

**WRITE TRACK:SEASON 4**

# **THE E-BOOK**

**EDITION 2**

**A collection of writings by  
YOCee's student reporters  
this summer!**



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## Note from the production team!

Here's presenting you The Write Track Season 4 Edition 2! Reading and collating the articles was beyond pleasure. As a team, alongside learning, there was so much fun too!

- eBook Creators of  
Edition 2 - TWT Season 4

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# 12 Angry Men

- Hussain Topiwala

Movie  
Review

The 1957 film, '12 Angry Men', masterfully encapsulates the nuanced tenets of human nature, the art of convincing and lobbying, and an appeal to reasonableness.

The plot revolves around a murder case, wherein a teenager is accused of stabbing his father to death. The teen's fate now lies in the



An intriguing murder. A sweltering jury room. And twelve angry men.

hands of twelve jurors, strangers to each other, who must deliberate and submit a unanimous verdict of 'guilty', or 'not guilty' if reasonable doubt exists. If pronounced 'guilty', the teen faces the death penalty.

The murder case appears to be ostensibly straightforward at first, and the jurors, identified by their numbers throughout the film, take a preliminary vote among themselves and are unanimously inclined to announce the verdict as 'guilty'. However, Juror 8 (acted by Henry Fonda) disrupts this consensus by voting 'not guilty' as he believes that a reasonable doubt exists and that the matter of life and death of an individual must not be ruled upon in haste.

Juror 8, through his respectable mien, careful observation of the different personalities in the room, and scrutiny of the many facets to the case, eventually convinces the jurors to change their stances, and attain consensus. The deliberation that precedes this consensus, however, sheds light on the way various people think, and how their disposition affects their decisions. Atavistic, bigoted, aged, finicky, insouciant, meek, short-tempered, straitlaced – the jury room is packed with uniquely disposed of individuals, each having his opinion that Juror 8 alters through reasoning.

Unlike contemporary movies that are packed with glamour and action, this black-and-white film is set in only one room. And yet, it succeeds to capture viewers' attention by giving immaculate importance to dialogue delivery and acting. The highlight on 'mob mentality' and the people skills that come into play in ordinary situations provides major lessons for film-viewers to apply in life.



# Rising above criticism

- *Jayani Neelam*

In the contemporary world, we have to deal with a lot of criticism as everybody freely shares their opinion, especially on social media. I would say, no matter whether it is social media or outside social media “Right to an opinion does not make an opinion right.”

Opinions can be the other person’s feelings and sometimes they can be true and positive or sometimes true and bad and sometimes they can be untrue, very rude and negative. In some cases, the difference of opinions can lead to a discussion and bring people closer together on a better and shared understanding so not everything is completely good or completely bad.

The world will always comment and criticize, it is upon you to consider whether they are wrong or right. For example, sometimes people might share about any bad quality of yours, but it is upon you to decide whether it is actually hurting people by putting yourself in their shoes and rectifying your error. However, sometimes it can be very negative. The worst you can do is comment back negatively for a negative comment. You yourself should be polite when criticizing and understand that sometimes your comment is not even required.

You have to remember that the noise and opinions of others shouldn’t drown your own inner voice. So firstly the most important thing is to be self-confident and have self-esteem as your value should not decrease based on somebody’s inability to see your worth. You should be confident that what you’re doing is right or wrong and if you’re confused because of somebody’s comment it’s okay just sit and think about it and sort it out and remember that someone else’s opinion doesn’t have to become your reality. If you’re strong on the inside you can’t let the outside voice shut you down so be courageous and ignore the haters, do your own thing and don’t try to waste too much time changing people’s opinions.

Finally, one thing to remember is that as much as you should avoid criticism and negative comments, you should avoid praise. As they say, “Don’t let criticism get to your heart and praise into your head.”



# The monsoon magic

- *Daya Lakshmi Mukundan*

In India, we have four main seasons. Although climate change has skewed the boundaries between these seasons at times, they still retain their main features.

I've learnt to appreciate each season for what it is. While they can all be very frustrating, they can also make wonderful experiences.

Summer is memorable for mangoes, ice cream, light rains and a long vacation. You can make some of your best memories with friends in the summer.

Monsoon is one of my favourite seasons, for the rains, the petrichor, the puddles and the glistening streets. The cool evening air is always a plus. Petrichor (the smell of the soil after rain) is partly named for the Greek word for the blood of the gods. I think it is aptly named, as the lifeblood of the season.

Winter is another favourite of mine. Even if you don't celebrate Christmas, the festive mood is contagious. The barren trees may be a little disheartening to some, but they're only preceding a new season of growth. The bright, crisp mornings of the winter season make up for any kind of gloom, anyways.

Last, but certainly not least, spring is regarded by some as the most beautiful season in Bangalore. This is, of course, because of the Bangalore blossoms. Also known as pink trumpets or Tabebuia roses, these flowers are breathtaking when they line the streets in a sheet of pastel pink. They are a signature of the Bangalore spring.

Each season is an opportunity for new memories, new experiences, or new beginnings. They're all like rebirth, in their own right. That is an opportunity that we truly must harness; reinventing, or re-evaluating, as the seasons change.



## Aggregator businesses: Why unity is strength

*- Adhiti Tandle*

Swiggy, Uber, Google and OYO – all seemingly different businesses from different industries. What do they have in common, one might ask? Well, they're all aggregator businesses.

An aggregator business is one that connects many similar businesses in an industry with their customers. For example, Swiggy connects a large number of restaurants (which become partners with Swiggy) with customers, essentially creating one large network under the aggregator's brand. Aggregators act as middle person between businesses and their customers. It is important to note that although the partner businesses sell their products under the brand of the aggregator, they never become the employees of the aggregator.

Customers benefit from the aggregator business model in many ways. It is much more time-saving and easy as they need to browse only one website compared to multiple. They can also compare prices easily and choose the best option for them more easily. Customers might also find it safer as they can check the ratings of the partner businesses and reviews left by other customers.

The partner businesses benefit from the extensive marketing done by the aggregator as it brings more people to the aggregator's site, leading to more potential customers and a potentially larger customer base.

Aggregators benefit from this business model as they get a certain revenue from each sale made by a partner business. This is known as a commission and can be earned in two ways. The aggregators can charge a final price to customers after adding a markup to a minimum price quoted by the partner business. Alternatively, the aggregator can charge a certain percentage of the sale made by the partner business. The aggregators earn this commission from the partner business in exchange for providing them with customers.

With the growth of the internet and new technology, it is likely that aggregator businesses will only become more common. Although this business model did exist before the internet, the internet has helped it become more widespread due to better connectivity and greater ease for processes like transportation and payment, providing an easy and quick way for customers to purchase products online.



# Adventure tourism: Balancing the thrills and the risks

- *Sthuthi Arun*

Picture the scene. You are a thrill-seeking teenager bursting with excitement about an upcoming adventure trip. You are excited about discovering new horizons, and making memories that will last a lifetime. But hold on tight because you'll also need to be aware of the risks involved in adventure tourism.

Adventure tourism promises thrilling and unforgettable experiences. But, before you finalize your plans, it's crucial to step back, evaluate the potential hazards involved and make informed decisions.

Take trekking as an example. Did you know that more than 150 Himalayan trekkers lost their lives in the last 5 years? (*Source: Times Of India*). Imagine what would happen if you were zip-lining and the rope gave way? Youtube is full of such horror stories. Although these might look like outlier incidents, there is still a non-zero possibility of them happening.

Why is this the case especially in India as opposed to Western countries? There are many causes for India's poor reputation in adventure tourism.

- Poor and faulty equipment, not inspected regularly
- Improper planning and scheduling by tour agencies and tourists left to fend for themselves in unfamiliar situations
- Untrained or non-certified tour guides
- Lack of physical fitness of the tourists undertaking adventurous expeditions outside their comfort zone

Recently in May '23, there was a shocking accident in Kerala. An inland cruise ship capsized, killing 22 local tourists. This happened despite a warning by the officials that required the cruise operation to be terminated. This incident is one of many such mishaps.



The only way such accidents can be prevented is by knowing the risks and being prepared for contingencies. Never trust unauthorized adventure firms that appear even the slightest bit untrustworthy.

Ask yourself the following questions.

*"Is the equipment fit for use?*

*Is the trip well planned and is the tour agency trustworthy?*

*How experienced and trained are the guides?*

*Am I healthy and fit for the trip I am planning?"*

Heading on an adventurous trip with your family is an incredible experience that can make any teenager's heart race with excitement.

However, before we dive headfirst into the thrill, it's essential to have the right planning conversations with our families. Don't let the excitement of adventure tourism cloud your judgment. Pause, assess the risks, and make informed decisions to ensure a safe and memorable experience.





# Forging a strong bond through diverse personalities

*- Jayani Neelam*

As they say, “A strong friendship doesn’t need daily conversation and doesn’t always need togetherness. As long as the relationship lives in the heart, true friends will never be apart.” Friendship can be between two opposite people sometimes though their characters are different, their hearts are pure and they understand each other.

One such example can be the friendship between an introvert and an extrovert. Imagine different situations between two different personalities. For instance, the extrovert says, “Are you coming to the birthday party next week?” The introvert will probably say, “No, I don’t feel like coming, moreover I think I will be busy on that day.”

Imagine a friendship moment when the introvert is finding it difficult to tell people to be quiet when they are talking during his or her presentation and the extrovert notices this and immediately just tells everyone, “Please be quiet everybody, let us listen to the presenter.” Or when the students go on a field trip, when the introvert sits in one place and doesn’t come for a group photo, the extrovert says, “Come on, be fun, join me in the picture and give a nice pose” or “Come on I know, you can dance; don’t just sit there!”

Or the exact opposite situations where the introvert at the field trip says, “Come on, enough pictures, look at that tree there, aren’t the flowers beautiful?” and the extrovert agrees. Or when the extrovert is distracted by his or her social circle, the introvert says, “Did you start studying? Remember, the project is due the day after tomorrow.” Or sometimes, at the end of the day despite the extrovert having a large friend circle he or she comes to their introvert best friend to discuss some issues that need some advice and the introvert will always lend their ears and give them some insightful advice.

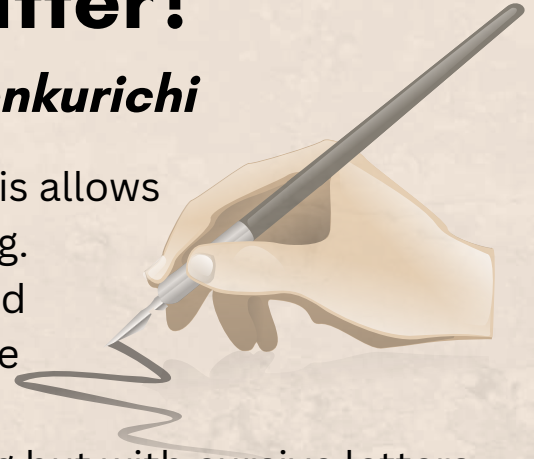
From this, we can understand that when we’re opposites it doesn’t always have to be a fight. Their contrasting characters are the beauty and adding to that is their willingness to learn from each other as they both have faults and that understanding is what forms a stronger and purer bond between each other.



# Handwriting: does it matter?

- *Aravind Senkurichi*

The style of a person's writing is handwriting. This allows each person to have a different accent for writing. Usually, handwriting is split into cursive, print and pre-cursive. Print is a handwriting style where the letters are spaced to use in forms; Pre-cursive is the link between cursive and print having spacing but with cursive letters used to train children on how to write cursive; cursive is another handwriting style which has joined letters to help write fast.



Then there is also calligraphy and graphology. Calligraphy is the study of fonts and how to uniquely create fonts. Graphology is though not directly related to handwriting but is the art of finding personalities through handwriting. Both these professions rely on the use of handwriting. Also, many forms mostly official need a signature unique to each person by handwriting style and name.

Now schools, classes, and tuitions need us to write instead of typing to enhance our skill of handwriting. This is good as the better the handwriting the easier it is to read and copy. Another reason why writing by hand is better is that it is harder to forge documents so we cannot just print or delete papers of importance. Even though the possibility of forging is not completely negated due to expert forgers and Thomas Edison's electric pen and other such ways, it is the easiest and safest method.

The point of autographs is also dependent on handwriting. As mentioned before 'a signature which is unique to each person by handwriting styles and name', brings fame and more likely people want to come and pay to see an artist live and get his signature.

The selling of pens, notebooks and pencils also depends on handwriting as without it there will be no sale of objects needed for writing. Artists usually sign their artwork to notify the observer whose work this belongs to because we cannot tell it is ours in any other way. In the end, we can say it is good to have nice handwriting, but it has its own pros and cons.

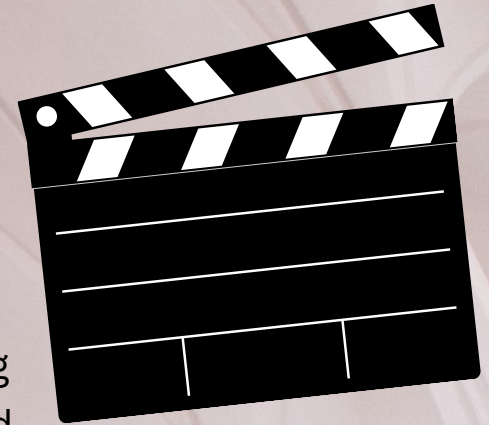


# India at Le Festival De Cannes 2023

- *Jayani Neelam*

One of the biggest and grandest annual global festivals has started, as you guessed, it is the 76th Cannes Film Festival or Le Festival de Cannes in French.

Last year, India stood as the country of Honour and this year India has no less to give at the French Riviera.



This year, the Indian Contingent will be representing India's Cultural heritage and diversity and will be led by the Minister of State for Information and Broadcasting, L. Murugan who will be wearing the traditional dress of Tamil Nadu called 'Veshti' with the shirt having the national flag on the left and the G20 logo on the right, The Mint reports. It also mentioned that the Union Minister of Information and Broadcasting, Anurag Thakur, will not be present physically at the festival and will address the inaugural through a video message.

The Indian Pavilion was designed and ideated by the National Institute of Design, Ahmedabad with the theme 'Showcasing India's Creative Economy to the global community', Etv Bharat reports. The design was inspired by the Saraswati Yantra, an abstract representation of the goddess Saraswati who depicts knowledge, music, art, speech, wisdom and learning. (IE) The Pavilion colours feature the three colours of the Indian national flag. The Pavilion represents India's global involvement and a symbol of globalisation representing the exchange of culture and ideas.

The Pavilion will depict the leap the Indian film Industry is making as it collaborates with global film and entertainment industries. Swarajya reports that the Pavillion will also highlight the contribution of women to cinema and the various cinematic and production facilities offered in India.



Coming to the Indian film works appreciated and honoured this year, Agra by Kanu Behl, Kennedy by Anurag Kashyap, Manipur Film Ishanou and Yudhajit Basu's Nehemich are the four Indian films selected for the Cannes. According to Business Insider India, some of the Indian celebrities to walk the red carpet at Cannes 2023 include Anushka Sharma, Sara Ali Khan, Manushi Chillar, Aishwarya Rai Bachchan, Mrunal Thakur, Sunny Leone, Aditi Rao Hydari, Shanon K, Andrea Kevichusa and Ranveer Allahbadia aka 'Beerbiceps' on Instagram.

Cannes is known for its glamour and Fashion but another not-very popular aspect is the inaugural dinner for which chef Prateek Sadhu has been invited for this year.

According to NDTV one of the dishes is called Tungrymbai, popular in the Khasi region which is made out of smoked and fermented soya beans. It will be paired with a traditional bread called Puthrao and a smoked tomato chutney. The chef said that the team will be including a millet-based menu since 2023 is the International Year of Millets as per the United Nations. "Since this is the year of millets we're doing a Millet Thoran (a Kerala-based dish) as well as a millet pulao with a Malvani-style Sole Fish (a French delicacy) and Potato Koshimbir (a Marathi salad)." The desserts include sweets and mithais from the Bengali Sandesh, Maharashtrian Chikki, and Mysore Pak which will be served with Kashmiri Kahwa and homegrown coffee from Karnataka.

To conclude, though not everybody closely follows the Cannes Festival, it is a proud moment to know and see India take another step in representing itself globally, which makes us proud for sure.





# Handwriting – becoming redundant?

- *Adithi R*



As the digital age unfolds, everything has leapt. Since the pandemic, everything has gone online. In the name of smart learning, every school has digitally improved and every kid is better familiar with a laptop than with a button phone. It's no surprise that as technology has become an increasingly integral part of our lives, the traditional act of writing is waning.

The ease of the world allowing us to sync documents to every portable device, has made the purpose of handwriting almost redundant. Aside from its charm on certain tasks, writing has far more utility than its given credit for. Handwriting has advantages, both creatively and functionally. It forms a unique and irreplaceable part of our culture. Our ancestors have followed the tradition of writing our names on golden plates filled with raw rice. It's scientifically proven that the tips of our fingers have nerves that stimulate parts of the brain that activate memory retention.

The ability to write is closely linked with the ability to read and comprehend. We are taught to hold our pencils and make different patterns on paper during our primary classes. The fine and precise patterns that our hands create trigger many senses, contact different parts of our brain, create contact with different parts of our brain and open up our brain for learning. Since the brain is constantly at work, it improves our motor and literacy skills. In addition, it has plenty of cognitive benefits too!



Writing by hand allows time to slow down our thoughts enabling the reader to expand and give wings to his imagination. Pen and paper are not restrictive and especially do not come with distractions.

Handwriting has an emotional aspect too! When you open an old wooden box from your garage and see your grandmother's written recipes, it makes you feel written recipes, it makes you feel closer to her! There's some comfort in holding the paper your grandmother once wrote in. A handwritten letter from a friend on a special occasion would portray the efforts they took to make you feel a little extra special and speaks volumes!

Although we could replace writing on paper with smart tabs and stylus, nothing could match the feel pen and paper would give. Let's face it—technology is bound to continue to develop. It's not a debate between handwriting and technology, there is a place for both. However, handwriting has proven to have a good deal of advantages for the future generation!







# A matter of trust

– Daya Lakshmi Mukundan

I believe that a person must earn trust. They may not have to go through a gruelling process of interviews and the like, but a little attention paid to someone's mannerisms and habits can tell you whether they are trustworthy.

Trustworthy people usually don't talk behind others' backs. Unless you are very close to someone, if they are discussing someone else negatively without their knowledge, then maybe it would be unwise to trust them not to do the same to you.

The same goes for those who discuss others' secrets openly, or judgementally.

A trustworthy person will respect your boundaries and never pester you for information. They also admit their mistakes and make an effort to improve themselves whenever required.

They are also reliable – they don't vary in their judgement or switch sides at the drop of a hat depending on what benefits them. They think logically and realistically and can aptly defuse the situation that is about to go awry.

For the most part, anyone who truly cares about you could be considered trustworthy, as someone who violates your trust or takes you for granted cannot be considered a well-wisher.

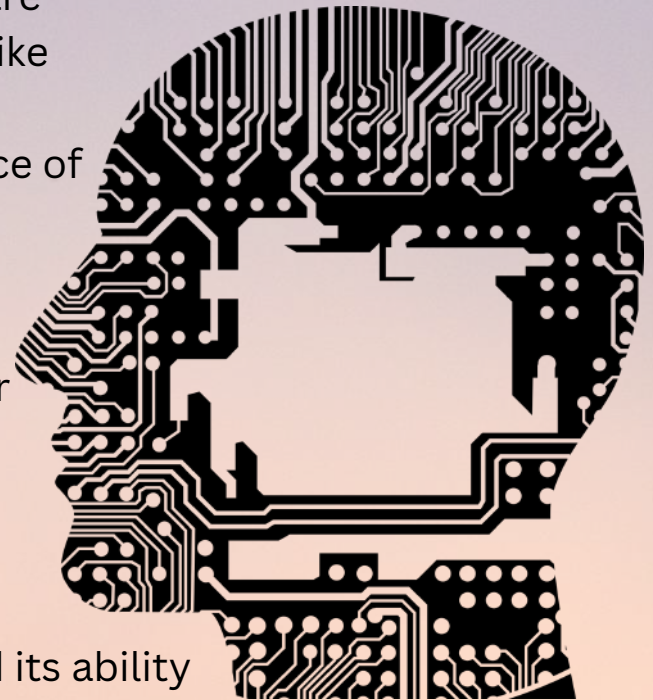
At the end of the day, it pays to be cautious with how often and with what you trust people, but it's also not good to be too guarded with your trust, as that can make you unapproachable, closed-off and intimidating.

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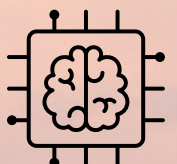
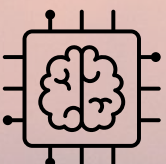
# Artificial Intelligence in Healthcare?

- Akshara A

On May 16, 2023, the World Health Organization (WHO) promulgated a warning on the risks of AI in public healthcare systems. LLMs – Large Language Models – like ChatGPT and Bard can provide information which is biased. In addition, there is a chance of the diagnosed problem being incorrect. Additionally, the models may be rigged, hence generating disinformation<sup>2</sup>. This comes shortly after OpenAI – the developer of the model GPT-4 – proclaimed that ChatGPT-4 has passed multiple medical exams.



While the WHO is keen on AI's potential and its ability to expand and enhance the healthcare system, the WHO feels the risks and issues aren't being examined as thoroughly as they normally are for new technology<sup>1</sup>. It said in its statement, that "This includes widespread adherence to key values of transparency, inclusion, public engagement, expert supervision and rigorous evaluation."<sup>3</sup> The main risk that was stated was how fast the software had been accepted. Within 4 months, Chat-GPT was one of the most rapidly growing applications. In short, the WHO believes that a risk examination is necessary and AI may not be everything it seems for the healthcare system at the moment.





# Bustling bazaars or mystical malls?

- *Samyuktha Chandrashekar*

Simple light bulbs hanging at the corner of a spread of vibrant articles on the streets with sign boards written with white chalk are the go-to places for me to indulge in a shopping spree. There's no doubt about the appeal of packed shopping malls with a variety of shops to offer under one roof but, there is more to the local businesses too.



Locally sourced food and products crafted by local artisans can be supported with every purchase-It elevates the local economy by impacting the vendor's families directly. This gesture encourages innovation and broadens the platform for expression and creativity for craftsmen and artisans.

Shopping local usually means fresher, safer and organic produce – This is undeniably a crucial factor that the world is running behind and is unquestionably vital in today's times. Many times, our eyes catch vegetables and fruits like mangoes on the racks of supermarkets during peak winters when the season is not apt to cultivate such crops. On the other hand, local markets have seasonal produce available at the right times of the year. This urges customers to build associations with seasonal crops while amending their food habits and also connecting with their traditional roots.

As a budding environmentally conscious person, I truly believe that the impacts of going local aren't limited to the advantages for us humans. The terms 'sustainable business' and 'sustainable living' are a fad and I think that local businesses deserve more recognition from the world for playing a major role under the category. Here is why- Loving local businesses also keep the environment happy as the travelling costs are kept low and packaging material is limited too. The breezy air is a great substitute for air

conditioners at shopping malls which are set to emit over 130 Gigatons of CO<sub>2</sub>, from present times until 2050 as per IEA (International Energy Agency) and RMI (Rocky mountain institute) which will increase the size of the already deteriorating carbon footprint.

The use of reusable cloth and jute bags in markets is prevalent which is one of the best parts of shopping locally. It is amazing to witness the vendors encouraging and insisting on the use of reusable bags too.

Shopping experiences in local bazaars are much more than just buying goods-The thought-provoking interactions and affectionate laughs you share with the vendors who you fondly refer to as 'annas and akkas' (brothers and sisters) foster unbreakable bonds. You always look forward to meeting them on your next shopping trip to discuss just about anything under the sky. This acts as the building blocks to embrace your community and culture. Their recommendations and choice of products for you to buy, don't just signify the undying affection of your relationship-It also displays their expertise and mastery in the subject.

You can directly receive suggestions from the experts who possess immense knowledge about the product they sell; where it's from, who makes them, what suits you better, the speciality of the product and more! It's an opportunity to learn more about our culture and the situation of various stakeholders in today's society. This is a gentle reminder to all of us that 'every small purchase makes a big difference'. What other time is better than the summer holidays to indulge in your local shopping spree?





# Museum – an epicentre of learning

- *Aravind Senkurichi*

Imagine coming into a large building with glass holders and pictures left and right showing a vivid history of our and pre-human history. Then getting a mainlined tour of all the grand artefacts



presented either in the open or in a transparent case. This is a museum!

A museum showcases places or subjects of interest in topics, items, a historical era, or even ideas. The museums have archives storing centuries of knowledge and texts. It is a place of art, knowledge and historical texts.

Some museums now are also meant to honour certain people or events. These museums give deep insight into the era and the timeline of the topic. These museums have gained the interest of the majority of people who visit them.

These museums act as an epicentre of learning for all interested, allowing children and adults to learn together. There is a spark of interest found in museums. In museums, a vast majority of old and new findings are stored allowing us to navigate and comprise these pieces for others to use.

To conclude, a museum is an interesting place where you can not only learn but also share the very same knowledge.





# Colour of the oceans and berries

- *Adithi R*

As I pull the curtains off, it's the serene colour that puts me in a good mood. It's the colour of the alluring morning sky that bears the ethereal clouds and the glimmering water under the powerful rays of the sun.

It's the colour of the large, playful creature that lets out a large cry every time it jumps from the ocean. A pale shade of it prevails in the rich and juicy berries.

Then, it's the colour of the lump in your throat, though, of course, it gives birth to courage. It's the sign of hope that is believed to ward off evil. It's the colour of the deity of Mahabharata.

Hidden in the iridescent feathers of a peacock but brightly visible in the stones of sapphire. Symbol of change and rebirth and the colour of the insect that lingers around in the garden of colourful flowers.







# **Pawan, Asha and the forest**

**- Maitreyi Aravindan**

The Kuno National Park, located in Madhya Pradesh is a wildlife sanctuary for wild animals. The animals one can find here are the Indian leopard, southeast African Cheetah, jungle cat, sloth bear, dhole, Indian wolf, Indian jackal, striped hyena, and Bengal fox. Ungulates include chital, sambar, nilgai, chousingha, blackbuck and wild boar.

The Kuno National Park is an amazing place for tourists to visit in Madhya Pradesh. Recently, two of the animals escaped the park. They were two cheetahs – Pawan and Asha.

The cheetah “Pawan” already stormed out of the park twice and the second time, he reached the borderline of Uttar Pradesh. Both times he was brought back to the park. Now, the female cheetah – Asha has also escaped the park. The authorities are still hunting for her and are tracking her whereabouts through her radio collar.

The authorities of the park are worried because she hadn’t hunted for two days and so didn’t eat anything. They are concerned for her wellbeing because of this. She hasn’t been found yet.

Everyone hopes for her safe return to the National Park as quickly as possible.





# Museums – full of stories

- *Jayani Neelam*

Museums aren't the most exuberant places you would find. It is quiet everywhere, and everything is delicate but despite all this, every object in museums has a story to tell.

In my opinion, museums can be monotonous sometimes, but not every museum is, nor every object in the museum is. Museums are not always dinosaur bones or historical artefacts like the tools early civilisation used. There are art museums, museums for seashells and sculptures at Mahabalipuram for example or for agriculture in New Delhi or even textiles!

This aspect is what I like about museums, they are a place full of interesting and intriguing historical things that were a part of who we were and who we are now and it is not always skeletons or tools that remind us of this but several other things like the arts from sculpting to textile designs and sciences, like agriculture, engineering and many more.

Moreover, museums motivate us to keep at least some regional ancient arts and crafts alive and not as a rare thing in a museum before people forget who they were because it is our culture and it is a beautiful skill specific to a region. More significantly, they make me realise that the world has a huge range of biodiversity and many wonders of nature, some of them are at the museum due to natural extinction but some of them might soon be in museums due to our carelessness and our inability to protect nature and responsibly utilise what it gave. If we don't act now, eventually a drop of clean water might be in the museum or forests and natural landscapes might just remain as pictures at a museum or skeletons might just be what is left of wildlife.

Finally, as Carl Sagan said, "You have to know the past to understand the present." I like that they make us stop and look back at how we came to live our contemporary modern lives, the amazing inventions of humans, the power of the human brain, or the fascinating gifts of nature and inspire us to do something new and great for humankind. History doesn't change the past but it can likely change the future.







Alert: This is a fiction with mysterious turns!

# The city that was!

- Maitreyi Aravind

My friends and I were planning a trip to Osaki, a famous lively place. We planned to travel by day train as the view would be stunning. We all reached the station at about 4.30 am and were waiting for the train's arrival. We made plans to do at the place on arrival. The train arrived at the platform with a huge noisy whistle. We had mixed feelings of happiness and curiosity about the city, as it was our first time visiting this city. We quickly got on the train. While we were on the train, we discussed our plans so loud that we didn't even hear the other passengers of the train speaking!

Suddenly a man next to us stopped us from talking. His eyes showed anger and we thought he was going to yell at us. After an awkward silence, he broke the silence and asked us where we were going. We told him the place out of excitement. After we told him the place, he suddenly became very serious and told us that Osaki was not a normal city and was a mysterious and mystical one. He began describing the place in a way we never expected! He said that the

clouds were pink and the streams and rivers were yellow! He even told us that in Osaki.

We weren't convinced but pretended to believe him. After a three-hour journey, we reached the station in Osaki which was inside a cave in a huge mountain. As soon as we got out of the train we couldn't believe our eyes! It turned out that the co-passenger in our train was telling the truth.

There was no way to get out of the mountains except the cable cars. There were two long ropes tied to a long pole on the mountain outside the cave and another one below.

A man hurried us into one of the cars. The car had seats enough for two people to sit on either side. As soon as we got into the car, he pressed a button and ours started moving downhill.

The view from there was an amazing one. We got to see something we never saw before – a species of bird only found in Osaki. They were called “Misties”. They were called so because when they



flew, they gave a trail of mist. It felt like being in a fantasy world!

The trip downhill took half an hour but was worth the sight! After the ride, we were famished and just then we spotted a restaurant! We ran in for food. The restaurant itself was an enthralling sight! Each table was in a pool of water with fish inside which had the power to make one feel relaxed.

The breakfast was also a great one! After breakfast, we went to many places and the best one was the river. The yellow river was 17km long and led to a waterfall. This waterfall was a unique one as the water was not fast and gushing, it was a slow and safer one. As we went down the falls in a boat, it felt like sliding down a slide.

After boating and a lunch break, we went for a stroll. The cityscape and the sights were marvellous! People were dancing on the streets, there was a light show from a ship in the ocean and the streets were filled with fancy shops decorated with beautiful lights.

We had juice in one of the stores and the juice was a mango-flavoured one, but tasted very different. It was a taste we had never experienced before. Our train was at 7 pm and it was time to go back. So we hurriedly ran to the cable cars and had a trip back to the station. We could see the clouds changing colours from pink to purple and finally a dark shade of blue! As we reached the top, we ran to the station and were just in time for the train. At 7 pm, the train arrived. We got on the train and left the city of Osaki. After we reached our homes, we chatted for some time about the day's adventure and went to sleep for the night.

The next day, we heard the most bizarre news which said Osaki had disappeared for good and that the city would have to be removed from the maps. I was shocked to hear this! Well, Osaki was a city that was, more than beautiful, it a mysterious one! At least I had the pictures of the best things there such as the cable cars, the mysteries, the view outside and the city streets! Maybe, the city's gone but the memories are still alive in my phone!





# Plastic - is it really a way to go?

- *Aravind Senkurichi*

Pollution is a common thing found in our world like a slow poison spreading in a body. It has many types 'water, air, land, noise, light and plastic'. Among the many distastes in the world, plastic pollution is the largest and one of the most dangerous to us and wildlife [both flora and fauna]. It does away with a total of 1800000. That is between 400,000 and one million people [avg. 600000]; 700 species are affected by plastics; 1 million sea birds; 100,000 marine animals; 100000 species of plants and trees.

From the above stanza, we can understand that plastic is highly dangerous to man and beast alike. To stop the ravenous fall of life that we are experiencing now on earth we have to work together and think of ideas to halt the manufacturing of plastics. But saying is easier than doing as plastics almost contribute to a whopping \$1 trillion each year, or 5% of total merchandise trade by UNCTAD [United Nations Conference on Trade and Development.]. A sudden halt can cause a crash in the economy and also daily comfortability as plastic is the main component from bags to lunch boxes to storage in our study table, pens, and pencil boxes to name a few.

So the only true way to stop or reduce plastic is to either reuse it or find alternatives for it. This is very easy to find for most things.

To name a few:

1. Bottles – Stainless Steel or copper
2. Bag – jute, starch or cotton
3. Cans – copper
4. Pens – wooden or metal
5. Cups – agriculture-based, leaves



These are easily found materials that we usually throw after use; they can also be reused again or exchanged with deposable plastic. But many things



like engines, vacuum cleaners, ACs and many more run for years and years, so do not really need to be devoid of plastic as we can use them again. This brings us to the second we can reuse. Though not the main focus it is one of the best ways. Now spare plastics are melted down above roads as a plating to stop the seeping of water. This is only one example, and there are many.

Obviously, there are many alternatives to plastics, such as jute, cotton, metals, alloys, leaves, and many more; but in the end, we can never fully shut plastic or any cause of plastic completely but only reduce, reuse, and recycle [3Rs] or to simply to avoid as much as we can. Even though it is a good option we cannot just stop the production of plastic due to economic reasons so again the 3Rs is the best way to go forward until we find a perfect material for any job. Plastic is both a boon and a bane or to better put it, a double-edged sword for every good thing it cuts us back.



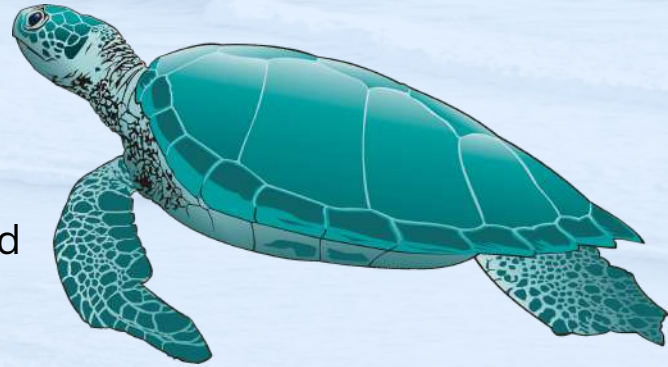


# Turtles stand as a symbol of hope; celebrate them!

- *Adithi R*

Every trash discarded contributes to the death of millions of turtles. These creatures date back to ages before the dinosaur era! There are a total of 300 species, out of which, only 129 remain breathing.

We began to “shellabrate” World Turtle Day in 2000 which was initiated by Susan Tellem and Marshall Thompson with a sponsor from American Tortoise Rescue (an NGO). Together, they have rescued and rehomed millions of turtles. This initiative intended to spread awareness about the need to protect tortoises, turtles and their increasingly dwindling habitats.



Susan and Marshall spent 10 years on organising fundraising events, ceaselessly spreading awareness about the strenuous lives of turtles. This year, we celebrate the 23rd International World Turtle Day. Turtles themselves stand as a symbol of hope and the efforts are standing tall with the help of compassionate efforts from ATR. Today, the entire global community holds hands and comes together to conserve the diminishing population of turtles. Vendors and poachers and pet shop owners sell turtles and ornaments made from them which results in the exploitation of the entire population. Over the years, many sanctuaries and NGOs have emerged in the hope of saving the lives of the beloved creature.

This year, the theme of WTD is “I love turtles”. It aims to spread awareness and the need for the turtles to be saved. With an abundance of affection and compassion people from across the globe have run drives to save turtles. The theme is specially for Mr. Mudd.

Almost everything around us has plastic, from our toothbrushes to the clothes



we wear and even the food we eat contains microplastics. We have used it so much that research has proven that microplastics are found in human lungs and blood. Stopping plastic usage all of a sudden is impossible but using alternatives is one of the primary steps we can take towards preventing plastic pollution.

Firstly, steps that we as common people can take apart from either reusing or recycling plastics effectively is using alternatives. People often start by saying “use reusable cotton bags” but CNN states in an article, “According to the UNEP report, a cotton bag needs to be used 50 to 150 times to have less impact on the climate compared with one single-use plastic bag.” Thus make sure you use it for a long time or give it to someone who needs it rather than throwing it away. Paper straws instead of plastic ones are not really effective as they leave behind a huge carbon footprint if you throw them away in a single use, rather you can use long-lasting steel straws. Similarly, you can use glass or metal bottles and containers instead of single-use ones. Reusing plastic containers is an option but not completely healthy as the plastic can break down into microplastics and mix with food or water.

Secondly, an alternative doesn't always need to be store-bought, it can be a touch of our creativity too. For example, if you have a cardboard box you're going to throw away, why don't you use it to make your own storage box for your desk?

Additionally, paint has plastics too so you can try creating natural dyes from fruit peels or flowers. Furthermore, you can try to make bowls, cups from banana leaves or baskets from palm leaves or even toys from natural things you find, as an alternative to plastic ones or try arts and crafts from natural things. These are not just substitutes for plastics but you can appreciate nature and can learn new skills, enhance your creativity and mental ability. You have several other ideas and inspirations to take from the internet. Supporting eco-friendly inventions is important. In India inventions of entrepreneurs include cutlery from sugarcane bagasse, edible and biodegradable plastic from seaweed or corn starch, leather from floral waste (known as Fleather) and sanitary napkins from banana fibres and bags, baskets and containers from water hyacinths a globally notorious weed.

Let's go for alternatives and save our planet!





# Think of alternatives to plastic

- *Jayani Neelam*

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# Celebrating Turtles

- *Adhiti Tandle*

May 23: While we observe National Library Workers Day and National Lucky Penny Day on this day, it is also used to celebrate one of the oldest reptiles on the planet, ones that have been around since the time of dinosaurs – turtles!

World Turtle Day is observed every year on the 23rd of May and has been for the last 23 years. This day aims to celebrate and create awareness of these fascinating creatures (and tortoises as well) and tries to encourage more people to help them, as nearly all species of sea turtles are endangered.

While the hatchlings of turtles are in danger due to predators like birds, crabs, and fish, the main threat to turtles is humans. Turtles are subject to poaching and over-exploitation for their eggs, meat, skin and shells. They can also be affected when they are caught in fishing nets by accident (known as bycatch), are tangled in debris and when beaches face destruction. The endangerment of turtles is a serious concern as they

are a keystone species, meaning if they were removed from the ecosystem, all the other species would be impacted. Hatchlings and turtles are a source of food for many animals, the turtles control the population of their prey, and turtles are essential for people who run turtle-watching ecotourism businesses.

Fortunately, as awareness increases, more people, governments, and conservation organizations are helping protect turtles.

For example, an international agreement made it illegal to trade turtles, their eggs, shells and meat; new fishing gear designs and fishing practices are being used to reduce bycatch; and organizations are working to reduce sources of debris.

This year's theme for World Turtle Day is "I love turtles" which strives to encourage more people to acknowledge the significance of



these reptiles and the threats they are facing. To help, there are some steps we can take. We can participate in beach clean-ups, keep nesting beaches dark for sea turtles, remove any possible obstacles from beaches, and try to reduce plastic usage as it might end up as marine debris. It is also possible to volunteer at organizations like the Madras Crocodile Bank Trust (MCBT).



*Adhiti Tandle, author of this article,  
volunteering at the MCBT.*

I had the opportunity to volunteer there a couple of years back and help clean the closure of the Aldabra tortoises and bathe them as well.

It was a truly great experience and helped me learn a lot about the Aldabra tortoises and reptiles in general. In these and many other ways, we can all do our part and help these magnificent creatures thrive again!





Thank  
you

For reading!

- *Team YOCee*

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