

# FLASH -EGB STUDENTS' NEWSLETTER –JUNE 2014

*Denisa Gyorfy, born in Texas, USA, moved to Arad thre years ago when she chose to attend our school. Since then she has been trying to cope with the differences bewtween the two cultures, enjoying them both and being critical about some aspects we should not overlook. Denisa Gyorfi – the American in Ghiba- has recently taken part in the English Language National Competition, but her experience seems to be far from what she expected to be.*

*Although Denisa may remind you- to some extent -of a Jamesian character, there is much more in her stories. (To those who are not familiar with Henry James, it is perhaps useful to say that his novels focus on characters from the Old World (Europe), embodying a civilization that is beautiful, often corrupt, and alluring, and from the New World (United States), where people are often brash, open, and assertive and embody the virtues—freedom and a more highly evolved moral character—of the new American society).*

## CULTURE CLASH:

### AMERICA & ROMANIA

One of the first things that people ask me when they find out that I used to live in America is: ‘Which place do you prefer?’

To be quite honest with you, the question drives me half insane. The differences between Romania and Texas (where I used to live) are so numerous that I can’t, in good conscious, declare which one is better or which I prefer. When I am here I miss it and when I am there I miss this.

Another question I get asked a lot is: ‘What is the biggest difference?’ Most of the time I’ll answer by saying: ‘the people’. Nothing and no one can ever hope to compete with a Texans patriotic pride or the love he has for his state. True Texans, born and/or raised, will defend the state tooth and claw and there is an overall sense of teamwork.

They are very friendly and willing to help out, be it at a charity, the neighbors house or a stranger and when you meet them you well and truly understand where the term ‘Southern hospitality’ comes from.

Being raised in that environment it breaks my heart when I look at us Romanians and see the contempt and downright shame with which we view not only our country but also our status as Romanians. By the simple fact that we do not respect ourselves we allow everyone else to disrespect us, resulting in the overall negative name that we have made for ourselves.

We even treat one another with contempt, cussing each other out no matter where we are, forgetting the simple and elementary rules of society, we seem to have forgotten to function as a whole and nothing can be sadder.

Why don’t we work together to bring a change instead of sitting quiet until we get our chance to escape?

*Denisa Gyorfi*



FLASH ONLINE

*By 10th E & 11th F students*

*Coordinated by Livia Marinescu*

## PUBLIC SPEAKING

*Eduard Gafton, or simply Edy, is EGB's new public speaker star, following into the footsteps of his glorious predecessors who dared to compete in a demanding public speaking competition and earn admiration and respect for their achievements. In what follows, Edy speaks with modesty and awe about his first participation in a national public speaking contest.*

Yearly, there is one competition or contest, however you may call it, that I'm anticipating the most. It's a contest which proves to be a challenge every step of the way, which only makes the satisfaction of achieving victory, even bigger. It's a contest where your friends are your enemies, but only for half a day, because by the end, even your enemies become your friends. I'm talking of course of the yearly Public Speaking competition, which has now reached it's 20<sup>th</sup> edition.

You might not know what it is all about so I'm going to keep it as brief and as concise as possible. The Public Speaking competition is yearly kept by an organization called English-Speaking Union, or, for short, ESU. They are trying to encourage speaking, specifically in English, which is ultimately the purpose of this contest. The competition is split into two age groups: 12-15 and 16-20, and yearly contestants are given a theme upon which they have to conceive a speech with the help of the coordinating teacher. Examples of themes include "A house divided by itself cannot stand" or this year's theme which was "Life is the hardest exam". The competition is structured in phases or heats: municipal heat, county heat, regional heat(only for 16

and higher), national semifinals(16+) culminating with the national final(also 16+). Sounds like it's a very scary thing, right? Yes, it is many times as scary as it sounds but it's also very exciting and fun! Trust me, it is a experience worth having and I encourage you to participate if you ever get the chance, even if you are just part of the crowd! You'll see amazing speakers and you'll get some food for thought!

Now that I have covered what the contest is about, I'll talk about my personal experience in this contest. I have been participating every year since I was in 8<sup>th</sup> grade and the competition just gets fiercer and fiercer. I didn't do much the first time, but I got some encouraging results that made me come back for more, so that's what I did, once I got into high school, here in Ghiba Birta.

Last year I was still participating in the 12-15 group, so my fellow participants were roughly my age. That does not mean that it was easy, oh, no it wasn't! I had two main adversaries, which I was glad to call my rivals. One was from our very own high school, whose name I will not reveal because I don't know whether or not he will approve of this, and the other one was from Pedagogic. The theme for the 19<sup>th</sup> edition was "Ideas are our greatest weapons" and I presented myself with a speech entitled "A Double-Edged Sword" which was received well by the jury-English teachers from various local high schools. Somehow, I managed to make it to the regional heat where I was gladly surprised to be awarded 1<sup>st</sup> place which came as a great achievement.

This year, I knew the competition was going to be even harder as I am now in the

“bigger league” and if I was one of the oldest students in the group last year, this time I were to be one of the youngest in the group, so the tables have been, metaphorically, turned. Our theme for this year was “Life is the hardest exam” and I faced many problems while creating my speech. I had **nothing** and after hours and hours of brainstorming, I still had **nothing**. But the idea, came out of the blue, and somehow it just *hit* me. Whilst I had the idea, I was still struggling to execute it. And in all of my struggles I was slowly, but surely, losing time. I could hear the clock going “Tick...tock” in my mind and I knew I had to move fast.

And, finally, I had a speech! But I was not satisfied by it as I knew that I could do better and that I needed more time around. So I prepared my speech during our English classes and with the support of my incredibly helpful teacher, classmates and friends, I was close to what would become the final version. Before I knew it, I was faced with the first challenge, the municipal heat. It was scary, it was frightening, but it was also very exciting. I was surrounded by people that had something to say and I knew they were all going to be great.

And, finally, it was my turn to speak up. In that moment, I felt like I forgot everything. I panicked and I was covered by cold sweats. The hardest part of the whole competition is quite abnormal, just walking to the podium. Cause once you get up and head to the place from which you hold your speech, all of your doubts and fear decide to attack you.

Then you give a speech...and you're suddenly free. You're still somewhat afraid as, lost in the moment, you can't really

know what you have just said. Everyone is congratulating you for doing a great job, but after all – they are your friends, they'll support you no matter what.

Probably the best part of the whole competition is talking with all of the participants, that suddenly, become your closest friends. This happens while the jury takes a few minutes to come with a conclusion and the moment is quite brief but golden. You laugh, you have fun and you make great friends as in my encounter with the people that participate at this contest, I have only met people that I can describe as: awesome, friendly, likeable.

And somehow, maybe by sheer luck or maybe because it was meant to be, I made it to the national final. I was excited, happy as I exceeded my expectations, which had already been sky high. I'm glad I got to represent myself as well as Ghiba Birta and I'm looking forward to great results in the future. And now, I encourage, you, the reader, to join the competition, if possible, as I'd like to see more and more worthy rivals.



In Bucharest, with my fellow competitors and the members of the jury, in April 2014.

*Eduard Gafton*



## BOOK REVIEW: THE FAULT IN OUR STARS

*“Without pain, how could we know joy?”*

**The Fault in our Stars**, by John Green, is a touching story, a mix of humour, love and pain.

This novel is about a bright 16-year-old girl, called Hazel Grace, who has been diagnosed with lung cancer. The book, which has become a best-seller a few months after its publication, shows us the real “face” of the world and life. Its focus is on the love story between Hazel Grace and Augustus Waters, a handsome teenager, who has cancer too. Together they live unforgettable moments in Netherlands where they get to know what true love means. Their wish comes true too because they have the opportunity to meet their favourite author, Peter Van Houten. But, unfortunately, after the extraordinary time they spend together, their worlds fall apart.

**The Fault in our Stars** is a book that proves that love can make us feel that we are invincible and strong enough to have the whole world „in our hands”, and after a few moments of happiness, we notice that the adrenaline from our veins disappears and we fall into nothingness.

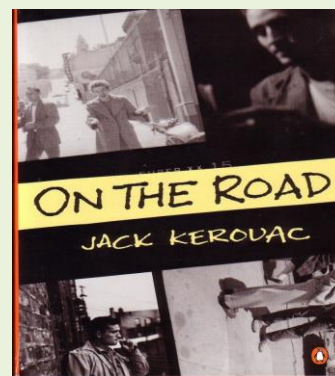
The novel contains humour, romance and heartbreaking events. It makes you cry and laugh but in the end it will make you realize that life is a gift and all you have to do is to “enjoy the moment,” without thinking of what will happen sooner or later, because life is always unforeseeable.

I highly recommended **The Fault in our Stars** to anyone willing to spend valuable time reading a book the „old way”. It is beautifully written and it will leave you

with a better understanding of what life really means, of what we should do to get over heartbreaking moments.

*Claudia Varga*

## BOOK REVIEW- ON THE ROAD



**On the Road** is largely based on Jack Kerouac's years traveling the North American continent with his friend Neal Cassady. As "Sal Paradise" and "Dean Moriarty," the two roam the country in a quest for self-knowledge and experience.

Jack Kerouac's **On the Road** is the defining work of the Beat Generation, a youth subculture of the 1940s and '50s that rejected the conformism of its time. It is a book of ideas and characters more than plot, and through the journeys of the main characters, the reader sees a picture of rebellious American youth and their attempts to subvert the cultural mandates they had been given in order to conform to white middle-class life. Kerouac's prose emulates jazz and the energy of the time.

Kerouac's love of America, his compassion for humanity, his sense of language as jazz combine to make this novel an inspirational work of lasting importance. I would recommend it to anyone interested in learning what it takes to cope with freedom and constraints.

## HE WAS FAR, FAR AWAY AT LAST

Jack had been long waiting for this day. He used to dream about the moment in which he would leave everything behind and set off farther from this cursed rainy country of fogs called Northern Ireland. He wanted to lie down on a sandy beach in some warm area, surrounded by cheerful people, as he was sick and tired of listening for so long to his grumpy boss' complaints. So Jack thought it would be a good idea to take a flight to Italy...

All the arrangements had been made: the plane had to take off at eight PM and everything useful for a relaxing holiday had been bought and packed. Jack took a look at his watch and said to himself: "Hm, there are just a few hours left till my great adventure starts. Maybe I should take a nap." Unfortunately, Jack had forgotten to set an alarm clock and when he woke up and looked at it, all dizziness went away – only shock could be read in his face. It was seven o'clock! "Oh my God! I'm late!" – Jack jumped out of his bed in a great hurry. It only took him five minutes to dress and he dashed through the door like the wind. In the street, while still panting he stopped a taxi-cab and barely muttered: "To...the...airport...and make... it quick." The taxi driver looked at the fatigued man and said: "This will cost you extra money..." "I don't care just drive!", Jack said feebly. "As you wish, Sir." – responded the driver and stepped on. They reached the airport when only ten minutes were left till plane's take off.

Jack paid the driver and somely and ran to the lounge like an athlete competing for a gold medal. Luckily, it wasn't too late for him – exhausted, but content the poor

man boarded the plane which soon took to Italy, away from Northern Ireland.

*Ciprian Tulea*

## THE ICE BOY

Once upon a time, somewhere in a very cold country, there was a small boy who had a gift. He was able to carve into ice and make all sorts of figures and small objects. His greatest wish was to make something special one day, perhaps something similar to a human being, someone who could be his best friend. A friend who would not abandon him as the other boys did when he spoke about his gift.

The boy kept on making various objects refining his technique, but in spite of his efforts, the ice began to melt as the weather became milder. He realised that without a miracle- a machine to keep his creations frozen for ever, all his little creations would vanish into thin air. He asked his parents if they could find such a machine for him, but they looked at him worriedly and told him to find other things to play with.

One day before Christmas the boy managed to finish his best creation ever: a boy, just like him, a boy made of ice. When night fell and the boy was about to fall asleep he heard some footsteps on the ground in front of his bedroom window. When the boy opened the window, he realised that someone had listened to his greatest wish.

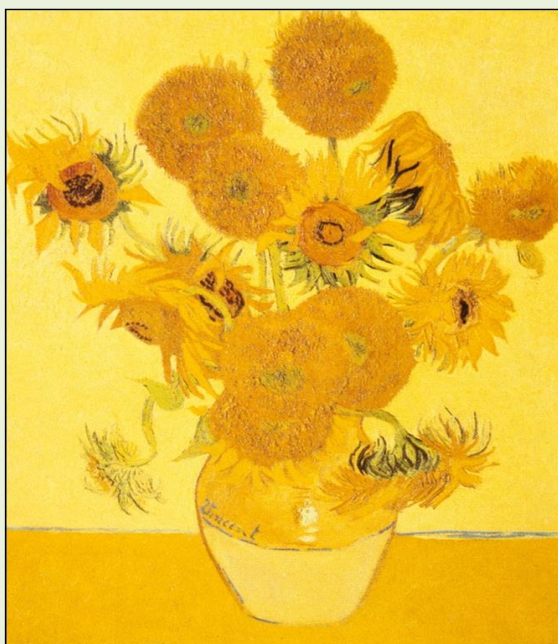
Outside, in the front yard there was a small boy made of ice, looking at him with eyes so icy that it made him shiver.

*Arina Draia*

## STUDENTS' OPINIONS

### ON ART

What is art? A broad definition, given by the Webster Dictionary, says that art includes all „the products of human creativity”. According to this definition we can class as art anything that comes out of imagination of individuals: architecture, painting, literature, dancing, theatre, philosophy, linguistics, music, cinema etc. Some may consider art to be less important than life itself but can anyone imagine life without art?



First and foremost, art is necessary in life, as it helps us relax and escape routine. We cannot work without moments of relaxation and time off. When we come home from work or school we need to relax before starting to work again, so we take some rest, read a few pages from a book, watch a film or listen to music. All these are art as they all have come out of one's imagination. While doing such things we can relax and forget about the daily chores, focusing on the things we

like, the ones that make us feel good and at peace with ourselves.

Secondly, we need art to express ourselves in a way we feel it defines us. Some of us write poetry or novels, others dance, sing, paint or create fashion in their spare time. It is true that not all these products are valuable pieces of art, but to us they mean a lot. Talent or genius may be rare but it is worth trying as long as we feel that what we do makes us feel accomplished, or happy. Even cooking is an art, and what can better define us than what we eat?

Thirdly, art is present in our lives even if we want it or not. We create to enjoy life and this is the reason why there is art everywhere around us. Everything is art: what we wear, see or hear. For instance, pieces of furniture in our homes are art. Also paintings on our walls, jewellery we have, our favourite kind of music. However, there are people who do not consider art as an essential element in their life. Some of them are so absorbed in their job, that they simply do not have time for pleasure. Maybe that is why they are not able to enjoy life.

On the whole, life without art would be not only poorer, but also meaningless. Living your life without music, books, films, paintings, dancing is living without joy, excitement or curiosity. We would be like robots programmed to function without being able to live a life.

### ON BOOKS

*“Some books are to be tasted, others to be swallowed, some few to be chewed and digested; that is, some books are to be read only in parts; others to be read but not curiously; and some few to be read wholly, and with diligence and attention.” – Francis Bacon*

In a few suggestive words Francis Bacon manages to classify books according to three categories: books that are meant to be read partially, books that are meant to be read easily and perhaps with a certain degree of pleasure and last, but not least, books that are so important and so meaningful that they require our full concentration and patience.

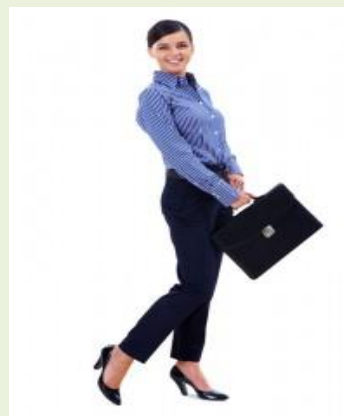
This classification is very comprehensive and can be applied to the books we read today. The books that are meant to be tasted and read partially may be the books that provide us information in various fields. It is not necessary to read these books from the beginning to the end as we need to find the information we look for. We ignore the rest of the book as it is not useful to us. In Bacon's words, we just taste such books, we do not end up knowing it all in their depth. This category includes reference books ( history books, science books, dictionaries, manuals), in general non-fiction.

Furthermore, the books we read entirely, the books we "swallow" without curiosity may be the novels we read for our pleasure, the ones we read eagerly to find out their ending, the books we forget about in a few months. This category includes detective stories, adventure books, romantic novels, even science fiction, in fact fiction we read every day, without spending too much time to discover their meaning since their meaning is quite clear. However, we read such books for relaxation, out of pleasure or we do it to escape routine and boredom.

### **ON PERSONAL APPEARANCE**

Personal appearance is extremely important in your life as it affects the way

you think and feel about yourself, as well as the way you behave in the community in which you live. In addition to this, the clothes you wear, the shoes you put on, the way you fix your hair, the make up you wear ( if any), your hands and nails contribute to the ( first) impressions people have of you.



First of all, what you wear and the way you look affects the way you think. While it is important to like what you wear and the way you look, it is more important to understand why and how this affects you, others and your life. Nobody likes to think negatively about himself/herself because of some aspect of their appearance. When you appear attractive and dressed well –for instance- you think positively about yourself and your situation.

Secondly, your personal appearance affects the way you feel. For instance, sometimes the things you choose to wear (consciously or not) make you feel depressed, uncomfortable and inferior to others.

Other times, the clothes you wear make you feel comfortable and relaxed. If you have a positive personal appearance you will surely feel good about yourself and become more self-confident .



Moreover, personal appearance can affect the way you behave. Sometimes the things you wear, or your hair style make you act as if you were insecure or out-of-place. Other times, they make you act as if you were arrogant, aggressive or conceited. When you appear attractively dressed and neat, you act more secure and at ease.

Finally, people you meet everyday or for the first time respond to your personal appearance by forming impressions that can last forever. Your appearance reveals your personality, values, attitudes, interests, knowledge, and you won't like to be seen as irresponsible or ignorant or careless by the people around you. When you create a positive image, people will respect you and will want to become friends with you or work with you.

All in all, personal appearance is essential as it affects the image you have about yourself as well the opinion other people will form about you.

## ON VALUES

In my opinion no value, including moral values can be enforced. A set of values is a matter of choice, it is not something that other people force you to believe in. No value justify force.

Each person should be allowed to choose his/her values even if he/she makes mistakes. However, parents, teachers and other people close to that person should try to help him/her choose right. If the person makes mistakes and realizes that the values he believed won't lead him/her anywhere then the person can choose other values which may work this time. Such things happen and they shouldn't be disregarded, because our personality and character aren't shaped at once, but in time. At one

point in our life, we may choose to value fame for instance. It takes time to realize that fame does not mean anything, it is just a fake coin.

We all choose what we think is right or good for us, but it does not mean that what we choose is really right or good. Some cannot distinguish between what is good and what is wrong, but life will punish them in the end. We don't have to try to make them act in a way we know it is right, because if they don't believe it, they won't do it.

When we believe in something, it is hard for other people to convince us that we are not right. Only time and bad experience will make us change our mind. Forcing people to be good or honest will not make them really good or honest, they will just pretend to be, or will become worse or more dishonest.

To sum up, enforcing moral values on people is not advisable but each of us should be advised, influenced in many subtle ways to value things which will help us be content with who we are.

## ON MEDIA

Many people generally agree that the press, or media, has immense political and social power, thanks to the fact that it can be used to shape societies while giving news and commentaries.

In the United States, for instance, the media is often called the fourth branch of government (or "fourth estate") because of its role in monitoring the political process, in preventing politicians' abuses in the democratic process.





First, the role of the media to inform people about events which could affect their lives is extremely important. Access to information is essential to democracy as it allows citizens to make responsible, informed choices rather than acting out of ignorance or misinformation. If, for instance the media informs people about a product which is dangerous to people's health or about a natural disaster which is about to occur in an area, then people will be able to make the right decisions to save their lives.

Second, media helps shape public opinion. A clever choice of words can make things seem different than they are. Quite often, journalists comment or interpret events to suit the interests of a certain economic group and it is very difficult for the readers to find out the truth behind these commentaries. If, for instance a product is advertised in a newspaper or on TV, people will have the tendency to buy it, believing it is very good, although it is not. This is the reason why we need to be careful when we adopt a position which is strongly supported in a newspaper or another.

Finally, mass media affects politics greatly. The public's point of view is changed by the way the news is reported.

When the public's views are affected, the voting polls are too. In turn, when votes are changed, different public officials are elected. The government officials are the men and women who make the laws and generally run the country. At the same time, media serves as a "checking function", putting pressure on the elected representatives to keep their promises and carry out the wishes of those who elected them.

In conclusion, media has the power to change things, to make them better or worse and we should not disregard its role in our lives.

## ON EXPRESSING VIEWS

I often think about what makes us so different since we grow up in similar backgrounds, go to the same school, attend the same classes, and share similar interests for some time. Somehow, over the years we realise that the differences are so big that we can't or don't want to make a compromise to make our friendship continue. We have become estranged and there is no regret when we put an end to our long friendship just because it happens once or twice to express different views about something more or less important. We don't know how and why such things happen and more importantly some of us don't bother to think about. A question of character indeed!

Everybody is entitled to an opinion, and you should accept it although it is different from yours. As long as this opinion doesn't not affect your life or other people's lives in a significant way you should be tolerant and open-minded to consider that people have different views on things or events and that they are not

necessarily bad or unacceptable. However, if you want to know if a person is a true friend, lover or boss, pay attention to their opinion of the world. It reveals all. Such people will affect your life and you need to be careful when you choose your friends, partners or career.

A person's opinion of the world they live in becomes a test for their strength of character. Some people are aware of the truth in this statement, other aren't or don't bother to think about it. This is the reason why we should be careful when we express our views. The tone, the gestures accompanying our words can also be meaningful. In many cases we can hurt other people when claiming that only our opinion is right. People who do such things are selfish, arrogant and self-sufficient and they should be avoided.

What we are is the result of many interactions we have had: the people we met at one time in our life, the experiences we had, the books we read, the music we listened to. We remain connected to issues, events and people to whom we have been connected in the past, for good or ill. These connections can lose their usefulness, and even become toxic, but nevertheless remain in place through inertia, or habit ... or lack of better alternatives.

In the end it is hard to say if the views we express are ours or somebody else's, but it is up to us what we do with these views and how we express them.

## ON LIFE

*“The game of life is not so much in holding a good hand as playing a poor hand well.”*

The quotation defines life as a game in which the ability to play the game seems

to be the most important. If life is a game, then there must be some rules you have to obey in order to play this game, but these rules are not mentioned, as if they have no importance at all. What is emphasized though is the way in which you manage to turn a disadvantageous situation to your advantage. In other words, it is less important to have everything you need for a good life – „to hold a good hand”- because you can lose everything in an instant or you won't know what to do with it. It is much better to know how to use everything to your advantage, even if you hold a poor hand”. If you play well, chances are that you'll be successful in life.



When defining life as a game, you should also include concepts such as competition, battle, effort, self-control, concentration and skills. There are losers and winners in a game, especially in a game of cards as the one suggested in the quotation, and if you want to win you have to learn some skills, you have to learn how to compete, how to fight, how to put effort, how to control your emotions, and how to concentrate. Where can you learn all these things in order „to play a poor hand well”? I guess there is no school where you can go to learn them, it's just learning by

doing, making mistakes and learning from them, trying and failing several times until, eventually, learning to play well.

The attitude towards life as a game also implies chance, although the author of the quotation does not suggest it. Perhaps, chance is less relevant in any game as success in the long term cannot be associated with chance. You can be lucky once or twice, but not always. If you don't know how to play, you'll end up losing everything. If you don't learn how to live, if you don't learn how to use a bad situation to your advantage, if you rely on what you have and know, without wanting to have or know more, then you'll waste your life.

### ON REALITY TV

Reality television is defined as "a genre of television programming that documents unscripted situations and actual occurrences, often featuring a previously unknown cast". Although reality television is supposed to be highly entertaining and to have a positive impact on its viewers, in my opinion it does more harm than good.

First, reality television has little to do with reality. Reality shows, such as Star Academy, Big Brother, Got Talent, Top Model, MasterChef and Dancing with the Stars, Who Wants to Be a Millionaire and The Bachelor have become global franchises and local versions have appeared in lots of countries. The show is the same in every country although each country or nationality differs greatly from another.

Moreover, participants in reality television shows are placed in artificial situations, not real ones. For instance, they have to live with a group of people in a flat for a

month, without contacting their family or friends and are told what to say or how to behave.

Furthermore, reality television shows often end up humiliating participants who are asked to perform in all sorts of scenes, some extremely vulgar, that reveal the worst part of their personality. In addition to this, we have the impression that people take part in such shows for fun, but in fact, they do it for money.

Participants are paid to take part in the show and the winners are paid with an impressive sum of money. They all made to believe that they can get money easily, that what they do is worth a lot of money, which is obviously not true. What is even worse is that reality television shows try to make its viewers believe that such things are possible for anyone, anytime.



In conclusion, reality television shows may be meant to entertain people and to make celebrities out of ordinary people in ordinary or extraordinary situations, but their effect is contrary.

They promote vulgarity, materialism and fake role-models who do not deserve fame or recognition as they have never done anything valuable in their lives.



## ON LEARNING FROM MISTAKES

*A man should never be ashamed to own he has been in the wrong, which is but saying, in other words, that he is wiser today than he was yesterday. - Alexander Pope*

Do we learn more from finding out that we had made mistakes or from our successful actions?

I believe Alexander Pope is right in saying that people should never be ashamed to admit they have been wrong, that that they have made mistakes, but most people do not agree with me. Moreover, even if they believe it is right to do such a thing, they will never apply it in their life.

First, most people are afraid to admit they make mistakes, as they believe that they will be considered vulnerable, weak or incompetent by the people around, be at work, at school or in the community, in general. So, instead of telling the truth, such people end up lying to their colleagues or classmates, and even worse lying to themselves. They forget that nobody is perfect, that it is in our human nature to make mistakes and they ignore that admitting you are wrong reveals your strength of character, your self-confidence.

Let's take an example, perhaps too simple and common, but quite relevant in this case. There are students who do not obey the rules of the school, and when they are caught, they simply deny having disobeyed one rule or another. They keep on lying, pretending they are innocent, although they know for sure it was the other way around. They do not take responsibility for what they do and this is, in my opinion a sign of weakness and lack of character. They do not want to learn anything from their experiences, bad as they were, and they

will not be wiser the next day or later on in the future.

Furthermore, people should learn both from their mistakes and from their successes. In fact, they should learn from every experience they have, but, once again, in reality things are different.

Perhaps, in this case it is much more difficult than the case of admitting our mistakes, because our success or failure does not depend entirely on us in all circumstances. There are so many factors we should consider: obstacles from the outside, difficulties that cannot be predicted, all sorts of things we cannot control.

However, a reasonable person will be able to learn from the mistakes he/she has made, trying hard not to repeat them and – similarly – will keep in mind what contributed to his/her success, trying to repeat it over and over.

For instance, I have learned a lesson from the mistakes I made during the exams I took last year. I had been learning all night before the exams and in the morning I found it hard to concentrate. I promised to myself that I would never do it again before an exam. Then, I have learned that I am successful when I work hard for my success. So, I do not expect to be successful in something because I am lucky or I deserve it without doing anything.

To conclude, although I am aware that most people believe that it is not advisable to admit that you make mistakes and that you can learn from them, I will continue to believe the contrary and try to stick to my principles.



## ON EDUCATION

The system of education in our country requires that all students be able to „climb trees”. Although each student is unique in one way or another, all of them have to take the same tests and pass the same exams. If they do not, they are labelled as lazy or irresponsible.

Educators have the same standards for everybody and students who cannot meet them are doomed to bear a stigma all their life. They end up losing their self-confidence, giving up their dreams and aspirations. Why trying, when everybody expects you to fail over and over again?

This system is not fair. I believe things have to change. Schools should be places in which students are helped to discover what they are good at and encouraged to work to become what they want. Not all the students can excel in English or Maths, they may excel in sports or repairing things. To me, it is much better to be an excellent mechanic than a bad teacher.

All in all, should schools try to discover „the genius” in each of us, we could become more efficient in our jobs, more content with our lives and, perhaps, nicer to each other.

## ON TEACHERS

*The task of the modern educator is not to cut down jungles, but to irrigate deserts. - C.S. Lewis*

I believe the statement above is true since we live in the 21st century and educators need new approaches in their job. Technology and science have advanced to unexpected levels and students are exposed to them from an early age. It would be wrong, it would be a waste of time to teach them what they already know, or to teach them in a way that used to be efficient yesterday but may not be as efficient today.

Modern educators do not need to start from nothing in their attempt to educate their students. At home, in the street, in a store, in the park, children benefit from an education – less formal than the one at school. When children go to school, they know a lot of things and teachers should use this to their advantage.

Teachers-educators in general- should not ignore the fact that the students’ mind is not like a white piece of paper or a wild place- a jungle- waiting to be filled with knowledge. Knowledge is already there. Children come to school with their own knowledge and skills that need to be refined, enriched, enhanced. The task of educators today is perhaps more subtle- they don’t have to cut down jungles as they have been already cut down by means of other forms of education.

What is then the task of modern educators? A very difficult one, in my opinion- to irrigate deserts, that is to find ways to motivate students who are already tired of being exposed to so much knowledge. It is as if students have had everything they

need, but too much use has changed everything into sand, into a multitude of sand dunes which seem irrelevant and unrealistic. What educators should do is to bring a fresh approach into the way they do their job, offering „water” to drink to those ones too thirsty of knowledge, today too shallow to stir.

In conclusion, modern educators should be able to stimulate their students to do things, feeding them as water feeds dry lands or deserts. To irrigate deserts is almost impossible and so is the task of educators when it comes to motivating them to continue learning.

## ON YOUTH

*„Youth is wasted on the young”*

I believe the statement belongs to an old man or woman who envies young people for their youth. At the same time, it is implied that young people do not deserve to enjoy the benefits of their age, as they are probably ignorant or foolish. Although, there may be some young people who waste their lives without thinking of the consequences of their foolish acts, the majority of young people manage to live a decent life. In my opinion, it is wrong to say that young people should not be given the right to enjoy their youth..

First of all, when you are young, you have no experience and you can make many mistakes, but nobody is perfect, and nobody knows from the start which way to choose and why. As long as you learn from your mistakes and take responsibility for them it is quite normal to make mistakes once in a while. To say that people who make mistakes do not deserve to enjoy life is exaggerated. Indeed, youth is the right

age for trial and error, because at this age people are inexperienced.

Later on, when they approach middle or old age, mistakes should become rare. Old people who make mistakes or persist in making them are ridiculous. Furthermore, young people are free of obligations and constraints and can get involved in all sorts of adventures, activities and events which will help them gain experience and live life to the full. When should people live to the full? When they are old, tired and probably ill? It is too late for old people to start enjoying life if they didn't enjoy it when they were young. They may not even know how to do it.

To sum up, youth is special, but so are all the ages and stages in our life and we deserve to live all of them to the full, with their good and bad parts. To be deprived of the benefits of youth when you are young is unfair to any human being who was once young, made mistakes, but managed to learn important lessons from them.

## PORTRAIT OF MYSELF AS A YOUNG ARTIST - A STEP TO SELF-KNOWLEDGE AND SELF-DEVELOPMENT

A large group of EGB students took part in a national drama contest which included several long mandatory stages and activities. The contest is part of an ample project –Portrait of myself as a young artist- A step to self-knowledge and self-development- whose first aim was to celebrate 450 years since William Shakespeare's birth.

The EGB students performed and recorded a selection of the best moments



from the following plays: "The Merchant of Venice"( 9th E), "Romeo and Juliet" (10th E), "The Tempest" (10th F), "A Midsummer Night's Dream"( 11th F) and Hamlet( 9th D).



Although almost all the students/ actors worked hard to learn their part, some students stood out from the crowd by exhibiting natural talent or genuine interest for drama. We should mention Edy Gafton- a very convincing Romeo-, Gaby Pauliuc- a spectacular Friar Lawrence, Adria Buboiu-a playful Puck, Cristina Filo –a sensitive Helena, Beatrice Farcutiu- a fisty Hermia, Ionut Barbura- an imposing Oberon, Andrei Toma – a credible Hamlet, Lorena Troi- a surprising Prospero, Cosma Monica- a fragile Miranda, Alexandru Oltean – a sensible Lysander, or Raluca Bajura whose Shylock was incredibly funny..

There were some unforgettable scenes such as the Knights'Dance in Romeo and Juliet with Robert Bogdan, Ariana Deac , Teodora Ardelea, Patricia Rus and Piera Cuzman as stars or the funny scenes featuring Trinculo and Stephano (Sara Simtion and Cristina Zaha).

We should also mention the elegance of the fairies in the performance of the 11th F

students as well as the seriousness with which all the 9th E students got involved in the project.



And the good news! The EGB students were declared „Winners of the month” in this national contest and were highly appreciated for their work.

### A MOVIE REVIEW

*Found somewhere on the net*

*As I was trying to write a good movie review for my English class I came across a review- quite long, though- I really enjoyed. I wish I could write like this one day. Till then, read the model below! It could be useful to you too.*

The 2013 *The Great Gatsby*, directed by Baz Luhrmann, is style over substance, a glorious feast for the eyes and occasionally

the ears that's at once majestically overblown and lacking in depth.

Based on Fitzgerald's acclaimed novel, the movie finds acting as the voice of reason and the entry into a tale of love and murder for the audience. Nick's a decent man, a struggling writer who just happens to live next door to a charismatic, enigmatic millionaire whose mansion is the site of New York's most decadent parties. The champagne flows freely at Jay Gatsby's gorgeous mansion, and the party guests are from all walks of life. Bootleggers rub elbows with politicians, socialites share the dance floor with actors and sports figures, and everything about Gatsby's parties is done to excess.

But Jay has a quiet, controlled side and only one reason for throwing these fabulous parties: to win back the love of his life, Daisy Buchanan. Now married to Tom, a rich, philandering man from a wealthy family, Daisy (Carey Mulligan) is the reason Jay has done whatever it takes to amass wealth. Calling on Nick to set up a meeting, Daisy and Jay are finally reunited after five years of being apart. But love isn't enough to chase away either Jay or Daisy's demons and their reunion is doomed to be short-lived.

As for the cast, DiCaprio makes for a fantastic Jay Gatsby. Equally well cast is Tobey Maguire as the real heart and soul of the tale. Carey Mulligan is simply breathtaking as Daisy Buchanan, bringing a vulnerability and sweetness to the role as well as an air of instability.

Baz Luhrmann has taken everything to the extreme in bringing this latest take on F. Scott Fitzgerald's jazzy classic to life on

the big screen. What Luhrmann's version of *The Great Gatsby* lacks in emotional depth it attempts to make up for in spectacularly staged scenes full of brilliantly colorful costumes and characters.

Unfortunately, the movie is ultimately flashy and energetic but never emotionally engaging.



### *The 50 Best Short Stories of All Time*

The short story is sometimes an under-appreciated art form. Within the space of a few pages, an author must weave a story that's compelling, create characters readers care about and drive the story to its ultimate conclusion — a feat that can be difficult to accomplish even with a great degree of savvy.

Yet these authors have mastered the art of the short story, turning condensed pieces into memorable works of literature that stick with readers long after they've finished. So if you're looking for something to read, get you into literature or just keep you entertained, pick up one of these short stories we have selected for you:

1. *Fall of the House of Usher* by Edgar Allan Poe

2. *The Necklace* by Guy de Maupassant
3. *The Fly* by Katherine Mansfield
4. *A Hunger Artist* by Franz Kafka
5. *The Lame Shall Enter First* by Flannery O'Connor
6. *The Ones Who Walk Away From Omelas* by Ursula K LeGuin -
7. *The Use of Force* by William Carlos Williams
8. *The Very Old Man with Enormous Wings* by Gabriel Garcia Marquez
9. *Harrison Bergeron* by Kurt Vonnegut, Jr.
10. *The South* by Jorge Luis Borges
11. *The Swimmer* by John Cheever
12. *The Second Bakery Attack* by Haruki Murakami:.
13. *Brokeback Mountain* by Annie Proulx
14. *Three Questions* by Leo Tolstoy
15. *The Secret Life of Walter Mitty* by James Thurber
16. *The Pedestrian* by Ray Bradbury
17. *A Rose for Emily* by William Faulkner
18. *An Occurrence at Owl Creek Bridge* by Ambrose Bierce
19. *A Holiday Task* by H.H. Munro (Saki)
20. *A Telephone Call* by Dorothy Parker
21. *The Fifth Column and the First Forty-Nine Stories* by Ernest Hemingway( Collection)
22. *I, Robot* by Issac Asimov (Collection)
23. *Olive Kitteridge* by Elizabeth Strout (Collection)
24. *The Things They Carried* by Tim O'Brien(Collection)
25. *Dubliners* by James Joyce (Collection)
26. *Nine Stories* by JD Salinger
27. *Steps* by Jerzy Kosinski(Collection)
28. *Lying Under the Apple Tree* by Alice Munro(Collection)
29. *The Lady With The Dog and Other Stories*, by Anton Chekhov

30. *The Complete Cosmicomics* by Italo Calvino(Collection)

### **MUSIC-PINK MARTINI**



Pink Martini is a musical group that was formed in 1994 by pianist Thomas Lauderdale in Portland, Oregon. Describing itself as a "little orchestra," its music crosses genres such as classical, latin, jazz and classic pop. The lead vocalist and principal songwriter for Pink Martini is China Forb.

Pink Martini's debut album *Sympathique* was released in 1997 and quickly became an international phenomenon, and the group got nominations for "Song of the Year" and "Best New Artist". Pink Martini released *Hang On Little Tomato* in 2004, *Hey Eugene!* in 2007 and *Splendor in the Grass* in 2009.

In November 2010 the band released *Joy To The World*—a festive holiday album featuring songs from around the globe. *Joy To The World* received glowing reviews and was carried in Starbucks stores during the 2010 and 2011 holiday seasons..

In Fall 2011 the band released an album – *A Retrospective*, a collection of the band's most beloved songs in their 17-year career,



Pink Martini songs appear in such films as *In the Cut*, *Nurse Betty*, *Josie and the Pussycats*, *Tortilla Soup*, *Shanghai Kiss*, *Mary and Max*, and *Mr. & Mrs. Smith* and have been used on television shows such as *Dead Like Me*, *The Sopranos*, *The West Wing*, *Castle* and *Sherlock*.

Their song "Una notte a Napoli" is an integral part of the Italian movie *Mine Vaganti* (2010). The song "No Hay Problema" is included as background/setup music for Microsoft's Windows Server 2003 and was also used as the background/setup music for an early build of Windows Longhorn, now known as Windows Vista.

## **FASHION: WHAT'S IN AND OUT**

Are you sick of "In/Out" lists yet? Neither are we. We've been clicking through them as voraciously as we plowed through the first season of *"Orange is the New Black"* (definitely on the "in" list).

For our list, we decided to do the politics and pop culture roundups one better. This version features what you really need to know: the top beauty and fashion trends for 2014 -- plus the ones we're phasing out.

**Nail Polish:** Emerald had its moment in 2013, but this year is all about Radiant Orchid, and we've already started stockpiling everything from eye shadow to nail polish in this pretty purple shade.

**Skirts.** Midi skirts came in this fall, and they're sticking around through next year. From floral brocades to solid satins and full shapes to pencil-straight, they come in a range of fabrics, patterns and cuts. Wear one and

suddenly any too-short mini in your closet feels completely inappropriate.



**Lipstick:** We all loved the dark, wine-stained, vampy lips that were so huge for fall -- even if they were almost impossible to wear in real life. This year's must-try lip shade is orange.

**Bags.** Forget broadcasting your favorite designer all over your handbag. The trendiest bags right now are simple totes in classic colors made with seriously high-end materials.

### **Footwear.**

Please step away from the high-heeled basketball shoes. Sure, they're comfortable and give you the extra three inches you've always wanted, but they're just so ... well, wrong. Besides, store shelves are practically exploding with an array of cool boots -- most of which are now on sale.

Over-the-knee styles, cool-yet-casual motos, comfy booties. We know you'll find a pair you like just as much as your beloved wedge sneakers.

## A fascination with football

Football is truly the world's sport. It is played in every nation on earth by more than 300 million people. It is the number one sport in the majority of countries and it also attracts the largest number of spectators. Football is also a major global industry complete with multimillion-dollar player contracts, merchandising and high earning teams.



But who was the first nation to play football? Many sources point to evidence of a game involving members of the Chinese military during the Han Dynasty kicking a ball from as early as 3,000 years ago. A similar game is said to have been played in Japan around 1004 BC and, „interestingly, third century Chinese frescoes show women playing a game involving kicking a ball”. The Greeks and ancient Romans are also said to have played a type of game involving kicking a ball. Similarly, the North American Indians are said to have played a game called pasuckuakohowog.

Yet, regardless of where football began, Britain is where modern association football/soccer is said to have truly been born. It most likely started as a game of war played to celebrate victories, and has been a popular sport of the British since the 8th century. In the Middle Ages, villages and towns played against each other.

Hundreds of spectators turned out to watch what is best described as „mob football”, given the large numbers of players, the

lack of rules and regulations and the high incidences of violence. The games could last all day. In the 1820s football somehow became as popular in English colleges and universities as it was on the streets, and the roots of the organised game we know today emerged. A set of strict rules, including the length of time, number of players, size of pitch, disciplinary sanctions was adopted.



The **FIFA World Cup** is an international association football competition contested by the men's national teams of the members of *Fédération Internationale de Football Association* (FIFA), the sport's global governing body. The championship has been awarded every four years since the inaugural tournament in 1930, except in 1942 and 1946 when it was not held because of the Second World War.

The 19 World Cup tournaments have been won by eight different national teams. Brazil have won five times, and they are the only team to have played in every tournament. The other World Cup winners are Italy, with four titles; West Germany, with three titles; Argentina and inaugural winners Uruguay, with two titles each; and England, France, and Spain, with one title each. The 2014 FIFA World Cup is currently being contested in Brazil.

## PLANS FOR HOLIDAYS?

**Crete** is the largest and most populous of the Greek islands, the fifth-largest island in the Mediterranean Sea, and one of the thirteen administrative regions of Greece. The capital and the largest city of Crete is Heraklion. It forms a significant part of the economy and cultural heritage of Greece while retaining its own local cultural traits (such as its own poetry, and music). Crete was once the center of the Minoan civilization (c. 2700–1420 BC), which is currently regarded as the earliest recorded civilization in Europe.

Crete has two climatic zones, the Mediterranean and the North African. As such, the climate in Crete is primarily temperate. The atmosphere can be quite humid, depending on the proximity to the sea, while winter is fairly mild.

Snowfall is common on the mountains between November and May, but rare in the low lying areas. During the Cretan summer, average temperatures reach the high 20s-low 30s Celsius , with maxima touching the upper 30s-mid 40.

Crete is one of the most popular holiday destinations in Greece. Fifteen percent of all arrivals in Greece come through the city of Heraklion. Overall, more than two million tourists visit Crete each year.

Today, the island's tourism infrastructure caters to all tastes, including a very wide range of accommodation; the island's facilities take in large luxury hotels with their complete facilities, swimming pools, sports and recreation, smaller family-owned apartments, camping facilities and others. Popular tourist attractions include

the archaeological sites of the Minoan civilisation, the Venetian old city and port of Chania, the Venetian castle at Rethymno, the gorge of Samaria, the islands of Chrysi, Elafonisi, Gramvousa, and Spinalonga and the Palm Beach of Vai, which is the largest natural palm forest in Europe.

The island is known for its Mantinades-based music and dances, the most noted of which is the Pentozali.

Cretan authors have made important contributions to Greek Literature throughout the modern period; major names include Vikentios Kornaros, creator of the 17th century epic romance Erotokritos , and in the 20th century Nikos Kazantzakis..



Cretans are very proud of their island and customs, and men often don elements of traditional dress in everyday life: knee-high black riding boots or a black shirt and black-headress.



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