

1 Editor's note
Our editor welcomes you to the first edition of The Perspective

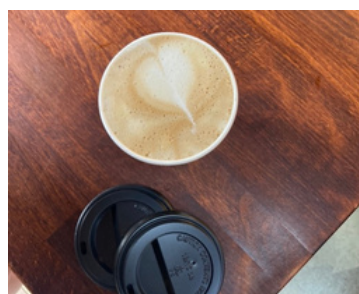
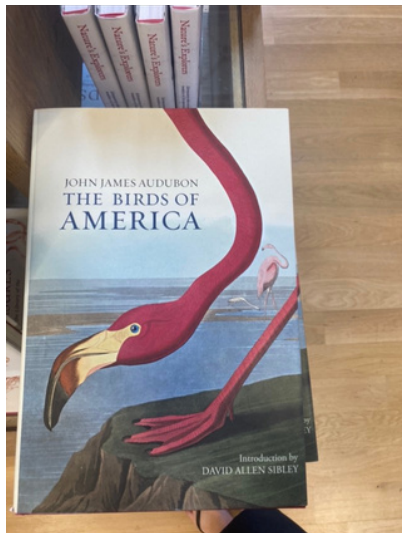
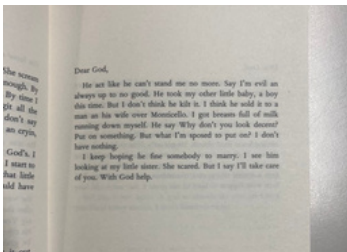
2 The cost of it all
A look into the financial crisis for university students

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Delve into climate change and pollution in Medway

4 Diversity and Disney
Diving into the hot topic of The Little Mermaid



THE PERSPECTIVE



Living with the cost of living

By Favor

"When the rich and the powerful rise they leave the powerless and the poor without possibility."

The current cost of living problem is affecting us all, the high inflation is causing acute distress for the people in this country, but it will have a disproportionately negative effect on those who are already struggling to make ends meet. People are worried, people are struggling, the people are getting less but paying more. A scary reality for thousands of people across the nation is the possibility of being forced into homelessness as a result of an escalating cost of living.

What is the cost of living compared to the cost of life, when to live doesn't mean you're alive? When people are struggling to just get by due to energy bills being on the rise and the cost of living at its all time high, what is to be expected of a gluttonous government that only feeds the nation its neglected lies. Inflation is not the only thing that is on our minds right now but social unrest, the energy crisis and not to forget we are still mourning the covid deaths.

The cost of living crisis is hard hit to all groups in society. Even The NHS workforce is under duress, underfunded and under pressure more than ever before. Lower band staff are struggling to afford to get work and feed their families because of the rising cost of living and are quitting the NHS for better paid jobs, creating more hard-to-fill vacancies. Frustration in the various sectors can be evidenced in the ongoing strikes that have occurred and continue to occur this month, with Unite the Union estimating that over 3000 London NHS workers will strike in early 2023.

Approaching the coldest times of the year, millions are yet again faced with the dehumanising struggle of 'heat or eat.' New data released by The Food Foundation Trust shows a rapid 57% jump in the proportion of households cutting back on food or missing meals altogether in just three months. Food insecurity in the UK is an alarming issue that requires immediate and adequate government intervention, for it is costing people their lives.

Other financial obligations placed on households have an impact on their ability to buy food, and when money is tight, food is frequently the first expense to be cut. The cost of food, rising energy costs, rising petrol prices, and ongoing inflation have all put pressure on families' discretionary income in recent months. To heighten the pressure even more, benefit levels were increased by 3.1% in April, where before the rise was a greater 7%

Soaring food prices have ultimately denied the most vulnerable groups of society, including low income families and the elderly, to have regular meals. Being unable to afford a weekly food shop likely means that people will steer to low cost foods that tend to be nutrient poor. Consequently putting individuals at an increased risk of diet-related diseases.

So what can be done? Ultimately, it's up to the government to properly tackle the issue, however as a society we have the fundamental responsibility to raise our concerns. The government must take action to rebalance food prices so that healthy food is the most affordable, expanding free school meals for all children in poverty and setting out clear long term action plans.

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Anna reviews the book 'Murder most unladylike'.

8 Book recommendations
Including the featured book series - Harry Potter

Editor's Note

Dear reader,

It is with my greatest excitement to finally be publishing the first issue of The Perspective! This paper has been a goal of The Perspective committee since the first couple of weeks that our team was created in September, and working on this issues been my greatest pleasure.

This issue contains content from a variety of subject matters and covers creative endeavours of Strood Academy's pupils as well as current affairs, reviews and research articles. From societal issues facing the cost of living, to engulfing controversy to modern adaptations of Disney, the works included in this issue are examples of outstanding work that can be produced through the collaborative work of Strood Academy's students and faculty. I hope that you enjoy these pieces as much as I have.

Acknowledgements

The first issue of The Perspective is only possible due to the hard work of Strood Academy's students and staff. Each of the students that submitted an article to the paper showed an inspirational dedication, staying after school to work on, improve and produce their articles. This terms issue wouldn't have been possible without our writers, **Favor, Harry, Kacey, Anna, Lexis, Deyana, Lola and Lyvia**. And our talented cartoonist, Emma Nacickaite who the drew the incredible cartoons in this issue. Our talented creative team not only had the responsibility of creating the paper, but also showed incredible talent in taking on the difficult task of creating our logo and creating an impressive set of mood boards. My greatest appreciation to **Scarlett, Lois and Eirwen** for their hard work. And finally, I'd like to thank Miss Wilkinson - Crute and Miss Worsfold for not only creating this opportunity to us, but guiding the team through each steps that we took towards this publication, without them this newspaper wouldn't have been possible.

Yaren
Editor

The cost of it all

By Harry



In recent years we have seen a surge of students in the UK applying for university all to be forced through, what can only be described as the 'migraine of student finance'; the government's support system for university funding.

For England, this involves two separate loans, tuition fees and maintenance loans (both loans will enter the same debt pool). Tuition fees are often £9250 yearly and are given directly to the university, however, the maintenance loan is far more complex. This loan is given to the student for living expenses - it fluctuates on many factors. For example, whether the student is living at home or in a dorm varies based on whether or not that dorm is in London and on the household income. It's alarmingly clear that the maintenance loan is incredibly complex for support that does not work, as 66% of students state that the maintenance loan is not big enough, saying that it barely or fails to cover the rent of their dorms. This is not surprising considering the average maintenance loan gives £439 a month compared to the £924 monthly cost of living! Many question the government's choice for a support system that will simply trap students in dorms without the money to even purchase essential goods. These issues will only worsen as time goes on with the rising prices caused by the cost of living crisis.

However, the reason why these financial systems are infamous for causing financial issues is the method that they are paid back. In England, these loans recently changed, affecting you once you earn over £25,735 a year, as 9% of what you earn above that threshold will be taken to pay for these loans. These loans also change in their interest rates, with them being tied to inflation rates and capped at 6.3%. It is important to note that despite the size of the average student loan being around £50,000, most do not pay it off, instead waiting the 30 years when the loan is wiped. While it is great that it is being wiped out, should we be content that only 11% of university students even pay off their debts while the majority must be left with the debts festering? Despite all of these financial issues, people still apply for university. One of these reasons for this is the average salary difference of £10,000 between graduates and non-graduates. Graduates are often forced to use this to mitigate some of the costs due to these loans. So should people go to university despite this? In the past a degree could get you into many higher paying jobs but in modern times the new job market has far more higher paying jobs that don't need degrees, so is this a path we should be promoting?



What is climate change? Climate change is a change in temperature and rainfall over a long period of time. What is global warming? Global warming is when greenhouse gases, which is a gas that can't be stopped as it is from animals and throwing away food, get trapped in the earth's atmosphere causing the temperature to rise. The main cause of global warming and climate change is the human impacts. They are overpopulating, pollution from factories and sea pollution, burning fossil fuels, which are natural gas, coal, and deforestation. What does global warming actually do? Global warming effects are weather, not enough food, forest fires, ice melting, loss of animals like polar bears and rising sea levels.



How can we help stop global warming? We can help by using less energy in our house as it is heated by fossil fuels, we can walk or ride a bike to school, work as cars produce diesel and petrol, you can get solar panels for your house, you can recycle your bottles and other things, throw away less food as it produces greenhouse gas. That is just some of the ways you can help. There are many more ways you can help the environment. There is also something called a greenhouse effect which is when gases get trapped in the earth's atmosphere and mix with the sun's heat causing the earth to heat up. Trees can tell you about climate change because when you cut a tree and look at the trunk there are rings and that will tell you about what happened while it was growing like a rain season, fires and the years it's grown the rings look like a bullseye and scientists can also see how climate change by having a camera in space by Nasa.



Pollution in Medway

Around Medway pollution is a big problem. It interrupts everyday life for all animals, humans and the environment as a whole. On Kent live a man from Four Elms Hill stated "If they don't do something about it, we'll have to just carry on and suffer in silence."

Some places in Medway, such as Four Elms Hill that has the poorest air quality in Medway, can be a health risk for people to even live there. There are a total of four places in Medway that do not meet air quality standards.

What is pollution? Pollution is the introduction of fumes into the natural air. These fumes can be released from factories using fossil fuels such as coal.

What can you use instead of coal? There are many alternatives to fossil fuels, three of them are solar, wind and geothermal power. Which is a much healthier alternative for the atmosphere.

WRITTEN BY DEYANA

Written by Lola

DIVERSITY AND DISNEY

By Lyvia

The long-awaited arrival of the live-action 'The Little Mermaid' has finally made it, the film will come out in May 2023. Actress Halle Bailey is playing the part of Ariel. There has been some controversy on the matter. The thing is, Halle Bailey is black and people think that Ariel being white is not accurate. The hashtag, #notmyariel has been doing the rounds on social media, being used by people saying that Ariel is not the same as the original.

But is this all really necessary? She's an empowering mermaid and an amazing Disney Princess. Halle Bailey has made multiple statements explaining how happy she is to be playing the role of Ariel. She told Entertainment Tonight 'It's a crazy feeling seeing all of the babies' reactions, I know what it would have meant to me as a little girl to have been able to see a black Ariel. If I would've seen that, it would've changed my whole outlook on life.' It is really nice to see an actress that finds the role so meaningful.

While Halle Bailey is empowering young girls and making them feel included, and healing the child within adults, some people have been ignorant towards the matter of the new Ariel. Some adults are complaining about a classic kids film about a mermaid that gives her voice to a sea witch as being 'inaccurate' or 'unrealistic'. To me, this seems like a total step back - we are in a society where people are encouraging the theme of 'it's not about what you look like, it's your personality' but as soon as Ariel is presented as a different race, it is suddenly about how you look and not about your personality. We are meant to be encouraging people of all races, sexualities, and cultures to be themselves, and encouraging everyone to be accepting and that means having representations of all races, sexualities, and cultures. The director of the new The Little Mermaid film, Rob Marshall has said that Halle Bailey possesses all of the traits that she needs to be Ariel. And I think that matters more than how she looks.

In conclusion, I believe that Halle Bailey is perfect for the role and I cannot wait to see the film in cinemas. I don't want you to just read this article, I want you to think about all the white girls in 1990 that saw themselves in Ariel, and all the black girls that are seeing themselves in Ariel now and how representation matters.



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LIZ TRUSS THROUGH THE YEARS!!

BY DEYANA

Liz Truss, was voted Prime Minister on 6th of September 2022, after former Prime Minister Boris Jonson resigned. But who is Liz Truss?

Liz Truss was born on 26th of July 1975, and as a child she attended Roundhay comprehensive school in Leeds, which she later criticised. Then she went on to do her A-levels in the University of Oxford and did her degree in Philosophy, Politics and Economics at Merton College, Oxford. Then she worked in the oil company Shell for four years. When she left Shell she worked for Cable & Wireless for five years.

Many politicians and MP's make promises that they don't keep. This means that they promise the public that they will make positive changes to help people or make life better but then they don't implement those changes. Although Liz Truss has been an MP since 2010 and former Foreign Secretary to Boris Jonson, she is not well known to everyone, and we would like to allow her to settle in but people need to see changes now. Unfortunately, she has not made a good impression on the public as she has done two u-turns on decisions she has implemented.

The two u-turns she made are scrapping the 45% higher rate of income tax and cancelling the rise in corporation tax, from 19% to 25% she is also considering doing a u-turn on cutting the basic rate of income tax to 19p next year. She has blamed her chancellor for decisions on tax cuts and then he was sacked after being in office for 38 days. Let's see how long Liz Truss lasts as prime minister.

Update! At the time of writing this article Liz Truss sensationally quit after she said "I am a fighter not a quitter." We were all shocked to find out that Liz Truss was the shortest reigning Prime Minister, lasting an embarrassing 44 days (6 weeks) as PM. The new Prime Minister is Rishi Sunak



THE BLOOD TRIALS

By Lexis

This piece is from the perspective of one of the contestants as they prepare for the annual blood trials, a game based on smarts and brain power rather than strength and skill. We don't know who the character is yet or anything about them at all but you learn all about that later...

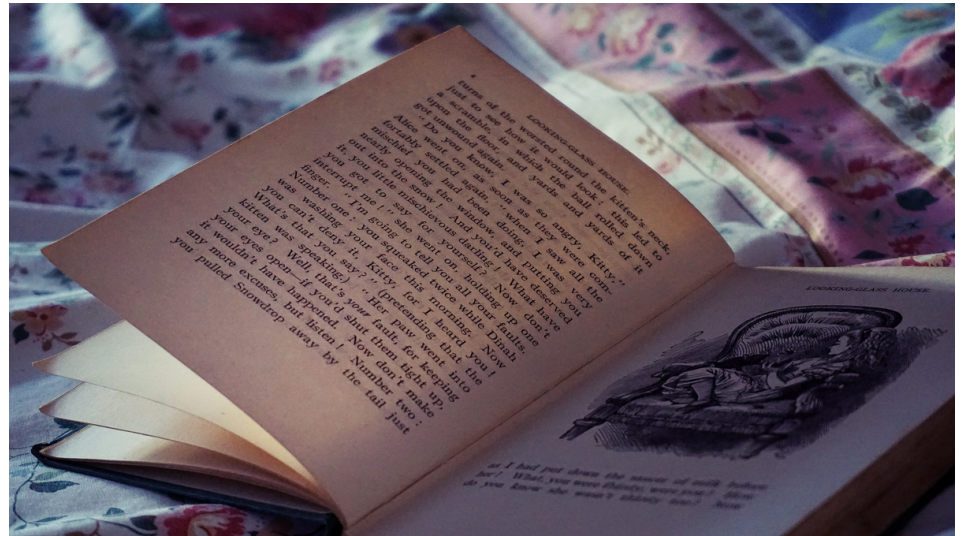
An infinite game of life against death. Except death always won. The blood trials were a game that occurred each year. Everyone from all sectors would gather around large projectors ; forced to watch these innocent people die, although for sector 146, it didn't matter because they were rich, unharmed after all these years and watched these shows as they watched daytime TV, placing bets like we were race horses. No matter if you were a winner, or a loser-you were always a loser. The horrors of the contestants' corpses from children to the elderly flooded you every night. The screams and cries of everyone, begging for their life, begging for you to let them live haunt you everywhere you went. Everyone picked a wafer like food and if you were drugged, you were one of the unlucky ones.

Now, here I am, one of the unlucky ones.

No one really knew the fear that crept up your spine as you woke up unless you had survived. Now, it didn't matter if I was a daughter, a father, a niece or uncle. I was just a number. number 505.

We had been interviewed, trained and paraded around like show ponies but now was time to show who we really were. Warriors.

As I woke up slowly from the best sleep I had in years, the darkness of the room covered me like a blanket, squinting wouldn't be any good but a torch would be great, just my luck there wasn't any. I could vaguely see the walls scattered in maps and riddles. There was a large, round oak table in the centre of the room, scattered in keys and puzzles. As I sat up, pain raced through the back of my head. Slowly, I turned around a large, oak shelf towered over me with dominance and was filled with safes and random objects.



I finally dragged myself up and as I felt a wave of nausea drown me, I heard the voice of Periwinkle, the presenter of these traps, announce on the speakers that blared through each room "welcome to the annual blood trials! Now I know we are all so excited for this year's trials but we have our rules. Number one, play strategically, be cruel, cunning, evil, strong anything to survive. Number two, have fun! Now let's get to know more about this year's contestants..." Her squeaky voice slowly faded away as we were all left in darkness. This was brutal and mean, but could we complain? If we won we had everything, money, food, comfort and we wouldn't have to lift a finger for it but for this? I'm not so sure if it was really worth it after all, no matter how much they all said it was.

Periwinkle's peppy voice screeched through the speakers "Hell, hello everybody. Boys, girls, men and women... Welcome to this year's blood trials! Now we have got to know everyone just that little bit better, I think it's best we start our countdown..." Hastily, I scrambled to get up and prepare "Now we have 30 seconds until our contestants need to be ready to fight for their lives! Now from me and all our audience here within the sectors.... Good luck!"

A glowing orange countdown was projected on the wall in front of me and an unknown voice boomed through the speakers "30...29...28...27...26...25"

He droned on continuously. As I zoned out, thinking where to start first until I finally heard "5...4...3...2...1...let the blood trials commence" This was finally it... time to prove myself, fight to the death and get the hell home.



MURDER MOST UNLADYLIKE BOOK REVIEW

BY ANNA

What is the book about?

A Murder most unladylike is a children's mystery novel based in the 1930s.

It is the first book in Robin Steven's book series, Murders Most Unladylike. The book is based in Deepean boarding school for girls and the two main characters in this story are called Hazel and Daisy, aged 13. Daisy and Hazel run a super secret detective agency in their school. So far the biggest case they had solved was the devastating story of Lavinia's missing tie. Until one night after the after-school societies club. Rumours that the gym has been haunted always lurked around the halls. The thought she had to go into the hall sent shivers down her spine. As she pushed open the door there were no ghosts but worse...Miss Bell the deputy head was lying lifeless, with her arm thrown back behind her head, legs folded under her! Hazel ran to get help and was very panicked. But by the time she arrived back in the hall, Ms Bell was gone. Ms Bell, who was definitely dead, had disappeared. The girls now have a real case on their hands - who was the murderer of their Science teacher....

What did I enjoy?

This book definitely kept me hooked from start to finish. Many books I've read always take too long to get to the point and are slower to read but this book was easy to read and a real page-turner. I had my own list of suspects and could clearly see why each suspect could have been guilty. But the end was something I couldn't have ever seen coming and was very clever. I also love how Hazel is such a kind and relatable character. The whole book and other books in the series are based on mystery, friendship and humour. There is the perfect mix of drama and suspense in this book!

Many other articles have the same opinion. It was called 'thrilling' by The Guardian and 'Ripping good fun' by The Times. Another Strood Academy student has her own opinion on it, and states that "This book is brilliant as it keeps you entertained and has a phenomenal storyline. The lead up to the ending is very exciting and Hazel is the best character. She also is a very good assistant to Daisy."



My dad is definitely Not a crime lord - Ben Davis

Damian I mean Finn's family has used new names and has just moved into a run- down council estate because Finn's family is in a witness protection program, hiding from bad guys. I believe that Finn's dad used to be a bad guy himself. Then Finn meets a superhero called Starkid and Finn somehow joins him. Starkid is on a mission to take down the local crime bosses. But the fighting is full of surprises and then Finn starts to think who am i really....

Diary of a Wimpy Kid (The Getaway) - by Jeff Kinney **The Getaway**

Join Greg on his chaotic adventures on his parents honeymoon and it gets extremely out of hand. Lots of issues started to stir up, for example when they lost their suitcase with all of the fancy clothes they needed for the only nice restaurant at the hotel. So they had to eat outside where all the birds are. The book contains the aeroplane journey and when they got to the hotel. The holiday went on over christmas so the present from Greg's mum and dad was the trip.

Diary of a Wimpy Kid (Big Shot) - by Jeff Kinney

Greg has tried sports at school and has given up, but then his mum somehow makes him give it one more shot. His tryouts went terrible and he then surprises himself with landing a spot on the team - but it's not a very good team. When he does join the team the chances of Greg's team chances of winning are not looking so good...

Will Greg think of a way to win or will he lose?

BY KACEY EDGE

BOOK RECOMMENDATIONS

My name is Kacey and over the last couple of months, I have been working hard to read some books to recommend to you all.

Featured Book series

Harry Potter and the Philosopher Stone - by J.K Rowling Book 1

Harry Potter's parents died when he was very young so he was placed with his auntie and uncle, who are the worst people ever and they have a son, Dudley, who was also very horrible. They took away his Hogwarts letters and put him in the cupboard under the stairs which is where his room is. Harry Potter has just discovered he is a wizard and his parents were to and the groundskeeper goes to his house and tells him. There he meets his two best friends and has many mysteries that lie in the castle doors. Will Harry have an answer to the many mysteries in his life? Will he discover the truth of his parents death? Will he ever discover the truth of his school? Its history?