



*Tanghin Voice:
Spring 2024*

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A Letter to Gulliver

Summer, Choy Lok Yee (1B) 2023-2024

Dear Mr. Gulliver,

As a secondary student, I was honoured and excited to have the opportunity to write this letter to you. I am deeply drawn to your experiences in the book *Gulliver's Travels*.

I know that in Lilliput, you encountered many strange and difficult situations, and one of the saddest things I've read is when you were mistaken for a villain and attacked by the little people.

When I read about your experience, I could deeply feel your fear and helplessness. As a tall and healthy person, you must have felt so confused and bewildered when you were treated so badly. You must have struggled to understand why these people misunderstood you and even used violence against you. I could imagine you tied up with ropes and the little people shooting arrows at you. It must have been so terrible!



I understand the painful experience of being misunderstood and attacked during your journey. I hope you do not lose faith in human beings. There are still many kind and compassionate people in this world who are willing to listen to your story to provide support.

Please keep hope alive and continue your adventurous journey. I look forward to your safe return home.

Enjoy your journey, and I wish you all the best!

Yours faithfully,

Summer

A Letter to Sherlock Holmes

Alva, Ming Kwan (2D) 2023-2024

Dear Mr. Holmes,

Let me briefly recap a recent puzzling case you helped us solve. The incident began last month with a robbery at our jewelry shop. The gangsters broke into our shop and threatened the customers and employees. Then, they stole a large amount of jewelry. The gangsters were wearing masks and sunglasses so no one could see their faces. We lost so much in this case. The police urgently intervened in the investigation, but they could not break the deadlock.



Fortunately, we found you to help us out. Through your careful analysis of the clues at the scene, you found out what happened and cracked the case. Finally, all the gangsters were arrested, and we got the jewelry back. We are very thankful to you!

Sincerely,
Avelyn Wong



Should we eradicate all 'vampires' that still exist?

Kingsley, Lam King Chit (3B) 2023-2024

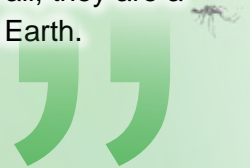
Do you believe in vampires? In the story *Dracula* by Bram Stoker, there is a mysterious and cunning creature by the name of Count Dracula. He is a vampire and a supernatural being that has not been found to exist, so it is meaningless to worry about him. However, some creatures that do exist have the same abilities as vampires. They also suck blood like vampires and are deadly. They may roam your bedroom at night and may try to kiss you. Unlike Count Dracula, we can easily kill them with our hands. They're really small and annoying, and sometimes they can make us crazy. Yes, I am talking about the annoying mosquitoes. This essay will discuss whether those small creatures should exist or whether we should eradicate them all.

First of all, their bites make our skin really itchy. Mosquitoes pierce our skin and inject its special mouthpart to suck our blood. Since our skin is sensitive to saliva, our body reacts, resulting in itching. It is really annoying when you need to concentrate on something to finish a task, but you fail because of a mosquito. While Count Dracula wanted to spread his vampirism, these tiny creatures are trying to spread their diseases. Mosquitoes can carry many infectious and fatal diseases and even take away people's lives mercilessly. Viruses like Dengue, Malaria and the Zika virus are terrible and can be spread by mosquitoes. That's why it is important to have enough prevention in place to avoid mosquitoes.

Although mosquitoes are harmful to humans, they have their role in nature, which makes them indispensable. If we eradicate mosquitoes or if they go extinct, it could potentially disrupt the ecosystem and the

food web, especially the plants that rely on them for pollination and animals that treat them as their main food source. The animals will need to change their diet. Although it is predicted that most animals can adapt, some creatures will still be affected. This may result in a reduction in biodiversity. Even though there are up to 3500 species of mosquitoes on Earth, only a few hundred are attracted to human blood. Most of them live completely off of plants. Besides, a few entomologists expressed their concerns that if mosquitoes really go extinct, it will lead to a rise in insects. These foreseen uncertainties make the eradication of mosquitoes risky. If these species are destroyed, it can be catastrophic.

In conclusion, some mosquitoes are a nuisance and can be ruthless killers. However, most of them are harmless to humans. We should find a balance between the good and bad points before we decide to eradicate all mosquitoes. After all, they are a part of the circle of life here on Earth.



Creating a More Inclusive and Caring Environment by Eliminating Stereotypes

Kristy, Chan Man Ching (4A) 2023-2024

Stereotypes are ubiquitous in teenager's lives. Teenagers are often labelled with negative words such as 'moody,' 'rebellious,' or 'phone-addicted' based on unconscious biases against teenagers. Also, teenagers are often categorized for their abilities and characteristics which are deep-rooted in preconceptions about genders. These stereotypes have already integrated into people's mindsets, causing teenagers to be often criticized or doubted for no reason. This leads to discrimination, and hence, teenagers' low self-confidence and limited exploration of their passion and hobbies. Nonetheless, there are things we can do to create an inclusive and caring environment, and I will make some suggestions at the end of this essay.

To commence with, teenagers are often given diminutive comments merely because they are in adolescence. They are thought to be mentally immature and susceptible to peers. Teenagers may also even get bad information on social media, which adults usually attribute teenagers' rebelliousness to. For example, some parents forbid their children to befriend others or use social media as they regard their children as not being able to think independently and will easily conform to others. But the fact is those parents are strangling teenagers' opportunities to develop their critical thinking skills and to manage interpersonal relationships. These reasons may cause teenagers to be excluded from their peers and to become ignorant. Thus, they are more likely to be mired in trivial affairs due to a lack of knowledge and support. As teenagers may have problems dealing with others, it causes low affiliation and competence and, as a result, a lack of confidence in themselves.

In addition, extreme instances of poor juvenile behaviours are often over-generalized. This phenomenon is especially common nowadays. Teenagers are constantly judged at first sight based on awkward things they do but those things are often exaggerated and even judged maliciously. For instance, a teenager walking on a street while staring at their phone is always regarded as a hopeless and most 'likely-to-get-hurt-of-traffic-accidents' phone addict. However, the teenager could just be using his phone to handle urgent issues while being aware of road conditions.

Also, a teenager who appears to be angry is often associated with words such as 'aggressive' or 'violent' without their situation being considered. Consequently, teenagers are frequently belittled and criticized with malice or slander, causing confusion and drastic damage to teenagers' self-esteem.

Moreover, the development of hobbies and characteristics of teenagers is often hindered and limited by traditional and distorted views about gender. Some classic examples would be football and basketball, which are sports only for boys, and dancing, which is only for girls. Or girls must be better at languages while boys must be better at mathematics and science. History has proven that these concepts are wrong; however, teenagers are often troubled by these perpetuated misconceptions. These gender stereotypes contribute to discrimination against teenagers whenever they are behaving not according to their expectations. This result distorts the mindset of teenagers and make them feel shame for violating proper 'gendered behaviours'. It limits teenagers' potential to develop their abilities, passions and characteristics intangibly, thus adversely affecting their prospects.

To conclude, stereotypes have a negative impact on teenagers' self-confidence, which leads to hindered development of their passions and hobbies. In light of the above, as teenagers, it is crucial for us to be self-aware of the stereotypes in our daily lives. Others may not mean to hurt us on purpose, but we ought to distinguish between stereotypes and advice and not be adversely affected by the hidden stereotypes in others' words or behaviours. Apart from that, we need to correct others' misconceptions by pointing out the difference between fact and opinion. Most importantly, we should learn to respect others regardless of their gender, race, and characteristics and not judge others based on preconceptions. At the same time, those who face stereotypes should speak out and fight against them. They can seek help from others when in doubt or confused. If we manage to eliminate the stereotypes around us, we can change others' attitudes and mindsets about teenagers and create a more inclusive and caring environment.

Sing Street

Abby, Zhang Fangyu (5A) 2023-2024

John Carney, who directed the award-winning Irish musical *Once*, returns to his familiar realm with *Sing Street*. Time and again, we get some great original songs that can take you back to specific moments, connecting you to a younger self. This time, *Sing Street* shows up with classics of the 80s. It's a toe-tapper of a film, and, particularly if you have a strong nostalgia for the period, you'll love seeing it portrayed on screen.

In Dublin in 1985, Conor, a 15-year-old Irish boy, finds himself adrift after being expelled from a private school known as Synge Street. Battling constant bullying at school and strained family relationships, he encounters a captivating girl named Raphina, who becomes his beacon of hope. In a bid to win her heart, Conor forms a band. Despite numerous hurdles, the band flourishes with the support of Conor's brother, Brendan, and they embark on a journey filled with laughter and tears.

Ferdia Walsh-Peelo played Conor in the movie. His acting performance is natural and impressive, so much so that it's hard to believe that *Sing Street* is his debut on the big screen. He was required to handle various emotions such as fear, ambition, romantic feelings, and growing pains. He showed the audience that the world is painful and scary, with the flickers of thoughts in his eyes and his quiet-thinking face. It is a delight to see him perform the right mixture of shyness and teenage petulance shown on his pink flush cheeks. In the film, he forms a harmonious band with co-stars who keep humour and excitement alive in every scene.

Written by Carney and Gary Clark, the seven songs that make up *Sing Street*'s original soundtrack tickle the audience with joy and amusement. *"Up"* and *"To Find You"* are sentimental. The former is about the youthful zest of running into a serendipity. At the same time, the latter is a ballad that utilizes a touching and star-crossed feeling of first love.

Remarkably, Carney and Clark can strike a balance between materials that sound professional and tones that could probably come from scrappy teens. But the most outstanding tracks are those with rocky styles—*"Drive It as You Stole It"*, *"The Riddle of the Model"*, and *"Brown Shoes"*. Carney and Clark wrap the three-and-a-half minute songs like lollipops with an addicting refrain and sugary lyrics that could turn the heads of any music lovers of all times.

From *Sing Street*, we can see that for teenagers, the sky is the limit because boys can put on makeup, and girls can play rock and roll? Why not? After all, rock and roll is a risk and you risk being ridiculed. Everything in life is like this. If you form a tribute band, you will be covering others' songs forever, and you can never dig into your personality to express yourself. Although there are inevitable accidents and dilemmas on the way to dreams, that's life, "happy-sad". Just like the characters in the movie, we need to admit and accept negative emotions so they won't cling to us. Then, we can move forward to things that are more valuable and meaningful. *Sing Street* is as spectacular as the music itself. This is life, so *"Drive It Like You Stole It"*.



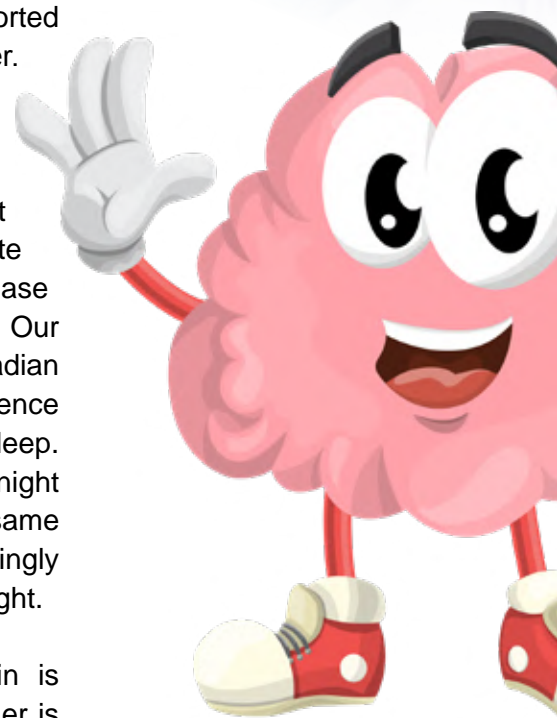
Treat Your Brain Better

Hana, He Hua (5B) 2023 - 2024

Inside our skulls lives a sophisticated living computer that organizes every aspect of our lives, from unbuttoning our coats to solving a trigonometric equation. Our brain is the most delicate yet complicated organ in the body and its complexity might still be far from our understanding. However, as we are stepping into an increasingly advanced technological era, the infinite potential of our brain has been neglected. We adopt a set of modern lifestyles that has the potential to damage our brain health. Over-relying on multiple alarm clocks instead of waking up naturally, flooding our brain with a plethora of digital information, and listing every single task with reminders instead of encoding them into our hippocampus deny us of our brain power. These prevalent modern habits have set off alarm bells in our society. They underline the pathetically inadequate attention we have been paying to brain health while catering to the palate of urban culture for efficiency. Hence, this essay aims to raise public awareness of brain health and provide ways to empower our brains.

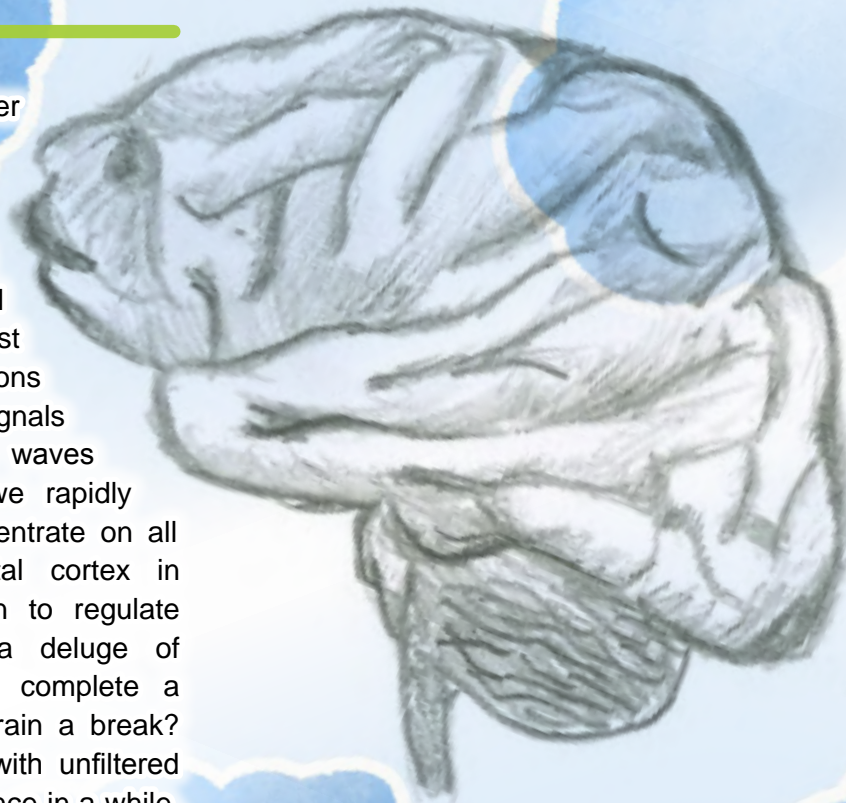
Modern lifestyles can sometimes disrupt our brain states, including sleep and arousal. One of the habits that is notorious in our society is burning the midnight oil. Urban dwellers nowadays are plagued by immense pressure from work. The nature of a diurnal Homo sapiens is bottled up and replaced by distorted sleep-and-wake cycles in the name of maximizing work power. Defying the basic needs of our brain has a negative bearing on our memory, alertness during the day and decision-making skills. Another reason for sleep deprivation, which is unfortunately common nowadays, is exposure to blue light before sleep. Blue light can increase alertness and stimulate cognitive functions because it suppresses the release of melatonin. This hormone induces sleep at night. Our sleep-and-wake cycle, which is academically termed circadian rhythm, is then disturbed. So, if you do not want to experience insomnia, put your phone away an hour before sleep. Train your brain to adapt to the natural cycle of night and day by getting to sleep and waking up around the same time every day. In doing so, your brain can function accordingly with maximum concentration after having quality rest each night.

The second modern habit found detrimental to our brain is multitasking. Previously deemed "a distraction", this misnomer is now seen as a stepping stone for reaching efficiency. Despite its seemingly promising advantages, it, in fact, exhausts our brains more than ever. Our brain is constantly sensing the external world and



interpreting the signals to decide whether to ignore or respond. For example, when you read an online forum while cranking up the tunes in your headphones, your brain cells need to interpret the visual information and rewire themselves to relate to past experiences. Meanwhile, those tiny neurons also need to deal with the electrical signals converted from the fluctuating sound waves pounding on your eardrums. When we rapidly shift between tasks or attempt to concentrate on all of them simultaneously, the prefrontal cortex in our brains selects relevant information to regulate higher-order decision-making. Thus, a deluge of stimulation slows down its ability to complete a task consistently. Why not give your brain a break? Resurface from the world overloaded with unfiltered noise and listen to your own heartbeat once in a while. Therefore, avoid multitasking even if it is tempting, especially if you do not want to feel mentally drained.

While evaluating our ability to work efficiently and effectively, sustainability should also be at play. Life is more like a marathon than a dash. Sprinters usually start off fast but can only lead the race for a while and may not even reach the end. Caring for our brain health is essential if we want to achieve long-term success. Apart from getting adequate sleep and modulating the stimulation in our brains, we should also review our diets and exercise regularly. The relationship between our daily habits and our brains is so complicated that you might have to go over hundreds of pages of a dissertation to understand this topic. However, you just need to bear in mind that health is wealth. Playing havoc with your brain is neither a healthy nor sustainable pathway towards the end of the marathon. So, treat your brain better because it deserves better.



Artwork by Hana He

