



A DAY OUT IN TOKYO DISNEYLAND

One day I went to Disneyland in Japan. Disneyland is like a fantasy. In Disneyland there are many kinds of lands like Adventure land, Fantasy land, etc. There you can meet every single Disney character. There I met these characters: Mickey, Minnie, Donald, Lion King, Eeyore, Pooh, Piglet, Roo, Tigger, Owl, Bluebird, Maria, Cinderella, Jasmine, Aladdin, Pinokiya and guess who not. When I entered I met Eeyore. He talked to me and I took a picture of him. Then I met Lion King. He played hide-and-seek with me. After that I went to a Snow White ride. It was fun but also scary. You have to sit in a wooden open train and then you go to the dark jungle and meet the dwarfs and Snow White and the ridiculous, cruel mother who was throwing stones at us. I loved Disneyland. Then we went to Pooh's Adventure land and found honey with Piglet. We ate our lunch and snacks at a restaurant. After that I bought some honey-popcorn and a Maria hair band. It was already evening and we watched a beautiful parade. I bought a tinker bell necklace with a magical light. We spent the whole day in Disneyland. It was a wonderful day. I will go to Disneyland again.

Marisa Shibata

Class 2



WHY IS JANMASHTAMI CELEBRATED?

Children enjoy hearing stories about the birth of Lord Krishna and his naughty pranks as a little boy. Lord Krishna's birthday falls on Janmashtami in the months of August or September, depending on the position of the Star Rohini, under which Lord Krishna was born. Many people begin the celebrations by keeping a fast on the previous day. After morning prayers and worship, the devotees break their fast followed by sumptuous midday feasts where families customarily eat together. In North India, temples of Vrindavan and Mathura celebrate incidents of the life of Krishna.

Shreya Nemani

Class 2



U.F.O

An Unidentified Flying Object, or U.F.O. refers to any object or light, reportedly sighted in the sky that cannot be immediately explained by the observer.

But it is not all that simple? No, otherwise why would there be so much commotion about it? Well, there is more to the matter of an U. F.O. than what meets the eye. The word U.F.O. was coined when businessman Kenth Arnold told reporters he had seen a 'saucer skipping across the water'. Terms like U.F.O. or Flying Saucers came to be used thereafter.

Almost every civilization that has kept written history has recorded the sightings of strange objects and lights in the sky. Descriptions of U.F.O.s have ranged from glowing wheels, to colored balls of light, to cigars and even triangles! One of the first documented U.F.O. sightings occurred in 1561 in Nuremburg, Germany. A newspaper report published mentioned balls, plates, crosses or tubes of red, blue, yellow and black battling above the city.

The C.I.A., F.B.I., NSA and other secret service or special forces bodies have been trying to conceal from public attention and international media, the various phenomena and sightings of U.F.O.s business and therefore, created various projects in order to hide the 12, 369 reports which came silencing it for a long time. They had three secret projects to determine and classify it. Only 5.2% of the reports could not be explained. The government released the explanations. But still a majority of the population including a few of the scientists, would believe in the U.F.O. idea.

However, I personally like to believe in U.F.O.s . Don't you?

Soumya Bannerjee

Class 6



QUOTES

Hope for the best, expect the worst,
Life's a play, and we're unrehearsed.

Lighthouses don't go running all over an island looking for boats to save;
they just stand there shining.

If your head tells you one thing, and your heart tells you another, before you
do anything decide first whether you have a better head or a better heart. –
Einstein

Logic will get you from A to B. Imagination will take you anywhere. –
Einstein.

Everyone is a genius. But if you judge a fish on its ability to climb a tree, it
will live its whole life believing that it is stupid. – Einstein

May you never forget what is worth remembering nor ever remember what
is best forgotten.

The world is a book, and those who do not travel read only one page.

May the bridges I burn light the way.

The best way to predict the future is to create it.

Anusha Lihala

Class 9



YE OLDE SUPERSTIONS

Spilled salt – There is a common belief that if you spill salt you must take a pinch of the spilled salt and throw it over your left shoulder.

A bird in the house is a sign of a death.

A loaf of bread should never be turned upside down after a slice has been cut from it.

Never take a broom along when you move. Throw it out and buy a new one.

If the first butterfly you see in the year is white, you will have good luck all year.

If a black cat walks towards you, it brings good fortune, but if it walks away, it takes the good luck with it.

It brings bad luck if you leave a house through a different door than the one you used to enter it.

If you catch a falling leaf on the first day of autumn, you will not catch a cold that winter.

Srijani Bhattacharya

Class 9



THE IMPORTANCE OF READING

Why read? Honestly, I do not know the exact answer to the question, but what I do know is that when I read I can connect. Every page that I go through reveals a shade in me that I knew not to exist. One of the positive reasons why we should read is that it gives us an insight on life from someone who has already experienced it, and like many of my friends suggested, to experience something through a mere book is an art in itself. I love literature because you'll notice that all the stories and poems express vivid feelings and poignant emotions but never explain them. This makes Literature so ambiguous yet so charming.

However many would prefer their widgets than books and rightly so because books cannot give us entertainment as fast as a Youtube video. But what can one take from a video? Reading, apart from giving us a heart, also presents us with a mystifying stream of intellect. As Mark Twain said "The man who doesn't read good books has no advantage over the man who can't read them."

Literature is what you make of it whether it's a poem, novel or a play. And "If there's a book you really want to read but it hasn't been written yet, then you must write it."

As I write this article, it is around ten at night and it's pouring cats and dogs at the moment. I am snug in my bed, with my dog, a mug of hot chocolate and a good book. And trust me when I say, I am a happy man and I cannot ask for more.

Parikshit Mukerjee

AS Science



ON EDUCATION

Nelson Mandela once said the following - Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world.

There is no single line in the world that holds more meaning than the one above.

A lot of people nowadays do not really value education as much as they should, as they have led rather luxurious lives, lived in opulent houses and have traveled in fancy cars, because of their parents' hard work and sacrifices, and are under the wrong impression that their lives will be as comfortable without any work on their part.

I find this particularly disturbing, taking into consideration that we live in a country where a sufficient number of children are deprived of a proper meal, let alone an education.

Let me explain what exactly I mean. I do not mean to criticise or to be cynical when I say this but one can take the example of the West and China, and their current fiscal position.

Though I do not claim to have any knowledge about the world markets it is very evident, that countries such as Greece are in such a critical state today, that countries such as China are willing to buy their bonds in order for certain economic stability to be maintained. Could one have thought of the same country that was once regarded as an agricultural economy and having a Communist regime that would never allow them to progress, being able to bail out a country from the West?

You would have to look no further than the attitude of the people in these countries.



While China was working behind the curtains, other countries were taking it easy. The previous generations in these countries who had built them into the empires that they were until recently, are the ones to be commended for all their work. The generations that came after them, having led good lives wasted it all away and are responsible for what is happening to them today.

I ask you step out of your house, and take a walk. Look to your left and to your right, and it is likely that you will come upon a few poor people. It is not as if those underprivileged children that you see prowling the streets don't want the same opportunities that you have had. They were deprived of them. I am not asking you to help them out in any way, or engage in charity, but I want you to think about whether you really deserve what you have, and whether they do not.

It is with this in mind, that I ask you, to think about your life and your past, and to ask yourself whether you have earned the opportunities that you have been blessed with, and if you have not, now is a good time to start and I can assure you that you will never look back. And if you have, then I would like to shake your hand and congratulate you, for your life is made.

Shiv Toolsidass

AS Science



KOREA – THE SECRET BEHIND THEIR EDUCATION

Korean students rank 1st in OECD's digital comprehension test

The survey of 38,000 students aged 15 in 19 countries, including 16 OECD countries, across the world was conducted simultaneously with the OECD's 2009 Program for International Student Assessment. In Korea, 1,488 students attending 20 middle and 137 high schools all over the country participated.

South Korea also ranked first in the OECD's 2009 "printed media reading assessment" whose results were announced last December, according to the ministry.

The Korea Times : 29.06.2011

South Korea's education success

Young people in South Korea's workforce are more likely to have achieved an upper secondary education than anywhere else in the developed world.

They are also among the most likely to have university degrees, shows an annual education report from the OECD.

The South Korean success is also reflected in test results. International comparisons of maths skills among teenagers placed South Korea in second place behind Finland.

A spokesman at the South Korean embassy in London said that there was a great value attached to education in the country - and that it was seen as the way of achieving individual and national success.

From being a country that had experienced much hardship, he said that South Koreans had invested in education as a means towards economic progress - and that the country had recognised the importance of developing skills in new technology.

BBC NEWS : 13.09.2005



However, there are many problems in Korean education.

Korean education has been criticized for a long time. Most students have been oppressed by Korean education. Korean parents tell their children, "You have to study hard and go to a prestigious university, or else you will be a loser. Survive the examination hell." These pressures, sometimes, make Korean students kill themselves. It is not surprising that the rate of suicide among students in Korea is highest in the world.

Korean people think that only the name of a prestigious university can guarantee their bright future. Korean high school students usually study over ten hours for three years just to enter a university they want to go to. They just focus on how they can enter a university. They decide the university they want to go to even before they decide what they want to be and do. Then Korea education just teaches them the way to enter prestigious universities. After entering a university, Korean students get confused about their future because their current major is not in their interest.

The students in Korea study 15 hours more than other countries in average, reported by OECD. Most of the students spend time only in studies and they live in a world of competition, against others and themselves for higher level.

Is this the only way to live our lives to the fullest? This may bring good results shortly but it brings more adverse effects in the further future.. This resulted 50% of students to think of committing suicide, according to the news reported this year.

Youngeun Lee

AS Humanities



THE TWINS

Ever since I can remember, the fact that my brother and I are identical twins has really amazed and excited people. Even when talking to a stranger, I only have to wait for them to glance at me, then my brother, and back again, a flicker of realisation in their eyes and then brace myself for a barrage of questions from the curious stranger that I would be answering for what might be the thousandth time in my life.

So I'll be talking about twins today. You could call it 'from a twin's perspective' if you like.

There are basically two types of twins – *identical*, or 'monozygotic' for all the scientists, and *fraternal* or 'dizygotic'. This means that there are two ways twins are conceived in the womb. *After* an egg is fertilized, it may split into two embryos; and we get identical twins like my brother and I. When the ovaries release two eggs *at the same time* and two *different* sperm cells fertilize the eggs, we get fraternal twins – the kind which consists of a boy and a girl, and twins that don't look alike. Now that you have a general idea of why twins exist in the world and how they came to be, let's get to the meat – Life as identical twins.

I can safely say the worst part about being twins is constant comparisons with your sibling. Here's a typical scenario. Mom has guests over. My brother and I come home from school. Guests seem eager to meet us, and after the introductions and pleasantries, we come to the part that everyone's been waiting for. My brother and I are made to stand side by side while about five to six people excitedly scan our faces for the '*differences*' between us. Throughout this ordeal, we are expected to patiently wait there while they peer at our faces and are talking, discussing, nodding and agreeing amongst themselves, till everyone's had their fill. Now I understand that this is a very natural thing to do for people, but the fact that they don't realize what kind



of torture it is to go through that almost every-single-day of your life, does not make the experience any less excruciating. What's more, some people go about it in a round about manner, and ask *me* for the differences directly, obviously hoping that I'd volunteer to stand like some decorative show piece next to my brother to be glared at, preceding exclamations and remarks that make us feel like some inconsistency in nature's work.

And then there are these annoying myths and misconceptions floating about in people's heads. NO, I don't communicate with my brother telepathically and NO, I don't feel any pain when my brother cuts himself a mile away. More sensible and insightful questions would be "Do you have similar hobbies?" No. "Do you have similar tastes in music, movies etc?" Yes, partly because we went through the same exposure to most things in our lives. Another favorite – "Do you have a secret language?"- Yes, maybe a subtle nod here and a twitch there can mean a lot more to us than other people around us. What really amazes me is the fact that people are genuinely surprised that my brother and I are actually two different individuals, and not 'an extension of the same mind'. Strange, I know.

Apart from the aforementioned nuisances though, there are some interesting situations one can get into as twins. Like this one time when we were placed in different classrooms for math class, but decided to switch and see how long we could get away with it. It was a full thirty minutes before one of the teachers realized they had an imposter in the room, and I owe that to the giggling and sniggering of my classmates. Other aspects are less attractive. Mainly when I get into trouble for my brother's crimes because some people are too lazy to make sure they are punishing the right person. There have been people who genuinely start to dislike me because they don't like my brother. Even teachers at school would become slightly more irritable towards me when both of us are in the same class. Maybe because they perceived us as the 'same face' causing trouble instead of two separate individuals.



Sometimes though, it works both ways. It's really strange, but for some reason people tend to give me some credit for my brother's achievements, or vice versa. It's as if they are saying "Well, if u did something, I'm sure the both of you had a hand in it."

There are some bright sides to being twins as well. You are never really left very lonely and always have company. Also, that age old saying still holds true: Two brains are better than one, which means you always have a second person handy if you're in a fix and need advice or opinion, or just a hand doing something. If you get into trouble, you have someone to 'share' the responsibility with, and yes, it does make it *that* much better. Also, with someone who has shared so many experiences with you, it becomes extremely easy to communicate and work with your twin sibling.

Eventually, people's constant fascination with twins gets problematic and annoying. When you talk to people for fifteen minutes, and then realize they don't know which twin you are", and when some people don't bother treating twins as two separate people, it can start getting on your nerves very, very fast. I always used to blame people for their laziness and ignorance. Then, a few months back, my family was visited by my cousin sisters who also happen to be twins (guess it runs in the family). It was the first time my family saw them in 5 years. I witnessed the ritual of looking for visual differences between the twins from the third person this time. As the others were busy pointing out their features, *so was I*, and that is the part I found most shocking. I am a twin myself; nevertheless, I involuntarily joined in the ritual which I cringe at going through myself. And I realized how innocent people actually are when they are perhaps inconsiderate. I realized how much of a natural thing this is for people and that they really don't mean to annoy me. I often felt really felt irritated at people for being inconsiderate and often embarrassing me. I see now that it is a much more curiosity and fascination than anything else. After all, we are quite a fascinating species.

Abhishek Agrwal

A2 Science



SUPERHUMANS

Our world is huge, over 6 billion people, each trying to eek out an existence in the face of insurmountable odds. We are all going to die, but how many of us truly live? We are all unique, but doesn't that also mean noone is unique? But then there are those who truly are unique, that is, special in some way. Maybe through god-given talent, skill earned through years of intense training, or genetic mutations that allow them to surpass the normal scope of abilities of human beings. These men and women are a statistical anomaly, but with so many people, there's bound to be a few odd and incredible apples.

First, I will come to a well documented, though extremely rare medical disorder called Savant Syndrome. These are people with superhuman mental capabilities, yet they also suffer from a mental disability. Anyone who has watched rain-man will know what I'm talking about. Let's take for example, Kim Peek. He has very poor social skills, scores low on IQ tests, and has limited physical capability. But Kim has a unique ability that anyone trying to get into a good college would kill for. Kim can read fast, as in both pages at the same time, and recall 98% of what he read. Kim has read approximately 12000 books in his lifetime, and can recall every single one of them. I can't recall half of the one sheet of physics formulae I tried to memorise in the morning. Or Daniel Tammet who suffers from Asperger Syndrome but has god-like mathematic and linguistic skills. He knows and fluently speaks 10 languages, and can recite pi correctly to over 22,000 digits, which is more than my calculator can do. He can also do complex calculus problems in his head, in case you think reciting pi is just a memory trick.

There are only a handful of people with such brilliant mental capabilities, but almost all of them have some sort of trade-off.



Also, there is Dean Karnazes from San Francisco, California, who possibly suffers from a genetic disorder, which allows him to run forever. He ran 50 marathons in 50 states in 50 days, and then back to the finish across all 50 states. That's 49 more marathons than I've ever run in my life, and anyone who's ever run one, professional, or otherwise, will tell you that it gets a lot harder to keep running with the fatigue from the last one.

Now for the skilled: Isao Machii is a samurai, in Los Angeles. A modern day samurai who can cut a bullet in half. Not the ones just sitting around, but one fired at him, and zooming towards him at bullet speed! Which is around 2520km/h, on the slower end, 700-1000 m/s, that is. Or Bob Munden of Las Vegas, who's a modern day gunslinger. He can fire in the blink of an eye. A normal 6 round-revolver needs to be cocked, aimed, fired, and then re-cocked if you want to fire it again. Bob can hit 2 targets, placed a metre apart, and make it seem like one single shot. It takes him less than the blink of an eye to take out both the targets, and he does it so fast it looks like a single shot, that too from the hip. Who do you think would win a fight? Super samurai or gunslinger?

Or maybe Shi Yan Ming would. A shaolin monk who defected from China, and lives in Denver, Colorado. I don't know if anyone who reads this has seen Bruce Lee's one inch punch, but it's wicked cool. He punches from an inch away and can send a man flying. Shi Yan Ming punched a crash test dummy from one inch away, and generated more force than a 50km/h car crash.

Kaustav Halder

A2 Science



WE SHALL OVERCOME

POVERTY: Through re-distribution of wealth.

INEQUALITY: With equal rights for everybody

RACISM: We are all the same (with dreams, visions, beliefs and hopes) just different castes, creeds and cultures and a different shade of grey.

GLOBAL WARMING: By bring about greater ecological balance by 'going green', not with envy but by growing more trees and plants, curbing the use of plastics and non-bio-degradable products and saving water and electricity.

THE THEORY THAT SCIENCE CREATED THE WORLD: Practically it has not been proven nor can science explain a lot.

ILLITERACY: With education

INJUSTICE: With justice

DISHONESTY: With honesty, the moral - Honesty is the best policy - still holding good.

OBESITY: With a healthier lifestyle/ diet.

MALNUTRITION/ ANOREXIA: With a more balanced diet and healthy foods.

ILLNESS: Through the eradication of life-threatening diseases.

DISORDER IN THE WORLD: By changing the world order.

TURMOIL/ WAR: With peace plans/ peace bearing forces bringing lands to peace with one another.

ATHEISM: By faith

NEGATIVITY: With a positive attitude



In trying to 'overcome' all of the above and more, we can make this world a better place for all humanity. God created the world for us with love, passion and a purpose – the purpose got defeated along the way; hence the sorry state-of-affairs continues to exist and will worsen if "WE" don't take a stand to "OVERCOME" the man-made disasters that rock/ rule this world. But collectively, "WE SHALL OVERCOME".

Salome Yonzone

A2 Humanities



THE STATE OF FREEDOM IN INDIA

"At the stroke of the midnight hour, when the world sleeps, India will awake to life and freedom. A moment comes, which comes but rarely in history, when we step out from the old to the new, when an age ends, and when the soul of a nation, long suppressed, finds utterance. ... We end today a period of misfortunes and India discovers herself again."

Thus spoke Jawaharlal Nehru on the midnight of August 14, 1947 when after 90 long years of ceaseless struggle, India succeeded in breaking free from the shackles of British imperialism. "A new star arises," Nehru had remarked, "a new hope comes into being."

64 long years have passed since and as the nation celebrates the 65th anniversary of her independence, I cannot help but wonder out the state of freedom today in the largest democracy of the world. Has the long suppressed soul of India truly found utterance? Has she really succeeded in ending the period of her misfortunes to discover herself again? My mind is abuzz with questions such as these and I take a moment to ask myself - Is the India of today really free and independent?

This is not to say that I am not proud of my country or that I do not share in the patriotic sentiments that the celebrations invoke. In fact, I take great pride in the heritage of our civilisation and the nobility and magnanimity of our freedom struggle, and it truly fills my heart with a sense of immense joy and satisfaction to think about the wonders of our democracy and the great successes we have seen in recent years in almost every field ranging from commerce to education. But the undeniable fact remains that a nation cannot survive, leave alone make progress, by simply flaunting its past heritage as a rare badge of honour. Despite the great heights that India has scaled till date, even those that love India with a crazy passion cannot deny that our long and continuing list of failures has a far greater impact on our



freedom than our evident strengths. For even after 64 years of independence, India remains a country that has fallen short on most globally accepted standards of progress and well-being.

With 70 per cent of her population below the age of 34, India today is an overwhelmingly young country. And as is true to the nature of youth, she is restless and impatient - for progress, for achievement - and it is not in political rhetoric that she is interested but in good governance - the kind of governance that will promise and deliver to all her citizens not only *roti-kapda-makan* [food-clothing-shelter] but also good education, decent health care, regular electricity and water supply, proper infrastructure and an equal share of her prosperity. In short, what India and Indians want today is to get a taste of real freedom - the kind of freedom that guarantees individual dignity and provides each and every citizen easy, if not equal, access to opportunities and resources necessary to make a decent living.

Unfortunately, this freedom still eludes India, a nation which at the moment presents a picture of stark contrasts. While on the one hand, the country has witnessed a great economic boom and has carved an identity for herself on the global platform as, to quote the TIMES magazine, "the country of software engineers, Bollywood movie stars, literary giants and steel magnates", on the other, she remains a nation where poverty is still widespread, with 41.6% of her total population living in grinding poverty, unsure of when and from where, if at all, they will have their next meal.

While on the one hand, India has established world-class educational institutions, on the next, she seems to have reached nowhere near achieving her goal of universal education.

The Indian Constitution may well be among the world's finest when it comes to ensuring gender equality, but our sex ratio - 933 females for every 1000 males - remains well below the global norm.



In almost every other sphere one gets to witness a similar picture. Our primary healthcare still remains in a pitiful state and while one might point to the fact that treatment for almost every disease that can be treated can be availed of in India, the truth is that for the greater majority of the country's population these facilities remain well out of reach.

We have conquered the moon but not the darkness within us, for going by the number of female infanticides and honour killings that take place in our country today, it leaves room for little doubt that much of India still remains plunged in the pits of ignorance.

But our miseries do not end here. With problems of unemployment, religious tension, child labour, communalism, corruption and terrorism, India's woes continue - the list is almost endless. Amidst plenty, we remain a poor country! In 64 years, the nation of a billion people ought to have fared better than this.

I believe it is incorrect to think of India as one single nation - this might be true from a geographical or political point of view, but in essence India is a thousand nations within a nation. Interestingly, as the situation stands today, these thousand nations do not enjoy freedom in equal measure for the great disparities that exist among them go on to influence the extent to which they can and do have access to the available resources and opportunities. Yes, there is formal independence no doubt - but not freedom in the real sense, for till today there exists no freedom from poverty, no freedom from unemployment, no freedom from inequality, no freedom of expression, no freedom from the ravages of endemic corruption, no freedom from terror, no freedom from fear and no freedom from empty promises made from the halls of power. Freedom thus largely remains an illusion that is staring everyone in the face. And this great crisis that looms large on India's horizon today is not something she can afford to ignore.



In the 1980s, Rajiv Gandhi coined the slogan: *Mera Bharat Mahan* [My India is great], a sentiment that millions of Indians appreciated and still do. Now-a-days there is a new slogan that says: *Mera Bharat Jawan* [My India is young], a simple statement that highlights the promise and enthusiasm that the youth of India embody. Without a doubt, both these slogans beautifully capture the spirit of India but what they essentially do is present just one side of the coin. If I am asked what the other side of the coin looks like, I shall have nothing better to say than *Mera Bharat Pareshan* [My India is troubled].

Unfortunate. But true.

Stuti Das

A2 Humanities



THE PURSUIT OF HAPPINESS

The journey to happiness may not always be a bed of roses. In fact, in almost all cases it is not. The attainment of happiness brings more pleasure and satisfaction; like when a soccer player scores a goal or a man completes Harvard Law.

A good example of the unadulterated bliss that most people feel once they have achieved their goals is the case of Christopher (enacted by Will Smith) in the movie, 'The Pursuit of Happiness'. The tears of joy when Chris finally gets the job as stockbroker at the end of the movie shows quite explicitly just how much happiness one feels for an achievement that comes after a long and tiresome journey.

To reach this stage of life Christopher had to undergo numerous hardships: from sleeping in abandoned restrooms, not being able to afford a meal for his son to having only five dollars in his wallet. A person who has gone through such difficult times should definitely feel immense joy in the end.

'The Pursuit of Happiness', in my opinion tells us a story about a man who never gave up in spite of his misgivings but it was only at the closure that he experienced well-deserved happiness.

The British philosopher Bertrand Russell may have been right in claiming that journeys bring more satisfaction than reaching the destination itself. However, not all pursuits are fruitful nor are they happy. More often that not, it is only when one scores the goal or completes law school that the journey to the destination brings ultimate satisfaction.

Diya Chakravorty

A2 Business