

# SCHOOL LIVE

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## 2025 A Space Odyssey

Is Green Energy Really Clean?

The Ultimate Chess Game

Puppy Love



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## ed-note

## inside



The devastating earthquake that rocked Myanmar and Thailand has sent shockwaves across the region. The loss of lives and resources in our neighbourhood is a stark reminder of the uncertain times we live in. India, though fortunate to have escaped major damage, felt the tremors of the 7.6 magnitude at the epicentre of the earthquake.

The past month has brought some uplifting news, too. The safe return of astronauts Sunita Williams and Barry Wilmore from their space odyssey has been a thrilling moment, watched by millions around the world.

The academic year is drawing to a close, and schools are abuzz with excitement. Exam season is winding down, and anticipation for the new session is building up. A growing debate about the role of technology in education is also underway. Will schools adopt a more balanced approach, blending traditional methods with digital tools? Or will there be a shift back towards the basics – blackboards, paper, and pen?

Change is inevitable, and the future holds much uncertainty. Whether it's the rise of AI, machine learning, or a return to traditional teaching methods, we must adapt and evolve. The next big thing in education might just be a return to the basics.

Here's to a happy and fulfilling new academic year!

**Hariharan Balagopal**

- Will Power!**  
 Williams and Wilmore land safely on Earth after 286 days in space!
- Quirky Pathways To Success!**  
 Explore the weird and wonderful world of unconventional study choices.
- Battle Of The Brains!**  
 Human brain vs. AI : Who reigns supreme? Place your bets!
- Digital Detox In Classrooms?**  
 Conversation has begun around getting back to books and paper in classrooms! Join the movement to reduce screen time and revitalize classroom learning.
- Timeless Wisdom!**  
 Leo Tolstoy's "God Sees the Truth but Waits" continues to inspire 100 years after its publication; a story retold probably a millionth time!
- Champions Again!**  
 India wins the Pakistan-hosted Champions Trophy 2025 in style, breaking records - and hearts in the neighbourhood!
- The Edge Is Double-Edged!**  
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- Pathfinder**  
 An out-of-the-box decoding of the recipe for success.
- Galactic Gambit**  
 Get ready for a wacky inter-galactic chess match - aliens welcome!

School Live has something for everyone. Share with your friends and relatives!

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SCHOOL LIVE - THE ONLY COMPLETE EDUTAINMENT MONTHLY FOR SCHOOL STUDENTS AND THEIR PARENTS



**Ms. Vandana Midhaa, Principal  
Delhi Public School,  
Siddharth Vihar, Ghaziabad (UP)**

**NASA** astronauts Barry Wilmore and Sunita Williams' safe landing back on Earth after their remarkable 286-day journey aboard the International Space Station is a testament to human determination, curiosity, and the unrelenting pursuit of excellence. This incredible feat reminds us that success is often the result of careful planning, perseverance, and a willingness to take risks for the progress of human kind.

At School LIVE, we're committed to providing a well-rounded perspective on education and learning. We explore a wide range of topics, from science and technology to art and culture, to prepare students for success in all areas of life. Our goal is to empower our readers to become creative problem-solvers, effective communicators, and compassionate individuals.

But we also believe that learning should be fun! That's why we feature quirky stories and fascinating facts that will make you go "wow!" or "huh?" or even "wait, what?!" Our aim is to inspire curiosity, spark imagination, and foster a love for learning that will stay with our readers throughout their lives.

In this issue, you'll discover more amazing stories and fascinating facts that will blow your mind. From the weird to the wonderful, we've got it all covered. So sit back, relax, and get ready to learn something new!

*As educators, we recognize the importance of instilling values like determination and perseverance in our students. But let's be real, who needs astronauts when you have the world's greatest miser, who can squeeze a dollar till it begs for mercy? Or the metal-eater man, who can munch on a metal pipe like it's a snack? These individuals may not be flying to space, but they're certainly pushing the boundaries of human capability.*

*We're passionate about creating a platform that's engaging, informative, and entertaining. We believe that learning should be a lifelong journey, not a chore. That's why we're committed to providing content that's relevant, relatable, and fun.*

*The stories and topics covered by School LIVE month after month inspire children to make the most of their school life, stay relevant to contemporary trends and topics, and build a strong foundation of general knowledge that will stay with them throughout their career.*

*So, whether you're a student, teacher, or simply someone who loves to learn, we invite you to join us on this journey of discovery and exploration. Who knows what amazing things you'll learn along the way?*

**Vandana Midhaa**



# Unusual to a Degree!

*These quirky study choices may not only tickle your fancy but open up new job opportunities...*



## Metalsmithing

The courses include the study of Fine Arts and a broad-based metals education. This includes creating jewellery and other works of art from metals as well as functional objects, hollowware, enamelling, rendering, gemology, product design and metal business practice, to name a few.

There are shorter courses as well as degree programmes that open up careers in jewellery making as an independent artist, in museum work or academia.

## Music Therapy

This is a specialised exploration of using music as a therapeutic tool to address psychological, emotional and social needs. Theoretical foundations with hands-on clinical training provide students with the skills to assess clients' needs and design tailored music-based interventions. There are certificate courses as well as PG diplomas. Graduates find careers in clinical settings, private practice or community programmes.



## Viking and Medieval Norse Studies

These courses offer an interdisciplinary approach to the study of medieval Nordic texts and artefacts. Medieval and modern Scandinavian languages, history, textual criticism, palaeography, runology, folklore, religion, art and archaeology are some of the subjects offered. There are undergraduate and postgraduate programmes that usually involve studying at multiple Nordic universities. Jobs are usually in education, media and publishing, research and the arts.



## Theme Park Engineering

This curriculum draws from structural, electrical, civil and mechanical engineering. It covers hydraulics, electrical power, mechanical systems and control mechanisms, geotechnical engineering, structural analysis, waste management as well as layout design with creative and computer skills.

One can get a bachelor's or a master's degree that equips graduates to design and construct not just theme parks, but also museum exhibits and sports facilities.



## Manga Studies

This is an interdisciplinary study and appreciation of contemporary Japanese animation focusing on its aesthetic, thematic, social and historical contexts. The course involves scholarly inquiry into anime, manga and their related media and fan practices as well as its impact on Japanese culture, national identity, gender roles, semiotics and narratology. There is a range of doctorate programmes offered in the field.



# Knowledge Hub!



**1.** Which of the following plays a key role in regulating coagulation of blood?

- a. Vitamin D
- b. Vitamin A
- c. Vitamin K

**2.** On which of these historical movements is Charles Dickens' book *A Tale of Two Cities* based?

- a. October Revolution
- b. French Revolution
- c. American Revolution

**3.** Which of these awards is conferred by UNESCO?

- a. Magsaysay Award
- b. Pulitzer Prize
- c. Kalinga Prize

**4.** Which of the following river-country pairs is incorrect?

- a. Tigris-Iraq
- b. Seine-Italy
- c. Danube-Germany

**5.** In which continent is the Sonoran Desert located?

- a. North America
- b. South America
- c. Europe

**6.** Greenland, the largest island in the world, is a part of

- a. Finland
- b. Denmark
- c. Iceland

**7.** Gautam Buddha preached during the reign of

- a. Bimbisara
- b. Ajatashatru
- c. Chandragupta

**8.** In the fictional game of Quidditch name the ball that must be caught to end the game.

- a. Broomstick
- b. Bludgers
- c. Golden Snitch

**9.** Which of these cities has the largest railway station in the world?

- a. Mumbai
- b. New York
- c. Shanghai

**10.** Who created the fictional detective, Hercule Poirot?

- a. Agatha Christie
- b. Arthur Conan Doyle
- c. Dorothy Sayers

**11.** What is the main constituent of haemoglobin?

- a. Chlorine
- b. Iron
- c. Calcium

**12.** In which state is the National Institute of Water Sports located?

- a. Kerala
- b. Maharashtra
- c. Goa

**13.** Pyrenees is the name of a mountain range in which continent?

- a. Europe
- b. Asia
- c. Australia

**14.** Name the American pop singer famed for her role in the television series *Hannah Montana*.

- a. Selena Gomez
- b. Miley Cyrus
- c. Emily Osment

**15.** Red blood cells have a life of

- a. 3–4 days
- b. 30 days
- c. 3–4 months

**Answers:** 1. Vitamin K 2. French Revolution 3. Kalinga Prize 4. Seine-Italy 5. North America 6. Denmark 7. Bimbisara 8. Golden Snitch 9. Grand Central Terminal in New York City 10. Agatha Christie 11. Iron 12. Goa 13. Europe 14. Miley Cyrus 15. 3–4 months



# Can Water Flow Upwards?

*Suppose you have two bottles of water (without lids) and you invert one bottle over the other, gravity would make the water from the bottle on top flow down. Let's find out if it is possible for the water from the bottle at the bottom to flow up.*

## You will need:

Two identical, transparent plastic bottles with wide mouths; hot water; cold water; red or any other food colouring; a piece of thick cardboard; and, a tray.

## What you do:

1. Fill one bottle with hot water upto the brim. Add red colour to the water. Place the bottle on a tray, on a table.
2. Fill the second bottle with cold water. Use the cardboard piece as a lid.
3. Holding the lid tightly so that the water does not spill out, invert the bottle of cold water over the bottle of hot water in such a way that the mouths of the bottles are exactly on top of each other and the card lid is between them.
4. Now gently pull out the card lid—get someone to pull it out as you will need to hold the two bottles.

## What do you find?

You will see the coloured, hot water flowing upwards into the bottle containing cold water. After a while, you will find that the water in both the bottles gets coloured.

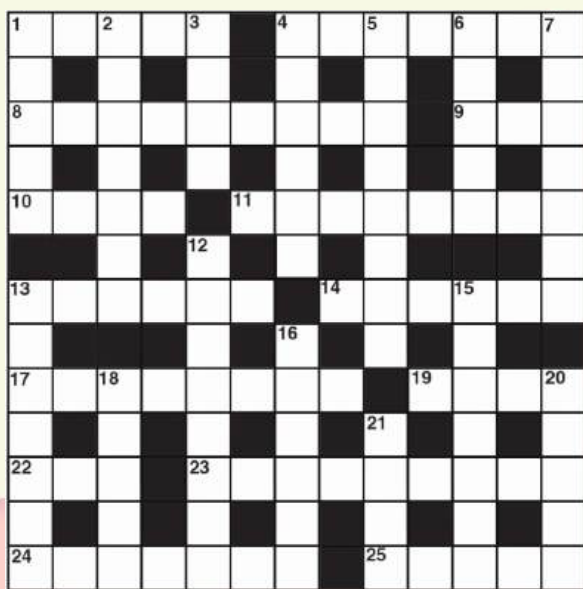
## How does this happen?

Hot water is lighter than cold water and hence the light, hot, coloured water flows up into the bottle on top. The cold water moves down simultaneously and hence the water in both the bottles becomes coloured after a while.

— Dr. Venugopal



## Crossword



### Across:

1. Gloomy and dark (5)
4. Mocking laugh (7)
8. 17th-century Dutch painter (9)
9. Edible fruit kernel (3)
10. Warmth (4)
11. Basketball direct shot (4, 4)
13. Whitening chemical (6)
14. Smallest bone (in ear) (6)
17. What Rudolph the reindeer was (3-5)
19. Elevator inventor (4)
22. Possess (3)
23. Variety of peach (9)
24. Fascinate (7)
25. Underground tomb in church (5)

### Down:

1. Swamp (5)
2. Run amok (7)
3. Three feet measure (4)
4. Weak due to old age (6)
5. Closely acquainted (8)
6. Long white robe worn by East African men (5)
7. Films a scene again (7)
12. Sailing ship with many masts (8)
13. Machine-readable series of numbers (7)
15. Frighten into immobility (7)
16. Writing instrument (6)
18. Ring-shaped fried confection (5)
20. Exhausted (5)
21. Softest mineral (4)

**Answers:**  
 Across: 1. Murky 4. Snicker 8. Rembrandt 9. Nut 10. Heat 11. Slam dunk 13. Bleach 14. Stapes 17. Red-nosed 19. Otis 22. Own 23. Nectarine 24. Enthal 25. Crypt  
 Down: 1. Marsh 2. Rampage 3. Yard 4. Senile 5. Intimate 6. Kanzu 7. Retakes 12. Schooner 13. Barcode 15. Petrify 16. Donut 20. Spent 21. Talc

## A Quick Think

1. What is it that you can crack, tell or play?
2. What kind of coat is always wet when you put it on?
3. On which side of a jug is its handle?



4. When is 'L' bigger than 'XL'?
5. I speak without a mouth and can hear without ears. I come alive with wind even though I have no body. What am I?

## C Death Sentence

Knucklebone, the most notorious criminal, has been sentenced to death. As the sentence is passed on the judge's day of retirement, he allows Knucklebone to choose his own way to die. Knucklebone gives his reply in three words. What are they?



## D Missing Numbers

Fill the grid with numbers from 1 to 16 in such a way that the sum of each row, column and diagonal add up to 34.

5		15	
	9		
2			13
		1	

## B Cards on the Table

Four playing cards, one from each suit, are kept facing down on a table in a row. The cards are 3, 4, 5 and 6. Using the clues, can you find out each card's suit and the order in which they are kept?



- ◆ The cards on either side of the 4 are black.
- ◆ The clubs is to the right of the 3 but not next to it.
- ◆ The spades is to the left of the hearts.
- ◆ The middle two cards add up to an even number. Neither of them is a clubs.

- Answers:**
1. A joke 2. A coat of paint 3. On the outside!
  4. When using Roman numerals 5. An echo
  6. From left to right: 3 of diamonds, 6 of spades, 4 of hearts, 5 of clubs.
  7. Of old age.



# No More Thirsty Crops!

*That was Kiara Nirghin's goal when her nation South Africa was facing its worst drought in 30 years.*

THE 13-year-old of Indian origin had spent months recovering from a severe bout of illness.

But she used the down time to pursue her lifelong love for science and read research publications while pondering the challenges facing her country. Kiara cited a renowned Indian agronomist, M.S. Swaminathan, as her greatest inspiration. She was driven by a belief similar to his, that the world needed to move towards sustainable agricultural development.



Her goal became breaking the problem down into something she could solve. Her best option seemed to be creating a superabsorbent polymer (SAP). Commercially available SAPs are planted alongside crops to create mini reservoirs of water in the soil to ensure that crops have access to water even during severe stretches of dry weather. But they are expensive and contain harmful chemicals, so Kiara brainstormed a way to produce one that was biodegradable and cheap.

Kiara's research led her to discover that polymers exist naturally in most citrus fruits. Experimentation in her garage led her to ultimately create a polymerised mixture of orange peels and avocado skins that could be converted to a powder. When added to the soil, it was able to absorb and carry about 300 times its weight in liquid relative to its own mass. Best of all, it was low-cost and sustainable as it used waste peels from the fruit industry.

In 2016, the 16-year-old high school junior submitted her patented product to the Google Science Fair. It is a global programme for budding scientists between the ages of 13 to 18 who can help solve the world's biggest challenges using science and technology. Kiara's project won her the Grand Prize at the Fair. She also won the Global Google Community Impact Award.

She was recognised as one of *Time* magazine's Top 30 Most Influential Teens and was invited by Forbes and TED to speak about her work. She was also selected to sit on Facebook's Youth Board, a committee of ten young leaders from around the world.

The United Nations invited Kiara to their New York City headquarters to speak at their International Women's Day conference, giving her the opportunity to talk about education's ability to drive change and the importance of engaging young women in STEM. Her memoir, *Youth Revolution*, which chronicled her journey to the Google Science Fair, became a bestseller.

Kiara graduated from Stanford University with a computer science degree. Now 25, she co-founded a tech startup called Chima at the age of 22. The company is focused on using AI technology to solve problems for some of the world's largest companies.

# 2025 – A SPACE ODYSSEY

NASA astronauts Sunita Williams and Butch Wilmore splashed down in the Atlantic Ocean off the Florida coast, on March 18, after 286 days in space...

WHEN NASA launched astronauts Sunita Williams and Butch Wilmore into space aboard Boeing's Starliner capsule on June 5, 2024, it was meant to be only a week-long mission to the International Space Station (ISS). Their task was to check the Starliner's performance during its launch, in-orbit and re-entry.

While the Starliner's launch was smooth, the capsule's thrusters failed shortly after docking with the ISS and engineers noticed helium leaks in its fuel system. NASA decided that it was too risky to use the Starliner to bring the astronauts back home as originally planned. Williams and Wilmore had to extend their stay in space from a week to more than nine months!

Starliner was later brought back to Earth successfully, minus its passengers.

So why didn't NASA send another spaceship right away to pick up the 'stranded' astronauts? Firstly, they were

absolutely safe on the ISS and not really stranded. The ISS is not a cramped place—it is a five-bedroom well-stocked 'home' in space where scientists live and conduct research for up to six months at a time. Williams and Wilmore are both seasoned astronauts, having lived aboard the ISS for extended periods before. They simply joined the existing crew of five astronauts, conducting scientific experiments and performing regular maintenance tasks.

Secondly, space missions are planned months and years in advance. Not only are they prohibitively expensive but they also require a great deal of research and groundwork. So, NASA arranged for the duo to return on the SpaceX Crew-9 mission that was launched in September and was scheduled to return to Earth by March-end.





In addition to Sunita and Butch, were the two Crew-9 astronauts, all of whom boarded the SpaceX Dragon spacecraft from the Harmony port of the ISS for the 17-hour journey back to Earth.

A recovery ship was waiting to welcome Williams and her crew mates. Viewers were treated to the heart-warming sight of a pod of dolphins circling the capsule after it landed.

### Did You Know?

SpaceX will next launch the Axiom-4 private mission in May. IAF Group Captain Shubhanshu Shukla will pilot the Dragon spacecraft to the ISS on a 14-day sojourn, with three other astronauts. It will take India back to space nearly half a century after Rakesh Sharma's historic maiden flight.

### A Lab in Space

The International Space Station (ISS) is a permanent research laboratory in space. It orbits Earth at a distance of 350 km. The first module of the ISS was launched in 1998.

On a clear night, the ISS can be seen with the naked eye as a bright object in the sky. It is the largest object orbiting the Earth after the Moon. It travels at a speed of 27,600 km per hour, completing 16 rotations of the Earth in a day. This means the crew inside gets to see the sun rise and set 16 times in 24 hours!

The main idea of setting up the space station is to study how human beings are affected when they live in space for long periods of time, and to carry out research under zero



From L to R: Butch Wilmore, cosmonaut Aleksandr Gorbunov, Nick Hague and Sunita Williams

gravity conditions. The station is a joint venture of USA, Russia, Canada, Japan, Brazil and the member nations of the European Space Agency.

Astronauts can stay in the space station for over six months. The ISS has been continuously occupied for over 24 years now. More than 250 individuals have visited the space station, many of them multiple times. Among them are a few space tourists.

The ISS gets electricity from huge solar panels as big as basketball fields. The required level of oxygen is maintained inside the station by producing oxygen through electrolysis of water. All waste gases like carbon dioxide and ammonia that are given out by the body are automatically vented out.

Spaceships visit the station regularly with fresh supplies and take away garbage and waste matter.

Mikhail Kornienko of Russia and Scott Kelly of USA hold the joint record of spending the longest time aboard the ISS. They were part of the One-Year Mission in which they spent 342 days in space.

### Fun Fact

The ISS has over 200 food items in its menu, but no salt and pepper shakers! Liquid salt and pepper are used because regular seasonings could float away and clog air vents or contaminate equipment.



# Artificial v/s Natural

*Imagine a friend who's always available to help with your homework, play games, share jokes and chat with you, any time of night or day...!*

THESE days, that friend may not necessarily be human, but a computer program powered by Artificial Intelligence (AI).

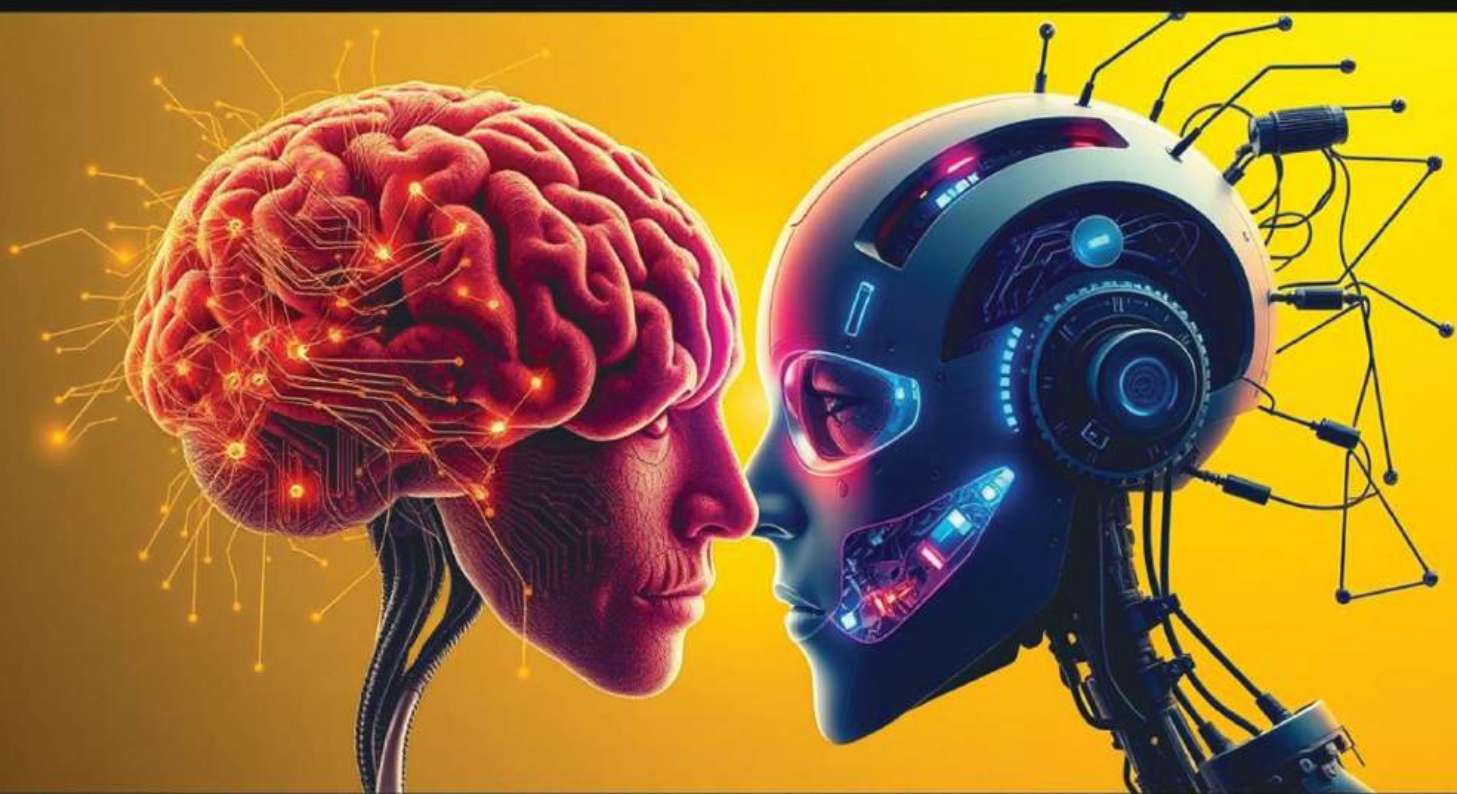
AI is a technology that allows machines to learn, solve problems, make decisions and communicate with us — well, almost! Scientists didn't have to look too far to develop AI: they

found inspiration in the way our brains work. They designed computers to mimic human intelligence and called it Artificial Intelligence, or AI for short. But how is AI inspired by human intelligence?

## **Human Intelligence**

Humans are incredible problem-solvers. We learn from experience, understand

emotions and make decisions based on logic and feelings. For example, when you see a math problem, you recall what you've learned in class and apply that knowledge to solve it. Or, when your friend is upset, you recognise their emotions and try to comfort them. This combination of thinking, learning and feeling makes human intelligence unique.





## Artificial Intelligence

AI is a way of teaching computers to act and think like humans. Instead of following step-by-step instructions for every task, AI learns patterns and makes decisions by processing large amounts of data. For instance, an AI program that plays chess doesn't memorise every possible move. Instead, it uses complex algorithms and computations to analyse millions of potential moves and learn strategies through trial and error. In some cases, such as AlphaZero, the AI even learns to improve its own strategies without relying on human data.

AI systems can recognise faces, translate languages and even drive cars! These tasks are similar to things humans do daily, but AI performs them by mimicking human thinking.

### Mimic Master

Here are some ways in which AI mimics human intelligence.

### Learning from Experience (Machine Learning)

Just like you learn from your experiences, AI learns from data. For example, when learning to ride a bike, you might fall a few times before mastering it. Similarly, AI systems improve their performance by analysing data, adjusting models and identifying patterns. AI also learns

by testing different actions in its own environment and improving over time.

### Problem-solving

When you solve a puzzle, you try different strategies until you succeed. AI does the same by testing various solutions to find the best one. For example, virtual assistants like Siri and Alexa search through vast amounts of information and rank the most relevant answers based on your query.

### Recognising Patterns

Many times, you correctly identify a song after just hearing the beginning notes. That's because your brain detects familiar patterns. AI works similarly when identifying faces in photos using convolutional neural networks (CNNs) or recommending videos on YouTube using collaborative filtering techniques.

### Neural Networks

Your brain is made up of billions of tiny cells called neurons that help you think and learn. Scientists created artificial neural networks modelled after the brain. These networks enable AI to understand speech, translate languages and even help doctors diagnose diseases.

### People Smart, AI Smarter?

AI is incredibly advanced, but it's not perfect. While AI can solve specific problems faster than humans, it lacks



emotions, creativity and common sense. For example, AI can beat the world's best chess player, but it can't understand how he feels after losing the game.

AI can process information related to emotions, like recognizing facial expressions or analysing text sentiment, but it doesn't experience emotions the way humans do. It also lacks the kind of creativity and intuition that we use when making decisions or solving complex problems.

Scientists are still working on developing AI that can think and feel like humans, but there are limitations. AI doesn't have personal experiences or consciousness, which are essential parts of human intelligence.

### The Future

The future of AI is exciting! It could help solve some of the world's biggest problems, such as curing diseases and protecting the environment. However, it's important to use AI responsibly. Just as humans follow laws and rules for moral and ethical behaviour, AI should also be regulated and used only for promoting good things.



**—Dr. Supriya Kapil Shetty Thanekar** has a doctorate in Medical Biotechnology and is currently the editor at Iterative International Publishers.

## AI Applied

### ◆ Self-Driving Cars

These cars use AI to recognise road signs, detect obstacles and drive safely without human input. They rely on sensors and machine learning to make decisions in real-time.

### ◆ Voice Assistants

Alexa, Gemini and Siri can answer questions, set alarms and even tell jokes! They use natural language processing (NLP) to understand and respond to human speech.

### ◆ Video Games

AI creates smart opponents that adapt to your moves, making games more challenging and fun. It uses strategies and learning to predict your actions and adjust accordingly.

### ◆ Healthcare

Doctors use AI to detect diseases like cancer early and develop better treatments for patients. AI can analyse medical images or predict outcomes based on patient data.

## NEWS BYTES



### David v/s Goliath

Ukraine's President Volodymyr Zelensky's visit to the White House to discuss a deal with the US for minerals was meant to be a step towards a broader peace deal. But it was cut short as US President Donald Trump had a meltdown and openly clashed with him over ending the war with Russia. Russian President Vladimir Putin later agreed to a temporary halt on attacks against Ukrainian energy facilities after a conversation with President Trump. Zelensky then spoke to the US President expressing Ukraine's readiness for an unconditional ceasefire and cooperation on ending strikes against civilian infrastructure.

### Young Lion

At age 13, Vaibhav Suryavanshi has become the youngest player ever to be picked in the Indian Premier League (IPL) auction. Rajasthan Royals won the bidding war and signed him on for ₹1.1 crore. The powerful left-handed batter from Bihar made waves in his U-19 match against Australia and has an impressive domestic record. The IPL does not have a formal minimum age requirement for players, though the International Cricket Council (ICC) has set the minimum age for international cricket at 15.



### Shifty Business

Curfew was imposed in parts of Nagpur after protesters sparked violence with their demand that Aurangzeb's tomb be moved. The tomb is located in a district of Chhatrapati Sambhajnagar, which was earlier called Aurangabad after the 17th-century Mughal emperor. The tomb is managed as a 'Monument of National Importance' by the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) and the power to delist any such monument lies with the Centre.

### No End in Sight?

There appears to be no end in sight to the conflict in Gaza, with Israel resuming its attacks in the midst of a shaky ceasefire. Meanwhile, the US rained missiles on Yemen killing dozens, after Houthi rebels, who are supported by Iran, continued targeting dozens of merchant ships in the Red Sea and the Gulf of Aden. Israel has also been in conflict with the Houthis since 2023.

### Meltdown

India has recorded its earliest heat waves yet in Gujrat and Maharashtra, with Odisha and Jharkhand also reporting warmer nights than usual for this time of the year. The IMD has issued heat wave alerts for several other regions

including Delhi, Karnataka and Goa. Not only does the heat pose a serious risk to public health, it leads to a decline in wheat and rice yields. The excessive heat reduces the quality of the grain and its nutrients.





*Which is the better way to learn in school—through digital devices or paper books?*

WHILE both have their advantages and disadvantages, educationists caution against fully digitising learning at the school level.

During the COVID pandemic, schools quickly adapted to online education, putting screens in the hands of young children and teenagers alike. Now, five years later, learning in India has largely returned to the traditional offline method, relying on paper books.

However, the pandemic has left a lasting impact—children, even at a very young age, now spend significantly more time on screens while the reading habit has declined among all age groups.

Sweden, one of the first countries to introduce digital learning in classrooms, is now shifting back to paper books. Research has shown that digital education not only affects children's attention and focus but also fails to strengthen essential reading and writing skills. Similar patterns have been observed in studies conducted in Australia, Finland and the USA.

Experts now recommend reading from printed books and writing by hand to improve focus and understanding. Studies suggest that physically handling a book—feeling the paper and turning its pages—helps learners process and retain information more effectively.

E-books, on the other hand, are undoubtedly more engaging with their hyperlinks and scrolling format and interactive multimedia features such as music, sound effects and animated pictures. They can also be distracting, especially for children.

Printed books with audio enhancements, such as talking books for young children and VOX for older kids, tend to produce better learning outcomes.

Reading physical books also encourages active learning. We often underline or highlight key points and even jot down notes in the margins of textbooks or notebooks. This process takes time and demands more focus compared to simply scrolling through a PDF.

That said, digital resources are certainly very useful when a student is researching for a project. Finding and compiling information digitally is much quicker and easier than searching through multiple books in a library.

Experts highlight the importance of using paper, pencils, crayons, glue and scissors in a child's development. The motor skills developed through these hands-on activities cannot be

## Back to Books?



matched by just colouring a picture on a screen.

This does not mean that digital learning should be completely discarded. Instead, technology should be used wisely to support textbooks rather than to replace them. Finding the balance between digital and traditional learning is key. Also, the 'one-size-fits all' approach may not be effective.

For example, pre-primary and primary school children who are still developing their basic reading and writing skills, would benefit more from traditional education with limited use of technology. On the other hand, for secondary and higher-secondary students, a well-designed curriculum that integrates technology to complement traditional methods may be more effective.

— Madhurani Paranjape

### 'Screen-free' School

Heritage School in Cambridge is likely the only school in the UK that does not allow students to use laptops, mobile phones, the internet, or any other digital teaching tools. Instead, it focuses entirely on learning from books and gives extra importance to the fine arts. Despite this, the school continues to achieve excellent results.

### The India Story

India faces unique challenges in integrating digital education. Many struggle to get even basic textbooks, leave alone access to digital devices.

In India, full integration of digital learning is mostly seen in IB schools, while many urban schools incorporate it partially into their curriculum.

The bigger concern here is excessive screen time among children and young adults—not for education, but for social media and OTT platforms, thanks to cheap and easy access to data.

VOX Books, launched by an American company called Library Ideas in 2015, allow children to listen to an audio recording directly from a printed hardcover book. No Wi-Fi, computer, tablet or phone is required. Instead an audio reader – attached to the front cover and controlled by a push button – allows the child to listen and read along.

The book can be recharged with a standard micro USB charger. The books comes in several languages including Hindi.



## CLASSICS RETOLD

# God Sees the Truth, but Waits

*Russian writer Leo Tolstoy (1828–1910), best known for his monumental works 'War and Peace' and 'Anna Karenina', is regarded as one of the world's greatest novelists. He was also a social reformer and thinker who believed that any use of violence or force is harmful.*



**I**VAN DMITRICH AKSIONOV was a wealthy merchant from the town of Vladimir. He was young and handsome, a cheerful man who loved to sing and play the guitar.

One morning, he told his wife that he was off to the Nizhny Fair to sell his goods. As he was leaving in his carriage, his wife said, "Don't go today. I had a bad dream about you."

Aksionov laughed and said, "I think you are afraid that I will spend too much money!"

"I dreamed that you returned from the fair and when you took off your cap, your hair had gone white."

"That's a lucky sign!" chuckled Aksionov. "It means I will sell all my goods and bring you and the children lots of presents."

When Aksionov had gone halfway, he met a merchant he knew and both of them decided to put up at the same inn for the night. They had tea together and then went off to their separate rooms to sleep. Next morning, Aksionov roused his driver and left the inn after paying the landlord who lived in the back.

He had gone about 25 miles when he decided to have the horses fed. He ordered some tea at the inn where he stopped and sat outside strumming his guitar. Suddenly he heard the jingle of bells and saw a troika\* driving up to the inn. A police officer alighted, followed

by two soldiers. He came up to Aksionov and began questioning him.

"What's your name and where are you from? Where did you spend the night? Were you alone? Did you see a merchant before you left?"

The barrage of questions bewildered Aksionov.

"Why are you questioning me as if I am a thief? I am going to Nizhny on business. I didn't see the merchant after we went to bed."

"The merchant was found murdered this morning," said the officer. "We have to search your luggage."

They went into the inn and started rifling through Aksionov's bags.

"Here it is!" said one soldier triumphantly. He brandished a bloodied knife.

"Whose knife is this?" asked the official. "How is there blood on this knife?"

Aksionov was frightened when he saw the knife. He began stammering in his terror.

"It...it is not my k..k..nife," he said. "I d...don't kn...know how it came into my bag."

The policeman said, "You are the only one who could have done it. The door of the inn was locked from inside. The blood-stained knife is in your bag! Tell me, how did you kill him? Where is the money you stole?"

Aksionov swore that he was innocent. But his pale face and trembling voice convinced the policeman that he was guilty. His money and goods were confiscated and he was imprisoned in the nearest town.

Though the people of Vladimir told the police that Aksionov was a man of good character, he was put on trial and convicted of murder and robbery. His wife came to see him in prison with their children, a boy of three and the other a mere baby.

"We must petition the Czar that he shouldn't let an innocent man be punished," said Aksionov.

When his wife said that she had already sent a petition and that it had been rejected, Aksionov held his head in despair.

"Do you remember I dreamed that your hair had turned white? It has come to pass," said his wife with a sob. "Vanya dearest, tell me the truth. Did you do it?"

"So, you suspect me as well!" Aksionov said and began to cry wretchedly. Then a soldier appeared and Aksionov said goodbye to his family for the last time.

After they had left, Aksionov whispered to himself, "It looks like only God knows the truth. I can only appeal to Him now and only expect mercy from Him."

From that moment onwards, Aksionov stopped sending petitions, gave up all hope and only prayed to God. He was

\*a Russian horse carriage



condemned to be flogged and sent to work in the mines in Siberia. Twenty-six years passed. Aksionov's hair and beard turned white as snow. He walked slowly, barely spoke and never laughed. He prayed almost all the time. The prison officials liked him and the prisoners respected him. To them, he was 'Saint' and 'Grandfather'.

One day, a new batch of convicts was brought to the prison. The older prisoners clustered around, eager to know where they were from and what they had been convicted for. Among them was a hefty man of sixty. He said he had been arrested for taking a friend's horse.

"It's funny," he said wryly. "Once long ago, I really did commit a serious crime, but some other man was arrested for it."

"Where are you from?" asked someone.

"Vladimir. My name is Makar Semyonich."

Aksionov who had been sitting quietly, looked up. He said, "Tell me, Semyonich, do you know the Aksionovs in Vladimir?"

"Of course!" replied Semyonich. "They are rich merchants, but their father is in Siberia. And how did you come here, Grandpa?"

Aksionov did not answer but his companions told Semyonich how he had been wrongly accused of killing a merchant because the real murderer had put the knife in Aksionov's bag.

"Oh! It is wonderful that we have met here! How old you have become, Grandpa!" said Semyonich.

Aksionov wondered if he knew who had killed the merchant.

"Have you seen me before then? Did you hear of the affair?"

"How could I not have heard? There were so many rumours flying about! But it's a long time ago. I have forgotten."

"Maybe you know who the murderer is?" asked Aksionov.

"Well, it must have been the one in whose bag the knife was found! How

could anyone have put a knife in your bag without you waking up?" said Semyonich laughing.

When Aksionov heard this, he was sure that Semyonich was the man who had killed the merchant. The more he thought about it, the more unhappy he became.

"It is all due to that villain Makar Semyonich!" thought Aksionov and he was so enraged that he wanted to take revenge on him at once. He tried to pray but got no peace.

One night, he noticed earth flying out from beneath one of the wooden bunks on which the prisoners slept. When he bent down to look, he saw Semyonich. Aksionov tried to go past him but Semyonich caught hold of his arm and said that he was planning to escape the prison by digging a tunnel.

"Some of us take the soil out in our boots and empty it on the road when we are taken to work," he whispered. "Now, don't you blab about it, old man, or I will kill you!"

Aksionov shook with rage and flung Semyonich's hand away.

"You have no need to kill me. You did that long ago. As for telling on you, I will decide when the time comes, and do as God bids."

The next day, the guards noticed some men emptying their boots of soil and rounded them up. The hole was found. When the governor of the prison asked the convicts who had done it, no one answered. Everyone knew that Makar Semyonich would be flogged if they caught him. The governor looked at Aksionov.

"Tell me, Grandpa, I am sure you must know."

Aksionov's lips and hands trembled. "Why should I protect this man who ruined my life? Let him pay!" he thought. "But then what if my suspicion is wrong? And what good would it do me if he is flogged?"

So he replied, "I cannot say, your honour. It is God's will that I shouldn't tell."

That night, Semyonich came and sat on the edge of Aksionov's bunk.

"What more do you want from me?" asked Aksionov sitting up.

Semyonich slid off the bunk and knelt on the ground. "Ivan Dmitrich, forgive me!" he whispered. "It was I who killed the merchant. I meant to kill you too, but I heard a noise outside, so I hid the knife in your bag and escaped out of the window."

Aksionov was silent.

"Ivan Dmitrich," said Semyonich, "for the love of God, forgive me! I will confess and you will be freed and can go home."

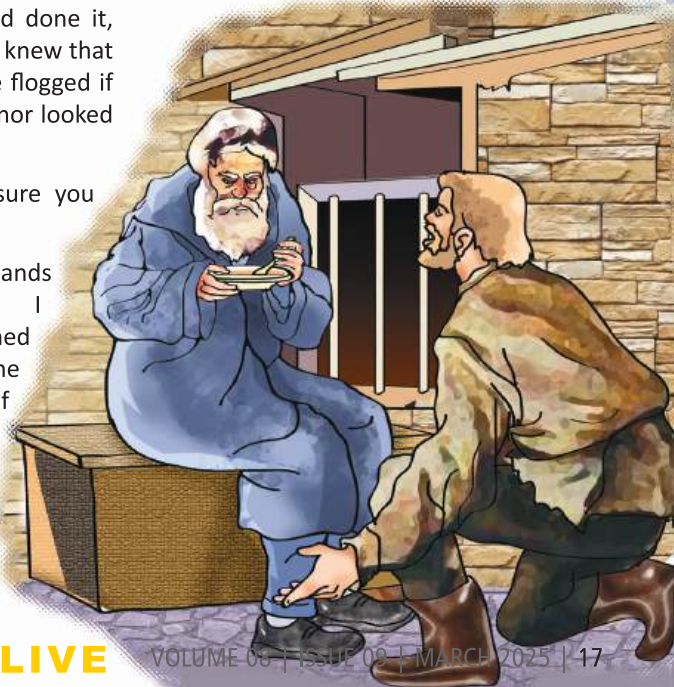
"It is easy for you to talk," said Aksionov, "but I have suffered instead of you for 26 years. Where would I go to now? My wife is dead and my children have forgotten me...."

Semyonich beat his head on the floor and began to sob. When Aksionov heard him sobbing, he too began to weep. "God will forgive you!" said he. "Maybe I am a hundred times worse than you."

And at these words his heart grew light and the longing for home left him.

Despite what Aksionov had said, Makar Semyonich confessed to the murder, but by the time the order for his release came, Aksionov was dead.

— A story by Leo Tolstoy retold



# Blazing a Path to Victory



*The Men in Blue triumphed over a determined New Zealand side at the end of a neryv chase to lift the 2025 ICC Champions Trophy.*

## **The Tournament**

The ICC Champions Trophy has been through various iterations as a “Mini World Cup”. After the first Cricket World Cup was held in 1975, the global governing body of cricket, the International Cricket Council (ICC) decided to add a short tournament to raise funds to develop the sport. Starting as the ICC Knockout Trophy in 1998, it was rechristened the Champions Trophy in 2002. All the participants are ICC member nations, but the number of teams has differed over the years. It was held every two years until 2008, when it was postponed to 2009 due to security

concerns, and has been held every four years since. There were calls to scrap the tournament after 2017 and it was not held in 2021. In 2024, the ICC launched a refreshed identity for the competition and the 2017 reigning champion Pakistan was announced as the host of the 2025 championship.

## **The Journey**

The eight highest-ranked men’s national teams that qualified for the 2023 World Cup participated in the tournament, with Afghanistan making their debut. The teams were arranged in groups of four with the top two teams from each group set to advance

to the semi-finals. India was in Group A alongside New Zealand, Pakistan and Bangladesh. Group B was comprised of South Africa, Australia, Afghanistan and England.

The Indian team began as they meant to go on, beating Bangladesh, Pakistan and New Zealand in decisive victories to qualify for the semi-finals against Australia. Their win there set them up for the final clash against the winner of the second semi-final match, New Zealand. Coming into the finals unbeaten, India continued their dominance, to finally lift the trophy. The captain Rohit Sharma received rave reviews for including four



spinners in the finals to defeat the Black Caps. All through, India displayed a well-balanced approach, combining powerful batting and disciplined bowling with sharp fielding.

The hosts Pakistan finished at the bottom of their group and ended the tournament winless.

### The Controversies

The 2025 Champions Trophy was the first global tournament to be played in Pakistan in almost 29 years. However, the Indian team refused to play there citing security concerns, leading to negotiations between the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) and the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB). Despite the PCB's initial outrage, it was finally decided that the tournament would adopt a hybrid model. Matches were played across three venues in Pakistan except for the matches that India played, which were held in a neutral location in Dubai. The ICC also decided that all matches played by India and Pakistan and hosted in either country would be played at a neutral venue until 2027.

For the finals in Dubai, the Chairman of the PCB Mohsin Naqvi had been invited for the closing ceremony but was unable to attend. As ICC protocol states that only the heads of the cricket boards are included in the stage proceedings, the PCB was not represented at all during the ceremony despite being the hosts of the tournament.

### The Records

A number of records were set and broken. Indian pacer Mohammed Shami claimed 5 wickets for 53 runs against Bangladesh, becoming the fastest to 200 One Day International (ODI) wickets by balls bowled.

Virat Kohli's unbeaten century in the Pakistan match marked his 51st ODI ton, making him the fastest player to reach 14,000 ODI runs. He achieved the milestone in 287 innings, surpassing Sachin Tendulkar's record of 350 innings. At 36 years and 110 days old,



Kohli became the oldest centurion at the Champions Trophy.

In his Champions Trophy debut, spinner Varun Chakaravathy took 5 wickets for a mere 42 runs against New Zealand, marking the best-ever bowling figures by an Indian in the tournament. The match also was the first instance in the trophy of two 5-wicket hauls in a single game as Black Cap pacer Matt Henry also returned identical figures of 5/42 during India's innings.

Rohit Sharma became the first and only skipper to lead a team in all ICC tournament finals, previously captaining India to the finals of the 2023 World Test Championship, 2023 ODI World Cup and 2024 T20 World Cup.

New Zealand posted the highest team score with 362/6 versus South Africa to set a new record for the trophy.

Ibrahim Zadran, Afghanistan's maiden century-scorer in the Champions Trophy, had the highest individual score in tournament history with 177 off 146 balls against England.

### The Celebrations

The fans literally bled blue, with tickets for the finals priced from ₹5,940 going up to ₹3 lakhs! Despite this, all 12 categories of tickets were sold out within two hours.

The stands were awash in a sea of blue with crowds of Indian supporters making it seem like a home ground.

The crowd roared their approval for every wicket taken and boundary hit by the Indian team, while going eerily silent at every lost Indian wicket. *Dhols*, face paint and tricoloured turbans all made an appearance. The fans at home were no slouches either, with fireworks after the finals and throngs on

the streets dancing the night away.

Former cricketing legend and commentator Sunil Gavaskar, 75, treated delighted spectators to an animated celebratory dance as he watched the team receive their distinctive white jackets. The Little Master's former team captain, one of India's best fast bowlers and all-rounders Kapil Dev, now 66, was also unable to resist clapping along and shaking a leg. Both these icons were part of the squad that brought home India's first ICC World Cup in 1983.

The current crew didn't lag behind in expressing their glee. The audience was thrilled to witness everything from Ro-Ko's *dandiya* with the stumps and Gangnam style by Jadeja and gang to Shreyas Iyer channelling Kohli's 2013 victory dance steps!



# A World of Opportunities

*In the past, it was a dream that only a privileged few could realise, but today, studying abroad has become accessible to youngsters across the board, feels **Radha Sundaresan**...*

### Why Study Abroad?

Although it is a big decision with major financial implications, studying abroad has several benefits. Some of these are outlined below.

#### ◆ Broadens the mind

Students who study abroad are exposed to diverse experiences that help them to think objectively and analyse problems from a wider viewpoint. This often involves changing one's own perspective towards other cultures and peoples, making us more tolerant of diversity.

#### ◆ Builds personality

Learning to cope with a new place, people and culture can be a steep learning curve. As one grapples with challenges on one's own, it helps one become independent and develop as an individual. Students often discover skills, interests and talents that they may not have if they had stayed home.

#### ◆ Improves communication skills

As we interact with people from different cultural backgrounds around the world, it helps us to communicate effectively. An international experience may also prompt one to study a new language, which can open more doors.

#### ◆ Promotes career opportunities

Many employers value international experience, as it signals courage, adaptability and a global mind-set. The intercultural communication skills acquired through a course abroad gives students an edge over others in the home country as well as in the global job market.

#### ◆ Helps make connections

Apart from the opportunity to make new friends, overseas education helps you build connections with other students who share similar interests. These in turn, may lead to a rewarding professional network that could help boost your career prospects in the future.

### Do the Groundwork

Before planning for your study abroad, it is important to first ask yourself the question: What are my goals? What do I intend to achieve? For example, is your primary goal to gain professional learning abroad and return to your home country to work? Or are you simply looking for an experience?

Depending on the answers to the above, you may next ask yourself: What and where do I want to study? Identifying the right course, university and country based on your background, preferences, personal interests and your budget is the first step.



Once you have shortlisted a few courses, you need to research the destination institution, teaching modules, faculty expertise, campus life, and research and career opportunities.

To get a better idea about what the institution has to offer, you can attend webinars, information sessions and virtual campus tours hosted by universities for prospective students. For a wider perspective, you can connect with alumni networks on social media or seek guidance from counsellors and professionals to help you narrow down your selection.

## Prepare the Application

Before applying for a study program, check the admission requirements and eligibility criteria. It is advisable to break the process down into manageable chunks such as applying for the course, seeking scholarships, appearing for standardised tests and preparing the CV/application essay/Statement of Purpose. Simultaneously, ensure that you have a valid passport ready.

Once the institution accepts your application to the chosen program and issues you an offer letter, the next step is to fulfil the immigration requirements including visa, biometrics, processing fees, health insurance and financial statements. After submitting the documents to the relevant consulate or embassy, follow up on your application status and once you receive the visa, work on securing your housing abroad.

Depending upon your budget and personal preferences, a range of options such as university dorms, private rental homes, shared apartments and homestays are available for students.

With the basic preparation behind you, it is now time to plan for your shift to the new environment. This includes familiarising yourself with transport, health, banking and other facilities at your destination, and collecting essential information for a smooth transition.

## Embrace the Experience

With careful planning and preparation, you can navigate the complexities involved in the entire journey of studying abroad. It is a transformative experience and an exciting adventure that promises a rewarding future. So if you are contemplating an international education, go ahead, take the plunge!



**—Radha Sundaresan**  
is an educator with vast  
experience in teaching, training,  
and content development.



# Empower Yourself!

*What's the recipe for success — one's own abilities and hard work or luck?*

THIS question is squarely answered by this simple folktale:

A wealthy old man had three married daughters. He wanted to know which of his three daughters was worthy of being his heir. So he sent for his daughters. When they arrived, he said he had planned a pilgrimage and would be back after three years. He gave five grains of wheat to each daughter and asked them to take good care of the grains.

The first daughter was negligent and eventually lost the grains. The second daughter put the grains in a velvet pouch and locked it up. The third daughter thought long and hard till she decided what she would with them.

Three years passed and the father returned, eager to see how his daughters had fared. He visited his first daughter and was disappointed. The second daughter happily removed the five grains from the velvet pouch and gave them to her father.

The father then took the two to visit the third daughter. The daughter led them to the backyard of her house. What the father saw made his eyes shine. The third daughter had planted the five grains and after three years the wheat crop covered the entire backyard.

Needless to say the father entrusted his property and the welfare of his other two daughters into her hands.

The first daughter simply disregarded the instruction given. She is Type C. The second one was conscientious and preserved the grains as instructed. She is Type B. The youngest daughter is an example of self-directed learning. She not only preserved the grains but also multiplied them. She followed the

instruction, went a step beyond and achieved much more. She is Type A.

In a workplace, Type C has no place at all. Type B can learn to





graduate to Type A, become more productive and an asset to the organisation.

## TYPES OF LEARNING

True learning is a process which leads to a change in behaviour for the better. Suppose you arrive 15 minutes early on the platform one day and notice that the earlier train is less crowded, you will start taking that train regularly — this change in behaviour is termed as learning. Human beings and animals can learn through a variety of methods.

**Trial and Error:** Suppose you are given a bunch of keys to open a lock, you will try every key till you find the right one. This is learning through trial and error.

**Observation:** If you have previously seen someone else opening the lock with a specific key from the bunch, you will not waste your time trying the other keys. You would use the same key that the person used to open the lock. This is learning through observation or imitation of others which is very common in children.

**Insight:** Look at the following numbers: 149162536496481100... Which number should come next? Try not to give up.



When you were solving the number problem you may have tried several strategies. You may have felt it was going nowhere. Then you may have suddenly hit upon the solution. This type of learning is called insight learning where learning takes place all of a sudden through an understanding of the relationship between various parts of the problem. (The solution for the above problem is at the end of the article.)

German psychologist Wolfgang Kohler conducted an experiment in which he placed a chimpanzee in a cage along with a short stick. Food and a long stick were placed outside the cage at an unreachable distance. The chimp tried various ways to reach the food but wasn't making any real progress. After some time he suddenly stopped what he was doing, surveyed the sticks and the food and without hesitation pulled the long stick towards him with the help of the short stick. He then pulled the food towards himself with the long stick. The chimp had got a sudden insight into his problem!

Self-help is the best help. Identify what motivates you: is it a higher salary or receiving an award or achieving a goal?

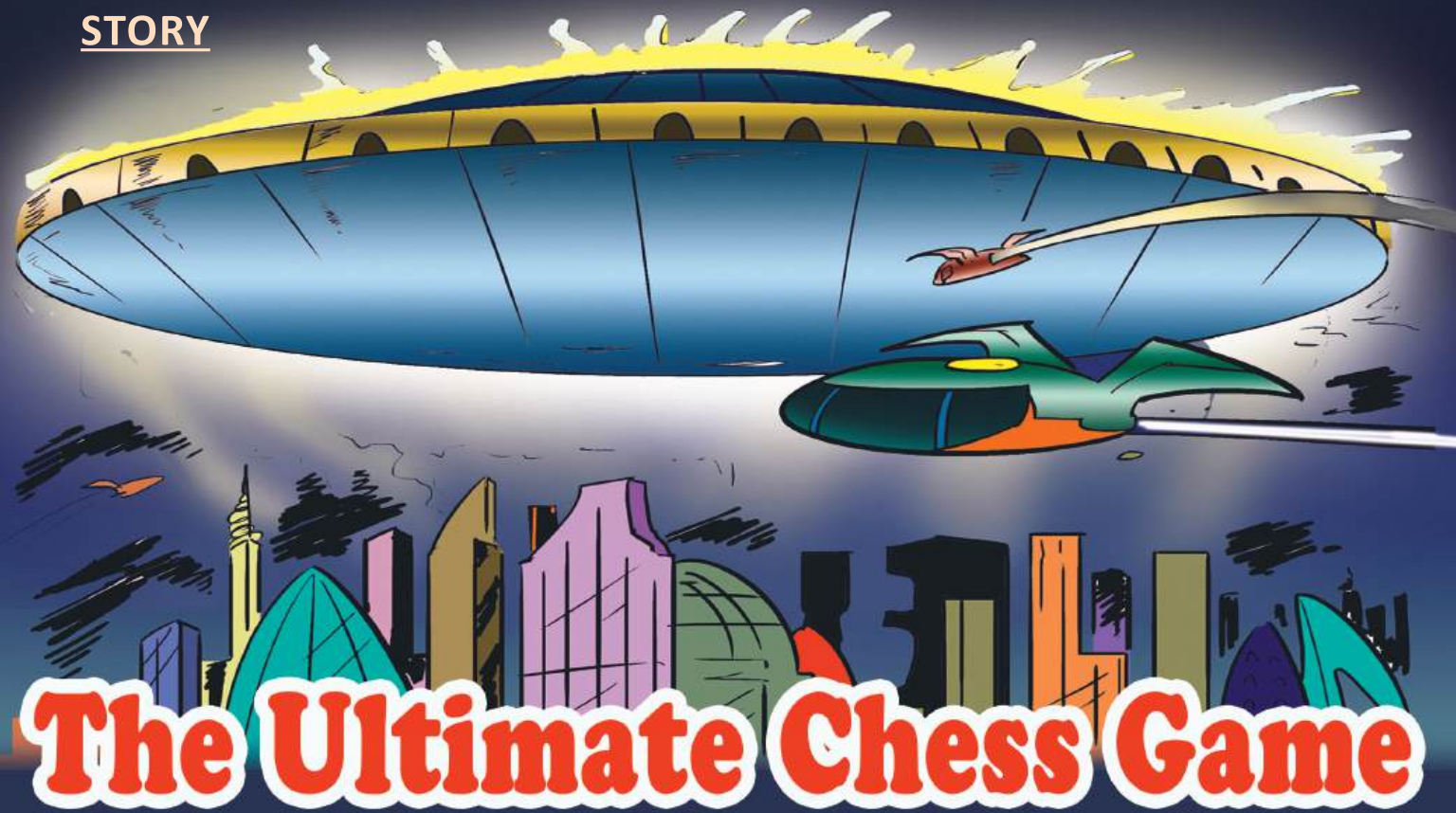
## Step-by-Step

1. Try to improve your performance on tasks at your workplace. Learn the skills that may help you do the same. If your tasks demand attention, learn ways to improve your concentration and attention levels. Your improved productivity will be noticed and appreciated by superiors.
2. If you get the opportunity to learn something outside your field of work, just go for it. When asked to make a presentation, don't refuse out of fear but take up the challenge. Find a good source to learn to make a good presentation. This will help you build new skills.
3. Remember the three daughters from the story? Do not always be like the second daughter who just sticks to the instruction. Learn to take the initiative. For example if there are particular work skills you would like to learn, discuss it with your superior. Also do not hesitate to share ideas or opinions at meetings.

4. If you cannot find what you like, try to like what you do! Work to learn, not for money. When you are good at your work, success will follow.
5. Use observational learning to your advantage. Suppose you lack conversational skills, you can observe someone who is a good conversationalist while he/she talks. If possible ask the person to help you out. (Self-directed learning allows you to choose your teacher!).

Remember that a learner can receive instructions and advice from outside forces but he or she is ultimately responsible for his learning experience.

**The solution:** The next number should be 121. The numbers are squares of the series 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10. It is easy to understand when the numbers are arranged like this: 1 4 9 16 25 36 49 64 81 100. So how did you fare on this problem? Did you find yourself giving up too soon? Many a times solutions to problems seem out of reach simply because we do not spend enough time tackling a problem.



# The Ultimate Chess Game

**Y**OU could say that the most crucial chess game in all of Earth's history was played in the year 2049, and the outcome of that said match saved humankind from eternal slavery. It's true. Believe me. As the chief of Earth's historians, I'm not exaggerating.

It happened like this:

In the year 2049, one July morning, gargantuan alien spaceships appeared from nowhere and positioned themselves above the capital cities of all major countries. None of Earth's vaunted Early Warning Systems (EWS) had detected them! A moment later, a communication was received by the governments of all the countries. "Surrender, Earthlings, and your lives shall be spared. Resist, and there will be genocide."

At once, Earth's superpowers attacked! They launched fighters and stealth bombers to take out the alien ships, but all failed miserably. None of the rockets or bombs from the airplanes could penetrate the thick force field around the spaceships. The alien vehicles were impregnable. Immediately after the failed attack, another message was

received from the aliens: "Humans, since you have chosen to fight, we will now display the might of our weapons. Turn your attention to the place you call London."

And, while the world watched in horror, a gold-coloured beam shot down from the ship above London, and the city erupted in flames! Within minutes, London was totally devastated.

"This will be the state of all your cities if you do not stop your resistance immediately. This is your final warning," the robotic voice from the spaceships declared.

Within hours of that last message, Earth surrendered, for there was no defense against the all-powerful weapons of the alien ships. It was a sad day for this proud planet, for Earth no longer belonged to humans. It had been conquered.

The next day, one of the giant spaceships landed near Washington. And, for the first time ever, aliens set foot on Earth's soil. The creatures were about five feet tall, with hair all over their body. They had four pairs of limbs attached to their torso and a

pair of limbs to help them stride. Their faces resembled bears to an extent, for they too had elongated snouts, upright furry ears and black noses.

Two of these bear-like creatures disembarked from the spacecraft. One gave the other some sort of device, and the latter spoke. While it spoke in some unknown tongue, the gadget translated the words into English. "Earthlings," the creature rasped, "We are from the planet Corrabor. I am the supreme leader Krrysh and, from today, I am the Lord of this world. You are now our captives. Any resistance will be put down immediately and with great force. Listen and obey!"

Life changed completely for humans. No longer were they the dominant race on Earth; now, they were treated as slaves by the aliens and made to work in factories and mines. Corrabor's technology was far beyond Earth's, and any who resisted or showed defiance was immediately imprisoned or worse. The Corraborans offered no second chances, and they ruled with an iron fist. Soon, the people of Earth were no better than sheep working at the beck and call of their masters – the Corraborans.



And it would have gone on this way forever if not for Sunder, a fourteen-year-old boy from Bangalore.

It so happened that, a few months later, while touring across the world, Krrysh visited Bangalore. He took a trip around the city in his anti-grav armoured transport. While on the excursion, he noticed Sunder and another boy deeply engrossed in something. Now, Krrysh, upon becoming the Lord of Earth, had issued a decree that Earthlings were to kneel in respect whenever they saw him or his official vehicle, no matter what they were doing. When the two boys neither kneeled nor even acknowledged him, he became livid. He got down from the transport, approached the two boys, and using his translation gadget, said, "Humans, give me one good reason why I should not turn you to dust here and now."

Sunder looked at the angry bear-like creature and replied fearfully, "Very sorry, sir, but my friend and I were busy with this game." And he pointed at a board in-between them.

"Game? How can a game be more important than saluting your Lord and Master?" roared Krrysh.

"But this is the king of games! It is called chess."

The Corraboran took a closer look at the board and exclaimed, "That looks like our game – Lyshur!"

"We call it chess," replied Sunder.

"Well, I'm sure humans are as bad at this game as you are at protecting your world!" the alien replied sarcastically.

"Not true, sir," Sunder's friend exclaimed excitedly. "Sunder here is



really good! In fact, people say that he is a Grandmaster in the making!"

"Is that so, boy?" sneered Krrysh. "In my world, I am considered a champion of Lyshur! If you are so good, why don't we have a contest?"

Sunder nodded eagerly, "Sure, we could have a friendly match . . ."

"No friendly game, human. In Corrabor, we play Lyshur only with wagers! My wager is this – if I win, your friend's life and yours are forfeit."

Sunder swallowed in fear but found his voice. "And what if I win, sir?"

"There's not much chance of that happening, human, so ask what you will," the alien said contemptuously.

Sunder thought quickly, "Sir, if I win, will you and the rest of the Corraborans leave Earth and never come back?"

Krrysh was taken aback at hearing the human's words, but he knew he could easily beat this young human. After all, he was the champion of Lyshur!

"So be it. If you, by chance, win, we will leave Earth and never return," Krrysh disdainfully told the young boy.

And, thus, the game that decided the future of humans was played on the streets of Bangalore. Legend talks of this being a marathon five-hour bout with both opponents wracking their heads and sweating profusely before moving the chess pieces. However, sometimes, legends can be blown out of proportion. In truth, the game lasted about twenty minutes, and it took Sunder less than fifteen moves to defeat the alien.

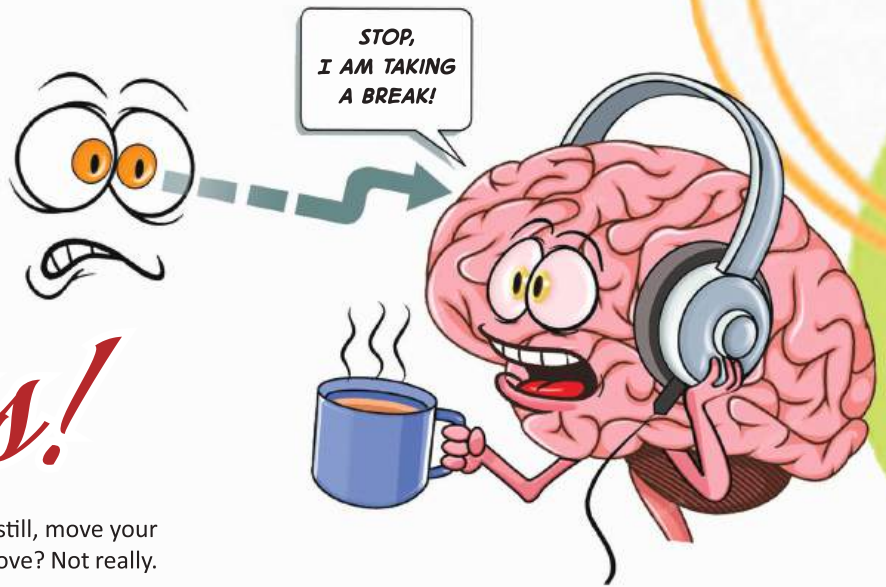
Sunder, having white, started with the Smith-Morra Gambit. The alien responded with a weak form of the Sicilian Defence (or whatever it was called in Corrabor). The human boy then brought his bishop and queen into play and destroyed Krrysh's defence in a few moves. The alien tried to hide his king behind the queen; however, sacrificing one of his rooks, Sunder was able to take the opposite queen out of the game. And then, it was only a matter of two moves before he had his opponent's king checkmated. Corraboran skills at playing Lyshur, or chess as it was known on Earth, were definitely overrated!

Even though the Corraboran was furious at having lost, he thankfully kept true to his promise. The very next day, the alien ships with their alien passengers blasted off, and Earth once again belonged to humans! All thanks to a young lad from Bangalore.

—rajesh k k



# Blink and Miss!



STAND before a mirror and keeping your head still, move your eyes from left to right. Can you see your eyes move? Not really.

Our eyes capture images like a camera as it sweeps across the visual field. The brain receives several such snapshots in a second and links them to form a continuous image of what we are seeing. At the rapid rate at which our eyes move, the world would appear blurry and we would feel nauseous from the motion. In order to deal with the rapid eye movement, the brain adopts the tactic of saccadic masking.

A saccade is the quick movement of the eyes between two fixation points. (A fixation point is the point where our gaze rests on a single object or place.) Saccades are involuntary actions and are one of the fastest movements produced by the human body. We cannot perceive saccades in our own eyes, but they can be seen by an onlooker or captured by a video camera.

During the saccadic movement, the brain momentarily shuts the visual processing and restarts it when the eye fixates on the next image. That means we become temporarily blind to a visual event that may take place in those milliseconds. Saccadic masking thus makes us blind for less than a second and we do not even realise it. This is because the brain tweaks our sense of time and our vision seems to be seamless like a video.

In reality, when added together, saccadic masking makes us blind for about 40 minutes in a day! Saccadic masking does not affect our daily functioning, but it can make us miss important visual details like a flash of light. A speeding driver may miss seeing another driver on the road even while quickly turning his head from one side to the other to check if the way is clear.

## TOTAL RECALL

DO you remember what dress you wore two weeks ago? Can you recall where you were on this day a year ago or what you were doing when Nepal was struck by its worst earthquake in 2015? There is a small group of people who can boast of remembering every single detail of their life. This rare condition is called Highly Superior Autobiographical Memory (HSAM) or Hyperthymesia.



So far, only 60 people have been officially diagnosed with HSAM.

This kind of memory may seem like a boon, but most of the people with HSAM complain of suffering from depression and anxiety because of their tendency to dwell longer on painful memories.

They can remember events from the age of about 10-12 years. They tend to have obsessive traits like excessive attention to orderliness or taking up hobbies that require great effort.

However, though they can recall each event pertaining to their personal lives like it happened yesterday, they are not necessarily good at remembering ordinary things like random facts or a list of phone numbers.

Researchers are yet to determine whether HSAM is caused by biological or psychological factors.

HSAM is a new area of study. The first case of HSAM came to light in 2000 when a 34-year-old woman Jill Price emailed James McGaugh at the University of California, saying that the mere mention of a date would trigger her memory of where she was, what she was doing, what day it fell on, etc. McGaugh subjected her to a battery of memory tests and concluded that Price had a unique condition indeed. After McGaugh published his research in 2006, more people came forward with the same condition.





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**BELIEVE IT OR NOT!**

# The World's Greatest Miser

THERE are misers and then there is Henrietta Green. Henrietta or Hetty Green was the first American businesswoman in the 19th century. At the time of her death, Hetty was the wealthiest woman in America. She continued pinching pennies till the very end.

Tales of her stinginess abound and there is proof that Hetty never ever used hot water or turned on a heater. She lived in cheap boarding houses and used public transportation to reach her Wall Street office — a cramped corner of a bank that the bank management had offered to her for free.

Needless to say Hetty's nasty disposition never won her any friends and her rivals dubbed her the 'Witch of Wall Street'.

People sniggered behind her back for she wore a single black dress most of her life and changed her underclothes only when they were reduced to tatters. Her diet consisted of the cheapest food available, usually pies, or toast and porridge. Once she spent a sleepless night looking for a lost postage stamp.

When she began to suffer from a bad hernia, she refused to have an operation because it cost \$150! One day in 1916, on a visit to a friend's house, she accused her hostess' housekeeper of wasting her employer's money by using whole milk instead of skimmed milk. The violent argument that followed brought on a stroke, leaving the millionaire paralysed on one side. She died soon afterwards.



## Mr Eat All

**Warning:**  
Do not ever attempt  
the actions described  
at any time!

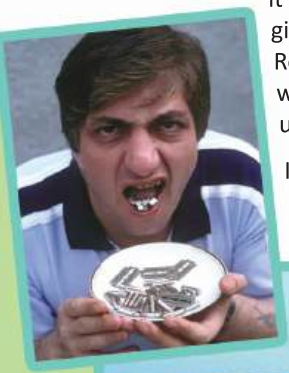
MICHEL LOTITO was a Frenchman from Grenoble. He was nicknamed Monsieur Mangetout which means 'Mr. Eat All' in French.

Born in 1950, Lotito ate metals almost all his adult life. He chewed on cars, television sets, aluminium skis and bicycles. When asked which was the tastiest he replied, 'Chains!'

His metal-rich diet included razor blades, needles, cutlery and nuts and bolts among other things. Once, he even ate a robot.

One jumbo meal that he consumed took over two years: it was a Cessna 150 light aircraft! He was given the 1984 Guinness Book of World Records award for the feat — titled the world's strangest diet. That title was never used again!

In addition to the bicycles and self-described 'low-calorie Cessna', he ate a supermarket trolley and seven TV sets.



It is estimated that Lotito ate over nine tons of metal during his lifetime, including the Guinness World Records brass plaque that was awarded to him.

He prepared each item by cutting it up with a power saw to create bite-sized chunks. Instead of chewing the pieces, he swallowed them like a pill.

The bizarre eating habit began when he was eight. Other children would make fun of him because he had rickets. He started doing the incredible to win their admiration. He chewed glass. He asked children to beat him with bats, stick needles in his body, and staple his chest!

What seemed a 'simple' party trick soon turned into a lucrative career at the age of 16. He appeared on TV shows in South America and Canada. He was paid nearly \$1,000 per day, which later went up to \$5000.

How did Lotito do it? He guzzled large quantities of mineral oil to lubricate his digestive tract before attacking his unusual meals. He also drank plenty of water while eating. Doctors who examined him were amazed to find that his stomach produced unusually powerful digestive juices that 'melted' the metal. He also had very strong teeth. His unusually thick stomach and intestinal lining may have prevented severe internal injuries. Amazingly he didn't have a problem excreting his 'food'!

His system was so used to such bizarre meals, it didn't take kindly to normal food! Soft foods such as bananas and hard-boiled eggs caused him heartburn and indigestion.

Michel Lotito passed away due to natural causes on June 25, 2007, aged 57. It is unknown if his diet played a role in his death.





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# The Mirror



Script & Artwork:  
Gajoo Tayde

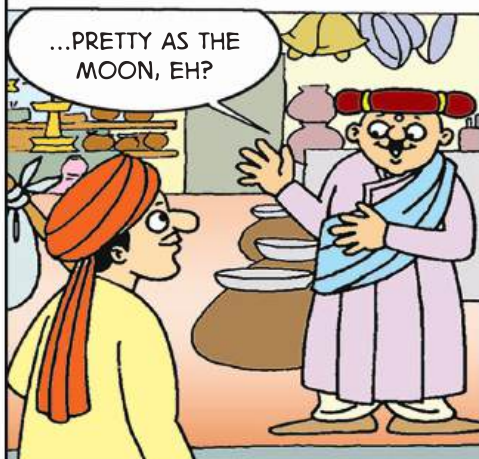
PAHADPUR WAS AN ISOLATED VILLAGE WHERE THE VILLAGERS SELDOM VENTURED OUT TO THE CITY. LAKHAN AND LAJJO WERE A YOUNG COUPLE LIVING ON A FARM.



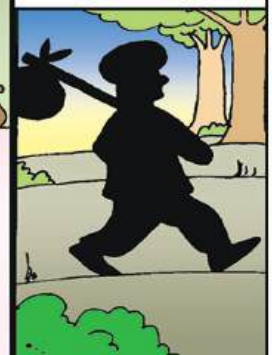
ONE DAY, THE VILLAGERS ASKED LAKHAN TO GO TO THE CITY TO SORT OUT SOME MATTER ON TAXES.



ON HIS WAY BACK, LAKHAN WENT TO A SHOP TO BUY A GIFT.



LAKHAN BOUGHT THE MIRROR AND HAPPILY RETURNED HOME.





LAJJO HAD NEVER SEEN A MIRROR BEFORE.

...HOW DO YOU LIKE IT?

HEY, LAJJO, WHAT'S IT? WHAT HAPPENED?



LAJJO RUSHED TO HER GRANDMOTHER'S HOUSE.

HEY, WAIT!

DADIMA! DADIMA!! MY HUSBAND DOES NOT LOVE ME ANYMORE. HE BROUGHT HOME A BEAUTIFUL GIRL FROM THE CITY.

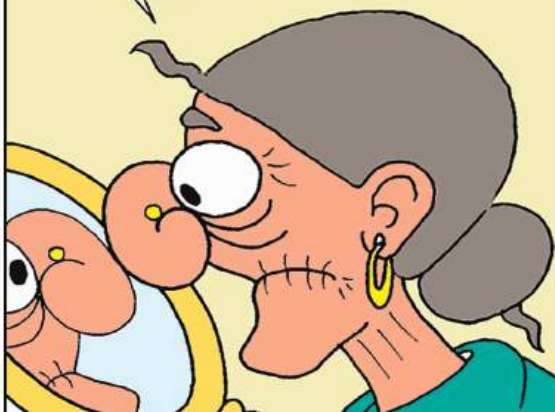
HERE, LOOK!

WHERE? WHERE?



LET ME SEE! HMMMMM...

HA HA HA HA! YOU STUPID GIRL!! YOU CALL HER BEAUTIFUL? GO HOME, GIRL, DO NOT WORRY! YOUR HUSBAND WON'T EVER LEAVE YOU FOR SUCH AN UGLY, OLD HAG!!



THE END.



# Chasing Down a Meteorite

A meteorite fall is an event that interests not just astronomers and astrophysicists, but also ‘rock hounds’ or ‘space cowboys’—informal names for modern meteorite hunters!

ON January 21, 2024, in the town of Ribbeck near Berlin, Germany, a beach ball-sized meteorite landed and shattered into dozens of pieces. The news brought meteorite hunters from all over the world rushing to the town. Called an aubrite, the meteorite was rare, as it was composed of a number of minerals not known on Earth.

Hours before the impact, the asteroid 2024BX1 that produced the meteoroid was being tracked by amateur and professional meteor astronomers as well as space agencies such as ESA (European Space Agency) and NASA (National Aeronautics and Space Administration). All of them were busy calculating when and where the meteorite would land on Earth.

Asteroids are large rocks that are found mostly in the asteroid belt that lies between Mars and Jupiter. Like comets, asteroids sometimes approach Earth’s orbit in their journey towards or around the Sun. Collisions between these heavenly bodies produce breakaway rocks called meteoroids.

A Near Earth Object or NEO is an asteroid or comet that comes closer than 1.3 astronomical units (AU)(195 million kilometres) to Earth. One AU is the distance between the Sun and the Earth, which is 150 million kilometres.

Almost 99.5 per cent of the meteoroids originating from these NEOs burn up while entering Earth’s atmosphere. They form streaks of light in the night sky (called meteors or meteor showers). A fraction of these meteoroids hit the ground as meteorites!

So how are asteroids (and comets), which approach close to Earth, followed on their journey from outer space?

Data on NEOs is collected by the International Astronomical Union’s Minor Planet Center.



**Willamette Meteorite**

The object is identified and named, and its orbit computed. This information is passed on to space agencies such as NASA and ESA.

NASA has a Center for Near Earth Object Studies (CNEOS) which collects tracking data from space-based radar telescopes such as NEOWISE (Near-Earth-Object Wide-Field Infrared Survey Explorer). A system called Scout determines if the NEO will impact Earth, and the possible time and location of the impact. The ESA has the Meerkat Asteroid Guard system. Astronomers also report observations to the International Asteroid Warning Network.

These minute-by-minute observations, available to anyone who is interested, have changed meteorite hunting from its



early days. Till the end of the 20th century, meteorite seekers would distribute flyers requesting eyewitness accounts of fireballs, and rely on word-of-mouth accounts or news stories. Once hunters found a meteorite, they had to find a buyer. There was a negligible market for space rocks at the time.

Meteorite hunting is now a lucrative business, leading to a fierce competition to find them. They are sold for huge sums at major auction houses like Christie's and Sotheby's. The 15.5-ton Willamette Meteorite, the largest ever found in the US, is valued in millions!

## Meteorite Men

Three American fanatics—Harvey Nininger, Oscar Monnig and Lincoln LaPaz—could be called the pioneers of meteorite hunting. In the 1930s and 40s, all three wrote books, articles and newsletters on their pet subject. They sold the meteorites they found to major museums. Astronomers studied the rocks and proved that they originated in outer space and held important clues to the origin of Earth.

However, meteorite hunting did not take off till Bob Haag entered the scene in the 1980s. Over the course of 40 years, Haag became a 'rock' star. He found the first known lunar meteorite in 1990. He was the first to make a fortune selling his meteorites at a major mineral show held in Tokyo. He went on to publish catalogues, field guides and books. He featured in National Geographic and was a guest on TV



Geoff Notkin and Steve Arnold

talk shows. Major auction houses soon came knocking, enabling Haag to turn what had started as a hobby into a business.

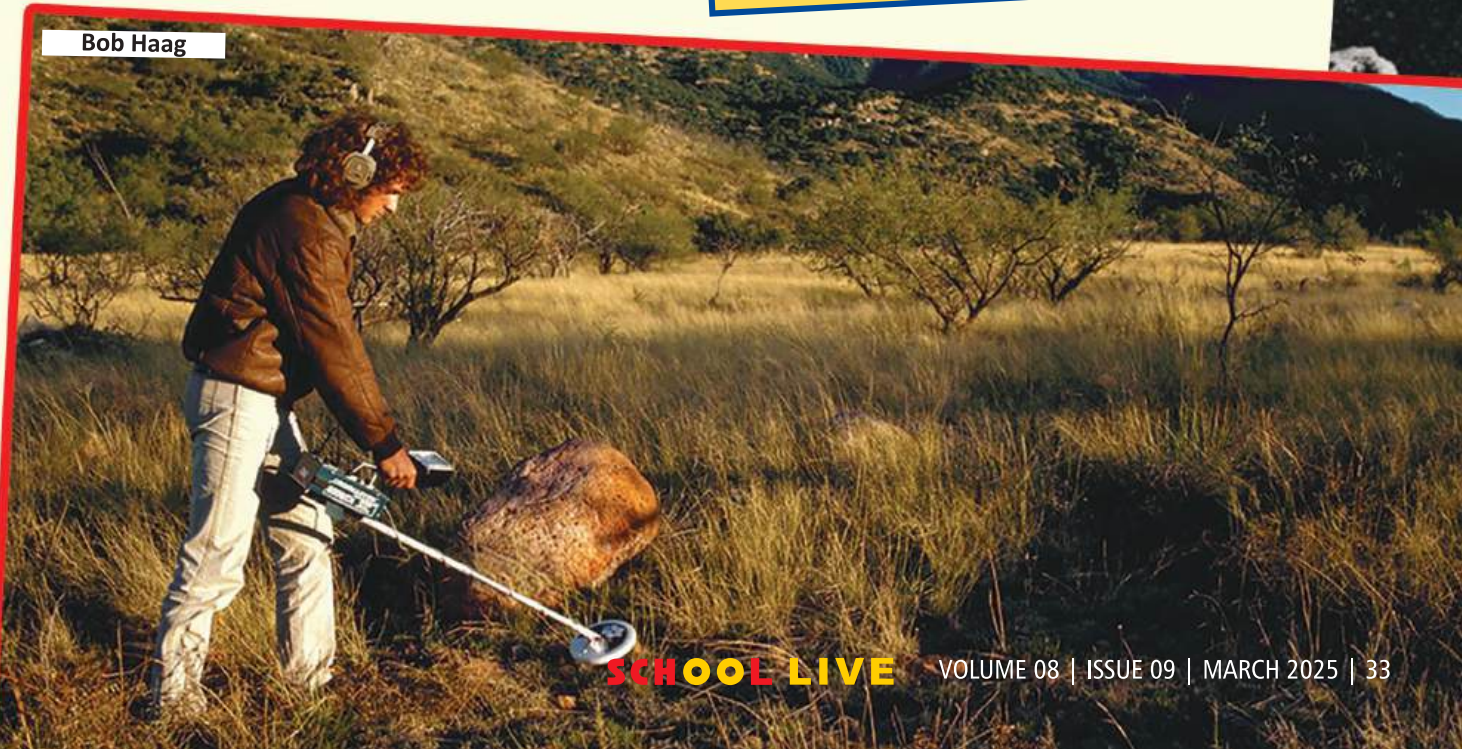
Steve Arnold and Geoff Notkin, who together hosted the reality TV series *Meteorite Men* on the Science channel from 2009 to 2012, also kicked off a 'gold rush' of sorts. Today, hundreds of amateur rock hounds routinely scour the Earth for meteorites!

## It's a Fact!

Naveen Jain, an Indian businessman in the US, owns the largest private meteorite collection on Earth, valued at more than \$8.5 m!



Bob Haag





# Hungary – land of spas and scholars

## Fact File

**Capital:** Budapest

**Population:** 95 lakhs

**Currency:** Forint (HUF)

*Hungary is a fast-growing market economy in Central Europe having successfully emerged from the shadows of Communism in the 1990s. This small land-locked country boasts a unique language and an abundance of talent. Hungarians have remained at the forefront of mathematics, science and technology with their stellar contributions.*

## Tracing History

Hungarians trace their roots to the Magyar tribes who arrived from the Ural mountains in the 9th century.

A powerful medieval kingdom for centuries, Hungary was taken over by the Ottoman and Habsburg rulers. It later became a part of the Austro-Hungarian empire. Its defeat in the First World War cost Hungary much of its territory. The Second World War

brought more hardships to the people of Hungary. Once again Hungary found herself on the losing side and became a satellite state of the USSR.

Communist rule lasted four decades. But even behind the Iron Curtain, Hungary remained a relatively 'open' and progressive country. In 1989, Hungary was the first Communist-bloc country to open its borders to Western Europe.



## Capital Glory

Touted as one of the most beautiful cities of Europe, capital Budapest is indeed a pretty showcase of Hungary. In fact, the entire country is Budapest-centric with the finest in science, technology, visual arts, education and entertainment encompassed in its length and breadth. This fast-growing global city is also the financial nerve centre of Hungary. Budapest was created by uniting the cities of Buda and Pest situated on either side of the Danube river in 1873.

Budapest is regarded for its architectural legacy from various periods — its majestic buildings bear



testimony to the city's glorious past. The late 19th century is considered the golden age of Budapest when some of its most magnificent structures including the Hungarian Parliament, St. Stephen's Basilica, Hungarian State Opera House, the Fisherman's Bastion and the Great Synagogue, were built. The historic city centre along the Danube is a World Heritage site. Its landmarks include the Buda Castle, Matthias Church and the iconic Chain Bridge over the Danube.

Numerous museums, galleries, opera houses and concert halls dot the city landscape displaying the rich Hungarian culture. The Museum of Fine Arts has over 100,000 artifacts representing the various genres of European art.

## Painful Past

The dreadful history of the 20th century has been carefully preserved — be it the bullet-riddled walls from World War II or the Holocaust Memorial Centre. The House of Terror museum honours the victims of both Fascist and Communist rule. The building served as the headquarters of the Nazi party in the 1940s and was later used by the State Security (secret police) during the Communist regime. Thousands are believed to have been tortured in the House of Terror.

Another poignant memorial is the 'Shoes on the Danube Bank'. It commemorates the victims of the Holocaust when Jews were ordered to take off their shoes before they were shot at the edge of the river. It represents their shoes left behind on the bank.





## Scholars Galore

Hungarian people are a talented and ingenious lot — scores of Hungarian scientists, mathematicians, economists, musicians and artists have made their mark in various fields. As many as 13 Hungarian-born scientists have received the Nobel Prize, all of whom had emigrated from Hungary due to persecution during the Communist regime.

Hungary has produced some of the world's most outstanding mathematical geniuses like Farkas Bolyai, Bolyai János, John von Neumann, Paul Erdos, Paul Turán, George Pólya, Gábor Szego, and Lax Péter. What made Hungary produce so many mathematicians? Hungarian culture places great value on intellectual achievements and therefore an overall atmosphere of high learning nurtures brilliance at an early age. However, many also argue that as Hungary was a poor country, it was always more economical for the brighter students to pursue mathematics than the costlier sciences!

## Lake Balaton

This largest freshwater lake in Central Europe is one of Hungary's most precious treasures and a prime tourist hotspot. The sheer vastness of it has earned it the sobriquet of 'Hungarian Sea'. Its hilly northern shore speckled with vineyards offers trekking opportunities for the adventurous. Numerous boutique resorts, castle hotels and wellness spas lining the southern shore present a perfect getaway for a rejuvenating holiday. The thickly-wooded Little Balaton along the western shore is a haven for migratory birds. The region is known for the fine wines produced locally. The calm waters of the lake are ideal for sailing, fishing and other water sports.



Balatonfüred is one of the oldest resort towns on the northern shore of Lake Balaton. Its world-renowned heart rehabilitation hospital once had Rabindranath Tagore as a patient. The Nobel laureate's poetic admiration for the lake town has been included in the travel brochure. The hospital room in which Tagore stayed has been preserved as a tribute to him. A promenade along the banks of the lake has been named after him and in the garden alongside is the sculpted bust of the poet under the linden tree that he is said to have planted.

Hungary with more than 1000 thermal springs, some of which are known for their healing properties. The Romans and the Turkish invaders put this nature's bounty to good use by building expansive baths. The bathing culture continues with numerous spas dotting the countryside as well as the capital. Some of the 16th century Turkish baths are still in use. Budapest's Széchenyi Spa is the largest medicinal bath in Europe.

## Spa Culture

Hungary is located on the Carpathian Basin where Earth's crust is very thin. This geological feature has blessed

## Trivia

- ◆ Hungarians speak Magyar, a language that is not related to any other major European language.
- ◆ The world famous logic toy Rubik's Cube — widely considered to be the world's best-selling toy — was invented by Hungarian sculptor and architect Erno Rubik.
- ◆ Goulash, a stew of smoked meat and vegetables, seasoned with paprika is a popular dish.
- ◆ Hungarians excel in sports, especially water sports like swimming and water polo. Their men's water polo team has bagged 15 Olympic medals including 9 gold. They are among the top ten medal-winners at the Olympics. Chess is also very popular. Judit Polgar, a Hungarian chess grandmaster, is considered the strongest female chess player of all time.
- ◆ Opened in 1896, Budapest's subway system called the Millennium Underground is one of the oldest in the world.



- ◆ The University of Pécs, the oldest in Hungary, was founded in 1367.
- ◆ Hungary's prolific composers include Béla Bartók, Zoltán Kodály and Franz Liszt.
- ◆ The ceramics of Herend are world famous, specialising in luxury hand-painted and gilded porcelain.







## A Fibre that Saves Lives

EVERY now and then, an FBI agent who lives near Stephanie Kwolek's house brings over someone to meet her — someone whose life has been saved by Kwolek's invention, aramid fibres, or Kevlar. When Kwolek's invention became known, a chemist from another company remarked, "That guy has to be a very outstanding chemist." Since there were few women scientists in those days, people automatically assumed that any important discovery had a man behind it!

Kwolek took up a job after graduating in 1946 with a Chemistry degree, at DuPont's textile fibres laboratory in New York, planning to work for a few years till she saved enough money to study medicine. She so fell in love with the job that she continued working there till she retired!

In 1964, Kwolek was working to produce a high-performance polymer fibre. One day she came up with a polymer solution that was unlike anything anyone had ever seen. When spun, it produced a fibre that was stronger than steel and yet lighter and more flexible. Kwolek had invented a totally new fibre — aramid fibre — and a new substance called liquid crystalline solution. Aramid fibre was also resistant to high temperatures.

Today, Kevlar is used to make a host of products, including boat hulls, sails, bullet-proof vests, fire resistant suits, spacecraft parts, tennis rackets, canoes and skis.

## Zany Ideas

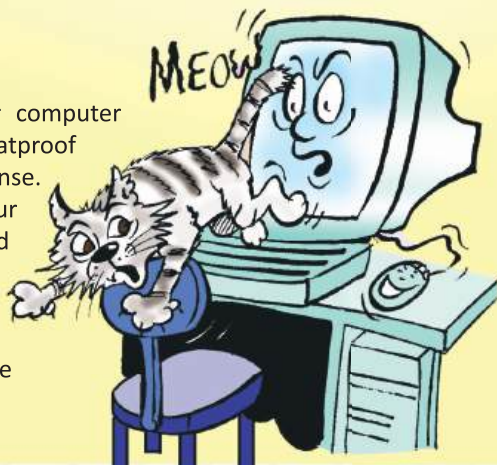
### Quiz

1. How many bones does a cat have?
2. What is radar?

Answer: 1. More than 230 bones — an adult human has 206. 2. Short for Radio Detection And Ranging, radar systems bounce radio waves off objects to find out their location that then appears as blips on the radar screen.

DOES your cat delete files from your computer when you're away from your seat? Catproof your machine by installing PawSense.

It's a software that senses your cat is walking on the keyboard and blocks the input. It can distinguish cat typing from human typing. It even makes a noise that annoys cats.





## Word Power



Munificent – (adj) extraordinarily generous

For example: The *munificent* businessman distributed crackers to all the children in the orphanage. He wanted them to have a great Diwali.

*Munificent* literally means 'giving gifts'. It is a combination of two Latin words, *munis* (gift) and *facere* (to do/make).

## Package Deal

Match the collective nouns in column A to their subjects in column B.

### A

1. bed
2. crew
3. quiver
4. murder
5. kindle
6. convoy



### B

- a. arrows
- b. crows
- c. kittens
- d. roses
- e. trucks
- f. sailors

Answers: 1. d, 2. f, 3. a, 4. b, 5. c, 6. e

## The Sound of Music

- ◆ The bee buzzed past.
- ◆ Brrr...I'm feeling so cold!
- ◆ The popcorn crackled in the microwave oven.
- ◆ Hansel and Gretel cowered in fear as the evil witch cackled with delight.



Words like buzz, hum, pitter-patter etc. are onomatopoeic — they imitate the sense of natural sounds.

## Laugh & Learn

**What was Satan's favourite pastime?**  
To play devil's advocate!

A devil's advocate is a person who expresses a controversial view to provoke a debate. Satan is a devil!



## What's the Difference?

**Does fat chance mean the same as slim chance?**

Fat chance means there is no chance at all of something happening whereas slim chance indicates that there is a small chance the thing happening.



ASHA HAS A FAT CHANCE OF GETTING INTO THE BASKETBALL TEAM.

MAYBE SHE HAS A SLIM CHANCE!

## Crazy Words

Did you know that when Shakespeare used the word 'zany' in *Love's Labour Lost*, people regarded the word as crazy. Take a look at the words below. Do they seem crazy too?

### Bumbershoot

It refers to an umbrella. You may have heard the word in one of the Disney films or read about it in a book.



blah, blah...  
blah...blah...  
blah, blah...



### Flibbertigibbet

It describes someone who is silly or a chatterbox. It also refers to a person who is flighty.

### Abibliophobia

It is the fear of running out of reading material. Bookworms generally suffer from it. Do you?





## Ministry of Rural Development and UNICEF YuWaah come together to empower youth and women of rural India through digital and entrepreneurial opportunities



### Pilot Initiatives across Cluster Level Federation (CLF) in Odisha, Jharkhand, Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, and Andhra Pradesh

The Ministry of Rural Development (MoRD) and UNICEF YuWaah have signed a **Statement of Intent (SOI)** to strengthen collaboration aimed at empowering India's youth and women by connecting them to skilling, economic, and social impact opportunities.

Through this three-year partnership, UNICEF YuWaah and MoRD will build on existing national and state initiatives to co-create scalable solutions for skilling, economic opportunities, and social impact, with a focus on vulnerable populations. At the core of this collaboration is a *pilot initiative* across **CLFs in Odisha, Jharkhand, Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, and Andhra Pradesh** will use an ecosystem approach to empower SHG women and their female family members (18-29 years) by linking them to jobs, self-employment, entrepreneurship, and skills aligned with local demand.

**Shri T. K. Anil Kumar**, Additional Secretary, Ministry of Rural Development, said, "This partnership has come at a very

*opportune time as it aligns with the Rural Prosperity and Resilience Programme announced in the Budget 2025-26. It is particularly significant because nearly one-third of the 10 crore SHG members are youth, who will play a central role in this initiative."*

*"By strengthening digital infrastructure, enhancing skilling pathways, and fostering entrepreneurship, this partnership has the potential to create sustainable livelihoods and transform local economies. Investing in young people and women economic participation is not just about individual progress, it's about driving inclusive growth at the community and national levels,"* said **Sharada Thapalia**, Deputy Representative Operations, UNICEF India.

This pilot will integrate innovative features, like **Youth Hub**, an aggregator platform for jobs, skilling, and volunteering, while testing scalable models to create **2,500 'Lakhpati Didis'**, aligned with the government's vision for women



entrepreneurs. If successful, the model could reach **3.5 million women across 7,000+ blocks**. To strengthen digital and entrepreneurial infrastructure, the pilot will establish **100 'Computer Didi Centres'** run by women at the Panchayat level. The **Digital Girls Hub (DGH)** initiative supported by Children's Investment Fund Foundation, will enhance last-mile skilling and employment for young women by leveraging **Youth Hub** and rural infrastructure. Furthering economic empowerment, **250 'Didi Ki Dukaan'** retail stores will be set up across five blocks, offering training, branding, market linkages, and an online presence to connect local producers with wider markets. **Community Management Training Centres (CMTCs)** will provide residential training, while the initiative will use CLF/SHG networks and technology to expand rural employment opportunities.

MoRD's partnership with UNICEF YuWaah reinforces the Government of India's commitment to fostering inclusive growth by empowering rural youth, particularly women, with the skills and resources necessary for financial independence. The initiatives outlined in the Statement of Intent have the potential to become a national model for sustainable livelihoods, ensuring that India's women are at the forefront of the country's economic development.

### About UNICEF YuWaah

As part of the UN Youth Policy 2030, the UN Secretary-General launched UNICEF's global Generation Unlimited (GenU) movement at the United Nations General Assembly in 2018. This initiative addresses the urgent needs of young people aged 10-24 by expanding learning, skill development, employment, and engagement opportunities.

The India chapter of Generation Unlimited, known as YuWaah, was launched in November 2019. By 2030, YuWaah at UNICEF aims to:

- Create pathways for 100 million young people to access aspirational socio-economic opportunities.
- Enable 200 million young people to acquire relevant skills for productive lives and the future of work.
- Partner with 300 million young people as change-makers, providing spaces for them to develop their leadership skills.

Launched in 2019 by the Honourable Minister for Women and Children's Development, Smriti Irani, YuWaah also received strong words of encouragement from the Honourable Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi, in the form of a letter of support. Follow YuWaah on Instagram, Facebook and Twitter. For more information, visit [www.yuwaah.org](http://www.yuwaah.org)

## The Missing Goat!?

It all started one lazy Sunday afternoon in a small town near Toronto in Canada.

Two school-going friends had a crazy idea.

They rounded up three goats from the neighborhood and painted the numbers 1, 2 and 4 on their sides.

That night they let the goats loose inside their school building.

The next morning, when the authorities entered the school, they could smell something was wrong.

They soon saw goat droppings on the stairs and near the entrance and realized that some goats had entered the building.

A search was immediately launched and very soon, the three goats were found.

But the authorities were worried, where was goat No. 3?

They spent the rest of the day looking for goat No.3.

The school declared classes off for the students for the rest of the day.

The teachers, helpers, guards, canteen staffs, boys were all busy looking for the goat No. 3, which, of course, was never found.

Simply because it did not exist.

Those among us who in spite of having a good life are always feeling a "lack of fulfilment" are actually looking for the elusive, missing, non-existent Goat No.3.

Whatever the area of complaint or dissatisfaction, relationship, job-satisfaction, finance, achievements, ..... An absence of something is always larger than the presence of many other things.

Let's stop worrying about goat No.3 and enjoy life...

Life would be so much happier without the worries...

And don't let the non-existent imaginary goat number 3 waste your time and happiness!



*\*From School Live Archives*

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# Athletics A TO Z

*Brush up your athletics vocabulary in time for the World Athletics Championships to be held from September 13 to 21 in Tokyo...*



**Anchor:** The athlete who runs the last leg of a relay race.

**Bell Lap:** The final lap of a multiple lap race. A bell is rung to notify the other athletes that the leader has begun his last lap.

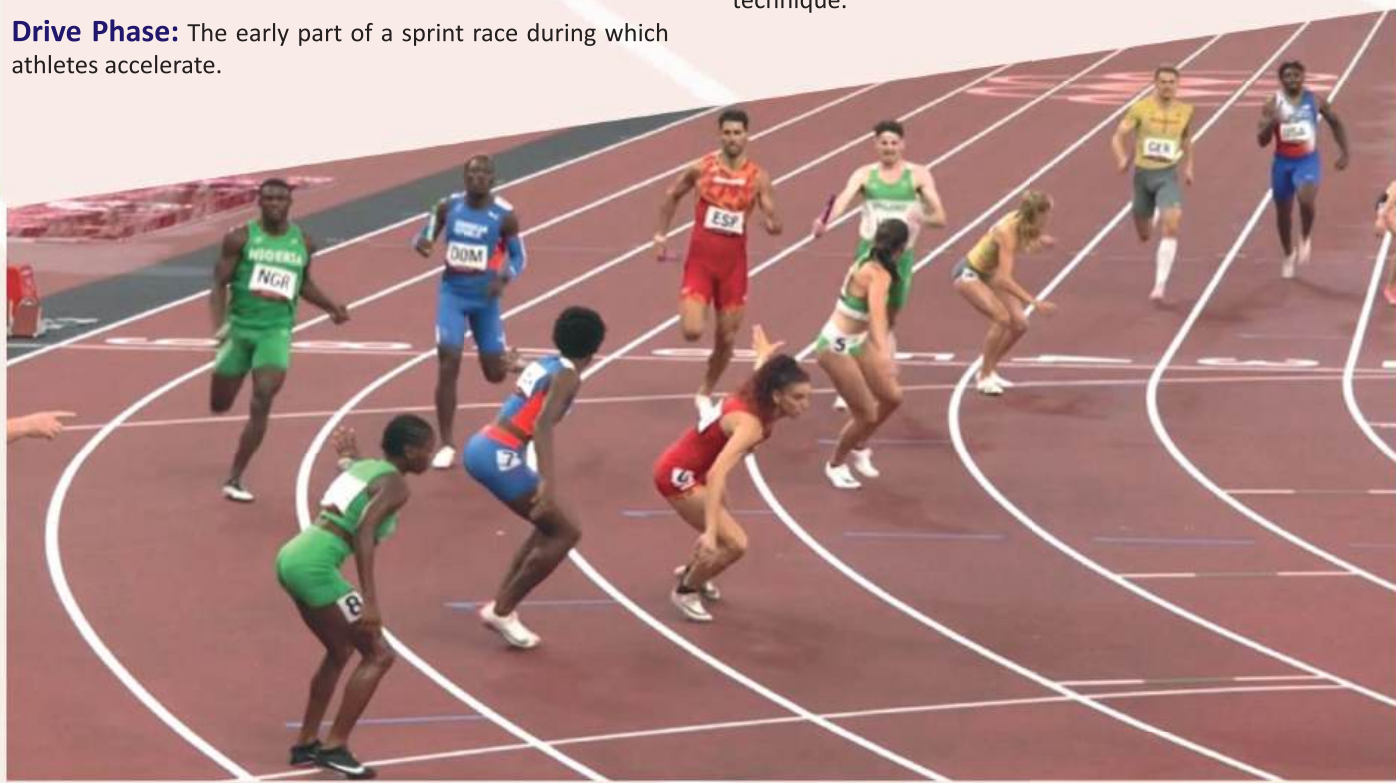
**Cage:** The marked area used for discus and hammer events. It is a metal frame covered with netting.

**Drive Phase:** The early part of a sprint race during which athletes accelerate.

**Elite Runner:** An athlete who has reached the highest level in his/her sport.

**False Start:** The beginning of a race before the gun is fired. Two false starts by a player result in her or his disqualification.

**Glide Technique:** In shot-put when the athlete hops from behind in a straight line instead of spinning, it is called a glide technique.







### Fast Fact

In ancient Greece, the Olympics were a religious event dedicated to the Greek gods. Only Greeks who worshipped Greek gods were allowed to take part. It was only later, around 146 BCE when the Romans conducted the games that athletes from other countries were allowed to compete.

### Heptathlon:

An athletic event made up of 7 events namely 100 metres hurdle race, high jump, shot-put, 200 metre race, long jump, javelin throw and 800 metres race.

**Impact Area:** The portion of the field in which the shot, discus, hammer or javelin should land during throwing events.

**Jump-off:** The final stage of a pole vault or high jump competition in case of a draw.

The final athletes get one attempt to jump particular heights and the first one who knocks the bar off is eliminated from the competition while the other is declared the winner.

**Kick:** Increase in speed during the final stages of a race.

**Lap:** One circuit of the track during a race.

**Middle-distance:** a race distance of between 800 and 5,000 metres. The world's best middle distance runners come from northern Africa.

**Negative Split:** Running the second half of a race faster than the first half.

**Octathlon:** a combined event competition consisting of eight different sports or contests. It is mainly a youth or junior event.

**Paceband:** A wristband that lists expected split times in a running race.

**Quality Workouts:** Any workouts that are faster or longer than daily runs — long runs, speed sessions and tempo runs.

**Race Walk:** An event which is different from running races. In this race an athlete should have one foot in contact with the ground at all times and the leading leg must be straight when it makes contact with the ground.

**Sit-and-Kick:** A strategy implemented by long distance racers in which the runner relies on his/her brilliant finishing skills and does not attempt to overtake other runners of the race until the very end.

**Tail Wind:** A wind blowing in the direction of the run. Tailwinds help the runner to run faster. If the tailwind exceeds 2 metres per second, the performances of that race would be counted for the event/tournament but not for record purposes.

**Uprights:** The vertical poles which hold the cross bar in place in pole vault and high jump.

**Wall:** The point in running, when an athlete's legs become heavy and he can run no further.

# Gold Nuggets



### Golden Retriever

A breed of dog known for its ability to 'retrieve' game birds that have been shot during hunting parties. Golden retrievers have a luxurious waterproof coat of varying shades of gold. They are valuable as guide dogs for the blind and in search and rescue operations.



### Gold Medal

The finest achievement in a contest in the field of arts, science, sports, etc. is awarded the highest medal, which may be made of solid gold but is usually gold-plated.

### Golden Temple

Harmandir Sahib, the revered Sikh shrine in Amritsar, was built in the 16th century by Guru Arjan Dev. The gurudwara is the seat of the holy Sikh text, Guru Granth Sahib. It was gilded in gold by Maharaja Ranjit Singh, the founder of the Sikh Empire. Hence its name, Golden Temple.



### Golden Gate Bridge

An iconic symbol of San Francisco, the orange-coloured suspension bridge is probably the most photographed bridge in the world. It was the longest single suspension bridge (1,300m) at the time when it was built in 1937.

### Golden Globe

An American award recognizing excellence in film and television, both local and international. Director Mira Nair has won two Golden Globes for her films, *Salaam Bombay!* and *Monsoon Wedding*.



### Goldfinger

The third Bond film based on a novel by Ian Fleming. Sean Connery, starring as the British super spy, James Bond, brings down the villainous gold smuggler Auric Goldfinger.

Actor Pierce Brosnan's first Bond movie was *GoldenEye*. It was also the name of Fleming's estate in Jamaica.



# THE WINCHESTER MYSTERY HOUSE

IN the Santa Clara Valley of California in the U.S. stands a remarkable house. It has 40 bedrooms, three lifts, and six kitchens. Not impressed? It originally had 2000 doors, 10,000 windows, 47 fireplaces and at least 40 stairways. Sounds cluttered? It is!

Winchester House once belonged to Sarah Winchester, widow of William Winchester who owned the Winchester Repeating Arms Co. The firm manufactured rifles, the most popular of which was the Winchester '73, 'the gun that won the West'. William Winchester died in 1881. Sarah inherited his wealth, but it brought her no comfort. She grieved not only for her dead husband but also the loss of their only child.

Mrs. Winchester sought solace from a spiritualist who told her that her family was being victimised by the spirits of thousands of people who had been killed by the rifles manufactured by the Winchester Company. She was advised that only sounds associated with construction activity could keep the spirits from getting at her too.

Mrs. Winchester bought an 8-room farmhouse in 1884, and began reconstructing it. The construction crew was told to work non-stop, so work went on day and night, 365 days of the year — for over three decades. The farmhouse grew into a seven-storied monstrosity. It finally contained 160 rooms, and was criss-crossed with staircases, many of which led nowhere.

Three floors had to be pulled down after being damaged in an earthquake in 1906, and that is perhaps the only time that the building really required the services of a construction crew. The First World War came and went but the work never stopped. It went on till the day of Mrs. Winchester's death at the age of 85, on September 5, 1922. It is said that when the workmen learnt of her death they immediately downed their tools, and the sound of hammering that had started 38 years earlier finally came to a stop.

Mrs. Winchester was buried beside her husband and daughter. Her house, now known as the Winchester Mystery House, is a tourist attraction. It is also listed as a National Historic Site.

# Mindbender



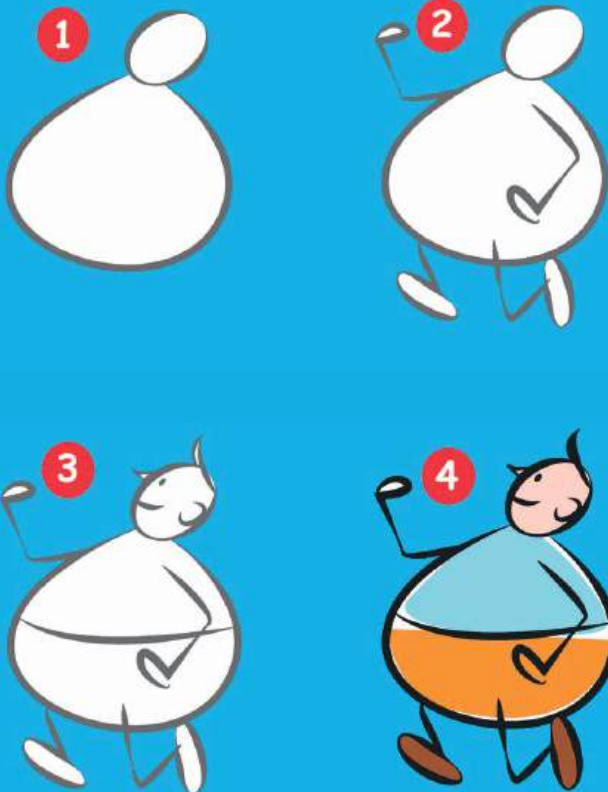
Alisha wants to send a secret diary to her friend Leena in a box which can be fitted with multiple locks. Both Alisha and Leena have their own locks and the corresponding keys but they don't have the keys to each other's locks. Neither girl wants to part with her key. How will Alisha send the diary to Leena without anybody opening the box on the way?

Hint: They have a servant who can take the box from one to another.

**Answer:** Alisha will put the secret diary into the box, secure it with a lock and send it to Leena. Leena will attach her lock to the box and return it. Alisha will then remove her lock and send the box back. Now Leena can unlock her own lock and retrieve the diary.

## Easy Draw

Draw a cartoon man in four easy steps.



## Sudoku

Fill in the grid so that every horizontal row, vertical column and 2x3 box has the digits from 1-6 without repeating them in the same row, column or box.

	2		3		4
6		1		3	
			5	6	
2	5				
	6		4		3
4				5	1

ANSWERS:

4	3	2	6	5	1
1	6	5	4	2	3
2	5	3	1	4	6
3	1	4	5	6	2
6	4	1	2	3	5
5	2	6	3	1	4



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**LET'S FIND OUT!**

# What is 'email bankruptcy'?

A PERSON declares 'email bankruptcy' when he/she has decided to clear the inbox by deleting all the mails up to a particular date. Such a decision may be necessary if the person has been inundated with thousands of emails and has failed to respond on time. Such a backlog is generally attributed to information overload as many high-profile persons receive hundreds of emails everyday. A person may have also fallen behind in reading and answering emails during long vacations or illnesses.

While declaring bankruptcy, the person sends a mass email to senders informing them that their email is being deleted and that they may send it once again if they expect a response.

Harvard professor and political activist Lawrence Lessig first coined the term in 2004 when he expressed inability to go through the email backlog and deleted them en masse.



## Who is Jaron Lanier?



JARON LANIER is best known for popularising the term 'virtual reality'. Lanier is a computer scientist, music composer, writer and speaker all rolled into one. In 2010 he was included in the TIME list of the 100 most influential people.

In the early 1980s Jaron Lanier carried out path-breaking work in the field of virtual reality. He wrote a new programming language and developed a virtual headpiece and a glove that could manipulate objects in cyber space. His cyber glove, which he sold as a 'virtual reality' device, was an instant hit, giving a new catchphrase to the computer world.

Lanier's research has deeply influenced emerging technologies.

Jaron Lanier is an accomplished pianist and has a keen interest in rare string and wind instruments from Asia of which he has a good collection. Lanier has performed with many eminent artistes.



# Circus Act

SURREAL costumes, impossible acrobatics, rousing music, unique themes and grand sets — the show is nothing short of spectacular! It is a circus like you have never seen before. Founded in Quebec in 1984 by Guy Laliberté and Daniel Gauthier, the Cirque du Soleil (Circus of the Sun) brought together street performers like stilt walkers, jugglers, fire eaters and acrobats. Over the years, the circus has evolved into a large, hugely successful multinational, multilingual company.

The main attraction of its productions is the high drama. Every production has a specific theme with original music, employing

performers from all over the world. Dressed in flamboyant costumes, the actors perform gravity defying feats. One of its novel productions, 'O' has a gigantic water tank for a stage. Another unique feature is the absence of animal acts!

The circus has developed a global online database called Cirque Memory to manage its numerous shows and performers.

The award winning Cirque du Soleil has toured not only North America but also Asia, Europe and Australia.



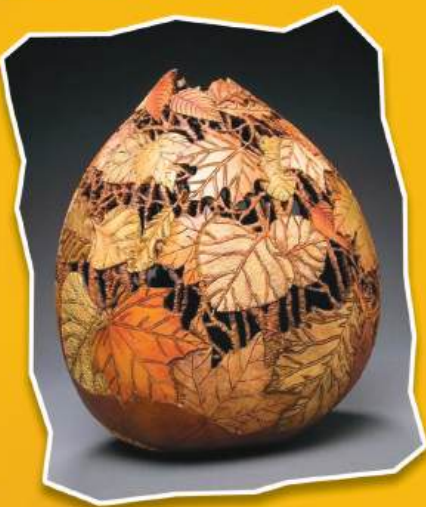
# Vegetable Art

THE indigenous peoples of America, notably tribal Peruvians and Native Americans, take pride in a unique craft — gourd art. Gourds (mainly those belonging to the squash family) of various sizes and shapes are transformed into ornamental works of art.

When gourds are dried, they develop a hard shell. Symmetrical gourds with smooth, thick shells are the perfect medium. The vegetable is cut open with a mini-saw and its interiors emptied, cleaned and sanded to get a polished finish. The gourd is now a ready canvas for the artist to make it into an ornament, bowl, sculpture, vase, or mask. The harder shelled varieties are used to make musical instruments and vessels.

Gourds are usually decorated by painting or wood burning (pyrography). Today, modern devices like electric wood burners and high-speed pen-shaped rotary tools have speeded up and eased the time-consuming process of cleaning and carving gourds.

Exhibitions and festivals are held all over North America to promote gourd art. North Carolina, USA, hosts the oldest such festival featuring craft workshops, books, vendors, etc.





# Is Green Energy Really Clean?

*Climate change is wreaking havoc all around the world. Are 'green energy' alternatives like solar and nuclear energy really making a difference?*

LOW-CARBON sources of electricity have been around for decades, but do they cause more harm than good in the long run?

Globally, low-carbon 'clean' power (constituting 25 per cent of power from all sources, including coal and oil), comes from hydro, nuclear, wind, solar and geothermal sources and from biofuels. Hydroelectricity has the largest share, while nuclear energy comes second, followed by wind, solar, geothermal and biofuels.

The starry-eyed adoption of alternative energy sources has ignored their environmental impact, which is surprisingly huge.

Let's look at the pros and cons of two alternative energy sources—nuclear energy and solar energy.

## **Nuclear energy: the pros**

- ◆ A typical nuclear plant produces 1 gigawatt (GW) or 1000 megawatts (MW) of power.
- ◆ It can be set up on less than a square kilometre of land.
- ◆ It is a reliable, efficient and continuous source of power.
- ◆ Nuclear plants require little maintenance and can run for almost two years without refuelling.
- ◆ Nuclear energy is clean. It generates power through fission, splitting uranium atoms to produce heat. The heat creates steam that spins turbines to generate electricity. There are none of the emissions that come from burning fossil fuels.
- ◆ Since it is so dense, spent nuclear fuel doesn't occupy much space. All the nuclear waste produced in USA in the last 60 years can be stored in an area the size of a football field at a metre's depth.
- ◆ The spent fuel is reprocessed and reused as fuel or used in nuclear weapons.
- ◆ Billions of litres of water (more seawater and less freshwater) are required per year to run a nuclear power plant but all of it is recycled. In some types of plants, the water cannot be reused. It is decontaminated, cleaned, and then released into water bodies.





### Nuclear energy: the cons

- ◆ Spent fuel or nuclear waste is highly radioactive, which is why it cannot be called 'green' energy. The process of making it safe for storage is also complex. It has to be encased in super strong containers and transported to special facilities meant for the purpose or stored onsite.
- ◆ As demonstrated by the Three Mile Island, Chernobyl and Fukushima disasters, nuclear power plants can malfunction and cause massive radiation leaks.
- ◆ Uranium used in reactors is a non-renewable finite resource.

### Solar energy: the pros

- ◆ Solar energy does not emit polluting gases like carbon dioxide and methane that cause climate change.
- ◆ A solar cell, also called a photovoltaic (PV) cell, converts light energy to electrical energy. There are no moving parts in a cell, so it is long-lasting.
- ◆ The sun is an infinite source of energy, so solar energy will never run out as long as there is enough sunlight.
- ◆ PV panels are easy to install on a small scale, say on houses or on small farms and businesses.

### Solar energy: the cons

- ◆ Solar power is dependent on daily weather. On overcast and rainy days, it requires to be backed up by a sufficient amount of stored electricity. Or the plants need to be paired with a reliable power source such as nuclear or hydropower, to make up for the deficit.
- ◆ Three or even four solar energy plants, each capable of producing 1 GW, are required to supply the same power as one nuclear plant! A solar energy plant requires 75 times more space and over 3 million solar panels to generate that amount of power.
- ◆ Solar cells and panels contain metals that are hazardous if released into the environment—toxic elements such as cadmium, arsenic and lead, as also certain rare minerals like indium, gallium, selenium and tellurium.

- ◆ The processes to create silicon and glass (essential components of PV panels) from sand, require tremendous heat energy.
- ◆ Toxic metals are washed out of damaged or discarded panels by rainwater.
- ◆ The glass in solar panels cannot be recycled because of impurities like plastic, cadmium, lead and antimony.
- ◆ Natural disasters like hailstorms, tornadoes, hurricanes and earthquakes sometimes wreck the fragile panels and cause leaching of toxicants.
- ◆ Around 90 litres of freshwater are used per MW hour of electricity generated to clean the mirrors, heliostats and PV panels.

### Recycle or Perish

Solar panel recycling is as problematic as dealing with spent nuclear waste. Solar energy went mainstream in the 1970s and its use expanded rapidly in the 2000s. The panels have a lifespan of 20 to 25 years, so in another 30 years, environmentalists fear a deluge of solar e-waste.

Unless there is proper management of e-waste from photovoltaic panels, solar energy may end up causing more harm than good. The benefits of zero emissions will be far outweighed by the ecological damage.

### Did You Know?

A thermal or concentrating solar power system generates electricity by focusing the sun's rays to transform water into steam, which turns a turbine to power a generator. A huge number of mirrors point to a central tower. It creates an incredible amount of heat. Unfortunately, the light beam and surrounding mirrors attract insects by the horde. Following the insect prey, come the birds. Both are incinerated instantly when they fly into the concentrated light beam. The Ivanpah concentrated solar tower in the Mojave desert of California killed more than 6000 birds in the space of a year, i.e. around seven birds for every GW hour of electricity it produced.





## TRAVEL

A family trip had been on the cards for a long time. We decided to make it a kind of getaway from city life. Achra, a sleepy little village in Konkan's Sindhudurg district, sounded perfect.

An overnight train ride followed by a scenic hour-long drive brought us to our temporary abode. It was a rural resort but was well-equipped for the needs of the urban traveller. Our cottage was a delightful affair set between tall trees, on a grassy mound.

Right behind the cottage were green woods alive with curious chirps and tweets. I whipped out my trusty binoculars and went for a walk in the forest. And Nature was kind to me! I spotted a family of the elusive Malabar pied hornbills, big black birds with curved yellow bills fitted with conical horns. One came and perched on a tree branch right over my head, so close that I could hear it crunch food in its massive beak. Watching it eat made me hungry too. So I trotted back and headed to the dining area where the caretaker was laying out a scrumptious fare for us. Since we were in Konkan, fish prepared in the tasty Malvani style was a staple.

The next morning, we took off for the town of Malvan that was about 20 km from Achra. Vehicles that looked like crosses between rickshaws and cars functioned as transport. Although these were six-seaters, they were shared by 10 passengers — plastic stools placed inside the vehicles

provided extra seats. The epitome of Indian innovation indeed!

In Malvan, a walk through the market took us to the beach where there were two kinds of boats: one kind would take us scuba diving and the other would go to Sindhudurg, the sea fort built by Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj. Since I am an awful swimmer, Sindhudurg it was!

The fort looked deceptively small as our boat approached it. It was only when we started walking inside it, did we realise how extensive its grounds were. We visited the Shivaji temple inside its premises and then explored its ramparts. What I loved best was the tall grass that had taken over most of the area. It waved at every gust of salty air. I ventured further alone through a doorway in a rampart. It brought me to a cove of sorts where the water met the sand quietly. I revelled in the silence until my phone rang. The boat was supposed to depart in a few minutes. I had to get back.

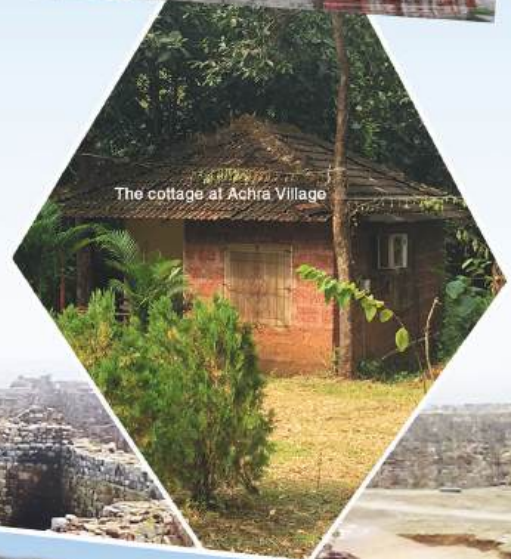
The next day was the day of the biweekly market or 'haat' at Achra. Farm-fresh produce and knickknacks of every kind lined the streets. The sleepy village suddenly seemed abuzz with activity. My father and I accompanied our caretaker as he shopped for rations — fish, fresh fruits, nuts and yummy peanut and sev laddoos.

Then we headed to Achra beach, about four kilometres from the village. It was quiet there save for a few fishermen.

A smattering of tourists arrived as the hour of sunset drew closer, but it was still pretty peaceful.

Achra is one of the virgin beaches of Malvan. It is relatively unknown and therefore, clean. I took off along the beach, my feet immersed in the waves. But unlike other beaches, the water here tickled. I stopped and peered into the waves. That's when I spotted them — tiny crabs and molluscs scuttling about in the water. They were beautiful — pink and peach and grey. The sand was full of them. As I picked my way out of the waves, I wondered where one could get a better holiday than in Achra.

—Dolly Pahlajani



# Sleepy Nooks of Sindhudurg





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# HADDIRAJ

## The Dilemma



Ashwin & Abhijeet





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# Puppy Love



*If you are planning to buy or adopt a puppy or your dog has recently littered, here are some tips that may come in handy.*

WHEN you go to a pet shop or to a breeder to get a puppy, the most important thing to do is to check the health history of the puppy's parents, the health of its littermates and make sure it is fit.

Once you bring a newborn pup home, keep it warm by covering it with a blanket. The eyes and ear canals of the pup will open within 14 days. During the first three weeks of life, a puppy has to be stimulated to pee and poop. Normally the mother takes care of this by licking her pup but you can do it by wiping the area with moist cotton/soft tissue paper after every feed.

A puppy spends its first two weeks sleeping and feeding. It begins walking, play-biting and doing jobs on its own only by the third week. By the time a puppy is a month old, it starts spending the major part of the day playing (which includes biting, barking, chasing and pouncing) and exploring its surroundings.

You should record the puppy's weight regularly as it helps to monitor its growth. The normal birth weight varies with the breed (toy breeds are 100–200 gms, medium breeds are 200–300 gms, large breeds are 400–500 gms and giant breeds are 700 gms or more). Generally, the body weight doubles in 10–12 days.

Your puppy should have its own comfortable corner to sleep and rest. You could shred newspapers and use them as bedding. However, make sure the area is clean and dry.

It is a good idea to handle your pup only for short periods in the first month. Wash your hands with soap before and after handling the pup. Get your pup used to routine things like getting its ears cleaned, teeth brushed and hair-coat combed from around two months, so that it will be easier to control your pup when it becomes an adult.

## Looking After Your Pup

**My father gave me a two-month old pup for my birthday. I want to know if I can bathe her.**

Never bathe your puppy until it is three months of age. If the puppy is very dirty, sponge it with bath wipes, a wet towel or cotton soaked in an antiseptic liquid and lukewarm water.

**Is it all right to feed my six-day old pup with a commercial puppy milk replacer?**

If the mother is healthy and getting proper nutrition, a puppy needs only her milk for the first month. If mother's milk is not available, you can feed it with a commercial puppy milk replacer. In an emergency, mix half or one litre cow/goat milk with an equal quantity of water, two to four egg yolks and one tablespoon of corn oil.

**When can I start giving solid food to my pup?**

Weaning should be done gradually from six to eight weeks of age. Start with moistened semi-solid food: you can mix one part of dry weaning diet with three parts water. The water content may be slowly reduced over the next few weeks.

**How many times a day should I feed my pup?**

A puppy should be fed 3–4 times a day at regular intervals. It should have access to fresh drinking water at all times. How much to feed depends on the type of food you are giving and on the body weight, age and required growth rate for the breed. Check the package or consult your vet to know exactly how much to feed your puppy every day.

**Is it necessary to de-worm a puppy?**

Yes. De-worm your pup every two weeks until it is three months of age, and then once a month till it is 12 months of age. Thereafter, you need to de-worm it every three months to protect it from internal parasites. Puppies are more prone to worms because of their tendency to chew and eat rubbish.

— Dr. Sharada Mahalingam, BVSc & AH







# Meals

A healthy pet is a happy pet!

- ★ Chicken changezi
- ★ Buff bhurji
- ★ Quail
- ★ Mutton masala
- ★ Chikpea Salad
- ★ Paneer Meal

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# Lost and not Found

*Historical artefacts that get stolen, lost or hidden become legendary treasures sought after by historians.*



The Heirloom seal of the Realm was the royal seal of the Chinese emperor Qin Shi Huang. Made out of a sacred piece of jade, the seal marked the emperor's rule as a mandate from heaven. It was a symbol of legitimate royal rule for over a millennium until it was lost before the Ming rule in the 14th century.

King Dhammazedi of ancient Myanmar presented a large bronze bell measuring 5.4 m high and 3.65 m wide and weighing 300 tonnes to the Shwedagon Pagoda. In 1608, a Portuguese mercenary known as Nga Zinka stole the bell and tried to ship it away by raft, but it sank into the depths of the Yangon River.



Russia's Catherine Palace had a chamber called the Amber Room, covered with panels made with over six tonnes of amber, precious stones, gold leaf and mirrors. It was dismantled by the Nazis in 1941 and displayed in a castle in Königsberg, Germany. After the Allied powers destroyed the city, the Amber Room was never found.

Bone fossils of forty individuals belonging to the *Homo erectus* species called the Peking Man were found in Zhoukoudian cave in China. During World War II, they were packed to be shipped to USA for safekeeping. But the bones never arrived at the destination.



An ornate, gold-plated wooden chest that held two tablets inscribed with the Ten Commandments, the Ark of the Covenant was kept in the ancient Temple of Jerusalem. Carried by the Israelites during their time in the wilderness, it was eventually placed in the temple built by Solomon. After the Temple was destroyed for the second time in 70 CE, no one knows the final fate of the Ark.

The crown jewels of Ireland included a jewelled star and badge studded with diamonds, emeralds and rubies. They were kept in a safe in a room that required seven keys to open. Despite the heavy security, the jewels mysteriously disappeared just days before an international exhibition on July 6, 1907.



# SENSEFUL Millet Noodles

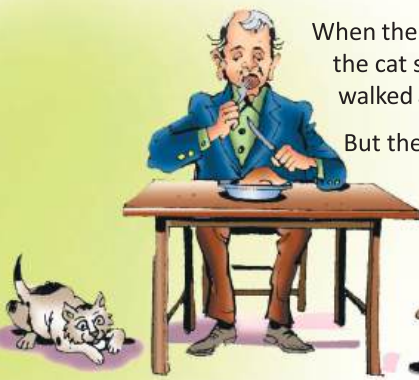


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## THE LIGHTER SIDE

A man eating a chicken kept on throwing pieces of it to a cat and a dog sitting at his feet.



When there was nothing more on his plate the cat said: "Well, I've got to be going," and walked away, throwing the dog a disdainful look.

But the dog did not budge.

"Good dog!" said the man, touched. "I hope you won't desert me like your friend."

"Never," said the dog. "I know that sooner or later you'll get another chicken."



A prisoner in jail received a letter from his wife:

"Dear Husband, I have decided to plant some tomatoes in the back garden. When is the best time to plant them?"

The prisoner, knowing that the prison guards read all mail, replied in a letter:

"Dear Wife, whatever you do, do not touch the back garden. That is where I hid all the money."

A week or so later, he received another letter from his wife:

"Dear Husband, you wouldn't believe what happened! Some men came with shovels to the house, and dug up the whole back garden."

The prisoner wrote another letter back: "Dear wife, now is the best time to plant the tomatoes."



\* \* \* \* \*

THE sports editor of a local newspaper took his wife for a movie one day. The lights were still on when they walked down the aisle. The few people who were scattered throughout the theatre turned towards them and began to applaud. The editor was stunned. Even though his daily sports column included a photograph of his, he had no idea that he had become so popular in such a short time.

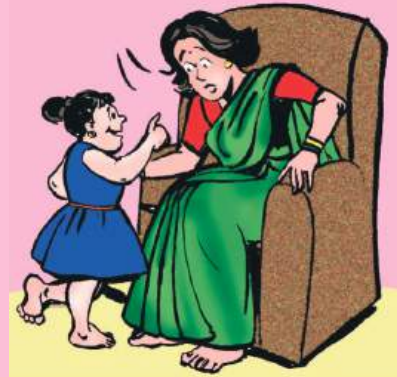
When the movie was over, one of the patrons came over and vigorously shook his hand.

"I'm very flattered that all you people recognise me," said the editor. "I'm really amazed and honoured."

"I don't know about that," the man said puzzled. "All I know is that a few seconds before you and your wife walked in, they announced that unless there were at least 15 customers in the theatre, they wouldn't show the movie."



A woman dashed into a hardware store. "Give me a mouse trap, please," she gasped. "I've got to catch a train." "I'm sorry," said the assistant, "We haven't got any as big as that."

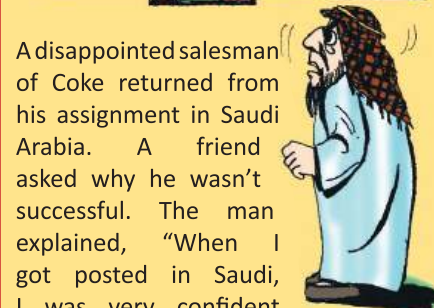


ONE day, a girl looked at her mother's hair and sadly said: "Mom, why is some of your hair white?"

The mother replied, "Well, every time that you do something wrong and make me cry or unhappy, one of my hairs turns white."

The girl thought about this revelation a while, and then said,

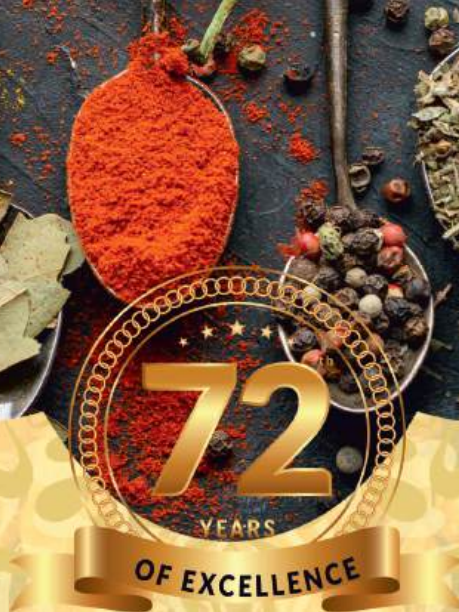
"Mom, how come all of grandma's hairs are white?"



A disappointed salesman of Coke returned from his assignment in Saudi Arabia. A friend asked why he wasn't successful. The man explained, "When I got posted in Saudi, I was very confident that I will make a good sales pitch as Cola is virtually unknown there. I didn't know how to speak Arabic. So, I planned to convey the message through 3 posters: first a man crawling through the hot desert sand.....totally exhausted and panting. Second, the man drinking our Cola and third, our man totally refreshed. I had the posters pasted all over the place."

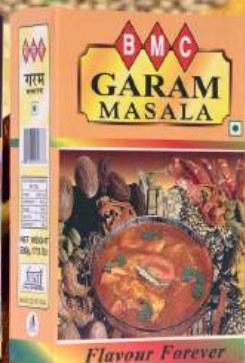
"That should have worked," said the friend. The man replied, "Well, I didn't realise that Arabs read from right to left."





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