

INSIDE

**REASONS TO BE
CHEERFUL**
MORE 'OOH', LESS
'AARGH!' - TIPS FOR
STAYING SANE



**KITCHEN
CONFIDENTIAL**
'SECRET' RECIPES



**ART, CULTURE &
SPORT**
PORTRAITS & MORE



FANTASTIC BEASTS
WORMS & OTHER
ANIMALS

STRANGE TIMES

NORBURY MANOR LOCKDOWN NEWS



Putting the splendid into 'splendid isolation'

Since the end of March when the UK's lockdown began in an attempt to control the spread of COVID-19, staff and students have been struggling to deal with the impacts of social distancing and isolation. It's an anxious and distressing time and many of us have had to deal with the pain of seeing loved ones grow seriously ill or worse.

We have had to celebrate religious festivals and carry out other aspects of our faiths, lives and cultures in very different ways to those we are used to. The school has been closed for weeks and we've all had to find ways to cope (students: we really miss you!); things have got so bad that some people have even reported missing media coverage of Brexit.

**"Some people
have even
reported missing
media coverage of
Brexit"**

Enter Strange Times - an attempted antidote for our present situation, a lighthearted and informal way of enabling staff and students to catch up with what we've all been doing.

If you'd like to find out what our students have been getting up to and what's been occupying staff - aside from work - since the lockdown hit (mostly buying puppies, it seems) read on!

KITCHEN CONFIDENTIAL

LOCKDOWN SPECIALS

Many of our staff and students have been cooking up a storm during the lockdown. You can see some of their work below and on the right.

Ms Roberts has been cooking brunches at the weekends during lockdown to make them 'a bit special'. Here are two of her favourite recipes...

French Toast

1 large egg, beaten
300ml milk
1 tsp vanilla extract or 1/2 tsp cinnamon
4 thick slices white bread
2 tbsp butter
Toppings (e.g. 2 tbsp maple syrup/honey; fruit salad - see picture)

In a wide dish or plate, whisk the egg, milk and vanilla or cinnamon together. Coat one side of the bread slices in the liquid then carefully flip them over and leave them to soak for 1-2 mins. If the bread isn't very fresh you can leave it for a few mins more.

Melt 1 tbsp of the butter in a frying pan over a medium heat and add two slices of the soaked bread. Cook for 5 mins or until golden, then turn to cook the other side for a further 5 mins. Transfer to a plate and cook the other two slices in the rest of the butter.

Add your toppings. A drizzle of honey or maple syrup works really well as does a sprinkling of cinnamon mixed with sugar.

Shakshuka

1 medium onion, diced
1 red pepper, diced
4 garlic cloves, finely chopped
2 tsp paprika
1 tsp cumin
1/4 tsp chilli powder
2 cans chopped tomatoes

Mouth-watering staff eats



From top to bottom:
French toast by Ms Roberts (recipe left); shakshuka by Ms Roberts (recipe left); hot cross buns by Ms Spiegel; saag paneer and peshwari naan by Ms Park - yum!

6 large eggs
 Olive oil, for frying
 Salt and pepper, to taste
 Toppings (e.g. feta cheese, coriander)

Heat the oil in a large frying pan on a medium heat. Add the chopped pepper and onion and cook for 5 minutes.

Add the garlic and spices and cook for an additional minute.

Pour the cans of tomatoes and juice into the pan. Season with salt and pepper and bring the sauce to a simmer.

Use a large spoon to make small wells in the sauce and crack the eggs into each well. Cover the pan and cook for 5-8 minutes, or until the eggs are done to your liking.

Add some toppings like feta cheese, coriander and serve with nice crusty bread.



Mr Reiss celebrated his locked-down birthday with a homemade chocolate puddle cake

Student bakes



From top to bottom:
 Unaysah Amir's cookies;
 Tia Wilson's chocolate
 cake; Amber Greaves's
 sponge cake; Amber
 Greaves's cupcakes;
 Nikola Bochra makes
 brownies - mmm!

MY LOCKDOWN

STUDENTS SHARE REAL LIFE EXPERIENCES

When we were first put into lockdown I ironically felt freed. Freed from the robotic loop I was living: wake up, go to school, come back from school, eat, do homework, sleep, repeat. I felt I had finally been given the freedom to choose how I wanted to live my life instead of living a life that has been assigned to everyone from the age of five.

So lockdown seemed like a wonderful opportunity for me to learn more about myself. We get so caught up in learning about everything around us and forget to educate ourselves on who we are, how creative we can be, what we are passionate about, what motivates us and all the fascinating things that cross our minds.

**“We have not only been locked away; we have also been granted the privilege of being able to travel around a range of unfamiliar, sometimes daunting but essentially wondrous inner continents”
- Alain de Botton**

I found I enjoy doing schoolwork at home; there is a huge difference in working because you have to and working because you want to. During school you must work whether you are feeling tired, unhappy, or simply just not in the mood; at home you do the work when you are motivated and eager, and have the privilege of choosing your favourite subject first or starting with the easier tasks before easing yourself into the more challenging work.

Philosophy has always been my favourite subject and during lockdown I have been spending huge amounts of time expanding my knowledge. During my research I have come across things that really resonated with me during this period of confinement. The French philosopher and mathematician Blaise Pascal wrote: ‘The sole cause of man’s unhappiness is that he does not know how to stay quietly in his room’. Pascal’s idea usefully challenges one of our most cherished beliefs, that we must always go to different places in order to discover new and worthwhile things. What if there was already a treasury inside us? What if our minds already held enough interesting thoughts, experiences and ideas to last us 10 lifetimes? I find this to be true; in the fast-paced society in which we live there are many experiences accumulated inside my brain that I never get a chance to properly process, appreciate and ponder on.

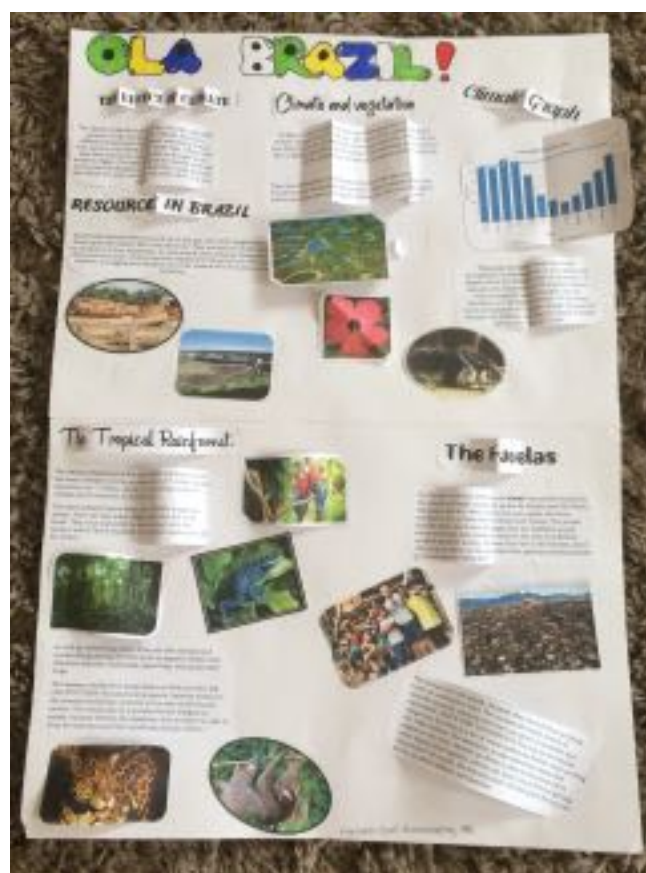
The French writer Xavier De Maistre, placed under house-arrest for duelling, decided to study the wonders and beauty of his immediate surroundings. His playful account of this experience, ‘*A Journey Around my Room*’, in which he details his admiration for simple furniture and his appreciation of cushions, suggests the pleasure we derive from going outside and seeing new things is dependent more upon our mindset than on the destination itself. So although our lives have slowed down during the lockdown and we may be currently unable to explore the outside world, I have learnt that there is much more to be discovered from our immediate surroundings and inner experiences. As the philosopher Alain de Botton puts it: “We have not only been locked away; we have also been granted the privilege of being able to travel around a range of unfamiliar, sometimes daunting but essentially wondrous inner continents.”

Zainab Zaidi

ART, SPORT & CULTURE

STUDENTS' WORK AND MORE

Clockwise from top: embroidery by Nayha Noor for display in a local medical centre; geography project by Nyarko Osei-Acheampong; Mountains of Dreams by Unaysah Amir; a watercolour pet portrait by Mrs Iaciofano to be posted to a friend; dyed bag and T-shirt by Tia Wilson



GRAYSON'S ART CLUB

Miss Sheppard is encouraging students to watch Grayson's Art Club on Channel 4, Mondays at 20.00. The six-part series hosted by Turner Prize winner Grayson Perry promises to take viewers on a journey of art discovery with themed shows inspiring members of the public to create their own work.



The portraits on this page were created by students and staff watching the show (clockwise from top right: Julia Krupinska, Lana Mitchell, Miss Sheppard, Nourhan Maamri).



FOOTBALL

Our resident sportswriter, Ms Sage, takes a view on what will happen in the Premier League with around a quarter of the current season's fixtures still yet to be played.



'Ere we go, 'ere we go.

Alright peeps, here are my thoughts. I believe the 2019/20 Premier League season will be scrapped and a new season will begin as usual in September.

This is because there are too many things to be sorted out - promotion, relegation, cups, etc.

I also think if games go ahead behind closed doors fans will turn up anyway which will cause huge problems for everyone.

On a personal level, one or two of you may be aware that I am a Chelsea fan. Well, it hasn't been a bad season for us so far, but I will be gutted if we don't get the opportunity to win a trophy, though it seems that may well now be the case. Having said that (and I can hardly believe I am writing this), there are some things that are more important than football. The health of the nation must come first.

FANTASTIC BEASTS

(MOSTLY) CUTE & CUDDLY ANIMALS

OK, here's the part many of you have been waiting for. First up, Ms Lampard's new Basset Hound, Wilma (right) - just look at her face!





Left: Mrs Iacofano's cats Z and O (left) have been mostly "eating grass (!) and sunbathing" during the lockdown. Above: Mrs McCardie's new Vizsla pup, Dolly.

Next up, some pictures from Ms Whitehouse: here's Toto (below left) and, below right, Ms Whitehouse's "park friend" that she has named Guinevere (we all have "park friends", right?).



Below, we have Ms Whitehouse's cat, Joseph, pictured "screaming at his butt." (Ms Whitehouse is from Canada.)



And here's a horse (above right) that Mrs Iacofano (AKA "Mrs Choff") recently discovered living behind her house. She noticed this after going for a walk one day and hopes to "make friends with the owner after lockdown" so she can "go horse riding!"

Finally, we promised you worms and we're not going to disappoint you.



Mr Ireland has been trying to entertain a couple of wild urchins he is acquainted with by conducting various activities including a treasure hunt, dropping eggs with parachutes from an upstairs window and - more recently - constructing a mini-wormery in a plastic bottle.

Putting the mini-wormery together was vaguely entertaining, he reported, but that was sadly where the fun ended: "Turns out worms don't do very much; they do even less than Sea-Monkeys."

(On the off-chance that readers are in any way interested, you can find full details on how to build a mini-wormery here:

<https://schoolgardening.rhs.org.uk/Resources/Activity/Mini-wormery>)

Lockdown Superstars!

Students and staff who deserve a special mention...

STUDENTS

- ✿ **Monsifa Hawond** for submitting an insightful essay based on her reading of a Dorothy Parker short story
- ✿ **Hareem Gondal** for being super-proactive in changing her Duke of Edinburgh's Award plans to enable her to continue during lockdown; volunteering with online classes to teach younger children; improving her yoga skills; and developing her cooking prowess
- ✿ **Khushi Patel** for getting ahead in her English work and being a general all-round star

STAFF

- ✿ **Ms Spiegel, Ms Radcliffe and Ms Lampard** for all their amazing work in making PPE for local hospitals
- ✿ **Mrs Rodney** for being on hand for every query and problem while working remotely and getting things done at the drop of a hat
- ✿ **Mr Lock** for getting everything working again in the English block so the department could access data sheets for grade-ranking when all the computers were powered off by workmen
- ✿ **Ms King** for donating lots of time to help with packing envelopes to post home for students without computer access
- ✿ **Mrs Murley** for being our resident postie and making sure our students' work packs were delivered to the post office

THAT'S ALL FOR NOW! REMEMBER TO CHECK THE SCHOOL WEBSITE (nmbec.org.uk) AND TWITTER ACCOUNT (@NorburyManor) REGULARLY FOR OTHER NEWS!

Thanks to all contributors - please keep them coming (staff, please send to Mrs McCardie; students, please send to Ms Roberts at robertsc@nmbec.org.uk). If your contribution hasn't yet featured, don't worry - it will probably appear over the next couple of weeks in another issue.

STAY SAFE, BE KIND AND LOOK AFTER EACH OTHER

Edited by Stephen Ireland. Thanks to Mrs McCardie, Ms Millard, Ms Roberts and Ms Ryder Owen.

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