



Principal's Note

As we welcome a new year, it brings more than a change of calendar—it is an invitation to renew, reflect, and transcend our boundaries. At Billabong High, education is not about merely turning pages, but about moving

beyond the ordinary to thoughtfully shape a journey of learning and leadership. Renewal for us is not tied to dates; it is a mindset—one that inspires us to transcend the familiar, challenge routine, and embrace learning with courage, curiosity, and compassion. At the heart of this journey lies a powerful truth: leadership finds its greatest strength in kindness.

Looking back at the year gone by, I feel immense pride in how our Billabong community has embodied this spirit. Our students have shown that leadership is not about being the loudest voice, but about listening with empathy, fostering inclusion, and uplifting others. Across classrooms, stages, sports fields, and community initiatives, it was the small acts of care and collaboration that created the deepest impact. These moments remind us that kindness is not a one-time gesture, but a conscious, daily commitment.

At Billabong High, learning is dynamic, experiential, and deeply human. We encourage students to move beyond the fear of failure, transforming challenges into opportunities and mistakes into meaningful lessons. While academic achievement matters, success is equally defined by the values we nurture—integrity, resilience, responsibility, and empathy—ensuring growth across every dimension of a child.

Recognising the importance of holistic well-being, we have strengthened emotional and cognitive support through our partnership with Neuropathways, Bengaluru, and are developing a comprehensive Well-Being Policy for release in the Academic Year 2026–27. Our globally connected initiatives, including Narativ London's storytelling sessions, reflect our commitment to nurturing empathetic, responsible global citizens.

As we step into the year ahead, let us dream with confidence, lead with kindness, and grow together. At Billabong High, we empower students to transcend expectations, rise beyond limitations, and shape the world with purpose and compassion. Together, let's make this year extraordinary.

- Ashish Agarwal

Student Editorial Board



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Editor's Note

This issue explores transcendence not as an abstract idea, but as a practice. Through articles that challenge perspectives, artworks that reimagine possibilities, and pieces that move beyond conventional thinking, this edition shows what happens when students choose curiosity over comfort. Here, transcendence is not about being perfect; it is about making progress.

What makes this edition especially meaningful is how naturally student voices reflect this theme. Each contribution

BEYOND COMFORT THE ACT OF TRANSCENDENCE

Human beings weren't designed to be extraordinary. We were designed to not die, and that's it. The brain's default setting is: Stay comfortable. Stay predictable. Stay small. That's quite charming if you're a prehistoric forager, but a complete disaster if you're a modern teenager trying to become someone worth reading about in your own future autobiography.

So what do you do when your own biology works against your ambition? You transcend it.

Your brain is like an overly cautious parent who panics over every little thing.

"Don't run, you'll fall."

"Don't try, you'll embarrass yourself."

Neuroscience confirms this; your brain underestimates you for safety. It's obsessed with energy conservation, terrified of risk, and addicted to routine. Comfort is its favourite drug.

But there's a way to bypass the system. Every time you step outside that comfort zone, your brain panics, and then rewrites.

Neuroplasticity is an architect, it reinforces new pathways, deletes old limits, and broadens your horizons: just like upgrading your own personal software.

Every historical figure who did something revolutionary had one thing in common: they started out thinking they couldn't do it. Then they did it anyway. Runners once believed the human body could never survive a four-minute mile. Scientists once believed space travel was science fiction. Students everywhere once believed they could never go from average to exceptional, or succeed in the career they dreamed of—until the day they actually did. Every leap forward began with someone discovering that their "maximum"

Transcendence is often viewed as something dramatic. In reality, it begins quietly, with a question or a refusal to accept the obvious. It means pushing beyond limits we didn't even know we had.

was just a preconceived notion their brain got from their anxiety.

So why transcend at all? Because the version of you that exists right now is only a fraction of what you are capable of becoming. Staying where you are may feel safe, but it is also a form of self-betrayal. Deep down, we are built for more than routine and predictability.

Transcendence is not about proving anything to others; it is about refusing to live a life dictated by fear, habit, or the past. The alternative is stagnation. When you push past your limits, you discover parts of yourself you never knew existed.

Transcendence is not beautiful because it's victorious. It's beautiful because it's defiant. It's beautiful because it's the act of becoming more than you were yesterday, even when no one notices. It's beautiful because you are rewriting your story without waiting for help. It's beautiful because transcendence gives us the feeling that we have something worth starting a legacy for. It doesn't have to be getting superpowers, but just becoming humans who refused to stop at the first barrier.



We are living in an age where distraction is easy, mediocrity is normal, and talent is overhyped. In such an age, transcendence is revolutionary. Transcending your own limits forces your environment to expand. It gives you a taste of who you could be, and there is no addiction stronger than that.

The truth is, it doesn't take a prodigy to transcend. It takes someone willing to try. Transcendence is a muscle. And like any muscle, it grows only when it is used.

- Krishanali Merchant (10B)

represents an effort to go further, intellectually, creatively, or personally. Individually, these works are thoughtful and expressive. Together, they highlight the creativity, insight, and originality of our student community, and the value of independent thinking and innovative expression.

For the Editorial Board, putting this edition together was both enriching and rewarding. We are proud to share this collection and hope it encourages readers to explore ideas beyond what they already know, think critically, and reflect on how they too can embrace growth and progress in their own pursuits.

Simar Kalsi - Editor-in-Chief

Theme: TRANSCEND





ANNUAL EVENT 2025-26

Showcasing peak performance, the Annual Event 2025-26 celebrated the exceptional hard work of our student body. Their commitment transformed every sports demonstration and cultural showcase into a dazzling display of collective talent and harmonic passion.



IAYP TRIP TO ANDAMAN & NICOBAR ISLANDS

The IAYP journey to the Andaman Islands was a thrilling expedition for our students, blending the challenge of marine exploration with the tranquility of pristine beaches. This adventure offered unique lessons in resilience and teamwork that will undoubtedly shape their growth.



GRANDPARENTS' TEA PARTY

The Grandparents' Tea Party was a celebration of intergenerational connection, emanating warmth and sheer delight. Through collaborative games, shared performances, dances and songs the event fostered deep bonds and offered precious, lasting memories for the little ones and their loved ones.



FAMILY DAY

Family Day 2025 celebrated togetherness as Jr KG and Nursery students enjoyed joyful activities with family, creating heartfelt memories, happy moments, and smiles that made the day truly special.





SHOULD HOLDING AT LEAST A BACHELOR'S DEGREE BE COMPULSORY FOR THOSE CONTESTING PUBLIC ELECTIONS?



FOR

"Should holding at least a bachelor's degree be compulsory for those contesting public elections?" I firmly stand in favour of this motion. If lawmakers themselves are not educated, what can we truly expect from the laws they create? If we want our country to progress, should the quality of our leadership not progress as well? If education is essential for every serious profession, then why should politics, the one field that affects all of us, not demand the same? These questions matter because every decision our leaders make has the power to either uplift the nation or hold it back.

In a fast-moving and complex world, a bachelor's degree ensures that a leader possesses a basic level of academic exposure and intellectual maturity. It teaches individuals to think critically, analyse information, and communicate effectively. Leaders are required to read policies, understand budgets, interpret data, and respond to national challenges. Today's political issues are closely linked to economics, technology, international relations, and environmental concerns. A bachelor's degree helps ensure that leaders are not disconnected from the realities of the modern world. Without a strong educational foundation, decision-making risks being driven by impulse, emotion, or even misinformation.

Moreover, setting a minimum educational requirement raises the overall standard of political leadership.

Elections are often influenced by popularity, caste-identity, wealth, gender, or emotional appeal rather than competence. Making a bachelor's degree compulsory shifts this dynamic. It reinforces the idea that leadership is not a position one claims through influence alone, but a responsibility that requires preparation, effort, and discipline. Education has always played a crucial role in shaping a progressive society. Educated leaders are better equipped to express their ideas clearly, understand long-term consequences, and propose practical solutions rather than engaging in unproductive debates or poorly informed arguments.

This would not only raise the intellectual quality of democracy but also strengthen public trust in the government and its institutions.

It is also important to recognise that almost every profession requires minimum qualifications. Doctors, engineers, lawyers, teachers, and even drivers must undergo training before serving the public. Governance, which impacts an entire nation, should follow the same principle. If we expect qualifications from those who build our roads or treat our illnesses, it is only logical to expect similar qualifications from those who frame our laws.

To conclude, if we expect our country to grow and compete on a global stage, we cannot afford leaders who are unprepared for the world they govern. A bachelor's degree is not about elitism; it is about setting a basic standard, a bare minimum, for those who wish to represent millions of

people. When we raise the standard for leadership, we raise the standard for the nation itself. Therefore, to answer the question, "Should holding at least a bachelor's degree be compulsory for those contesting public elections?" Yes, it should be compulsory.



- Malertamil Karthikeyan (11B)

We elect politicians to represent us, and true representation depends on an understanding of communities and their problems. The only representation a bachelor's degree guarantees is the classroom in which it was earned, a space often disconnected from lived reality. A degree does not automatically shape integrity, leadership, or a genuine connection to people. These essential qualities are forged in the real world, through conflict, failure, and engagement with society, not within academic corridors that have never experienced the struggles of the ordinary citizen.

Therefore, a bachelor's degree offers little more than the illusion of competence, and democracy cannot be built on illusions.

If competence cannot be manufactured in a classroom, we must ask: what does a capable politician truly look like, and why do we elect them? We choose leaders to represent our visions, our challenges, and our collective future. We elect them for the burdens they carry and their ability to make decisions with real consequences. A capable politician is shaped by real-world crises, humility learned through failure, and judgment sharpened by decisions that cannot be undone, not by theoretical tests taken in academic

institutions. Political acumen, rooted in lived experience, cannot be certified or accurately measured by a bachelor's degree.

Plato's analogy of the Ship of State illustrates this clearly: a ship cannot be navigated by those who lack judgment and experience. In the same way, formal qualifications alone do not make one fit to lead a nation. History supports this view. Leaders such as Harry S. Truman, Winston Churchill, and Brazil's Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva lacked conventional university degrees, yet guided their nations through war, crisis, and economic turmoil. Their leadership was defined by action and experience, not certificates on a wall. A degree cannot replicate the insight or vision required for effective governance.

Mandating a bachelor's degree as a prerequisite for public office does not strengthen democracy, it weakens it. Such a requirement turns governance into an exclusive, gated space reserved for the credentialed elite. It excludes capable individuals whose skills and experience were gained outside academic systems. Access to higher education remains unequal, shaped by privilege, opportunity, and social conditions. A degree requirement would silence voices that understand grassroots realities best, widening the gap between leaders and the people they are meant to represent. Rather than elevating leadership, it would deepen inequality and weaken democratic participation.

In conclusion, the idea that a bachelor's degree should be compulsory for politicians is misguided, if not dangerous. A degree cannot guarantee leadership, wisdom, or competence. History, from Abraham Lincoln to Lula da Silva, demonstrates that political acumen is built through real-life experience. Enforcing degree requirements prioritises privilege over ability, paper over practice, and theory over truth. Ultimately, the greatest test for a politician is the election itself, one that measures credibility in action, not qualifications on paper.



AGAINST



- Sidduesh Jain (11A)

TRANSCENDENCE

To transcend means to rise above. It is the act of going beyond ordinary boundaries - beyond fear, doubt, or failure - and stepping into growth, confidence, and self-belief. The word itself carries a spark of courage, as if it gently whispers, "You can be more than what you think."

In life, we all face obstacles that try to limit us, such as academic stress, peer pressure, or the fear of not being "good enough." To transcend is to look these limits in the eye and move forward anyway. It is not about ignoring challenges, but about learning how to overcome them. When

we transcend, we grow, adapt, and become stronger versions of ourselves.

Transcendence can take many forms. An artist transcends when emotions are turned into colour. A student transcends when mistakes become lessons. A society transcends when hate is replaced with understanding. Each time we choose growth over comfort, we take a step toward transcendence.

In a world full of noise and trends, to transcend also means staying true to one's values. It is about being original in an age of imitation and holding on to purpose when distractions are everywhere. True transcendence is not just about success, it is about balance, peace, and self-awareness.

So, let us not settle for what is average or easy. Let us aim higher, think deeper, and believe more strongly. Because the moment we decide to transcend, we do not just move forward, we rise.



- Bhumija Raghuvanshi (7E)

BETWEEN THE EDGE OF WHO I AM AND THE ECHO OF WHO I COULD BE

Transcending isn't a moment. It isn't a sunrise or a dramatic turning point people like to write about. It feels more like standing in a dim room, facing a mirror you don't completely recognise yourself in - a mirror that reflects who you are, who you were, and who you might become, all at once. Transcending isn't about achievements or winning; it is about becoming a better version of yourself, one you learn to accept and embrace.

Amid all this chaos, something begins to change. Not loudly, but just enough for you to notice that the person staring back at you is unfinished. That there is still a version of you forming, within doubt and disappointment. Perhaps transcendence begins right there: in the decision to walk toward the person you could be, even when the path is unclear and nothing feels certain except the need to change for yourself. It is the realisation that becoming better is not about proving anything to the world, but about choosing to become someone you would be proud to live with.

Sometimes, what holds you back isn't a single moment or a single failure. It is the slow accumulation of small disappointments - a slipping grade, a faltering confidence, a reaction you wish you could take back, or an action you wish you had carried out differently. From the outside, it may seem insignificant. On the inside, it feels as though something has cracked, something that needs time, confidence, and a little hope to heal.

And that is the part no one talks about: the silent effort it takes to keep going. To act as though the cracks don't worry you, even though you feel every one of them.



- Srishti Dewani (9A)

MY JOURNEY AS A BILLABONGER

Every person carries a map of who they aspire to become. When I first walked through the doors of this school, my map was mostly empty. Twelve years later, as I walk through these familiar hallways and sunlit classrooms, that map has grown, developed, and been shaped by my experiences, becoming a reflection of my personality. This transformation is the result of the nurturing environment at school, which constantly pushed me to do better, encouraged me to dream bigger, and instilled a sense of self-empowerment.

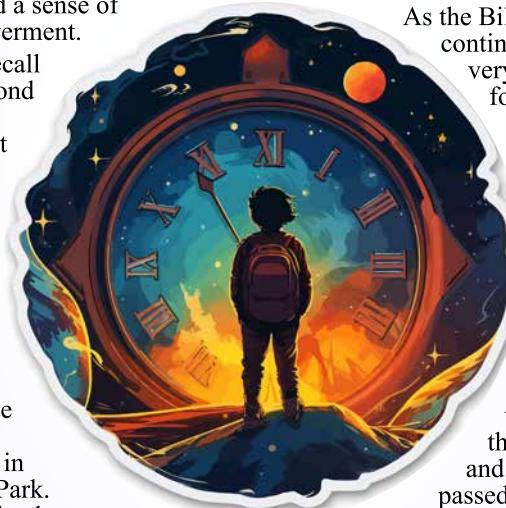
I can still recall how, in second grade, the Head Girl at the time, Advaita Singh, came up to a younger me who was upset after losing her favourite pencil somewhere in Adventure Park. She immediately acknowledged my distress and stepped in to help. At that age, I could not comprehend the idea of receiving support from a senior. Although we never found the pencil, the memory remains one of the happiest moments of my childhood. It taught me lessons I still carry with me today - resilience

and the importance of helping others in need.

Experiences like these have shaped my personal map and contributed to the person I am today. However, my journey is not unique. Every Billabonger, even if they do not share the same memories, encounters life lessons that help shape their own path. Year after year, each batch of students collects experiences and memories that build confidence and guide them through different stages of life.

As the Billabong family continues to grow, the very bricks that form the foundation of this school hold generations of shared memories, lessons, and experiences. These continue to influence both those who walk these halls today and those who have passed through them before. Let this serve as a reminder to always strive for personal growth and to nurture the community of students around us.

- Kyna Goel (10B)



Yet, even in that heaviness, there is a thread of possibility, a reminder that you are not defeated, only delayed. Perhaps that is the true essence of transcending. It is understanding that growth is not meant to look graceful. It is uncomfortable. It asks you to break patterns you have outgrown and to unlearn versions of yourself you once believed were permanent.

Transcending isn't only about overcoming everything; often, it is simply about rising. It means getting up on days when staying down feels easier. Trying again when no one expects you to. Choosing yourself even when you feel undeserving. It is the quiet determination to believe that your story is not over and that you still have the power to rewrite the parts you once thought were unchangeable.

And slowly, without announcement, you begin to feel the shift, the quiet return of self-trust, the gentle courage to imagine the future without fear, and the understanding that who you are becoming is not defined by what you couldn't do, but by everything you are still trying for.

That is transcendence: not a grand transformation, but the steady unfolding of who you were meant to be, until one day, you finally recognise yourself in the mirror you were once afraid to face.



TO WHATEVER END

There's something alluring about transcendence,
a push, a pull
It's like a haunting lullaby with ever-changing lyrics
A lightning strike right before the thunder
The click of a gun right before the shot
It took time for forests to grow,
Kingdoms to build, and empires to exist
Where one was being broken,
Another was being molded to take its place
If you couldn't beat the odds,
You changed the game
Think like the God of war
When one plan was blown,
You made a new one
When they backed you into a corner,
You cut a hole in the roof
Have an affinity for water,
But don't hesitate to let me go up in flames

- Hashvi Kataria (12C)



ECHOES OF A SOLIVAGANT SOUL

The solivagant heart,
Our hearts beat not in an absconded sound,
Much like an acouasm,
Perhaps an aubade sung at the auroral dawn.

Ardent souls, so often crowned,
Allure that leaves heavens astound.

Beyond the artless calling,
Lies an arcane or allegory's veiled disguise,
Whimsical sounds then arise.

In the solivagant's soul,
where werifesteria hums,
Transience overcomes, no more sojourned.
The heart at last transcends,
There, the thought dissolves, And the spirit mends.

- Nancy Chawla (8F)



Finally Free

With an angelic grace and a heavenly smile,
She walked among us,
Her aura beguiled.

Braided rivers of memory and elegance
glowed beneath the sun.
Her emerald eyes shimmered with secrets
She would carry to the grave.

She wore her burdens like a crown of thorns,
Yet rose adorned, no longer divided
between right and wrong.
This time, stronger.
This time, more fierce.

Not trinket of worry,
Nor a shadow of doubt.
This time, she stands alone,
Evolving into someone
She'll always be proud of.
She's finally free.

- Mishti Jain (9F)



Up, up, up, I fly so high,
Like a bird that touches the sky.
I reach beyond, I climb so bright,
I soar up high into the light.

I go past clouds, I zoom and spin,
I touch the stars, I win, win, win.
I rise above, I'm big and bold,
I'm like a rocket, strong and gold.

I spread my wings, I dance with glee,
I'm higher, higher, wild and free!

- Viraj Bhushan (2E)

FLYING HIGH



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WANDERING



Nothing to want
Nothing to need
Nothing, everything
And all in between
Everything dear, burnt to flames
Everything near, twisted mind games
Fell to the knees, no sun no star
The darkness of the sky
Alone with her black heart
Jet, onyx, charcoal, white
She realized she was not finite
Her limit was not sky, not space, not time
She would go beyond it all
And achieve in colors of neon
Live life to more than her dreams
To nothing
Everything
And all in between.

- Anvita Sharma (7E)



TOTO THE SANDPIPER

The morning sun was shining brightly over the sea. The waves looked shiny and silver, and the wind felt cool on the beach. Near a small sand dune, there was a baby sandpiper named Toto. She was tiny, soft, and very curious. Toto watched her mother and the other birds run to the water to find food before the waves came back. Toto also wanted to try. One sunny morning, she followed her mother to the shore. She felt excited and a little brave. Suddenly, a big wave came rushing toward her. It splashed all over her and pushed her back. The water was very cold, and Toto felt scared. She ran away as fast as she could.

After that, Toto did not want to go near the sea again. While the others played in the water and found food, Toto stayed far away on the dry sand. She tried pecking around, but she couldn't find anything to eat. She felt hungry and sad.

One afternoon, Toto saw a small crab near the water. A wave came toward the crab, but it didn't run away. It hid under the sand and came back out when the water moved away. Toto was surprised. The crab was so brave! Toto decided to try again. She took a small, shaky step toward the sea. The next wave touched her feet. It felt cool and soft. Toto didn't run this time. She felt a little brave.

Another wave came, and she stayed there again. Toto chirped happily. She started running with the waves, just like the other birds. She even found food in the wet sand.

Now Toto was not scared anymore. The sea that once frightened her now felt fun and friendly.

- Ahaana Goenka (4A)



Image credits: <https://chatgpt.com>

A Father's Note

When her father passed away, her world did not explode loudly; it fragmented silently. People told her that "time will pass and wounds will heal," yet her life felt like a dormant seed, full of life, yet lifeless.

She would often cry while leaning against her father's rusted iron almirah. Inside lay his clothes and a small pocket diary. She had opened that little book countless times, hoping to feel her father's presence through his words, but each time she found only old, wrinkled pages.

Until one day, she noticed a faint reflection of light on one of the pages. She began rubbing it gently, and slowly, blurry ink appeared. The page read:

"Like the almirah and this page, my body too has seen a lot.

Transcend this pain, your life still awaits you."

- Diya Chhabria (11A)

Image credits: <https://chatgpt.com>

OVERSTEPPING BOUNDARIES

It is important to fly beyond the limits we unconsciously set for ourselves, beyond hesitation and uncertainty. This is how Jack learned the true meaning of transcendence.

Jack had always enjoyed art, but he kept his sketches to himself and never believed they were "good enough." So when the school announced a challenge to paint an entire wall with a mural based on growth and resilience, he could hardly contain his excitement. At the same time, the idea of turning a blank wall into a bold masterpiece terrified him. It seemed almost impossible.

While others formed confident groups, Jack chose to take on the task alone. The large, untouched wall stood before him like a mountain. His early attempts were messy, the colours refused to blend, and whispers of doubt floated around him. But Jack did not give up. Every afternoon, he returned to the wall, fixing lines, changing colours, and slowly rebuilding his confidence.

By the final day, the mural was breathtaking. Every brushstroke showed determination, colours burst forth like dawn, and vines twisted upward across the wall. Students stopped to stare, and teachers paused in admiration. Jack had not just painted a mural, he had overcome his own



Image credits: <https://chatgpt.com>

limitations.

Jack became a perfect example of transcendence. He moved past fear, grew beyond uncertainty, and discovered a strength he never knew he had. And like Jack, we too must find the courage to rise, step out of our comfort zones, and overcome the obstacles in our path.

- Vivaan Daryani (7E)

I watched Sitaare Zameen Par and I really liked it because it was emotional, funny, and very inspiring. The story is about a coach named Gulshan, played by Aamir Khan, who has to train a basketball team of special children. At first, he is very angry and does not want to help them. He thinks they cannot do anything. But slowly, the children surprise him with their talent, hard work, and positive attitude.

My favourite part was how all the children supported each other like a real team. They never gave up, even when things became difficult. The movie teaches us that everyone is special in their own way and can shine if someone believes in them. I also liked how the coach changed from

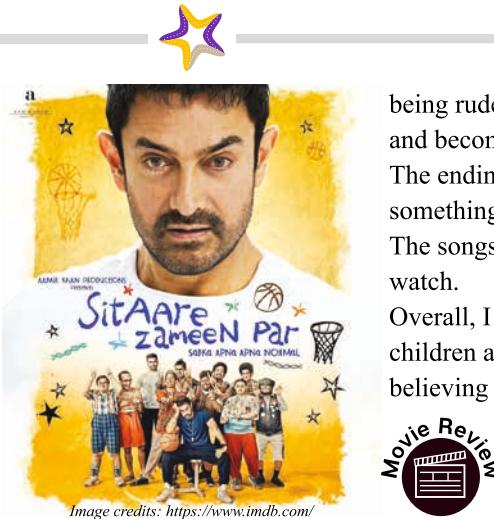


Image credits: <https://www.imdb.com/>

being rude to being caring. It shows that people can learn and become better.

The ending was a little predictable because I knew something good would happen, but it still made me happy. The songs were nice, and the basketball scenes were fun to watch.

Overall, I think Sitaare Zameen Par is a great movie for children and families. It teaches kindness, teamwork, and believing in yourself. I would definitely recommend it!



- Ahaana Goenka (4A)

'WEDNESDAY': A DARK DELIGHT FOR MISFITS

In a world where being different often feels like a weakness, Wednesday celebrates the weird, the dark, and the extraordinary. The Netflix series follows the adventures of Wednesday Addams (played by Jenna Ortega), a goth teen with a sharp mind and a sharper tongue, as she navigates the eerie halls of Nevermore Academy, a boarding school for outcasts with supernatural talents. With its blend of mystery, humour, and a touch of the macabre, the show is a thrilling ride for anyone who's ever felt like they do not fit the surroundings.

Season 1 introduces us to Wednesday's unapologetic sarcasm and determination as she unravels secrets about her family's past and the strange occurrences at Nevermore.

Season 2 ups the ante with new challenges: a stalker, family drama, and supernatural mysteries that push Wednesday to her limits. The cast, including Emma Myers as her bubbly roommate Enid, brings energy to the show's gothic aesthetic.

While the pacing can feel a bit rushed, the creativity and humour keeps you hooked.



- Gurbani Bhat (7F)



What sets Wednesday apart is its empowering message: it is okay to be different. Wednesday is not your typical character but she is smart, intense, and does not sugarcoat her feelings.

The visuals are stunning, blending Tim Burton-esque whimsy with a modern twist. Sure, it is not perfect, the plot can get a little messy, but the show's charm lies in its embrace of the weird.

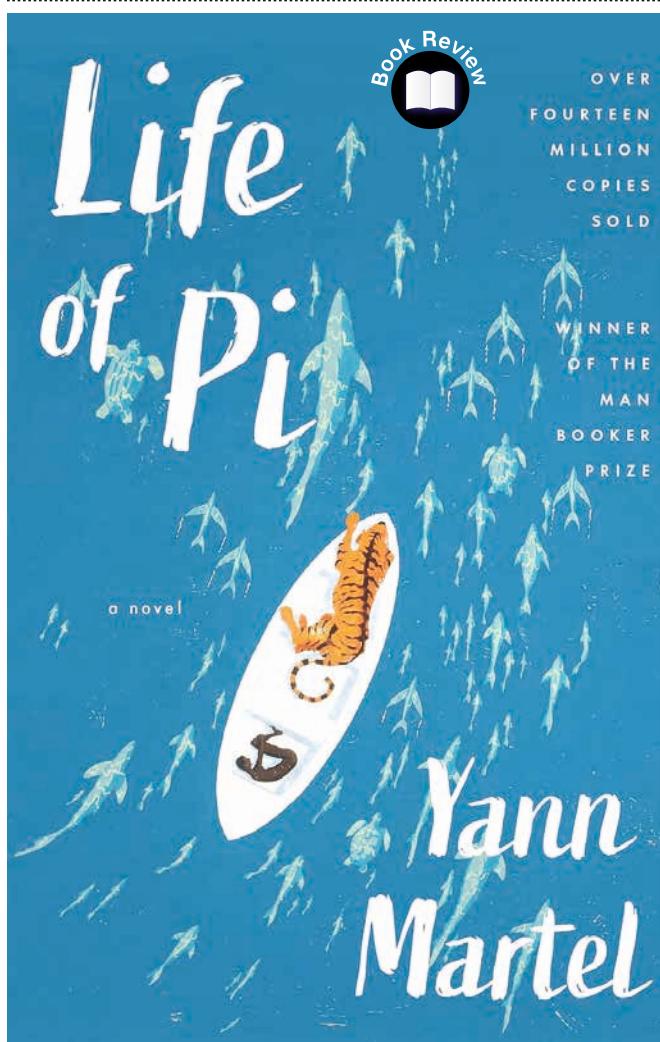
In Season 2, things get even wilder. Wednesday faces new problems, like a stalker and supernatural secrets, while dealing with her family (the Addams Family).

The visuals are creepy and awesome, and the cast, like Emma Myers (Enid, Wednesday's bubbly roommate), adds laughs. The show can feel a bit rushed, but it is still really entertaining, amps up the suspense with new challenges, family drama, and creepy twists. Enid, brings energy to the show's gothic vibe. While the pacing can feel a bit fast, the creativity and humour keep you hooked.

If you enjoy a little darkness with your drama, Wednesday is a must-watch.

Just do not try her "no smile" rule in class.

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OVER
FOURTEEN
MILLION
COPIES
SOLD
WINNER
OF THE
MAN
BOOKER
PRIZE

Yann Martel's Life of Pi is an extraordinary novel that blends adventure, survival, philosophy, and spirituality into a powerful and thought-provoking story. It is a book that not only entertains readers but also invites deep reflection on faith, truth, and the resilience of the human spirit.

The story follows Piscine Molitor Patel, known as Pi, a young boy from Pondicherry, India. Raised in a zoo run by his family, Pi grows up with a deep sense of curiosity. He practises Hinduism, Christianity, and Islam simultaneously, believing that all faiths lead to God. When his family decides to move to Canada, they travel on a cargo ship along with several zoo animals. Tragedy strikes when the ship sinks, leaving Pi stranded on a lifeboat in the Pacific Ocean with a zebra, a hyena, an orangutan, and most importantly, a Bengal tiger named Richard Parker. Eventually, only Pi and Richard Parker remain, and the novel transforms into a gripping tale of survival.

What makes Life of Pi stand out is not just its suspenseful plot but its deeper symbolic layers. The lifeboat is more than a place of survival; it becomes a space where human endurance, fear, and faith are tested to their limits. Richard Parker represents both danger and companionship, forcing Pi to

confront his primal instincts while also giving him a reason to continue living. The ocean itself is portrayed as both breathtaking and terrifying, reflecting the unpredictable nature of life.

Martel's writing is vivid, poetic, and often philosophical. He uses simple yet powerful language to describe the vastness of the sea, the brutality of nature, and the small moments of hope that keep Pi alive. The novel also explores the importance of storytelling. At the end, Pi presents two versions of his survival story, one involving animals and one without them. Readers are left to decide which story they choose to believe, raising profound questions about truth, belief, and the role of imagination in coping with reality. This makes Life of Pi a unique and unforgettable novel that appeals to both adventure lovers and readers seeking deeper meaning.

Overall, Life of Pi is much more than a survival adventure. It is a meditation on faith, resilience, and the meaning we assign to our experiences. Through Pi's journey, Martel reminds us that the stories we tell shape how we understand the world and ourselves.

- Vigyan Kedia (11A)

Robotics on the Assembly Line: ADAPTABILITY OR PRECISION?

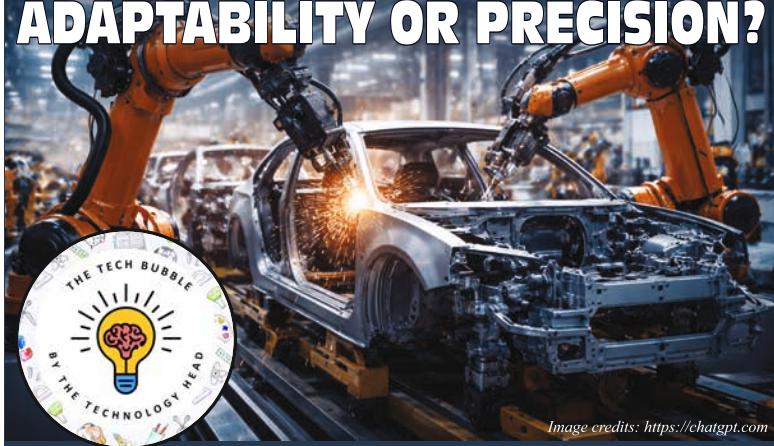


Image credits: <https://chatgpt.com>

Robotics on the assembly line has always seemed like a vision of the future that arrived early. We watch mechanical arms move with hypnotic precision, executing tasks with a repeatability no human could ever match. However, upon closer examination of the modern factory floor, the glossy promise of automation often clashes with a grittier reality.

The industry is realising that while we have mastered precision, we struggle with generalisation, the ability to adapt in noisy and non-perfect environments. In meticulously controlled settings, robots perform flawlessly. Yet when faced with the chaotic and unpredictable nature of the real world, they often become fragile.

This fragility is largely due to what engineers call the “sim-to-real gap.” In simulations, parts are perfectly positioned, lighting is controlled, and friction remains constant. The real world, however, is filled with uncertainty. Even slight changes in temperature, variations in a part’s shape, or shifts in ambient light can confuse a machine that lacks human intuition.

This becomes a major challenge during production changes. For manufacturers operating high-mix, low-volume lines, where products frequently change, a robot’s inability to adapt means switching tasks is not a simple adjustment. Instead, it often involves costly reprogramming and recalibration. As a result, we are left with systems that are exceptionally fast at performing one task but struggle when required to pivot.

Additionally, the popular “set-it-and-forget-it” dream ignores the real costs of maintenance. When a human worker notices a defect, such as a misaligned screw, they can instinctively decide to adjust it or discard the part. A robot lacks this judgement. It may continue forcing the part into place, causing larger issues further down the line.

This lack of flexibility leads to more errors, delays, and reduced resilience when problems arise. Even collaborative robots, or “cobots,” designed to work alongside humans, can feel cumbersome, as they often require constant supervision and still lack true adaptability.

Until we can teach machines to navigate real-world complexity rather than relying solely on the geometry of simulations, robotics will remain remarkably precise, but critically inflexible.

TECHNOLOGY HEAD

- Siddesh Jain (11A)

Grade 8 Energy Expedition

Our Night Camp - The Energy Expedition was nothing short of unforgettable. We had been counting down the days ever since the announcement was made about a month ago. It felt extra special because the last time we had done something like this was in second grade. Our classroom was filled with nonstop chatter and excitement. The camp wasn't just about fun, it was the kind of memory that would stay with us for years and leave a lasting mark.

The moment we arrived, everyone was already laughing and shouting. We dropped our bags in the classrooms and headed straight to the soccer park, where Ashish Sir and Mrinal Ma'am welcomed us and explained what was planned. That's when the excitement truly began.

We were divided into three teams, and our team went first for the circuit race. We ran, jumped, and ended up completely out of breath, but still grinning. Then came tug of war, and after three wins in a row, our voices were almost gone from all the cheering.

Later, as the sun dipped low, hues of apricot blended with soft lavender across the sky. We painted jars that turned into glowing lamps, enjoyed the campfire, and watched the moon shine like a silver coin. By the end of the night, we were tired but happy, our hearts full of memories we will carry with us into high school.

- Nancy Chawla (8F)



Image credits: Palak Lacchwani

IAYP TRIP TO ANDAMANS

My journey to the Andaman Islands was an amazing and educational experience. Every activity felt thrilling and full of energy, from kayaking across serene seas to scuba diving and snorkelling among colourful marine life. The resorts added to the charm of the trip and were breathtakingly beautiful.

One of the highlights was the intertidal walk, where I observed marine life up close and developed a deeper appreciation for nature. More than the destinations themselves, this trip strengthened my bond with my peers, making the experience even more meaningful. The memories I made in the Andaman Islands are ones I will always treasure.

- Palak Lacchwani (11C)

RESOLUTION REVOLUTION



Written & Illustrated by:

- Dikshita Mamtani (9B)

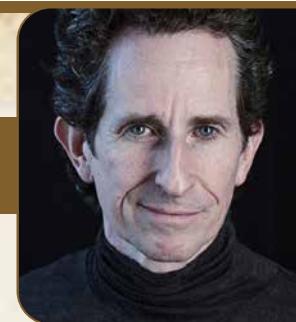
Transcendence isn't a leap; it's a series of gentle, consistent steps.



Tête-à-Tête with

Jane Nash and Dan Milne

Directors and Lead Trainers, Narativ London



Q 1. How did your personal journey as artists and educators lead you towards this shared passion for the work that you do on storytelling and listening?

I was working with a theatre company in Coventry, creating a play about a brother and sister, where the brother was intellectually impaired. As part of our preparation, we conducted extensive research in schools and hospital settings and listened closely to families supporting members with intellectual disabilities.

One experience that stayed with me happened at a youth club where we performed the play for a group of teenagers. One boy with Down syndrome saw that moment as his chance to speak up for himself. I watched him find his voice in front of everyone. Seeing yourself represented on stage and having your voice heard validates lived experience, and that moment has profoundly shaped who I am as a performer today.

humanity in art.

Q In a world overflowing with social media “stories,” what makes an authentic story stand out to you?

Authenticity comes from self-belief, and it cannot be faked. As humans, we are wired to read facial expressions and body language, which helps us distinguish between what is genuine and what is not.

Sometimes nervousness or external distractions disrupt the harmony between a person’s words, tone, and gestures. Every individual carries a library of experiences that serve both as communication and reflection. When people express themselves with genuine passion, their entire body becomes part of the story.

Q What’s a story - personal or professional - that has stayed with you and continues to shape the way you view your work?

In many workshops, facilitators impose rigid storytelling rules, such as



Q When you listen to stories that challenge your own worldview, how would you suggest we remain open to new ideas rather than getting defensive?

This question reminds me of the classic dilemma: what comes first, the chicken or the egg? Without a story, why would we listen? And without someone listening, why would we tell a story? For us, listening always comes first. It creates the space into which stories can emerge.

When listening becomes difficult, the real obstacles are often internal—thoughts like “I don’t agree” or “I don’t understand.” The modern world thrives on division, and technology has pushed us into increasingly polarised positions. However, everything is far more nuanced than it appears. Everyone filters experiences through their own background, and it is essential to remain curious about where another person’s beliefs come from.

Q What would listening without an agenda look like in a world that is driven by constant self-expression?

Research from earlier times shows that people once lived in smaller communities with fewer social connections. Today, we are exposed to voices and viewpoints from across the globe, which can feel overwhelming. It becomes difficult to discern individual voices among so many.

Complete absence of judgment is impossible, and judgment itself helps us navigate the world. What matters is self-awareness—recognising when judgment becomes a barrier between you and another person. We are adaptable, and our opinions can evolve when we approach one another with curiosity and compassion.

Q In an age where AI generates algorithmic drudge with increasing ease, how does the Narativ method equip the next generation to seek out flawed and human-made art over frictionless content?

Since running Narativ workshops from 2009 onwards, we have heard countless stories. Yet every time someone draws us into their lived moment, we are surprised. The combination of personal experience and individual expression is always unique and compelling.

Human experience goes far beyond what algorithms can predict. One-to-one connection is irreplaceable. AI is currently a powerful tool because it produces content without friction, but storytelling is deeply embedded in how the human brain functions. The true essence of creativity lies in its imperfections—those flaws are what reveal

requiring conflict followed by resolution. However, the stories that stay with me are often the ones that break these conventions.

One woman shared a traumatic memory of her elder brother’s motorbike accident. She and her parents waited in a hospital room as doctors informed them that life support would be switched off. Over time, she realised that retelling this story allowed her to place the moment within the wider context of her life, honouring its meaning without being overwhelmed by sadness.

I also recall a conversation in a ballroom on a hot afternoon in Cyprus with Marin Russell, one of the founders of Narativ, where we spoke about being a sportsman, performer, and dancer. Even a brief connection to another person’s life can transport us and offer deep insight.

Q In your experience, what has listening - truly listening - revealed about human connection?

The most surprising discovery has been how much we all share in common. Our stories are far more relatable than they are different. Even in workplaces where people sit beside one another daily, there is still so much left undiscovered about each other.

The power of listening lies in rediscovery. Each time we truly listen, we see someone anew, and that sparks curiosity. Families, in particular, are excellent spaces to practise listening and to experience what it feels like to be truly seen and heard.

Q A core part of learning is receiving feedback – from teachers, peers, or grades. How can your method teach a student to “listen to their own story” about a failed test or a setback, so they can learn from it rather than just feel defeated?

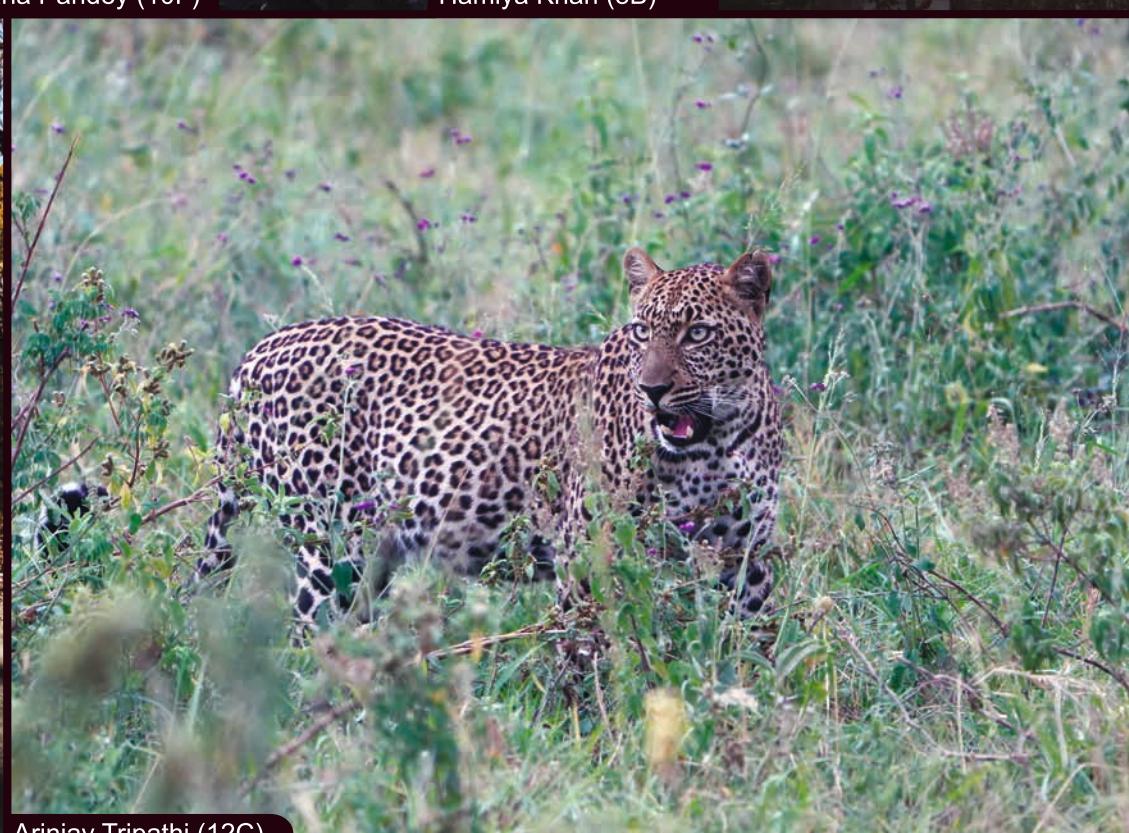
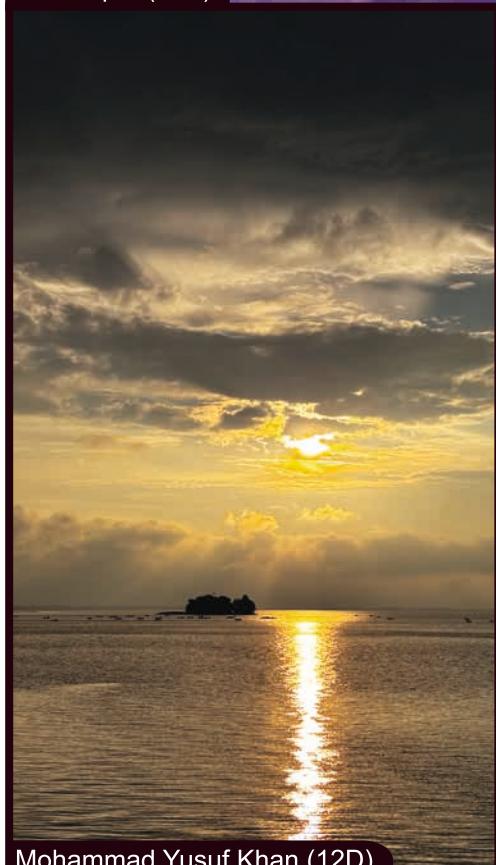
When we articulate our experiences, we understand ourselves more deeply. Having a listener reflect back their interpretation helps us gain clarity. At Narativ, one of our core principles is listening with infinite compassion—towards ourselves and others. This includes receiving feedback without blame or discouragement.

We encourage a growth mindset, reinforcing the idea that learning is ongoing. Rather than interpreting events emotionally, we ask people to describe what happened and how it happened, focusing on observable facts. This helps separate reality from personal perception and opens up multiple possibilities for growth and understanding.



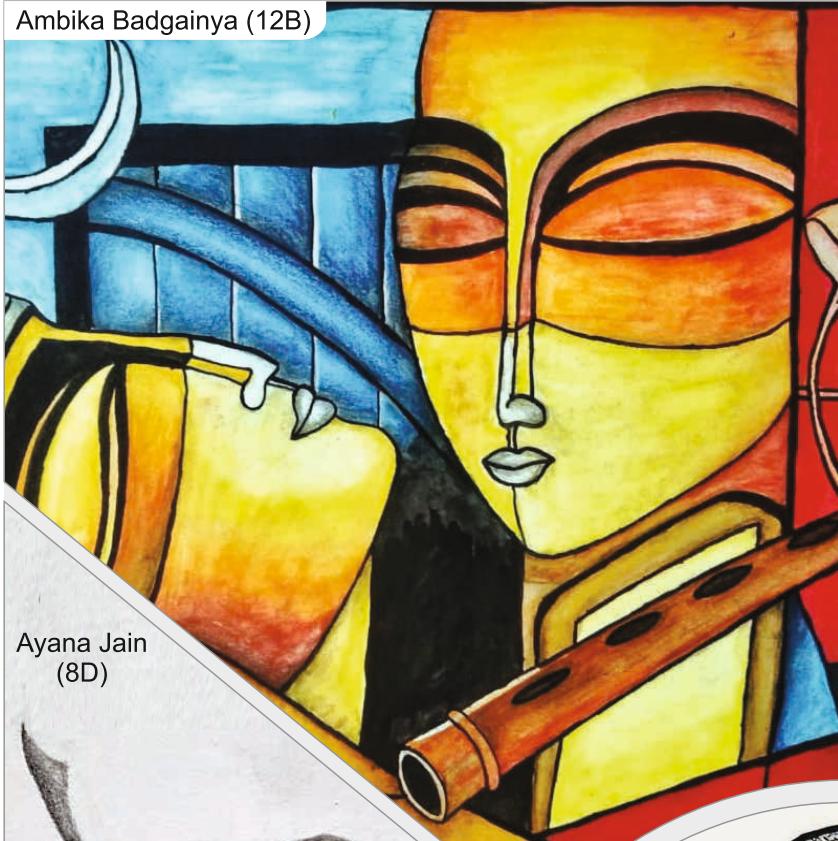
“In photography, there is a reality so subtle that it becomes more real than reality.”

— Alfred Stieglitz

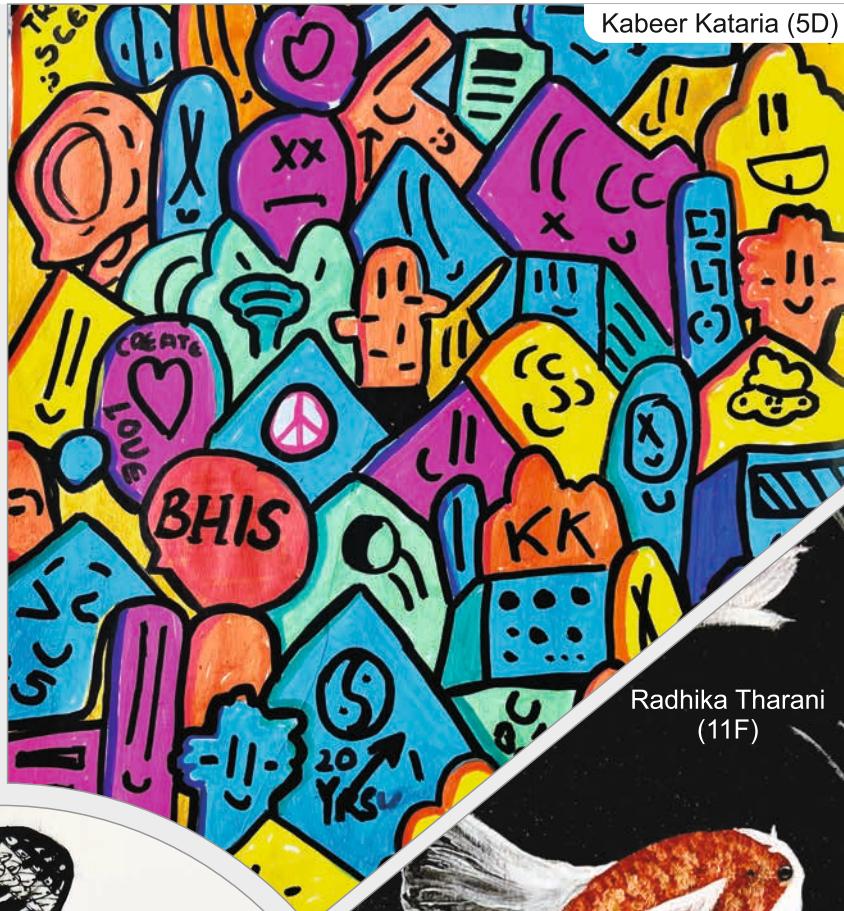




Ambika Badganya (12B)



Ayana Jain
(8D)



Radhika Tharani
(11F)

Ananya Singh (3A)



Shyambhavi Patidar (8C)



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