

# Global Reflections



An anthology of global issues from pupils in Ghana, India and UK

## **Acknowledgements**

We applaud the enthusiasm and dedication of the young people who have created this anthology. Your aspiration to work as global citizens and to strive for social justice will leave a legacy for a better world.

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## **Foreword**

The Global Partnership between Loxford School (UK), Sun City School (India) and Achimota School (Ghana) has created the opportunity for pupils to reflect on a range of diverse global issues affecting our own and global communities. These reflections take the form of a combination of poems, reflections, art and personal experiences to communicate global issues. This book has encouraged teachers and pupils to share and learn from each other on how global issues impact all communities in a growing inter-dependent world. This united approach to our pupils' global views and experiences links with academic excellence and makes the educational journey a life-long commitment to taking action on issues of social justice in the quest to leaving a legacy of a beautiful planet for all future generations.

## THE ROAD TO A SAFER FUTURE - A letter to my generation

Dear friend,

Do you shudder when you hear cheery words like market, festival, or vacation? I do. These words send a chill up my spine. For me, festivals forebode death, markets presage assault, vacation spell violence. Even to this day, after almost a decade of that incident, every time my Ma goes to the nearby market to buy provisions for the household, I feel a knot in the pit of my stomach and I send a little prayer heavenwards to bring her back home safely.

It was September of 2008. I was little. I remember every member of my family bustling with enthusiastic exuberance as they were preparing for the annual Durga Puja festival. Eid was also round the corner. Every market in Delhi was bursting at the seams with Hindus and Muslims in a buying frenzy, cramming jewellery, clothes, shoes, grocery and food stores, ushering in the festive season. My Ma and Baba too were there, somewhere in the teeming multitude. Amidst all the hullabaloo at home, there was a palpably excited anticipation for the stacks of goodies they would bring home for each one of us. Around mid-afternoon, abruptly, the house went silent. Everyone was staring at the TV. Police sirens and fire engine bells were shattering the neighbourhood. My skittish, highly-strung aunt started howling and screaming for my parents. What unfolded before us on TV was the horrific news of five synchronised bomb blasts occurring within a span of a few minutes in and around Delhi; one blast was in Sarojini Nagar Market where my parents were shopping. An inexplicable fear gripped me and I stood transfixed, staring at the road beyond the front gate. After an excruciatingly agonizing hour, when I saw my Ma and Baba emerge from an auto rickshaw outside our home, I burst out crying; and I cried for a long, long time.

Then I grew up some more. It was December of 2010; we were vacationing in Egypt. The day after we boarded our flight back to India, Egyptian army tanks rolled past the pyramids at Giza and were stationed exactly where we had posed for our holiday photos a couple of days ago. Heartrending photos flashing across our TV screens revealed the plight of thousands of tourists trapped at Cairo International Airport, suspended in a time frame between death and repatriation, with a slim chance of evacuation. We realised we had been extremely lucky and had just had a very narrow escape.

So now you know, my friend, why these words - market, vacation, festival - frighten me. I think of you too, my friend, who, I'm certain, tremble at the word 'office'

because your parent never came back from their workplaces at World Trade Centre on 9/11 of 2001 or from Charlie Hebdo on 7/1 of 2015; I also think of you, my friend, who would never dare to go to a concert because it will be a painful reminder of your sibling who was brutally killed at Manchester Ariana Grande concert on 22/5 of 2017; and of you, my friend, whose family was simply walking in the supermarket in Nairobi when a lone gunman whimsically started firing his gun and the bullets pierced your loved ones on 24/11 of 2016. I think of all of you, my friends from around the world, for whom life comes to a halt when you stand face to face with otherwise innocuous words like office, concert, supermarket and maybe countless more.

This world is not safe. Our predecessors have ruined it for us. The future appears bleak. Yet, like Milton's Satan in 'Paradise Lost', I keep reiterating, 'All is not lost.' I harbour an innate optimism and unshakable faith in human goodness, so I invariably keep asking myself this question, is there a road to a safer future? The answer is, "yes, there is". After a lot of deliberation, confusing self-arguments and credulous answers crowding my mind, I've stumbled upon one solution which I think is pragmatic, reasonably believable, executable and genuinely achievable; and the answer is all-inclusiveness.

We, as humans, belonging to the same species, have segregated ourselves for far too long. We have created for ourselves permanent and fixed borders, impossible boundaries, meaningless and selfish identities, stubborn ideologies that draw indelible and ineffaceable lines between 'us' and 'them'. Religion, nationality, skin pigmentation, economic superiority, politics all translate into a race of power-hungry fanatic individuals that annihilate humanitarian values.

It is time, my friend, we go borderless, erase boundaries of race, sex, colour, religion and gender, and chant the only mantra of 'being human.' Let 'we' replace 'me'; let 'I' be 'us'; and let the idea of 'our' overrule 'mine'. Let us endeavour to love our fellow beings and faithfully believe that "When the power of love overcomes the love of power the world will know peace." And it is not just the power of love, my friend. There is also the power of music, the power of art, of dance, of a symphony, of an orchestra, of a play, of a beautiful movie, of yoga that can create ONE community transcending geographical, economic, political shades among people. Therefore, my friend, remember, unbiased inclusiveness is the only path to a safer future. Yours truly,

**DEVAYAN DAS, Sun City School (India)**

## Experienced traveller that missed the point!

I climbed the Kilimanjaro and felt on top of the world

I trekked across the Grand Canyon

I sunbathed in luxury on a tropical beach in the Maldives

I drank the night away to red wine in the French Riviera

I posed for a selfie outside Buckingham Palace

I went deep-sea diving in the Great Barrier Reef

I climbed the Great Wall of China

I attended a business conference in Singapore

I jumped the queues via the international visitors route at the Taj Mahal

I found some great bargains at the German Christmas markets

I gazed at the lions sleeping in the Masai Mara

I even made the bucks in Las Vegas!

However, in all my self-accomplished travels, there was something missing.

I exported my culture and comforts in my suitcase

I missed the lessons on local cultures throughout my journey

I didn't pick up any local languages. I expected everybody to speak mine.

I had no knowledge of the popular local cuisines, but searched for my comfort foods.

I was unaware of the key religious and cultural festivals.

I was insensitive to political issues and customs.

I admired the wealth, but gave a passing glance to the poverty in its different forms.

I did not look out for issues of social injustice.

I did nothing to make a difference when I arrived back home.

Will I make a difference from today?

**S. Mendonca, (UK)**

## Where is the silver lining?

He was pacing the streets of Adenta  
In his usual dark and tattered clothes.

He went from door to door  
Hoping for one to lend him a helping hand.

But who, how and when?

For he was a wretched-looking man.  
He was in an undesirable state of poverty.

Some escaped but he couldn't

He was deprived of basic necessities.

He was deprived of opportunities.

He was deprived of healthcare facility

Along with no economic fortune.

He had no greed,

But all he had was needs.

Thus, poverty was the root cause of all his woes.

'Poverty is not natural but manmade,'

Said the famous Nelson Mandela

He heard around that this saying was an undeniable truth

But he failed to understand why

For he knew not the source of his poverty.

He was plagued with this unanswered question.

Days went by, weeks went by.

He was still oblivious to the causes of his woes

Then suddenly, it hit him.  
Was it unemployment?  
Was it the never-ending conflicts?  
Was it the over-population of his country?  
Was it his lack of education?  
What was it that caused his depression?  
Several weeks went by, months went by.  
He wondered as he wandered  
When his time will come  
For he knew that every cloud has a silver lining.  
But where is the silver lining?

**Kornam Kanda, Achimota School (Ghana)**



**Planetary Meltdown  
Riya Soni, Sun City School (India)**

## Locked

Developed nations are asked if they are fond of the lockdown?  
Strengthening the bond between partners, siblings, parents and children, Or  
whether they enjoy what they consider a temporary dictatorship. "Stay  
indoors" with food galore; Avoid that trip to meet more.

Stay aware and be somewhat prepared of the imperceptible killer  
approaching your door. Assure your loved ones that this time will pass, as  
promised by your elected governor. Essential visits to your local store.  
Purchase what you must; the choice is yours.

A fear of the imperceptible, the unseen, the invisible mass-murdering virus,  
Promised progress, Promised a return to something similar to previous  
norms, Promised rights, Promised connections.

Whilst an atmosphere of apprehension and unpredictability have long  
suspended over Kashmir, a lockdown reasoned with security rather than an  
exertion of control over the Muslim majority. Cutting communications, many  
arrested despite attesting to innocence.

No promises for the innocent, who reside in Kashmir. Limited services,  
Limited choice, not to mention the restricted voice of Kashmiri civilians,  
Grenade attacks and blood bursts of labourers, military deployment which  
clenches the voices, the freedoms and news of occurrences, angering  
millions.

Whilst we remain sleeping, We mustn't ignore, nor overlook the weeping of  
Kashmiris - exposed to the shedding of blood, fearful of speaking out, whilst  
we remain fearful of going out and about.

**Sadia Batool, Loxford School (UK)**



## CLIMATE MOVEMENT - A letter to the prophet

When you come to the streets of our city, as you must soon,  
Mad-eyed to state the obvious,  
Not to proclaim our downfall but to beg us  
In the name of God to have pity on yourself.  
Spare us all the words about guns, their power and their range,  
The long numbers which are rocking the mind;  
It will leave our sluggish, unreckoning hearts behind.  
How can we dream of this place without us?  
How the cloud of dreams crumbles, the soil poisoned with hate and greed.  
How the view changes.  
If you told us that, the white-tailed deer is going to slip,  
In perfect shade, completely shy,  
The game tends to avoid the reaches of our eyes.  
Ask us, Prophet, how we're going to call  
Our natures when there is all, but a living tongue.  
Dispelled, the glass darkened or broken  
In which we have spoken of the rose of our love.  
Ask us! Ask us if there's a wordless rose  
Our hearts are going to fail us; come and ask us.  
Whether it's high or long-standing  
When the bronze annals of the oak-tree close down.

**Gabriel .A. Gordon-Mensah, Achimota School (Ghana)**

## LOOK UP

Sunlight pours through the world  
Rippling down the streets  
But nobody looks up to take a glance  
At the rising heat

The ocean is choking on plastic  
a blue daydream turned prison  
toxicity runs in the sea blood  
a cry, but nobody to listen.

They say our destiny is written in the stars  
Maybe the future is shrouded in smoke canopied  
Just like the hidden stars behind the smoky veils  
To which nobody takes heed

And maybe the forests are dying  
And majestic creatures taking their last breath  
But who cares? We've got our phones  
Pay no attention to all that death

But maybe when  
The last river dries  
The last tree has been felled  
The air filled with poison  
And our ignorance be lost  
We'll realize  
What we could have done  
To what cannot be undone  
If only we'd looked up  
As one.

**PRISHA GUPTA, Sun City School (India)**

## **Positivity in a challenging world**

These days, all we hear about are the negative things happening in the world and while it's vital to be up to date with these events, the positive aspects of the world are often brushed aside.

Due to the overall decrease in traffic, the amount of air pollution has drastically decreased with the amount of nitrogen dioxide being reduced by up to 60%. Wild animals have also been wandering around cities. For example, a puma turned up in Chile's capital of Santiago. Although this may seem concerning, these appearances offer the chance for rarely seen animals to be spotted. Moreover, the canals in Venice are clearer than ever.

There have also been technological advancements, with volunteers creating the fastest supercomputer to combat Covid-19. The volunteers folded proteins from their home computers - a task that could prove to be vital in the battle against Coronavirus.

The few things that have been outlined are only the tip of the iceberg and there are so many positive things happening in the world. Especially during a time like this, it is important to look at the positives and understand that there is always light at the end of the tunnel.

**Kafia Akhtar, Loxford School (UK)**

## **P-O-V-E-R-T-Y**

When thinking about poverty, what is the first thought that pops up in your head? People unconsciously associate that word to developing countries and content such as Africa, but are blind to the needs of their brothers and sisters on the road suffering from evil diseases. People are blind to see the girl next door who puts on a mask on social media to represent her fantasy life; when in reality she's in heavy debt and on the edge of becoming homeless. Poverty comes in many forms, such as poor health physical and mental, homelessness and infant mortality.

People have many misconceptions about poverty, by targeting that word in association with developing countries. They are oblivious and fail to acknowledge that western countries have major poverty issues. People fail to consider that people in power in a capitalist society indirectly suppress progress of working classes and some middle classes. Poverty can be hard to escape and become multi-generational. Regardless of background, nobody should go through poverty; not in any form. We normalise poverty and look down on people as 'failures' rather than victims of capitalist societies. Did you know the biggest factors leading to crime are poverty and inequality? Poverty is global; but it's also on your doorstep.

**Michelle Blay, Loxford School (UK)**



Sun City School (India)

## The Pain of a Woman.

Why should gender dare erase and set fires of injustice ablaze?  
Why should gender be the source of discrimination, when we are but one people  
one nation?

Why does being a woman give me lesser opportunities?

Gender is not a choice

It is our identity

We are living in a society where femininity is subject to cruelty.

Why should a girl undergoing puberty be considered unclean?

It is at this moment that we rather call her Queen.

We are girls not brides

Stop seizing our dignity and our pride

We are not sex machines or slaves

We are not baby producers

Tell that to our abusers

Tell that to our bruisers

Tell that to the wrongdoers who deem it right to deflower

You cannot shame us forever

Why make us feel we have no power, especially when we are darker?

Do not raise your daughter like a pig for slaughter

No battle of the sexes can have a winner or a loser;

This would do nothing to improve the lives of either gender

"Pink and Blue"

Don't put us into those packets

It is high time we shed these gender straightjackets

The silenced, the faded, the jaded, the insignificant, the weak, the inferior...

That used to be us, but no longer.  
We pulled out our gags  
We will speak  
We will fight with all our might  
We don't have weapons or muscles  
We won't fight with guns nor with knives  
But we will cut you with our voice... we will prove we need to be heard  
These are our terms  
All we ask for, is  
Equal rights and justice.

**Vanessa Asare, Achimota School (Ghana)**

## **LOVE IS SO MUCH HARD WORK!**

Humans possess quite a few deadly sins;  
some which make them egocentric, selfish and insatiable.  
So, when it comes to putting another one of their own kind, before themselves,  
it brings up second thoughts, fear of commitment, investment of time, money  
and effort.

They tend to ask themselves, is it really worth it?  
Are we really willing to go all out, pleasing and respecting someone other than  
ourselves?

Ask those who drive all the way to their significant other's neighbourhood for  
just a glance, text them or catch up often to stay in touch, buy them gifts, not  
just any, mind you. Deep, thoughtful and meaningful ones.

Of course, one needs to tackle numerous challenges like approval of near and  
dear ones.

It is also the deep reassurance of compassionate companionship that continues  
to mean the world, and make a difference.

Even though love is hard work, it is worth the while; quite often till the end of  
time!

**SANYA GUPTA, Sun City School (India)**





**Maahira Gupta VID, Sun City School (India)**

## **A fairer better world**

We can all agree that 2020/21 has been a challenging year with the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic that has caused millions of deaths, as well as an inhumane act of racism in the United States at the moment which has affected us the most.

I, for one, have reflected upon my life and my actions and have tried to implement change into my life during the pandemic and I assume many people have too, as we are stuck in our houses.

Change is something that I've seen a lot of recently. Due to the pandemic people are forced to work from home and we are unable to socialise with people outside our household like the way we used to. Although this may seem like we are disconnected from each other, we have seen the best of people during the pandemic being charitable and helping others by donating things such as money or masks as well as equipment. But on the other hand, we've seen the worst of people. Another deadly act we have seen which I will call a "social virus" is racism. The amount of protests against racism has given the general public a voice that has needed to be heard, by not only the American government, but all governments across the world. However it should have never come to this. George Floyd should never have been publicly executed on the streets in the "land of the free" by people who are meant to "serve and protect".

Unfortunately those that have died to racism and police brutality cannot be brought back. However, I hope that we learn many lessons and hope that there won't be another innocent life taken away from us. Let us strive to be humane and promote a fairer better world.

**Kulvir Mann, Loxford School (UK)**



**Joel Muhangi, Loxford School (UK)**

## The tiny invisible monster

A little something which isn't living  
Suddenly, much destruction has bring.  
Suspended in the air  
Unknowingly enters your lair  
And just like that it is now living  
Not only that, it has begun the killing.

A little virus from China erupted  
Within a flash, world peace disrupted.  
Not a single bullet fired  
But of war we're already tired.  
Lives have been lost  
For clean air, a huge cost.

Human race on its demise  
And the nature on a rise.  
Just like that a single virus  
Locked the world in its curse.  
Just like that a single breath  
Inspired many a more death.

You can't be free  
Can't let it be  
The future isn't ours to see.  
Will we ever breathe free air  
Will we ever learn to not care?

Life falls in and out  
Trees whisper happily and humans shout  
The world is tied in a knot  
We might be free or we might not  
Can't go against each other  
To hold on all we have is one another

So as the blue sky gets bluer  
And as the earth gets fuller  
Let's let our hearts grow  
The hate let us all throw.

Under the free sky  
Let there be free smiles

Under the clean rain  
Let there be a learned brain  
Let there be a blossom younger  
Let's bring new life and kill old hunger  
Let's drop weapons and join hands  
We all come from the same lands

We arrived with nothing  
We leave with nothing  
Our wars, are for nothing.  
Our true wealth  
Isn't the gold mine  
It is our health  
It is someone else's smile.

It is what we have learned  
Knowledge is the real money we have earned.  
And by sharing it only increases  
By sharing it the dying ceases.  
Is life really what we're living  
Not doing anything  
Is as good as killing.  
So you see the world  
Or stay in your room  
You smile at the crescent  
Or cherish the full moon.

**AANANYA SINGH, Sun City School (India)**

## **My irritating family**

What should I do, what should I do?  
I'm a fool, I'm a fool.  
Can't do anything, can't do anything.  
Can't study, can't play; dad takes my I-pad away.  
Keep on saying lucky you, love you too,  
Dad takes my PS too.  
Keep on saying please,  
But the punishment doesn't cease.  
In Fortnite, I try to be on the top,  
But my Laptop is taken away by Pop.  
I try to take an off on Tuesday,  
'Cause double Hindi makes it a fuseday.  
Eat healthy be fit,  
That is my mom's favourite tip.  
Stay clean, stay green is my grandma's motive,  
Playing candy crush is her way to be active.  
My sister is such a pain in the neck,  
But she is so good with tech.  
In short my family is very irritating,  
But they are still worth tolerating.  
Love is universal; and it can be found at home.

**YUVRAJ ARORA, Sun City School (India)**

## Global outlook beyond Covid 19

When this ends,  
I'll meet my friends.  
We'll wine and dine,  
Stay out past 9.

I'll hug my grandad and kiss my nan,  
Sit with my cat and finally get a tan.  
I'll soar over London,  
Breathing without a mask.  
No sanitiser to carry,  
Only a new hydro flask.

I'll dance in the rain,  
And count aeroplanes.  
Sit in the park,  
And eat some chow mein.

But while this lasts,  
I'll continue to clap,  
For the NHS,  
our safety strap.

I'll sing for the neighbours,  
And help with their papers.  
Stand a metre away,  
And use card to pay.

I'll wash my hands,  
And follow government bans.  
Bleach the doors,  
And do mum's chores.

Stare at the glass,  
And wait for it to pass.  
But while it lasts...  
Let's all have a blast.

**Angela Ameer, Loxford School (UK)**

## **A progressive world with gender equality**

Gender equality, also known as equality of the sexes, is the state of equal ease of access to resources and opportunities regardless of gender, including economic participation and decision making. Gender equality can also be described as the state of valuing different behaviours, aspirations and needs equally, regardless of gender. It is the feeling of collecting our thoughts and ideas together and working for a common purpose.

Gender equality has many outweighing advantages which will drive the world to a better place. To begin with, equality of the sexes enhances economic development. When women receive the same education and job opportunities as men, productivity gets higher, the human resource is also increased and the nation receives higher revenue which can be used for developmental projects such as provision of infrastructure, provision of utilities like electricity and good drinking water.

Furthermore, it reduces poverty. Poverty rates are highest among young girls because girls do not receive the same education and job opportunities as boys. Gender inequality keeps women and their families trapped in cycles of poverty. When women receive better education, healthcare and job opportunities, they invest much of their earnings back into their families, which also improve the health and education of the children in the families.

Again, gender equality brings peace. It is an important element for stability and security, which can improve work on conflict prevention. The larger the gender gap, the more likely a country is to use violence as a first response in a conflict setting. Empowering women makes them aware of their rights and reduces discrimination and other forms of abuse that creates instability.

To conclude, gender equality enhances economic development, reduces poverty and brings peace. Gender equality will make individuals become better versions of themselves with every passing day and build a strong society together. I deem it very important for society to commend gender equality in view of its advantages to the society.

**Pamela Ocansey, Achimota School (Ghana)**





**Azeezah Mohammed, Loxford School (UK)**

## **Animals – part of our planet**

We live our lives in a bubble,  
Worrying about ourselves.  
Worrying which clothes to wear  
What show to watch  
What restaurant is near.  
For many the abuse of animals  
Is far from their social sphere.  
So perhaps a cruelty  
Equal to the one committed by abusers  
Is the ignorance of the rest of the world:  
For failing to take a single moment  
To pay attention to the bile farms in China, Vietnam;  
To pay attention to the circus animals trapped in cages,  
forced to perform cruel tricks  
through electric prods, spikes and whips;  
To the animals brain-damaged, starved,  
burned and drowned amid animal testing,  
drugged, and unsound.  
Perhaps WE could stop this endless cycle of horror together,  
and put an end to the gruesome cruelty of each sinner.  
If the world lost  
our ability to look on and turn a blind eye;  
If we lost our ability to seek the knowledge and dig deeper  
to the pain endured by each living creature  
and yet still go about our day unmoved,

The world could be transformed.

I am asking you to research.

To sign petitions, to change laws.

To donate.

To save.

To care.

**Anonymous**



**THE WORLD AHEAD**

## Our only world

The world today is plagued by despair,  
Which has not yet gone beyond repair,  
There are places where there no food to eat,  
And this cycle cannot help but repeat.

The climate stands dilapidated,  
Ecosystems stand manipulated,  
But, change is constant,  
And things can change in an instant.

So, there is a bright ray of hope,  
As we protect nature, who has us in an envelope,  
Our virtue is our society,  
Which will soon restore Earth's paramount supremacy.

We all must unite,  
For the good possibilities are far from finite,  
We should find a solution,  
And then make it our resolution.

Today, the world needs our help,  
We can hear its creatures yelp,  
And for us who care for it,  
It's up to us to make the ideal world fit.

In this mission,  
We must never compromise our vision,  
We have a long way ahead of us,  
Another reason to not harbour any fuss.

The power is all in the human brain,  
And from this we must not refrain,  
It is time to reverse what's done,  
And make Earth better for everyone.

**NAVYA MEHROTRA, Sun City School (India)**



**Vanshika Sethi, Sun City School (India)**

## 888 Inequality

8 minutes, 46 seconds. You will probably finish reading this in a shorter amount of time but THAT was the amount of time a police officer's knees were forced down on to George Floyd's neck. It's crazy. George Floyd repeatedly said "I can't breathe". The cops disregarded his plea. Is it really a surprise?

It's surprising how people stood there and watched someone get tortured. Torture after torture which turned bodies into corpses. It's crazy how colour could impact the treatment someone receives. It's crazy how the world can change. Families are left without parents, without children: Pain which is unimaginable in my eyes.

It's beautiful how we protest for justice, show respect and drop onto our knees. Day in, day out, people are dying. Innocents are injured and families are left crying. We should appreciate those around us and be grateful for their presence.

Hopefully, this opens up our eyes and we learn from the lesson. We should be grateful that we're alive. However we don't know who could be next. We go outside thinking we're fine, just like the rest. It could be me, it could be you. Death can hit us unexpectedly.

We can make a difference.

**Ahmed Madard, Loxford School (UK)**

## **Let me Breathe...Please**

Voices in my head, Shadows surrounds me,  
Visions, sounds, cries, STOP?  
When will this ever End?  
Guns, Canons, Tanks, Grenades,  
What have I ever done?  
I'm only five....ONLY FIVE!

What have these countries become?  
Iraq, Syria, Afghanistan, Yemen  
Where would the people go?  
Constant War, Constant Destruction,  
Let us Breathe.  
Let me Breathe...Please!

Taking the first breath in my mother's arms,  
The cuddle, the warmth, the breath, the love.  
What a wonderful feeling in an evil, corrupted world.  
What has the world become?  
Constant Death, Constant Destruction.  
When will this ever End?

My body stiffens as the voices get Louder and LOUDER!  
STOP...Please Stop.  
With every breath, I inhale Poisons,  
Please God, Don't let me suffer anymore,  
Take me, take me to the world that you took my mum and dad.  
Take me with you... please!

NO STOP! NOOOOOOOO  
My eyes tremble with fear as my body drips with sweat.  
Screaming in pain and fear,  
I notice a puddle around me,  
I wake up to find everyone around me sleeping,  
All shaking...All tense.

When will I lay my head down in Peace?  
When will I ever Breathe?

**Laila Faizi, Loxford School (UK)**

## **Gender Bender**

When I was a child  
I always thought  
Why did men and women have different roles?  
Or is it just what they were taught?

Why was my mom always in the kitchen?  
Why was my dad always out?  
Why was my mother always looking after me?  
Why was my dad most of the time nowhere to be found?

When I grew up everything became clear  
It wasn't God who gave men and women separate roles  
It was merely and solely our ancestors  
Men went out to achieve their ambitions and women sat in the house just dreaming about  
their goals

Slowly and slowly, I realized  
It's all in the mind, just a mind game  
For centuries and centuries  
It's always been the same

Equality might have increased today  
But inequality still exists  
Being practiced in our neighbourhoods, in our cities  
Even in places we don't even know persist

We're not asking for separate rights  
We're not asking for special treatment  
We just want to be on the same level as men  
We just want society to be different

A society that doesn't trap women  
Right after they become someone's wife  
We want a society that lets women decide  
What they want to do with their own life

Together let's make this world a better place  
Different from what it has always been  
Let's treat and respect every gender equally  
After all, what is a king without a queen?

**ANUSHKA VORA, Sun City School (India)**



## A blink of an eye

A blink of an eye I remember what I can  
A blink of an eye I remember what I could have  
A blink of an eye I remember the new pan  
A blink of an eye I think what had been wrong  
A blink of an eye I hear a ding-dong  
A blink of an eye I see what was missing  
A blink of an eye I see what is promising  
A blink of an eye I smell the newest dish  
A blink of an eye I feel the disgust of fish  
A blink of an eye I try adjusting  
A blink of an eye I try accepting  
A blink of an eye I try to see a new perspective  
A blink of an eye I see poverty  
A blink of an eye I see charity  
A blink of an eye I see care  
A blink of an eye I see prayer  
A blink of an eye I learn adapting  
A blink of an eye I learn spellings  
A blink of an eye I see pain  
A blink of an eye I feel it healing  
A blink of an eye my grandfather's leaving  
A blink of an eye I see a star shining  
A blink of an eye I see a plant shooting up  
A blink of an eye I see happiness  
A blink of an eye I see cheer  
A blink of an eye I see festivity  
A blink of an eye I realize the world shattering  
A blink of an eye I realize the world is better  
A blink of an eye I grow up  
A blink of an eye I know how to handle business  
A blink of an eye I learn the fine line between trust and truth  
A blink of an eye I see my parents going away  
A blink of an eye I see everyone beside  
A blink of an eye I see a nurtured world  
A blink of an eye I see my prayers answered  
A blink of an eye I see my disappearance  
A blink of an eye I see my vengeance  
A blink of an eye I see the Lord  
A blink of an eye Hallelujah! I am abode.

**TRISHAAN CHATURVEDI, Sun City School (India)**

## 91 LIKES

91 likes, are they unlucky?  
Yes or maybe, but even more than humanity dying all dry and bloody.  
All the countries lay their cards and play their game,  
To get the most powerful country after their name.  
Skull like graves silently rot,  
RIP humanity which is now no more than a thought.  
Kindness, like flowers, dare to bloom,  
But wars and fights end up filling the room.  
Wars, like gamble in casinos, need to be won,  
To prove country's strength, in the long run.  
After all this destruction, they will be waving flags that are white,  
But look, we just buried humanity in front of our sight.  
Tears like flowers we place around the grave,  
We still have time, let humanity exist before it becomes just a tale we rave.

**PARI GUPTA, Sun City School (India)**



## **Make a difference; be the change.**

Our world ! Where there is a lot of uncertainty and a sense of change in many ways. 2020/21 will go down as eventful years and a potential turning point. Being struck by a deadly pandemic that has claimed so many lives had put the leadership of many in question, and unfortunately the measure of this was to simply look at the death toll. This has led to an almost entire different way of life, from nearly halting the economy through keeping people at home in an attempt to limit the illness, to students having to sacrifice valuable hours of education for the greater good.

Ultimately this has proved that human life should come before any material goods. Despite this, an act of cruel racism has put the focus on a more important topic. There have been protests around the world in an attempt to finally kick racism out for good. This was sparked after George Floyd was choked to death in vain by a power abusing police officer. These protests have been spread worldwide and there is a feeling of global togetherness to tackle racism in all forms, and to stop glorifying those who have benefited from exploiting minorities. Our world! Make a difference; be the change.

**Mahir Ullah, Loxford School (UK)**

## LIFE UNDER WATER

"Mama! Mama! It's happening again, we're all going to die!", cried little Tony.

"No, come here baby! We're going to be just fine. Don't worry, Mama's got you.", cried Mama Blue. She knew there would be very little chance to survive but she had to stay strong for her little son.

This time, it wasn't the humans defecating into the river, but chemicals were being poured into the river. There was total chaos in the river. Every fish was trying to save itself from getting into contact with the black liquid that was finding its way onto them. How they knew this was poison? The "Other World" as they called it never took any actions that were beneficial to them. Today, they would throw refuse into the river, tomorrow it would be defecation in the river. These adverse actions had wiped out half of the swamp in the river. Now few were left.

Their "Magnificent Kingdom" was now in ruins and they lived by it. They couldn't afford to lose their lives too. They moved very swiftly to escape danger but their scales and fins moved slowly, their gills were adjusting to the current flow of the river. Suddenly they were all heading upwards.

"Mama, we are saved!", little Tony said happily.

"No, my poor son, our souls departed from our bodies".

Tony looked up and saw their bodies floating on the surface of the river. The entire swamp was wiped out.

## NANA AFUA ANTO - ACHIMOTA HIGH SCHOOL (GHANA)



## **EARTH POEM**

Our galaxy is very vast,  
With innumerable stars,  
Our galaxy is called Milky Way ,  
Meteorites form its bay,  
It is home to our blue Earth,  
The place where we survive ,  
Where all species thrive,  
The biggest gift to mankind is nature,  
Which we all should nurture ,  
It provides us for all our needs ,  
As humans we should never greed,  
Our planet is very unique,  
The sun provides it heat ,  
Earth provides us food to eat ,  
Let's pledge to keep it neat ,  
Let's make it clean and green,  
I love my beautiful Earth ,  
The place where we take birth,  
To experience mirth .

**ANVI MENON, Sun City School (India)**

## TEENAGE REALITIES

Everyone everywhere wants you to be perfect. Your parents want you to be a perfect child, your teachers want you to be a perfect student, your peers want you to be a perfect friend, the society wants you to have a perfect body, a perfect mind and a perfect heart. It is rightly said, 'Teenage is the time when you are too young to do half the things and too old to do the other half.' It is full of anguish, fear, anxiety and stress.

Being a teenager has always been hard, right from the beginning, and it doesn't get any easier. A teenager's mind can be compared to a tree's branches, everything intermingled, unclear and confusing, one wrong cut and everything can come crashing down. Sometimes things go too fast and nothing seems to be going right and there is no one they can talk to. People fail to understand that this is the time when they need to give us space for a little bit of immaturity and maybe a little more freedom to make mistakes. With chemicals and hormones being as confused as they are, their reaction to a particular situation is highly unpredictable and this can cause A LOT of misunderstandings.

The importance of friends in a teenager's life is unmatched. They mean everything to them, the only people who understand them. And most teenagers have lots of people they call "friends". Then why is it that they bottle up their feelings and feel lonely? It's the fear of being judged by everyone around them. But the importance of their social life shouldn't be underestimated. They too know that none of it is going to matter in the long run, yet it is one of the most important things in their life. With the expectations of their parents and friends clashing, they feel burdened. They want the freedom to live their lives to the fullest.

They want good grades in school yet go to parties, they want to be safe yet adventurous. With so much peer pressure around them to do things they may or may not want to do, they sometimes end up doing something to harm themselves and then they are termed as 'weak' or 'vulnerable'. Their life is like a roller coaster with invisible tracks.

Despite all this, teenage is the most memorable part of everyone's life. From hanging out with friends to study groups to gossip gangs to even fights, every teenager tries to make every day count. With academic pressure, the need to be perfect and truck loads of drama, any teenager's life can be made into a blockbuster rom-com which somehow always manages to have a happy ending despite all the struggles, like it is said, teenage is a time when you are treated like a child and expected to act like an adult!

**KHUSHI JHINGAN, Sun City School (India)**

## NO POVERTY

Here near to the centre of the earth Our indigenous people pay homage to the land which our ancestors suffered for and brought forth out of our occupations which is farming, fishing and hunting.

We live in communities and have families like a *Macrotermes bellicosus* and fend for one another as if we're from one root. But our funds are not enough to satisfy the needs of these families. The individuals in these families then tend to wander on-foot. Life battles them like we're in a boxing ring. Even to the extent that, the fragile fall into poverty.

Meanwhile, they possess God-given talents; dancing, drumming and some can sing too. But they tend to struggle because they lack creativity. Vice versa, the non-fragile wins the battle and falls into no poverty. They sing "ayeyi wura ee" and dance in a parish, as if they have won a bet. Right they are! Because they have fulfilled a wish. Even though they are not yet set.

**Shem Tei Wesley, Achimota School (Ghana)**



## EACH DAY, EARTH DAY

" He who loves trees, loves others besides himself." The lives we live on Earth today are more luxurious than what anyone has lived before. Yet, they are the most damaging. This new-found brotherhood of mankind, in pursuit of better economy, has worsened the state of Mother Nature.

It is high time, we see the world with our eyes wide open and not wide shut! We have become so addicted to our pursuit of goals and aspirations, that we literally have 'no time to stand and stare', stare at the beauty around us without us being beasts! Our lives will be defined with our reaction to this alarming scenario of present times and our response to it will shape our legacy. It is the little things that make the strongest impact, let's do our little bit each day to make every day count as Earth Day.

**VARUN RAO, Sun City School (India)**





## **POVERTY IN MOTION**

Poverty is the state of being extremely poor or living without the basic necessities of life which are food, clothing, good clean water and shelter. Many people in the slums of Ghana have been held captive by this hassle which has made life unbearable for them.

In Ghana there are many causes of poverty, for some people they were just born into it and they never had anyone to pull them out of that unbearable way of life. Many of these children born into these poor are very smart and talented but because they do not have enough money to be able to go to school and unlock or build upon their various talents. These children that had dreams and aspirations now have to become *kayayei* - a people who carry heavy items in markets of Ghana for other people, for a few coins.

Another cause of poverty worthy of mention is unemployment. This is a national cause of poverty. The unemployment rate in Ghana is at 6.78%. Most of these people who are unemployed have the skill set and the right work ethics but due to the scarcity of jobs nowadays make life bitter for them and they have to end up doing certain jobs that do not even put food on the table

Another powerful cause of poverty is conflicts. In Ghana many people in the rural areas engage in a lot of ethnic conflicts and wars. Due to this they end up destroying life, property, livestock and many crops grown by the people living in that community. And for most people the money they get from selling these crops is their only source of income, so when everything is destroyed they have nothing to do and nowhere else to go. Therefore living the rest of their lives begging or doing petty jobs just to eat.

Poverty does not just affect the poor person though, it can affect the entire nation. This is because when these poor people do not have any work to do or any source of income, they rely on the government to feed them. Not only does this cost a lot of money but it also retards the progress of the nation.

This is one major factor as to why some African countries are developing very slowly.

Hopefully in some years to come the problem of poverty will be totally eradicated and every man, child and woman can live peacefully without having to worry about the fact that there is no money or source of income.

**Nana Owusu Osei, Achimota High School (Ghana)**

**Climate and Social justice movement. The King of Glory; future for all.**

As judgement is about to arise  
Great glory of the king will come in disguise,  
As a lamb led to slaughter,  
Great things came upon us.  
As light came shining so bright,  
That the demons suddenly jumped with fright.

As the world became a lying, cheating, blasphemous place  
The world I know was full of disgrace,  
The Father knew what had to be done  
So he sent his only son through him so it could be undone.

As glory was all the angels could say  
Suddenly, death was erased from my name.

Earthquakes began in various places,  
This was the start of our tribulation,  
Trials started to commence  
As the enemy started to arise the dark kingdom,  
Spreading love was the first offence.

Wildfires burning higher than the scales,  
Polluting the atmosphere destroying the trails.

People killing each other,  
I wonder why they can't forgive each other,  
A million people die everyday;  
How can that compare to the Father's heartbreak?

Mass killings globally waging war against the Lamb,  
Demons starting to release the rams,  
Innocent people betrayed as the villains,  
Sentenced for their beliefs as extremism.

Famines and plagues are performing,  
Showing that their lives are being distorted,  
People isolating as fear of dying,  
Who can withstand death for it's coming?

As the moon rusts turning into blood,  
Great signs from up above showing it is about to flood,  
Darkness starting to decay,  
For the King of Glory is the only way.

Concentrated camps was one of the worst against believers,  
Torturing them against their religion,  
Satan planning for his next destination,  
Trying to wipe the population,  
For his plans were purely for distraction while he planned for his next course of  
action,  
His intentions are only to Kill, Steal and Destroy,  
Which is the next cause of the abomination that causes desolation.

When we needed him the most, we forsake him because of our ignorance  
If only we were more awake;  
If only our hearts would have been opened,  
If only we looked around the world spreading love and not hate,  
If only we would have realised what we done and put are trust in the saviour  
this could be all undone,  
All as one.  
Supporting those who found death,  
And loving those even in the mess.

**By Hana Ahmad, Loxford School (UK)**

## IMPERFECTLY PERFECT

A diamond with flaws is worth more than a pebble without imperfections. Everyone on this planet, including you and I, is full of mistakes and imperfections and therefore, all of us are real. The idea of perfectionism is the voice of the ego and not the spirit.

Did you know that 'atelophobia' means the fear of imperfection? Striving to achieve perfection has been a misguided belief in life, often ironically leading one down the wrong path. Perfectionists may suffer from matching their own standards and be vulnerable to mood swings and stress. It's the flaws and imperfections that make us unique. Let's chase progress, let the pursuit for perfection take a back seat!

**VANSHIKA AGARWAL, Sun City School (India)**



**Hajra Bibi, Sun City School (India)**

## **Uighur Muslims**

A handful of people are aware of the situation in China, whereby Uighur muslims are being detained in the western Xinjiang region, where they're said to be undergoing "re-education" programmes. In theory Xinjiang has a degree of self-governance, meaning it is able to host activities such as these without the government's direct interference, although this is not proven.

Former prisoners have explained that physical as well as psychological torture occur in the camps, as well as people being separated from their families. This form of 'ethnic cleansing' that is being surpassed by the governance of Xinjiang has caused rattles around the world, but little is being done so far. This is a violation of the basic human rights. The right to be free from cruel and unusual punishment, the right to freely associate with anyone you like and to join groups of which you'd like to be a part of, the right to freedom of expression are just the few examples of the rights that are being denied to the Uighurs.

No one should be persecuted against at such a vast scale, simply because of the faith and culture they choose to practice. The world needs to pay attention to these issues and fast; before the world is subject to yet another human disaster.

**Raheem Batty**

## **Gender**

The First-wave taught me I have a voice that deserves to be listened to.

The Second-wave taught me liberation from a male coup.

The Third-wave taught me to look beneath class, race and ethnicity.

Today in the Fourth-wave I come forward and join my sisters in a battle free from complicity.

Do not confine me to the box of homemaker or the reproductive role.

Mary Wollstonecraft walked first to rid us of the control the men seem to have over our soul.

When Ann Oakley said it was a dual burden where women became the stress reliever.

I step out to reach beyond the conformity but I was only called an over achiever.

The glass ceiling so intricately crafted by the hands of those that aim to keep the females at bay.

Alienated through societal expectation and buried with only half the pay.

A system so corrupt, failing to acknowledge my worth.

We will not stand and succumb to your definition of equality; my power has no limit on this earth.

**Maya Saujani**

## THE TEENAGER

There's a time when you start slipping away, and feeling out of place. Everything around you seems a bit too fast.

The anxiety of being left behind, and not being able to catch up haunts you. And no, parents and adults won't understand you, because times have changed. The kind of problems teenagers go through, has evolved.

'Teenage' is one of the most romanticised stages of life, and is unlike the movies. That exciting year portrayed in the shows and that Nicholas Sparks love does not exist.

All you long for is to be part of something significant and fit in, but it's hard when you're under the pressure to perform well academically, while trying to juggle your interests and hobbies alongside.

It never gets easier because you feel forlorn at that point of time.

But, in time you'll come to see it for how it really was, and you'll cherish those days. Because what seemed like a boulder of problems to you then, will merely be a pebble to you tomorrow.

**ADLIN REUEL, Sun City School (India)**

## IT'S THE ENDGAME

Worry growing, Fear spreading,  
Waves of terror consuming a paralysed crowd,  
Shouts of 'it's coming' all around,  
What is it, you ask, well let's just say,  
It's a lethal poison or a dangerous adversary, in a way,  
It's cold-blooded, ruthless and unforgiving,  
It's cold, calculating, and takes no prisoners alive,  
Old or Young, Rich or Poor, Strong or Weak,  
It does not discriminate against lives,  
Power, Sustenance and Total Control it does seek,  
Worse than War, Scarier than Strife,  
Powerful as Poison, Naughty as a Knife,  
It's a universal pandemic,  
A worldwide epidemic,  
No cure, no chance, no hope,  
All the doctors say, "Just wash hands with soap",  
It's a virus with which the world cannot hope to cope,  
All that's left is to just sit around and mope,  
The world's hanging by fraying ropes,  
What else can we do when there are only dopes,  
We have had it coming for a long time now,  
No use in making a large row,  
To put it simply, it is the End of Days,

Nature is rebelling, we incurred her wrath,  
Will there be something left in the battle's aftermath?  
The Gods are taking revenge,  
All we can do is pray, pray for mercy,  
We are paying the price of our lethargy,  
This is our fate, set by the Gods above,  
It goes by many names,  
Ragnarok, Fimbulwinter, Endgame, The Seven Suns,



It all refers to the same,  
Total destruction, anarchy and chaos,  
Preceded by annihilation and demolition,  
Followed by bloodshed and death,  
But after the battle, left will be a barren wasteland,

The foundations of a new world,  
A new land, a new people, a new race,  
Who, we can only hope, will make better choices than we made!

**Anvi Tuteja, Sun City School (India)**

## **Global hunger - Everybody's problem.**

Imagine, just imagine! Everyday countless lives are lost, and this is not caused by a virus or disease, but by a type of human greed which causes 'Hunger'.

People are starving, Children are dying - in a world where there's enough food to feed everyone.

Why? Oh why does hunger still persist?

In search for an answer to this I found out that it was the bigotry of mighty leaders. The avarice of the affluent and the penury of the disadvantaged.

But on the contrary, I saw many things that could be done to end this.

We cannot sit there no more and let precious lives be perished .

So let's come together! To end world hunger, our time starts now.

**Sanba, Achimota School (Ghana)**

## ENVY

Envy can be terribly destructive or surprisingly... constructive. It is the story we tell ourselves about the life of another person, and this particular story can be either the poison in our lives or the magic potion. Envy speaks to us in subtle ways, from nudging us to do things differently and exploring things we never gave much thought to.

Helmut Schoeck from his book *Envy* states that, "Envy is a drive which lies at the core of man's life as a social being, and which occurs as soon as two individuals become capable of mutual comparison."

Envy is perceived to be extremely negative and destructive but we live in a time of challenges, races and competition. Each and every moment of our lives is compared with the lives of others. Questions like Louis Braille invented Braille when he was 15, what have you done till now?

Envy can be extremely helpful when we learn to channel that envious energy to construct and build something positive out of it, be it through inspiration or motivation. It all depends on choosing the correct mind-set which is the abundance mind-set over the scarcity mind-set. Envy can point us into directions we had deep passion for, provided that we take a step back and observe the same situation and feeling from a point of non-materialism.

Envy is a little like opium. When we indulge in it in for fun or rebellion's sake, it will destroy. But if we learn how to control the use, applying it for specific situations, it can be helpful. In conclusion, Envy is not a place to aim for, it's not something to encourage but it's important to listen to what it tells us and use that learning for our own constructive development.

**VAIBHAV KUMAR, Sun City School (India)**

## Good morning - Will there always be a harvest?

7:15 - "I tap 'snooze' on my phone."

"In the Foxconn factory, how many bodies needed to be thrown, until the suicide prevention net above the concrete stone? Production simply could not be postponed."

"12 hour workdays? Humiliation and widespread depression?

These are actions I cannot condone, but

How will I know when it's.....?"

7:30" - "I wash my face and brush my teeth with water."

"In Flint, Michigan, how many children, sons and daughters, needed to be poisoned with lead which will affect even their own grandsons and granddaughters? They thought they could've saved \$200 million in 25 years by using the river around the corner.

"Damage to infrastructure? Bacterial outbreaks and deception?

I cannot accept these people being slaughtered, but as long as I can....."

7:40 - go in the shower"

7:45 - "I choose my clothes for the day."

"In the Bangladesh garment factory, how much were the children paid?  $\frac{1}{3}$  of the living wage? When they made this £5 shirt I'll only wear today."

"This is foul play, long working hours in the way of school days? It's an outrage that they're underpaid".

8:00 - I eat my breakfast. Half of it. The rest is discarded in the garbage. Yes, in Yemen, though some may be starving. I know exactly where my food sits tarnished. It lies there as a carcass. Yes, I know it creates 8% of carbon emissions, but I bought them as a bargain, there will be a harvest next time, and

8:01: Good morning"

**Saba Ahmed, Loxford School (UK)**



**Riya Soni, Sun City School (India)**

## **Where's are future? Where's our rights? Peace for all.**

8 minutes, 46 seconds. You will probably finish reading this in a shorter amount of time but THAT was the amount of time a police officer's knees were forced down on to George Floyd's neck. It's crazy. George Floyd repeatedly said "I can't breathe" while a cop's knee forced pressure on his neck. The cops disregarded his compliance, disregarded the possible effects. Is it really a surprise? It's surprising how people stood there and watched someone get tortured. Torture and torture which turned bodies into corpses. It's crazy how a colour could impact the treatment someone receives. It's beautiful how we protest for justice, show respect and drop onto our knees. Day in day out, people are dying. Innocents are injured and families are left crying. It's crazy how the world can change. Families are left without parents, without children: pain which is unimaginable in my eyes. We should appreciate those around us and be grateful of their presence. Hopefully this opens up our eyes and we take it as a lesson. We should be grateful that we're alive, however we don't know who could be next. We go outside thinking we're fine, just like the rest. It could be me, it could be you. Death can hit us unexpectedly. We can make a difference.

During the Holocaust, approximately 17 million people were murdered between 1941 and 1945. The state sponsored genocide of European Jews taught several lessons to humanity including the dangers of handing power to the wrong people who spread the ideology of hate. We remember the holocaust in honour for the innocent lives lost and pledge to prevent anything like this to happen again. However the reality remains with a huge shame the same, but with the slight difference in who the victims are and where they are located. Uyghur Muslims originate in the Xinjiang province, West China where they make up under half of the total population of 11 million. Up to one million Uyghur Muslims are said to be detained in camps, where as stated by the Chinese government are being taught ways to 'combat terrorism and religious extremism' willingly. However on 22nd April 2018, a satellite photo showed that these camps were highly secured with a 2km-long exterior wall punctuated by 16 guard towers, suggesting a more serious situation which should be further investigated. Survivors have come forward and have accused China of ethnic cleansing. They have shared the horrors that happen daily within these camps such as murder, rape and being forced to do things that go against their religion such as eating pork or drinking

alcohol. This acts as evidence for state sponsored killing and torture towards Uyghur Muslims. The severe lack of media attention may indicate how the Chinese government is trying to cover their horrific crimes, as the voices of survivors who try to be heard globally are silenced. Not only is this a violation against basic human rights but it also suggests how humanity still hasn't learnt from past events.

**Nazish Sajjad, Loxford School (UK)**



**Hamad**

## **IT'S LUCK.**

We all know that hunger kills  
We feel happy when our stomach fills  
We know wasting food is bad  
Yet we do it with our very same hands

Our challenge is to stop wastage  
Reduce the number of weak and hungry citizens  
To help others, to increase production  
Make the atmosphere a little less tense

One person can do this  
Two people are not enough  
This goal needs an army  
To help through times that are tough

It shouldn't be unlucky,  
to be born in a poor family  
These conditions have created this thought  
A thought so silly

Stop wasting food,  
that's what one can do  
Donate once in awhile  
Not only when it's in style

In these situations  
There is luck  
Those that are lucky, help  
Fill a person's stomach.

**ASTHA VORA, Sun City School (India)**



## Locked

First world countries are asked if they are Fond of the lockdown?  
Strengthening the bond between partners, siblings, parents and children, Or  
whether they enjoy what they consider a temporary dictatorship. "Stay indoors"  
with food galore, Avoid that trip to meet more,

Stay aware and be somewhat prepared of the imperceptible murderer  
Approaching your door, Assure your loved ones that this time will pass As  
promised by your elected governor, Essential visits to your local store,  
Purchase what you must, the choice is yours.

A fear of the imperceptible, the unseen, the invisible Mass murdering virus,  
Promised progress, Promised a return to something similar to previous norms,  
Promised rights, Promised connections,

Whilst an atmosphere of apprehension and unpredictability have long  
Suspended over Kashmir, A lockdown reasoned with security rather than an  
exertion of control Over the Muslim majority, Cutting communications, Many  
arrested despite attesting to innocence,

No promises for the innocent, who reside in Kashmir, Limited services, Limited  
choice, not to mention the restricted voice of Kashmiri civilians, Grenade  
attacks and blood bursts of labourers, Military deployment which clenches the  
voices, the freedoms and news of occurrences, angering millions.

Whilst we remain sleeping, We mustn't ignore Or overlook the weeping Of  
Kashmiris - Exposed to the shedding of blood, Fearful of speaking out, Whilst  
we remain fearful of going out and about.

**Sadia Batool, Loxford School (UK)**

## PARALLEL UNIVERSE

Parallel Universe  
A universe that's re-done,  
A place where your sub consciousness takes control,  
Takes you to places,  
That you thought you'd never explore.

Parallel Universe  
A universe where days go by without worry,  
A place where the mind is fun,  
Heart full of love.

Parallel Universe.  
Where laughter is like the sweetest lullaby,  
Souls, like mysterious oceans,  
Eyes, hinting the beautiful galaxies inside them.

Parallel Universe  
Where no one feels lonely,  
Knowing they have created an entirely different cosmos inside them.

Parallel Universe  
Where souls have indefinite depth,  
That don't just judge a person from the outside,  
But make the effort of admiring what's inside.

Parallel Universe  
Where people are full of unfiltered love,  
And there's peace within everyone,  
Even the wounded little dove.

Parallel Universe  
A place where everyone gets to paint their own lives,  
Filled with miscellaneous colours,  
Where everyone accepts that without darkness,  
Not even the brightest stars can shine.

Parallel Universe  
The place that showers people with the kindest smiles,  
Where ecstasy surrounds you,  
Even in the darkest times.

**SAANVI DHINGRA, Sun City School (India)**

## THE BEAUTY OF RAIN

Rain oh Rain, you bring worms and smiles,  
Rain oh Rain you bring umbrellas and slippery tiles.  
The boys and girls come running out,  
With paper boats in hand.  
Your pitter patter, their happy shouts,  
It's nature's marching band!  
The worms wriggle to the tune,  
The trees sway to the song.  
I watch their dance from my window sill,  
Hoping it lasts long.  
Just when things can't get any better,  
You paint colours across the sky.  
Then again we must say too soon,  
Rain oh Rain, goodbye!

**MIHIKA BATRA, Sun City School (India)**



## **Water - our source for life!**

We open our bottles,  
Unscrew our flasks.  
One drop of water,  
Not too much to ask.

They toil in the sun  
No strength to run,  
Stare down the well,  
Dehydrated, can you tell?

We rinse, lather and repeat,  
Replenishing what we lost from the heat.  
Water fights on summer nights,  
Turning the tap is not a plight.

Their cracked skin screams  
Water fights are their daydreams.  
Metal buckets burn their hands,  
Looking for water in sterile lands.

Pity to think, this liquid they crave,  
Is there for some...  
From cradle to grave.

So now I ask for nothing but aid,  
To undo the damage of this retrograde.  
To allow these people the chance to bask,  
For one drop of water....  
Is not too much to ask.

**Angela Ameer, Loxford School (UK)**

## GRATEFUL TO GOD

Henry Ward Beecher has correctly stated that "Gratitude is the fairest blossom which springs from the soul."

Imagine not having a roof on your head, clothes to wear, food to eat or even water to drink! No sane human would want to fall into such a wretched situation. All these things are readily available to the most of us, yet we don't seem to value them.

God has blessed most of us with lots of joy in our lives. Being grateful for these simple pleasures doesn't only make us content, but also helps us to stay grounded and humble. Many of us crib about not having the latest version of gadgets or the latest collection of the expensive clothing brand, not realising that there are millions of people in the world who don't even have the access to basic and essential amenities! Being thankful is the key to contentment in life.

We must be grateful for all the happiness God has blessed upon us. It may act as a catalyst in our lives by making us more optimistic and giving us a new, yet positive outlook towards life.

**RAJASVI SINGH, Sun City School (India)**



**Animals - Escapism, freedom....the way it should be!**

We live our lives in a bubble,  
Worrying about ourselves.  
Worrying which clothes to wear  
What show to watch  
What restaurant is near.  
For many the abuse of animals  
Is far from their social sphere.  
So perhaps a cruelty  
Equal to the one committed by abusers  
Is the ignorance of the rest of the world:  
For failing to take a single moment  
To pay attention to the bile farms in China, Vietnam;  
To pay attention to the circus animals trapped in cages,  
forced to perform cruel tricks  
through electric prods, spikes and whips;  
To the animals brain-damaged, starved,  
burned and drowned amid animal testing,  
drugged, and unsound.  
Perhaps WE could stop this endless cycle of horror together,  
and put an end to the gruesome cruelty of each sinner.  
If the world lost  
our ability to look on and turn a blind eye;  
If we lost our ability to seek the knowledge and dig deeper  
to the pain endured by each living creature  
and yet still go about our day unmoved,

The world could be transformed.

I am asking you to research.

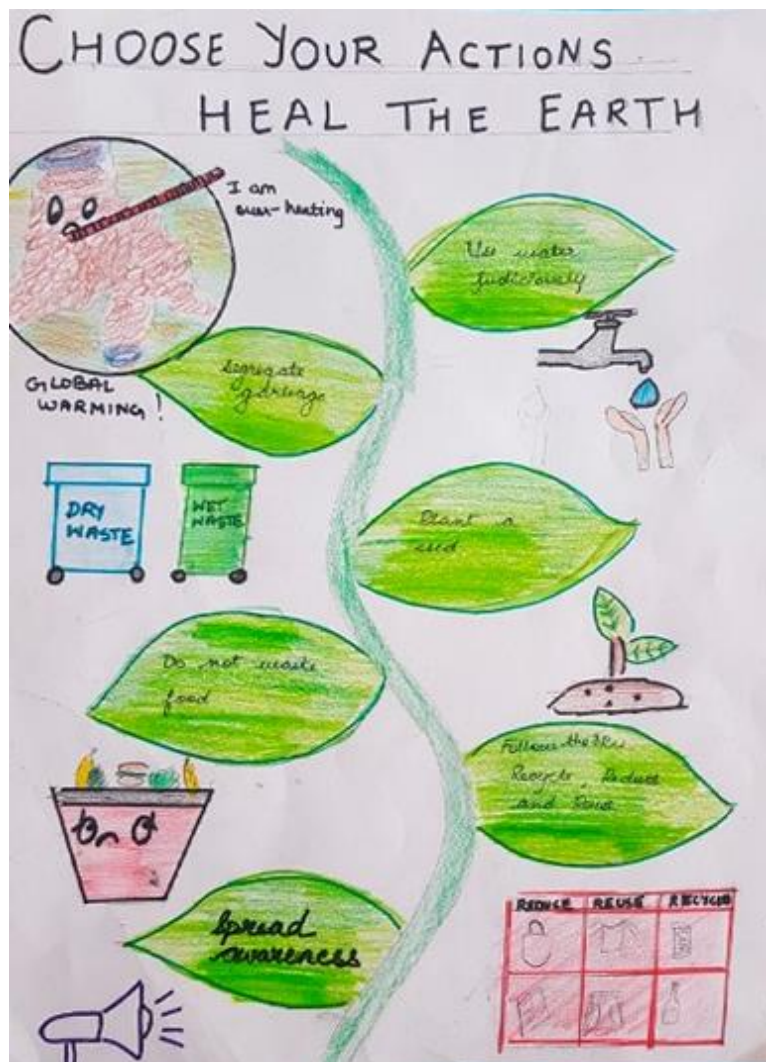
To sign petitions, to change laws.

To donate.

To save.

To care.

**Karolina Tomaite, Loxford School (UK)**



**Naina Agarwal Via, Sun City School (India)**

## HOW TO UNDERSTAND YOURSELF

In today's world, we are always in a rush to get some or the other work done, whether it be driving to work, or trying to meet a deadline. The hustle and bustle of the modern world leaves no time for us to reflect upon ourselves: we complete one task, and rush to finish the next one, and the cycle continues. People spend their entire lives on a wild goose chase, moving from one task to another, believing that they are being led to success. But what most don't realise is that success comes from within, and the key to success is understanding yourself.

This may come as a surprise, but the first step towards understanding yourself, is to listen to others. Ask for constructive criticism from close friends and family members, in whom you have placed your trust. You may be exhibiting some inappropriate traits and behaviours without you realizing it, which is why you need someone to guide you back towards the right path. Observe others' behaviours around you, and their attitudes towards you, as that will help you to introspect, and reflect upon your thoughts and actions. Thinking about all the information about yourself that you've gathered, for as little as 15 minutes a day, can go a long way.

Knowing your strengths and weaknesses is so much more important for you, than just for filling out institutional applications. It'll help you to enhance your efficiency in anything you do. Understanding yourself shouldn't have to be thought of as a concept, that's reserved for long voyages to far-off lands; rather it is something that you can begin right now, from the comfort of your home. Instead of looking for shortcuts to achieve success, focus on understanding yourself better, and treating those around you with respect, and success will find its way to you. These are global values that are positively contagious.

**YASHVI BAGARIA, Sun City School (India)**



## **Water Poem**

Falling from the sky into our veins,  
It makes our bodies function despite all the pain.  
It's as precious as diamonds but as common as copper,  
Yet many people are unable to hold her.  
We can't live without it and we can't die free from it,  
And it just tastes so damn good in the morning.  
Water.

I can walk to the kitchen and turn on a tap,  
Fill up a glass and that's that.  
But around the world,  
The story isn't the same.

Out there is a child who runs all morning to fill up just a single bucket,  
For his parents, little brothers and sisters, just so they can have their basic  
necessities.

Imagine a world where so many children didn't have to sacrifice their time,  
education, and childhood burdening the responsibility of care for their families,

(Whilst most of us sit here in laughter,

A baby is born to be the provider.)

We need change,

And they need it now.

**Tahmid Rahman, Loxford School (UK)**

## **SHE**

Her mind is to be preyed on by magazine covers and makeup products. She falls over herself trying to look like the faces on the billboards. She must mutate her skin, her body, her face, her hair — she must do whatever it takes to look 'beautiful', for how else will they accept her?

She must reject femininity altogether. She must loudly deplore the colour pink, the dolls and dollhouses from her childhood, the princesses that she was once told she would be. She must reject everything that marks her identity as a woman, for how else will they accept her?

She must never believe that she is beautiful — for how else will they profit off her insecurities? How will they sell their fairness creams, their anti-ageing serums? Her confidence is a hindrance to their business.

She must be the ideal weight, the perfect size. She must mirror the artificial beauty around her — for her desirability is her worth.

Women across seven continents are battling the pressures of a multi-billion dollar industry, fighting for their right to exist outside societal expectations and defined perceptions of femininity.

**NAINA BAGCHI, Sun City School (India)**

## DREAMER

When I say 'teenager', what's the first word that pops up into your head? Well, is hard to say you'll think of only one thing, considering how dense and profound this teenage experience is. But for me, that one word that strikes more fiercely than any other is dreamer.

From a certain perspective, this describes teenage as a whole. This is that stage of our lives where our minds are mostly occupied by the thought of what the future will hold, and in this entire thought process we start envisioning. We start seeing ourselves in a desirable position, doing something that most passionately satisfies us.

This is a dream.

As time passes, we want to get closer to that dream. Every teenager dreams at some point, some of us remember it and strive to catch it, while most of us let it fade with time. But that's not happiness, is it? And living, while not knowing true happiness, is merely existing.

Which is exactly, why it's exceedingly imperative, for every young adult to always remember what makes them smile, then reach out to find it.

So let's embrace our dreams; composing a reality that we call youth.

**NEERJA SONOWAL, Sun City School (India)**

**The Lord will provide**

To the mirror on my wall,  
You cannot define me in any way or form.

To the people who see me on the streets,  
Praises will not elevate me,  
Nor will your criticism degrade me.

To the news reporters and media platforms,  
Your manipulated truths will not confine.

To my worldly desires,  
You will not suppress me,  
nor will you keep me enslaved.

For my Lord will provide for me.  
An exit through the world of islamophobia.  
And guide me through on a safe and happy journey.

**Kaif Lodhi, Loxford School (UK)**

## CLIMATE ACTION

The temperature is increasing

And Human life is decreasing

Ice at the poles is melting

Water in the ocean is increasing

And Marine life is decreasing.

Think about the pollution,

Is there a possible solution?

Industries won't stop smoking

And Earth won't stop choking.

Global warming in the name of development is increasing,

Soil, nature and human life is slowly deforming.

There is still some time left before this gets out of hand,

There is still life with Mother Earth providing us land.

For all is destroyed and climate has changed,

There is still some time to do something to stop this change.

No more plastic waste because Mother Earth says....

I am fading at a fast Pace!

Mother Earth needs love, it needs care,

We are polluting its air and there is despair.

So let us Pledge to save the Earth and life,

Let it breathe and bring back its original glory.....

**AARNA BHANOT, Sun City School (India)**

## Treat Adversity Rightly

Most people look at adversity as a time of trouble or some sort of problem. In fact that is how the dictionary defines adversity 'a difficult or unpleasant situation.' But what separates successful people from "regular people" is the ability to stay calm and collected in every situation, moreover stay optimistic even in the most adverse situation.

Positive people will not look at adversity or difficult situation as a sign of giving up, they treat these situations as an opportunity to try again and make a difference.

To be successful the person needs a sense of acceptance, though that will not solve the problems in life but it will equip you with the "right attitude" to conquer the challenge thrown by life.

There is an extremely famous quote that states "a wise warrior must know what battles to pick and what to ignore", but I think to be successful you need to have a hint of craziness.

You need to have a mind-set which allows you to walk into battle knowing that there is a fair chance you might not walk out with a waving flag of victory, but most important thing is you try with the best of your ability.

There will be times when you might feel like you have made a wrong decision or that you are stepped into much bigger boots, but remember no matter what, you will only learn from 'failures'. I don't think it's even right that a word like failure exists, you should look it as a lesson or an experience which you know that you won't attempt in the same way. The dictionary should just replace the word failure with "lessons of life". Better still, failure should be defined as either giving up just because you failed or were not successful or when you succeed and feels like there is no room for improvement.

Always remember, treat every rough patch of life like a test. When you fail a test, what are you made to do- you're told to TRY AGAIN UNTIL YOU PASS.

Let's take an example of a successful personality- Steve Jobs the founder of Apple. Do you think one day he decided to start a tech company and ended up

with this huge technological empire? His day started with a challenge and ended with a solution. Perseverance, and "never give up attitude" led to Steve Jobs making an empire from a small garage.

Do treat adversity like an opportunity to create and innovate, treat it like this is your only chance to leave an everlasting impact of your existence in the world.

**LAKSHYA KAPOOR, Sun City School (India)**



Swara Kaushik, Sun City School (India)