendance issues, as well as providing pastoral support. This year, I'm mainly in charge of the Year 12s – I'm helping them settle in.*

## Favourite and Least Favourite thing about BETHS?

*My favourite parts are the diversity, community spirit and working with a great team. I've made some great friends over the 16 years I have worked here, both staff and students, and I really appreciate the past students who have stayed in touch and become friends.*

*My least favourite is that I wish we had more space, so I am really looking forward to the new building.*

## What makes BETHS unique from other schools?

*Even the name is unique – lots of people don't even know what it stands for. (It stands for Bexley and Erith Technical High School, and is not, a common misconception, named after anyone). Lots of external students say that the teachers are very approachable. We have an accepting community, and I think you see this in the choice of clubs and societies and the diversity of students and staff.*

## Do you have any hidden talents you would like to share?

*I can speak 3 Ghanaian languages fluently – Twi, Ga and Kyerepong. Also, I'm an artist, so I draw really well, and I also make African inspired crafts.*





# An Interview With Ms Brobbey

By Edwin  
11C

## What do you think makes a good student?

*I think that a good student is one who loves to learn, not just inside of the classroom, but outside of it too.*

And that wraps up my interview with Ms. Brobbey! I had a great time both learning more about the experience of being Assistant Head of Year and about what makes Beths, Beths, from a very heavily involved member of the community. Not only is Ms. Brobbey a master craftswoman and quadrilingual, but she also helps to keep the school in one piece, a feat we are all very grateful for.





# **BEST OF THE BETHS**

**Thank you for reading this edition of the newsletter!**

**For our first edition of the year, we've delved into just over a baker's dozen of topics, from October Classics such as Halloween and Black History Month to the most current, relevant global events and happenings. We hope you enjoyed our takes and recounts of everything that has and will happen in October.**

**Please let us know what you liked about this article and what you would like to see more of in the next one:**

**[msstevens@beths.bexley.sch.uk](mailto:msstevens@beths.bexley.sch.uk)**

**We hope you enjoy the half-term break, with all its frights and festivities, and return in November, rested and ready as you'll ever be for the next part of the school year.**

**-Regards From the Newsletter Team**