







By Nicholas Cheung

Being sustainable is a process that starts with small steps, gradually culminating in meaningful change and lasting impact. What is the Sustainability PAG doing to make it happen? What even is the Sustainability PAG about? To answer that, we interviewed some of the PAG members to share their experiences!

WHY DID YOU JOIN THE SUSTAINABILITY PAG?

"Ms Croll started this PAG four years ago, and I was really interested in joining because I wanted to help the planet."

"Ms Croll! Definitely! She's such an inspiration — and honestly a bit of a diva, in the best way!"



WHAT HAS THE PAG DONE SO FAR?

"We've added recycling bins around the school."

"We went to Deloitte and won £500, and with that money we bought reusable water bottles for the S1s."

The PAG also carries out litter clean-ups in and around the school. We are currently working on adding more plant life across the school grounds — so stay tuned!



PAG FOCUS — THE SQUAWK



WHAT IS THE PAG CURRENTLY PLANNING TO DO?

"We're planning to create murals around the school to promote sustainability."

"We're also going to give a plant to every teacher in the school to take care of!"







PAG FOCUS ————

THE SQUAWK

HOW DOES THE PAG COME UP WITH IDEAS?

"We just sit together and watch The Lorax. It's that simple."



WHY SHOULD ANYONE JOIN THE PAG?

"Sustainability isn't something only one person cares about. It affects all of us — climate change is here, and we need to act." — Eraj, S4

Our climate is changing - drastically.

Parallels are often drawn between schools and society – what we do in our walls often mirror what happens outside, or what soon to come. Just a few days ago, UN Secretary António Guterres announced that humanity has missed its target of limiting global heating to 1.5 °C — a threshold beyond which the Amazon rainforest, ice sheets, and coral reefs face severe and potentially irreversible damage.

Change begins here, with **us**.

If you care about sustainability — or simply want to learn more — come along to the Sustainability PAG in Mr Shepherd's room G24 during registration time. Everyone is welcome!

P.S. follow our Instagram page **@chs.sustainability** to stay updated!



PAG FOCUS THE SQUAWK



By Shravya Sriramadesikan



In October, it's more important than ever to raise awareness of Right 19 of the UNCRC which protects children from violence, abuse, neglect, and mistreatment. This is important because every child should feel safe and respected as they grow.



Feeling safe gives the child the opportunity to **learn**, **enjoy** and **flourish**.

This right matters even more this month during Halloween. Halloween although meant to be fun and exciting can also be a time when some children face dangerous pranks, spiking, bullying and more. This right reminds us that no child should be harmed or treated unfairly. We should make sure that the children are enjoying the festivities but also protected from risk.



PAG FOCUS THE SQUAWK



Adults have a **BIG** part to play in keeping Halloween safe for children.

Teachers can make sure school events are kind and respectful. Parents and guardians can set boundaries for trick or treating making sure young kids are supervised and remind everyone to be kind. They can also be supportive and listen to any of the child's concerns and step in when something is wrong. Adults should help make Halloween a night of fun not fear.

Ignoring this right can turn fun into HARM.

Halloween. can sometimes make children feel really uncomfortable. When we don't protect children, we take away their chance to enjoy the moment. Right 19 is less about being a law and more about protecting and caring for others.





TEACHER FOCUS THE SQUAWK

Teacher Feature: the wonders of birdwatching with Mr Galloway

by Sophie Gates and Henry Jones

Deep in the depths of the social subjects department lies a classroom where many children have laughed, cried, and become geniuses in all things History. The reason why? Craigmount's own Mr Galloway.

In an attempt to understand a man who would willingly move to Peebles, we tracked him down one dark Friday morning and asked about his captivating obsession with the topic of this month's teacher feature, bird watching. Guitarist of acclaimed school band, Vape Alarm, Mr Galloway believes bird watching is an activity suitable for today's youth, and encourages all to get in touch with their local environment.





We've been in this school for almost six years, so we've become experts in the ways of Mr Galloway (the Galloways). However, what do we really know about the master of National five Sociology? Are we really prepared to dive into the complexities of the man behind the Kim Jong-Un tapestry?

In Mr Galloway's attempt to connect with our youthful minds, he called birdwatching "the adult and sophisticated version of Pokémon Go." Comparing looking for winged beasts to walking around aimlessly collecting funny colourful cartoon characters.

"Technology has made birdwatching extremely fun, so I would like to tell the youth of today to download an app called Merlin." At this point, our friend and fellow Squawk member, Lukas Elliott, got very excited, sharing the fact that he is already in possession of this app. This delighted Mr Galloway, as it was clear his passions were already intertwining with the youth.



Merlin is an app that records and identifies bird calls, making the activity easier for those with limited bird knowledge, which includes most of us. "You hear a cheep cheep, you hear warble, immediately you know what it is."

Mr Galloway then went on to talk about the app for sixty more seconds before explaining where the different types of birds may lie, and when they make themselves known.

We decided to figure out what prompted Mr Galloway to get into birdwatching, but little did we know, we were trekking a path that no one had dared to go down. After claiming that he moved to the countryside, before stating he actually moved to Peebles, Mr Galloway shared that the walks he takes with his daughter in her pram put him more in touch with the nature around him, and a sighting of a kingfisher one eventful day made him want to learn more about what birds he could see in his local area. Mr Galloway was fascinated by the electric blue colour of the kingfisher, and said it was "about this size," not providing any gesture to indicate what 'this size' meant.

After a quick Google search, we were told that kingfishers are 'small to medium size,' proving that not even the best birdwatchers know how to describe this magnificent creature.

"I watched it take out a fish and it blew my tiny little brain, and I decided 'hey, that's pretty cool, what other birds are here?" Apparently, it helps to live in an area with a lot of greenery and birds. Clearly, living in Edinburgh is useful, as despite the metropolitan state of Princes Street and its surrounding areas, there are many green places where we can all feel the grass and smell the leaves. For many youths this may be a new experience. Mr Galloway made a claim that the birdwatching community was growing and recommended a YouTube documentary called "Listers" which is about two 'layabout brothers' from California who decide to get involved in competitive American birdwatching without any prior birdwatching experience.

What did Mr Galloway take from this documentary, you ask? Well, the main thing was to "not take it too seriously." All Mr Galloway asks is for you, yes you, to download Merlin, get some binoculars, and take a look around. See what's there. "It's important for people to know about the area they live in and the way that nature works around them."

Now, many of you may be sitting there in class, not doing work, and thinking, "why would I ever go out and watch birds? I look out my window and see pigeons every day, and they're pretty boring!" And that's what we were thinking too until we heard these inspirational words from Mr Galloway as we began to wrap up our interview.

Sort your life out. Check yourself. My two year old daughter is able to identify at least four or five different birds already, so come on. It's easy to do."

TEACHER FOCUS — THE SQUAWK

Though, there was then a moment of weakness. Mr Galloway did admit "maybe you do need to be middle aged and sad. Maybe that is what the case is. And if that is me, I'm fine with that."

"We live in a country where there's a massive variety of birds out there, and it's cool to know what's going on."

Mr Galloway then told us to hop on the Lothian birdwatching Facebook page because there was a sighting of a particularly large spoonbill in Musselburgh.

We asked Mr Galloway three questions during this interview. The voice recording currently playing as this is being typed is six minutes of Mr Galloway talking about birdwatching, practically uninterrupted.

Have we considered indulging in birdwatching since this interview? Not really. But the idea of having a plethora of bird facts to annoy our friends with is, in fact, quite an interesting proposition.

The moral of this Teacher Feature is not that the kids these days are on their phones too much, or find two numbers a bit too funny, or even that they no longer care about the humble Golden Cheeked Warbler like they used to in the days of Mr Galloway (the Gallowdays), but that we should really talk to our teachers more about their interests. As it turns out, behind the collared shirts and high heels, teachers are humans too, and you may even get a six-minute-long interview out of them.

(This is not sponsored by Merlin)



by Kaitlynne Bryce

On November 1st and 2nd, Día de los Muertos (Day of the Dead) is a Mexican holiday that honours the lives of those who have passed away. But unlike Halloween, it's not about fear, it is about connection. Families believe that during these days, the spirits of the dead return to visit, and they're welcomed with joy, music, and food.

Offenders (altars) are built with photos, candles, marigolds, and favourite foods of the deceased. These aren't just decorations, they're spiritual invitations. Sugar skulls represent the sweetness of life and the inevitability of death. They're often personalised and placed on altars or given as gifts. Pan de muerto, a soft, sweet bread, is baked with bone-shaped designs and shared with family. Marigolds, known as cempasúchil, are believed to guide spirits back with their vibrant colour and scent.

Spirits arrive on October 31st. It's believed that children's souls (los angelitos) come first, followed by adults on November 2nd. Leaving water and salt on the altar helps refresh the spirits after their long journey. Butterflies and hummingbirds are seen as messengers from the afterlife. If you don't honour the dead, they may feel forgotten, and some believe they won't return the next year. Bread and candles outside the home are left for souls who have no family to remember them. These beliefs are meant to show respect and keep traditions alive.

For many, Day of the Dead is a way to reconnect with heritage, with family, and with the idea that death isn't the end. It's a celebration of life, memory, and identity. Whether you're lighting a candle for a grandparent or painting your face in honour of tradition, you're part of something timeless.

If you're looking for a movie to watch to learn more about this beautiful festival, I would highly recommend the movie Coco. This movie is an emotional, colourful and music filled movie that effectively dives into the traditions of the Day of the Dead festival.

The movie follows the character of, Miguel. A boy who dreams of being a musician like his idol, Ernesto de la Cruz. However, his family have banned music for generations meaning that Miguel can't fully Pursue his dream. When Miguel accidentally finds himself transported to the Land of the Dead he ends up meeting his ancestors and discovering the truth behind his family's past.

The message behind this movie is brilliant because it's not just about music or family drama, it's about remembering where you come









from and keeping those connections alive, even after death. This effectively captures the meaning behind the Day of the Dead as that's why the Mexicans celebrate it, to remember and honour their deceased.

What Coco gets right is how it portrays Day of the Dead. The movie doesn't treat the festival as a Halloween spin off. Instead, it shows it as something valuable and beautiful. It shows that families come together, decorate altars, and celebrate the lives of the people who came before them. The Land of the Dead in the movie is stunning, glowing orange, marigolds everywhere, candles lighting up bridges, and skeletons dressed in all kinds of brightly coloured, fancy outfits. The place is full of life despite the movie being set in the Land of the Dead however, that's the whole point of the movie. It shows that Day of the dead is about remembering with joy, not sadness and Coco really does this justice.

Coco also has a song that features in the movie called, "Remember Me". The song carries so much meaning, it's about memory, love, and the idea that as long as you remember someone, they are never really gone. The song really captures and consolidates the theme of the movie, and the festival in real life.

This movie is definitely not a movie that you watch once and forget about. It's a movie that stays with you. Many find the message heart warming and comforting. If you like an emotional but also educational movie, I would definitely recommend watching this, it's appropriate for all age groups.

By Rory Dunn

PRELIM ADVICE

First time, second time, or last time sitting prelims - no matter your situation, our tips here are designed to support you in making those jumps from F's to C's, C's to B's, and even A2's to A1's.

We'll start off with some more general tips and then move onto subject specific advice - these will include examples of techniques, useful websites and valuable advice from a senior student - with our most important general tip being:

DEDICATION

You must have the dedication to make your study life as easy as possible. You need to make sure you want your grade, meaning you ask questions when confused in class and possibly adjust your schedule, so you won't have to stress about fitting in study time. All our tips below are designed to advance your efficiency and make sure you revise no more than you want to - as long as you're dedicated enough to read this.

PAST PAPERS

Now, even if you've wrapped your head around those ideas, you still need to test yourself with an informative method. We recommend starting off by casually going through some past paper questions and marking Instructions with no time pressure, to review how well you meet the SQA's standards. If you ever feel too challenged or confused make sure to discuss these questions with your teacher - after all, they're your best source of information.

MATHS

When it comes to Maths, past papers are your best friend. They're the single most effective way to prepare, not just for testing your knowledge, but for training your brain to think like the examiner and get a feel of what the exam will be like. The Dynamic Maths question bank is most useful for this as you can select a topic of your choice and all the exam-style questions from that topic will be there with the marking scheme. For extra support, check out Clelland Maths on YouTube as he explains every type of question that could come up using examples.



ENGLISH

As the Philosopher Jagger once said, "Time Waits for No One". Whilst this is true for all exams, we've found it is most problematic in this subject. Our best advice is to practice under timed conditions.

SOCIAL SUBJECTS

For Social Subjects, strong essay knowledge and structured arguments are key. You should learn your essays inside out so that you can adapt them confidently in the exam. Use techniques like blurting (writing everything you know about a topic from memory) and the Feynman Technique (explaining a topic in simple terms as if teaching someone else).

Great resources include the SQA website and Mr Marr's website and YouTube channel (for History and Modern Studies), which are packed with detailed essay help and extra past papers.

CDT - SCIENCES - COMPUTING

These STEM subjects require a lot of memorisation. They require you to interpret situations the questions give you and apply your knowledge to solve them - which sounds pretty obvious, but go through some past papers and you'll notice how varied these situations are. This means your understanding of each topic is crucial. Reading the syllabi for these subjects is a massive help, as they give you summarised points for everything you need to know. Make sure to take note of and recite any definitions you find hard to memorise. For certain subjects however, their definitions can be fairly vague, so make sure to use external resources for a better understanding, such as your teacher, Achieve and Scholar Online Learning.



CREATIVE ARTS

Now, all these subjects seem very different from each other, but all their exams have quite similar designs - all of them are more focused on your ability to memorise different pieces of knowledge and contain similar language - this means, once again reading the syllabus is highly beneficial.

Now for understanding their language, the most common commands are describe and explain questions - describe is essentially stating something but provided with slightly more specific details, whereas explain requires you to justify your point, which could include explaining the effects it has on the audience. For a specific tip about Drama, make sure you have a play planned out for the Exam, rather than stressing about developing one from the given stimuli.

LET'S HEAR FROM RANDEEP, THE S6 WHO WENT FROM D'S IN THEIR NATS PRELIMS TO STRAIGHT A'S IN THEIR HIGHER EXAMS...

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How important are Prelim results to you?

"(cough cough) My prelim results are pretty important as they give me a good indication as to where I'm working at and allow me to understand what to improve on for my exams."

When do you usually start studying for Prelims and Exams, and how often do study in this time?

"At least a few weeks before my exams, as I think it's important to revise a little bit everyday rather than cramming all my revision into the last few days."

If you do worse than you hoped for in your Prelims or Exams, what is a good way to bounce back from these results?

"First off, don't let the results dishearten you, it's important to consistently work on your weakest subjects up until the exams through attending study support sessions to minimise distractions and improve productivity whilst getting direct help."

The rise and rise of South Korean media

by Orla Hogarth and Louise Tod

When thinking about K-pop, BTS will come to most people's minds. After forming in 2013 and releasing their first song "No More Dream" under the company HYBE, BTS had a slow rise to fame which resulted in them being nominated for multiple Grammys and being invited to the White House to speak on important racial issues. BTS is a band made up of 7 members: RM, Jin, Suga, J-Hope, Jimin, V and Jungkook. They cover several genres such as rap, pop and hip hop.

After winning their first MAMA (Mnet Asian Music Awards) award for Artist of the Year they gained attention which later contributed to their current fame. While many people will know their hits such as Boy with Luv (ft. Halsey), Dynamite and Butter, they usually are unaware they have released over 10 albums over the past 13 years. They have even collabed with people like Megan Thee Stallion, Coldplay and Nicki Minaj.

After selling out stadiums such as Wembley, SoFi and Metlife to their devoted fans called "ARMY"- they enlisted to serve mandatory service in 2022. "I cried for two days straight..." says an S6 pupil after finding out about their hiatus. During this break from the band, they each released solo albums multiple and performed solo concerts all over the world.



Before BTS formed, BigBang was one of the biggest boy groups in Korea. Formed in 2006 with 5 members they released 5 albums with hits such as Bang Bang Bang and Fantastic Baby. One member T.O.P starred in Squid Game season 2 bringing attention back to the band. Recently, after being inactive for years they have announced a reunion to perform at Coachella. One S6 pupil says "The BigBang comeback was so unexpected after such a long hiatus!".

K-Pop girl groups such as BlackPink have become very popular in the west. Debuting with the hit single "Whistle" in 2016 BlackPink has no trouble gaining fame from the beginning of their career. They are currently on their third world tour along with releasing their own solo music.



Whilst music is massively influential in Korean Media, k-dramas have skyrocketed into the interest of people across the world. Internationally, "Squid Game" is the most successful and well-known Korean-spoken show in the world. A total 3 seasons have been filmed and shared with the growing fan base and watchers. Carla in S6 says 'Squid Game is one of the most entertaining shows I've ever watched, and whilst many people are disappointed with the ending, I think it was realistic and fitting.'

Followers of the show showed further support, through buying merch, engaging with Squid Game short form content and helping each season reach Netflix's top ten shows. The popularity for the show reached a whole new level as videos inspired by the story have been created by influencers such as Mr Beast releasing a real life Squid Games, where members of the public had the chance to win a cash prize of £456,000 by completing a series of challenges and eliminations.



Recently the public have been blessed with a Korean inspired, animated musical, "K-pop Demon Hunters". The movie contains one hour and twenty-five minutes of striking visuals, catchy songs, and a mix of comedic and moving moments. Reviews raved about the movie, and became popular across social media, on Netflix, instagram, TikTok, Spotify and more.

"It was almost like it appeared one day out of now where and was everywhere." Says Erin in S3. Infact, even only reaching the 5th episode of this seasons Strictly Come Dancing, two K-pop Demon Hunter songs have already been featured, including social media star George Clark performing a couples choice to the unbelievably addictive song "Soda Pop" and Vogue model Ellie Goldstein dancing to one of the most successful songs from the movie "Golden".

Furthermore, it has officially become the longest movie to stay in the top 10, reaching a total of 15 weeks. And even though it was only released recently in 2025, it is Netflix's number one, most watched movie. It has gained so much popularity that cinemas cinemas like Cineworld have seized this business opportunity to bring out a singalong viewing on the day Halloween, with tickets for many screenings already selling out. It is safe to say that all ages of the public have truly fallen in love with Rumi, Zoe and Mira, (and the Saja Boys too).

Katseye are a modernised K-pop group with a twist (though some argue they are not K-pop.) and are the newest result of westernised Korean culture. Katseye are a 6-member girl group that formed on the 18th of November in 2023 after partaking in a demanding training programme where non-Koreans underwent trained using the same method as other k-pop groups such as BTS through the company HYBE. This training program was made into an 8-episode season called "Pop Star Academy" which released on Netflix for audiences to watch on the 21st of August 2024. Orla in S5 admitted "I went home one day after school and binged watched the entire season."

The eighth and final episode was when the final 6 girls were officially announced to have made the group. The girls selected to represent Katseye was Sophia Laforteza, Lara Raiagopalan, Daniela Avanzini, Jeung Yoon Chase, Megan Skiendiel and Monon Bannerman. Together the girls made their mark releasing their debut song "Touch" on 26 July 2024 which in true k-pop style was accompanied by a choreographed dance.

Fast forward to now, the group have become crowd favourites since releasing their GAP ad campaign which highlighted the importance of inclusivity after American Eagles controversial advertisement involving Sydney Sweeney. Their creative ad included an engaging dance to the song "Milkshake" by Pharrell Williams, Chad Hugo and Kelis. So far, the girls have risen to fame and have performed in various locations, including London very recently. But they are still in the early stages of their careers, with so much ahead of them, like their upcoming "Beautiful Chaos" Tour to work towards.



GAMES REVIEW... WITH A SPOKY TWIST

Deceit 2 is a 9 player free to play online social deduction game, where 6 players are innocents trying to complete objectives on a map, 2 players are monsters hidden as innocents, trying to maintain their cover while killing members of the innocent team.



Each player gets a character role, allowing every one to play a role for their team, be it protecting team mates, gaining information, or banishing evil players. This game benefits from playing with a group of friends, as the tension, deception, and betrayal that's core to social deception is felt even stronger when it's with people you know well.

Phasmaphobia is a paranormal horror game where between one and four players work together to identify the type of ghost that is haunting a location in order to complete objectives. This involves sleuthing around haunted locations, using EMF readers, night vision cameras and other tools, while ghosts can hear and react to your voice in game. The cooperative nature of the game means that this is another game that benefits from playing with friends.

Luigi's Mansion 3 is the third instalment in the Luigi's Mansion franchise, following Luigi as he bumbles through a haunted mansion trying to capture ghosts and save his brother using his Strobulb (flashlight) and Poltergust (vacuum cleaner). It isn't as frightening or intense as some others on the list (making it more suitable for younger pupils or those with shakier nerves) but has undeniably spooky theming and aesthetics, making it perfect for a cozy night in, aided further by the fact that it's singleplayer.



What's your favourite game to play?
We're always looking for more
features and recommendations.

Why not write a review for The Squawk?

SI HALLOWEEN FRIGHT NIGHT

By Sophie Gates and Henry Jones

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On Thursday the 30th of October, our school concourse was transformed into a place for ghouls and skeletons to party!

With many different costumes on display, ranging from minions, to the Lorax, to Baby Saja from K-Pop Demon Hunters, the night included a tuck shop, a customisation station, and a spooooky haunted maze of terror which left many S1s screaming with fear. Despite this, Ms Lawson won the prize for screaming the loudest.

The S1s were treated with an exclusive performance from the acclaimed band, Vape Alarm! They played their classic Hot to Go by Chappell Roan, along with two Halloween classics: the Ghostbusters theme and Time Warp from The Rocky Horror Picture Show! We could tell the S1s enjoyed this performance, and were left with hopes of seeing them perform in the future.

Overall, this spooky affair left S1s filled with glee and excitement, especially after watching many S6s attempt to line dance. Neither of us heard who won the costume contest, but our personal favourite was skeleton Marty McFly!



A pair of Teletubbies!

SPOOKY WORD SEARCH

P E Χ R В N K G E Q T T J W D U Q A Е G U W E F D T N X Q В N Н M C P G A U T U M N P L E S H 0 K P K Z X M 0 P H R 0 R M E S Q N Q 0 R 0 S E S A R M E A P Q N A L Z S U T X R 1 R R Υ R L G Q C J 0 S E D S U R E A B D R E 1 R L Q F Q Q В K A T Z U H R E S R R S P T T Υ H R X Υ Q S S Z K E U C E M H 0 N D L

Caramel Apples
Hower movies
Red squirrels
Black cat
Conquers

Pampkin Witches Candles Leaves Autumn

Ghost Devil Mask



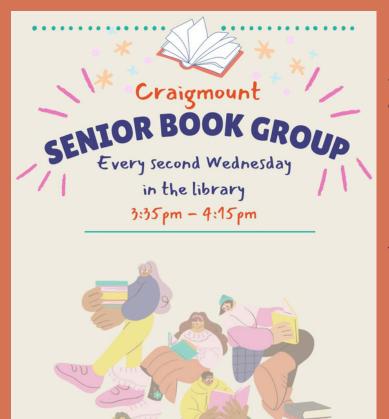
ARE YOU A SENIOR? DO YOU WANT TO BLOW YOUR MIND WITH FUN AND EXCITING STORIES?

written by Lukas Elliott

You should come to the Senior Book Group, Mr Hume, our school librarian is always there with snacks. We love reading and enjoy hearing other people's opinions of how the story develops. Our conversations allow us to get other people's insights into the characters and makes us question how we would react in similar circumstances.

What's our goal? To make reading fun and engaging. Having conversations about the book makes our minds stronger and makes us better readers.

We meet every second Wednesday at 3:30-4:15, check in the library for our next meet up!



Do you want to make your brain stronger?
Come up to the library!

WE HOPE TO SEE YOU THERE!!

