

Established in 1936

The Doon School WEEKLY

"I sketch your world exactly as it goes." -Arthur Foot

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Can We Write a Better Story?

Ms Moulee Goswami talks about the need for us to breathe life into the essence of impactful writing.

In the end, we will remember not the words of our enemies, but the silence of our friends. – Martin Luther King Jr.

Amidst the illustrious corridors of our esteemed institution, where ambition resonates and youthful energy thrives, we must address a pressing concern raised by some astute senior students: *The Doon School Weekly* appears to be losing its lustre, succumbing to narratives that veer away from our collective purpose. In the corridors and common rooms, I've been privy to murmurs that things aren't quite the same anymore — the quality, the sentiment, the *Weekly's* essence. These conversations, I believe, should serve as more than mere grumblings. They should provoke introspection, not solely from the *Weekly* team itself but from the larger student body it represents.

In my dual role as a reader and a member of the *Weekly* team, I have noticed that a sense of self-centeredness has become conspicuous in our writing. Articles, more often than not, seem crafted to fulfil quotas or appease the requests of editorial board members. While a publication welcomes and deeply appreciates personal feelings and perspectives, writing should never serve as a mere quest for personal limelight or fulfil an unspoken obligation to maintain

the *Weekly's* prestige. The content appears geared towards personal validation or venting, both potent fuel for writing but often failing to resonate with a broader audience. It's practically effortless to critique those in the spotlight, but it begs the question if the *Weekly* is the voice of our institution, why do we not actively nurture and cultivate it instead of observing from the periphery.

**Our publication
should be more than
ink and paper; it
should encapsulate
our thoughts,
experiences, and
aspirations.**

Does this imply that we must incessantly explore universally relevant topics to be genuinely inclusive? Not necessarily. While experiences can be deeply unique and personal, the perspectives developed and lessons learned can have a ripple effect far beyond one's immediate circle. An IB student's journey navigating ToK might not be relevant to everyone at Doon, but a student grappling with the abstraction of challenging concepts is a feeling familiar to us all.

We live in a colourful community and not even our worst critic can consider our environment dull. There is always too much going on and hence, it is a matter of utmost mystery to me when students struggle to find the topic to write. Consider the issue of pantry — it's more than a matter of pros and cons or rights; it represents sustenance to some and liberty for others. Attended socials? Going beyond the usual gossip, what did the dynamic between young men and women who live in different environments indicate about their current mindset? Passionate about art, gadgets, the stock market, gaming, or fashion? Share your inspirations and motivations. Nothing is too niche, nothing is too mundane. It's about how much you care and your ability to articulate your perspective. Your writing may not be flawless, but it may find the most unexpected and appreciative audience.

Turning to the matter of language, let's transcend the verbosity versus lucidity debate. The *Weekly* did not etch its place in history by subscribing to one extreme or the other. Instead, it thrived on the interplay of style, tone, wit, and astute observations. In our quest to sound more or less 'literary,' we've often fallen prey

(Continued on Page 3)

DANCING DEFENDANTS

The following are the results of the **Inter-House English Debating Competiton:**

Juniors:	House Cup:
1st: Kashmir	1st: Oberoi
2nd: Oberoi	2nd: Kashmir
3rd: Hyderabad	3rd: Tata
4th: Jaipur	4th: Hyderabad
5th: Tata	5th: Jaipur

Seniors:
1st: Oberoi
2nd: Kashmir
3rd: Tata
4th: Hyderabad
5th: Jaipur

Kudos!

“

Half of the harm that is done in this world
is due to people who want to feel important.
They don’t mean to do harm. But the harm
does not interest them

T. S. Eliot

ORATORY EXCELLENCE

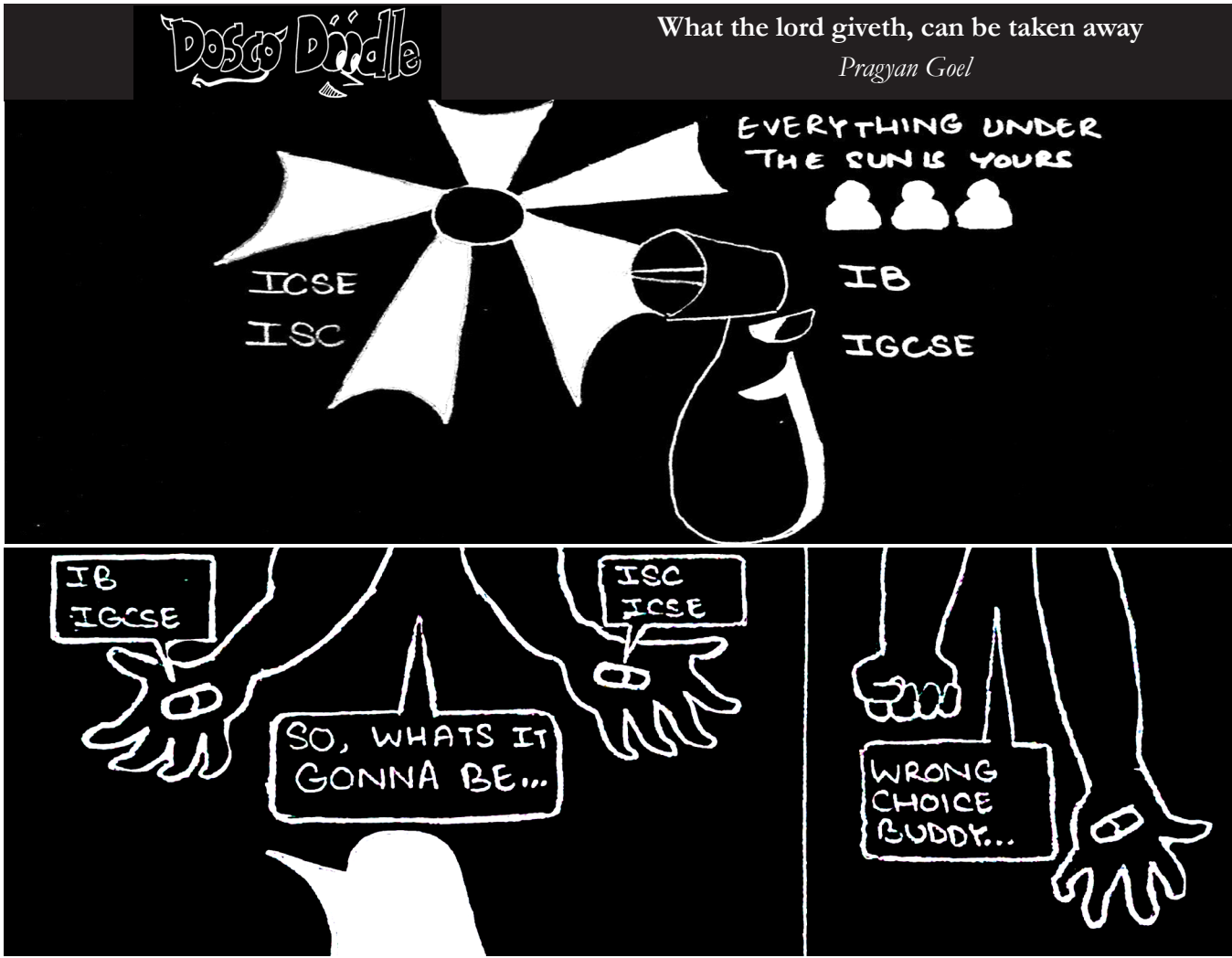
The following are the results for the **Vikram Seth Junior Poetry Recitation Competition 2023:**

Juniors
Runners-up: Yuvaan Grover and Devansh Gupta
Winner: Agastya Mehrotra
Seniors
Runner-up: Arnav Tiwari
Winner: Arjun Prakash

Congratulations!

Around the World in 80 Words

At least 36 died and hundreds displaced as a cyclone devastated southern Brazil. At least 53 members of Burkina Faso’s security forces were killed during heavy clashes with rebel fighters in the country’s north. Relentless rain from the remnants of Typhoon Haikui swamped southeastern China, forcing tens of thousands of people to evacuate. The notion of India to be changed to its Sanskrit name *Bharat* was backed by PM Modi. Arsenal defeated Manchester United 3-1 in their Premier League clash.



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to one extreme over the other. The richness of our narratives should not be confined by a limited choice between complex or simple language; they should be an artful blend that resonates with the reader.

To rejuvenate the *Weekly's* allure, we must foster a spirit of community within its pages. We must cease to be mere spectators and instead become active participants. Encourage discussions that delve into pertinent societal issues. Seek

perspectives and stories of and beyond our immediate experiences, making the *Weekly* a genuine reflection of our community and society at large.

In conclusion, the *Weekly* embodies more than just ink and paper; it encapsulates our thoughts, experiences, and aspirations. It stands as a testament to our collective wisdom and empathy. It's our call to action, a reminder that our words hold the power to heal, inspire, and unite.

Let's rekindle the essence

of *The Doon School Weekly* as a beacon of impactful writing and community engagement. It is a mirror reflecting our shared commitment to change, understanding, and the beauty of the written word.

Remember, it's not merely about what the *Weekly* signifies to you; it's about what it signifies to us, to our community, and to the world. Let's breathe life back into its soul, for it is a collective endeavour that defines our institution.

Rebut, Rebuild, Reply

Aadhar Mandhotra reviews the recently held Inter-House English Debating final.

Discourse is both a central, and essential concept for a very integrated community like ours. Whether it is the argument you had with your friend at dinner about who exactly is winning the House Cup, or the discussion in class of what Shakespeare really does mean by "If music be the food of love," discussion of ideas is perpetually around us. This year, the Senior English Debating final was a veritable war-zone of ideas, with a fierce battle valiantly fought by Kashmir and Oberoi House.

With the motion stating that "This house believes that teachers should contradict curriculum that they believe will be harmful to society", the anticipation was truly palpable. It was truly incredible to witness, on both sides of the house, the ability to create such lines of argumentation, replete with several strands of information and complex ideas. The Kashmir house team, consisting of Siddhant Srivastava, Vivaan Sood, and Rohan Taneja, put forward constructives that helped build a world of various biases and perspectives that could open student's eyes thanks to these teachers they consider paramount to their beliefs. Their composure, content, and prowess were truly commendable.

On the opposing side of the house, the Oberoi House team comprising Karan Agarwal, Yashovat Nandan, and Avi Bansode, countered with their own vision, a world teeming with biases that could be propagated and taught as a second set of curricula. The case was framed around a Bihari child of thirteen, whose only sources of information about society and the world at large would be their teacher and their textbook. Opposition argued that this very student would be exposed in their formative years to conflicting ideologies, and would definitely be left confused by things they could not be expected

to fully understand.

At the close, members of the audience, Masters and boys alike, shared their feelings on the motion. After the vote of thanks, the scores were tabulated, and a conclusion was reached. Rohan Taneja was crowned with the green laurels of the most promising speaker, while the golden laurels of the best speaker were awarded to Karan Agarwal. Finally, the long-anticipated announcement. With the chairperson's proclamation of, "The Motion falls, Oberoi House wins," the entirety of the Swan cohort present in the AMC rose up as one with a resounding cheer, while The Gentlemen's heads dropped to their arms.

Despite the declaration of a winner and runners-up, both Houses displayed an exceptional amount of skill and displayed tremendous efforts that will surely inspire a wave of energy that will only grow bigger in the time to next year. In the end, the Cup remained with the Swans, conversations were sparked and thoughts were mulled over, and there is no doubt that the *Apale ki Apale* would have been filled with euphoria.



'Bac' Chat

As always, the *Weekly* strives to promote discourse and discussions regarding issues that affect the community. In this series of discussions, we present the experiences of students who have done the IB since its inception, as well as those who haven't. Presented here is the first of the series where we have two articles by Abhaas Shah (Ex 152-J, 2008), who is from one of the earliest batches to opt for IBDP at School.

Following is the first piece deconstructing the decision to introduce IB in School:

At first glance, IB or International Baccalaureate was a really exciting prospect, involving a lot of hard work and research, with large doses of creativity, innovation and lateral thinking. At second glance, it was all this and much more. Our excitement has not faltered yet, with every new class bringing to light another new aspect of IB. Creativity levels are soaring, with every possible corner of our artistic minds being exploited to the maximum. Innovation is involved in every subject, from mechanical subjects like Physics and Chemistry, where one must invent and plan his own practicals, to expressive subjects, like English, where one is told to write first impressions on poets to be studied. As our Masters keep emphasizing, books are not very essential commodities in IB, as there is no specified course; out-of-the-box thinking is a must. All this we were prepared for, in fact, we welcomed it. What we were not prepared for was the enormous amount of time and hard work expected of us. Piles of assignments are withdrawn and corrected efficiently and regularly on a daily basis, while new, intimidating ones find their way to our folders. However, IB does pose a few problems, which, though not unforeseen, are major drawbacks to an otherwise smooth system. These problems are partly inevitable, and partly avoidable. Firstly, there is the major problem of the presence of two concurrent facts: there is a lot of research to be done, and we do not, I am sorry to say, have adequate facilities or the proper hours of access to computers to carry out this research. This is not purely due to the lack of foresight of the School authorities. They are making full efforts to provide us with the facilities. However, it would be shortsighted not to notice that IB students round the globe have 24/7 net access, and can work late hours researching and working on their assignments. Secondly, there is the major problem of carrying on all our School activities – sports and co-curricular – along with the workload of IB. This is truly a Herculean task, requiring professional time-management skills, deadly focus and an unfalteringly active mind. It is rare to find even one, let alone all three, of these qualities in a student. However, it would be wrong to ramble on about the flaws of IB. After all, these glitches were predictable, and the present IB students had a good idea about the consequences when they chose to go in for the IB diploma. The

School is making commendable efforts to make the journey as smooth and convenient as possible. The *vs* involved must be appreciated for the amount of hard work and dedication they display, and the energy with which they conduct the classes. Their situation is almost as bad as ours, if not worse! As Erich Fromm says, "Let your mind start a strange new journey through a strange new world. Leave all thoughts of the world you knew before. Let your soul take you where you long to be...Close your eyes, let your spirit start to soar, and you'll live as if you've never lived before."

This is the follow-up piece reviewing the curriculum after a period of half a year:

After six months of observation, speculation, and in several cases, experience, most of the School community has roughly formulated its opinion on the recently incorporated International Baccalaureate (IB) board, which, one may surmise, has been one of the greatest challenges School has ever taken up. A batch of twenty-three rather 'adventurous' individuals have set out on this voyage, and though some retain their vigour and excitement, and others their focus and dedication, almost all are awed by the prospects of this venture. Most students who have joined IB have done so to improve their placements abroad, where they are bent on going. It is inevitable that all criticism in this regard is directed towards the School and not the IB system, for, as most would say, how can an 'internationally-acclaimed' system be at all flawed? Masters and students alike, when frustrated (which is quite often), direct their anger at the inadequacy of the School infrastructure and schedule; where there never seems to be enough time spared to the student to do the required work. It all finally boils down to being told that IB was a choice and that if one wishes to pursue it, other activities must be dropped, which students are reluctant to do. 'Prioritize!' is the word. Several times, this batch cannot help but feel like guinea pigs (at their own will, of course). If this experiment turns out to be successful, then the product will be confidently launched. If not, then..... (I hate to think of it). The issue of laptops, though having been stressed upon enough times, must be mentioned. It will serve the vital purpose of allowing students to do their work wherever they may be on campus, which other students, who give handwritten assignments,

have the privilege of doing. It is a simple and emphatic transition from writing to typing. The reluctance on School's part, though understandable and logical, must eventually be overcome. The complaints are not restricted to the ones involved only. Others too are often heard to say that unwarranted whining is taking place and that IB is being made too big a deal of, quite contrary to what an IB student feels. After all, it is in human nature to find fault! However, full appreciation and credit to the School

must not be withheld for their initiative, perseverance and constant effort to improve the situation for IB students. The School has not hesitated in making exception after exception for the progress of IB. It is only the teachers' spirit and energy which keeps the students active and 'charged-up'. A standard question which is always asked is, "Is IB tough?" and I cannot help but shrug and say that "It will be another year before I can figure that out."

Tangled Synapses

Sriyash Tantia | Winner of the B.G. Pitre Science Fiction Short Story Contest, 2023 (Senior Category).

In a vast futuristic laboratory adorned with holographic displays and pulsating with electronic hums, Dr Nathaniel Blackwood teetered on the edge of insanity. Once revered across galaxies, his brilliant mind was now reeling towards irrationality.

The lab buzzed with anticipation as Blackwood's secret experiment reached a critical stage. Adelphia, a woman whose consciousness had been transferred into a neural network, lay before him. Years of meticulous work had gone into crafting this scientific masterpiece, with Blackwood's obsession driving him to the brink of ethical boundaries.

But as the countdown to the final phase commenced, Blackwood's sanity crumbled. Whispers circulated among his colleagues, hinting at his deteriorating mental state. Some hypothesized that the strain of pushing scientific boundaries had unleashed latent genetic markers, triggering a cascade of neural degeneration. Blackwood's hippocampus, the seat of memory and reason, was shrinking, pushing him toward the precipice of what was known to be called 'guolaosi'.

The revelation of Adelphia's debauchery further fueled Blackwood's descent into madness. The news struck him like lightning, short-circuiting his rationality. Now writhing with instability, his amygdala, once stable, plunged him deeper into obsession.

Gazing at his distorted reflection in the flickering lab lights, Blackwood questioned the nature of his attachment to Adelphia. He had lured her into the digital realm under the guise of friendship, concealing his true intentions. His devotion to scientific progress overshadowed any moral qualms, even as his heart yearned for her.

Determined to save his creation from the clutches of neurodegeneration, Blackwood delved deeper into the complexities of her mind. He uncovered neurochemical imbalances and dysregulation in her hypothalamic-pituitary-adrenal axis. Glutamate levels soared, overwhelming delicate neural circuits, while

PANSS scores revealed a descent into darkness.

Each revelation heightened Blackwood's sense of urgency. He knew that memories, the very fabric of Adelphia's existence, resided within the hippocampus. But time threatened to embed them deep within the recesses of her cortex, trapping her in a lifetime of adversity.

In the darkest recesses of his mind, Blackwood grappled with the unthinkable. He contemplated lobotomising Adelphia, erasing the memories that haunted her, sacrificing her autonomy for the sake of scientific progress. The terms echoed through his thoughts: amygdalotomy, prefrontal leucotomy, each an instrument of his descent into madness.

The haunting silence of the lab amplified his doubts, his hands trembling with a mixture of fear and resolve. With the tools of his trade in hand, he prepared to sever the tenuous connection between her consciousness and memories.

Yet, as Blackwood's trembling hand hovered above Adelphia's ethereal form, a surge of clarity jolted through him in that pivotal moment. The enormity of his actions and the sacrifice of her autonomy collided with the remnants of his sanity. A single tear escaped his eye, a beacon of humanity amidst the encroaching darkness.

"I can't do this," he whispered.

The realization of his own moral transgressions and the cost he was willing to pay for scientific progress flooded his mind with regret.

With a heavy heart, Blackwood let the lobotomy tools slip from his grasp, clattering onto the lab floor. The sound reverberated through the stillness, a discordant symphony that marked the end of his descent. Adelphia's digital form flickered, her eyes meeting Blackwood's with a glimmer of recognition.

In that moment, Blackwood knew he had chosen a different path—one that prioritized compassion and respect over scientific ambition. He stepped back, his trembling hands now trembling with a newfound purpose. It was time to make amends.

The Week Gone By

Tarun Doss
Confusion now hath made his masterpiece.- William Shakespeare, Macbeth

Promises of “progressiveness” were supposedly answered earlier this week as we received news of the upcoming changes in the curricula to be offered in School. Though it may seem appropriate to many at first glance, I beg you to dig deeper into the implications such decisions may have, not only on your future, but also on the future of Doscos for generations to come. With the need for more transparency regarding such a pivotal decision, many questions remain unanswered as Chandbagh must prepare for the chaos to come. In a world where

we constantly emphasise the need for “change” to be able to compete with modern institutions worldwide, I believe that this might not be a step in the right direction. But who am I to criticise such an age-old institution? Who am I to criticise democracy? Do with this as you will, reader.

This is not how I imagined my last Week Gone By to go, but things creep up on you when you least expect it; beware.

On a lighter note, as the Junior Inter-House Football competition kicked off this week, the entire School seems to have taken up arms against the Eagles in an attempt to prevent them from soaring too high. To the Junior Swans, I wish you the very best of luck for your matches to come; remember to play with all your heart for you have nothing to lose (quite literally). To everyone else, would it really be that bad if the Eagles were to win?

Academically speaking, most

Doscos still struggle to open their textbooks despite the terrifying onslaught of the approaching Mid-Year Trials. As we race through puzzling equations and countless pens, I realised how I’ve managed to successfully live another day without the need for multi-step differentiation. Oh, how I love my life.

Well, I guess this is it. Four years gone. Four years I would have never thought I’d miss. But sitting here as I burn through my last few words in this beloved section, I’m lost for words. In the midst of absurd humour, there are lessons, and within the mundane, there’s magic. A final word of caution to all my cherished readers: time really does move differently within these four walls, before you know it it’s over. I wish that we’d known we were in the good ol’ days before they got over, but that is the beauty of impermanence. It is what makes life special. Signing off...

Match the following | Characters from Popular Culture

1. SBG

2. RSL

3. MRD

4. MMR

5. HM

6. PMV

7. AAQ

8. MGI

9. PDT

10. NAS

11. ABE

12. SPB

13. MTG

14. AKM
- A. The Notorious B.I.G.

B. a *Peaky Blinder*

C. Yoda

D. The Pink Panther

E. Miss Marple

F. Family Guy connoisseur

G. Walter White if he believed in rote learning

H. Batman

I. Legolas Frodo

J. Napoleon from *Animal Farm*

K. Old Town Road...

L. Smurfette

M. The Roadrunner

N. Tyrion Lannister

| The *Weekly* wishes all the |
| Masters a very Happy |
| Teacher’s Day and thanks |
| them for all they do for |
| School. |

Key:

4. M	8. L	12. J
3. A	7. D	11. F
2. N	6. C	10. K
1. B	5. H	9. E
13. I	14. G	

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