

## A WORK OF ARTIFICE: THE TRAGEDY OF A LIFE MADE SMALL

- by Twishi Pabreja



Sometimes, oppression does not arrive with force; it presents itself as care. It persuades us that the cage is a shelter, that silence is virtue, and that being made small is something to be grateful for. Marge Piercy's poem, *A Work of Artifice*, lays bare this subtle deception through the extended metaphor of a bonsai tree, offering a poignant commentary on the centuries-old subjugation of women. Piercy presents a woman's life as analogous to that of a bonsai—endowed with immense potential yet continually whittled and pruned, confined within the four walls of their home under the guise of protection and taught to believe that their worth rests largely upon beauty, docility and domesticity. She is expected to accept the little 'pot' allotted to her as the only space in which she can flourish. The title thus captures the poem's profound irony: what is presented as care and protection may, in reality, be a carefully constructed mechanism of control. The gardener's gentle, almost affectionate treatment of the tree makes the irony even more striking. The image of the tree being 'split by lightning' further illustrates how unlikely dangers can be magnified to justify restriction. Piercy then extends her metaphor through references to foot-binding, the curling of hair and the conditioning of minds. These examples reveal that the subjugation of women operates not only through physical limitations but also through imposed ideals of beauty, behaviour and femininity. The phrase 'whittles back the branches' poignantly evokes the gradual stripping away of opportunities, aspirations and individuality. The concluding image is particularly unsettling: the tree's delicate hands must remain soft because they are meant to be pleasing to touch. Beauty, therefore, becomes more than an aesthetic ideal—it becomes an instrument of control. Piercy's short, fragmented lines reinforce this idea, visually echoing the pruning and confinement of the bonsai. 'A Work of Artifice' urges us to question restrictions disguised as affection, tradition or protection. The tragedy of the bonsai is not simply that it remains small, but that it is taught to mistake its confinement for its destiny.

## NAVIGATING CEREBRAL PALSY

- by Kushagrh Gaurav Deb

Imagine playing your favourite sport and struggling to balance your body every time you swung your bat, maintaining your posture while scoring a goal, or calling out to your teammate when you tried to pass the ball! That's what life can be like for a child with Cerebral Palsy (CP). CP is a permanent, non-progressive physical disability caused by damage to the developing brain before, during or shortly after birth. It affects body movement, muscle tone and posture. In simple words, the brain may have a tricky time telling the muscles how to move smoothly. Children with CP think, laugh, learn and feel emotions just like any other child. Some may use motorised wheelchairs for mobility, or speech apps to communicate. So, the next time you meet a friend with CP, include them in your games, be patient when they speak, and never stare at, or make fun of their equipment. Make space for them, play alongside them and remember that they are just as entitled to have fun, participate and have a place on the team, as anyone else!

## WHERE WILL THE WILD GO?

- by Advika Negi

What would the world look like if wild animals slowly ran out of places to call home? From the rhinos of Kaziranga to the elephants of Kerala, and from the African savannahs to the dense rainforests of South America, wildlife is what truly makes our planet alive. Yet, as concrete cities spread and ancient forests fade away, animals are cast out from the only sanctuaries they have ever known. Driven by survival, they wander onto our highways and slip into our quiet villages—not out of choice, but out of desperation. What we label as 'human-animal conflict' is often nothing more than a homeless creature searching for a way back home! Protecting wildlife isn't just about building bigger zoos or putting up fences. It's about giving nature the freedom and continuous space it needs to breathe. As our cities grow, we must remember to leave open pathways for our wild neighbours.

"When we give wildlife space to roam, we keep our entire planet healthy.  
Concrete cannot give us fresh air, but living forests will."



## palette of Potential

## Caught on Camera

- clicked by Sanjana Akula



Artwork by Vanshi Patel - V D



Enjoying the experience of Learning Street

## The Brainy Bit



1. If two astronauts are on a spacewalk outside the International Space Station and one violently strikes two metallic objects together, what will the other astronaut detect?

- A) A sharp, high-amplitude metallic clang
- B) A muffled, low-frequency hum
- C) Absolute silence
- D) A faint, high-pitched resonance

2. In our solar system, planetary mechanics can produce unusual temporal cycles. On which of the following planets does a single rotation on its axis take longer than its entire orbit around the Sun?

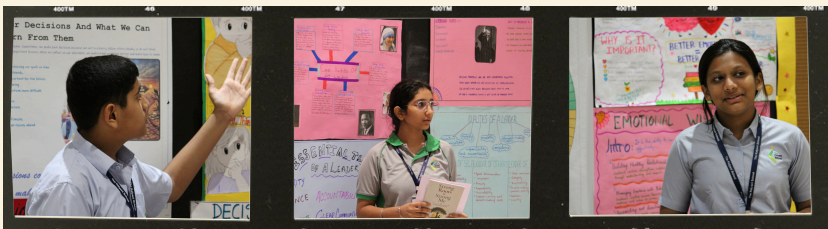
- A) Mercury B) Venus C) Mars D) Neptune

• Answers for previous edition: 1-B, 2-A.

- submitted by Airah Madaan

## GLIMPSES FROM THE LEARNING STREET

- clicked by Sanjana Akula



## GLIMPSES FROM THE INTER-SCHOOL DEBATE COMPETITION

- clicked by Darsh Suneja



## Diction Digest

### SPAGHETTIFICATION

(While it may sound like a funny, made-up word, it is a scientific term popularised by the famous physicist Stephen Hawking in his best-selling book 'A Brief History of Time'.)

**Pronunciation:** spuh-GET-ih-fih-KAY-shun

**Meaning:** The stretching of objects into long, thin strings when pulled by a black hole's intense gravity.

**Synonym:** Noodle effect, vertical stretching.

**Sentence:** If a careless astronaut drifts too close to a black hole, spaghettiification will violently stretch their spacesuit out like a piece of cosmic chewing gum, snapping them into gravity as well.

- Submitted by Karan Nambisan

## Weekly Wisdom

"Each time a woman stands up for herself, without knowing it possibly, without claiming it, she stands up for all women."

- Maya Angelou

-Submitted by Mishika Mehra

## Parents and Students Speak about the Learning Street

- Interviewed by Indira Banerjee

**Parent: Naval Thakur, Father of Jayant Thakur, VIII C**

This entire concept is amazing. Our generation was exposed to an array of careers very late in our lives, but these students have the privilege of being exposed to this at a young age. The students have put in a lot of effort, and it shows. I am sure these learnings will stick with the students in their future.



**Parent: Sheetal Dharmorikar, Mother of Abeer Madhav, VIII D**

I can see a lot of effort from these students as they share different modules on what they have learnt over the past three years. I am so glad that all the students can understand the intricacies of this concept, and the children are doing a good job showcasing what they have learnt.



**Student: Lily Mohol, VIII C**

I think the school has taken a great initiative, and my favourite part about this is how parents are also understanding what we do in school.

**Student: Kamaira Mulchandani, VIII B**

This experience was amazing and eye-opening. It has taught me so much, and I can't begin to express my gratitude for being able to have this opportunity.



## Controversial Policies about Women

- Parnika Rane

- 1. Karnataka's menstrual leave:** The state moved to give working women up to 12 paid menstrual leave days a year. Critics fear it could make employers hesitant to hire women.
- 2. Women's Reservation Act, 2023:** It reserves one-third of Lok Sabha and state assembly seats for women. It takes effect only after the next census and delimitation, so many call it a distant promise.
- 3. Night-shift restrictions:** Labour laws such as the Factories Act have long limited women's night work, citing safety. This can keep women out of higher-paying jobs, and several states have since relaxed the rules with safeguards.
- 4. Afghanistan's education ban:** Since 2021, the Taliban have barred girls from secondary school and women from universities. The international community widely condemns it as a violation of the right to education.
- 5. Iran's compulsory hijab:** It has been mandatory since the early 1980s. Mahsa Amini's death in custody in 2022, sparked nationwide protests.



## Meet The Editorial Squad

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- **Head of Journalism** - Twishi Pabreja (XI-E)
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