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# ESSAY COMPETITION

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# DO CITIZENS OF A DEMOCRATIC STATE HAVE AN UNCONDITIONAL OBLIGATION TO OBEY THE LAW?

WRITTEN BY BRENDA MUKHACHEVA (YEAR 12)

Before attempting to answer this question, it's important to define exactly what the "law" signifies and entails. Law can be essentially defined, according to Thomas Hobbes, as "an instrument of political sovereignty," but also as "a precept, or general rule, found out by reason, by which a man is forbidden to do that which is destructive of his life." The law then, in its earliest forms, was derived from moral principles. These moral principles have developed over time, as individuals were motivated to follow a certain code of conduct that worked in their own self-interest. These laws maintain cohesion and order in society and are enforced by the Leviathan. The basic argument for this is that individuals are willing to sacrifice some of their freedom in return for security. Therefore, we can deduce that morality depicts an ideal model of how individuals should behave, and the law is there in order to ensure that no one is behaving in a way they shouldn't – that is to say, in a way that would be detrimental to society and social order. Alas, obeying the law may come as a "natural duty" – where all members of society abide to the law as a way of advancing and improving moral principles, as well as making sure that "regressive" members of societies are punished, therefore maximising human welfare.

Furthermore, it's important to differentiate between the act of simply complying with the law and obeying it. Complying with the law is doing what the law commands. Obeying the law is doing what the law commands because the law commands it. This creates a further rift in the question, because citizens of a democratic state may be complying with the law, but not obeying it. For example, a citizen may be complying with the law when he pays his taxes, but that doesn't mean that he is doing it because it is the law – in fact, a good portion of society likely pay their taxes to avoid prosecution (not simply because paying taxes is the law). In this question, it is insinuated that citizens of a democratic state have a duty to obey the law and defer to authority simply because it is the law, however, although such an assumption might make sense in certain aspects, there are still many problems with this model, as I will explain later.

Democracy directly translates into "the rule of the people." In contemporary times, a liberal democracy is one where a

mandate is passed to representatives through an election, where the majority of an electorate elect elites to govern on behalf of the population. Therefore, since representatives have been chosen by a majority, it's implied that the general morality of the public is reflected in said representatives. Consequently, the laws that these representatives enforce or put in place can be assumed to be moral. Therefore, a citizen of said democratic state would have an obligation to follow the law, because these laws have been created as a direct result of an agreement, or a "social contract" on moral principles between the general public.

However, the legitimacy of the mandate passed onto the government and thus the law can be questioned. Voter turn out in most democracies (which do not have mandatory elections) are relatively low and in decline. For example, there has been a general trend of declining voter turn out in Britain, going from 83.9% in 1950 to 67.3% in 2019. Voter turnout in the presidential elections in France in 2017 was "worst in modern history," with a 48.7% turnout. Furthermore, electoral systems such as FPTP do not require the winner to secure an absolute majority, meaning that many governments are ultimately elected by a minority, rather than a majority. So then, if many voters voted against the winning candidate or party, or abstained from voting altogether, is it fair to say that they haven't consented to the rule of law and therefore don't have an obligation to follow it?

The explanation behind these problems lie in the definition of consent, and the different types of consent – explicit and implicit. Expressed consent is given directly by the individual by saying or doing something, like signing a contract. Tacit consent is giving consent indirectly, where there is no concrete action that explicitly shows your consent, but the act of consenting is implied. Locke defined tacit consent as "when one benefits from any possession or enjoyment of any part of the dominion of any government." This seemingly eliminates the problem of a minority giving consent to being governed, because we can assume that voters who abstained from voting have still given tacit consent to being governed, as they use services provided by the government, and therefore have a duty to obey the law, which is the basis of the consent theory of political obligation.

However, the problem with this definition is that it's quite vague, because it's unclear as to what constitutes for "benefitting from the government." While voting in an election could easily be classified as an expressed way of giving consent, would using any public service be considered as tacit consent, and could this consent really be considered legitimate if there was no way to opt-out of using said government service? For example, while some citizens may refrain from using public health services or public transportations, basic amenities such as roads, or sewerages and water (which remain in public ownership in Scotland and Wales) are basically impossible to replace with a private alternative. Furthermore, citizens from lower class backgrounds would not realistically be able to simply move out of a country due to financial constraints, meaning that even if said citizen disagreed with the law, he would not be able to "withdraw" his consent from the government and the obligation to follow the law. This inability to sever political obligation calls into question the legitimacy of the obligation.

However, this perspective seems to contradict Hobbes' view on the law and the government's role in enforcing it. He argued that as long as the monarch could secure peace and ensure security to his citizens, the citizens in return have to consent to his rule fully and unconditionally. This is illustrated in his theory of the "social contract." In essence, he believed that citizens should not take the law into their own hands because ultimately, the elites' judgements were superior and deferring to them maintained social order and stability. Although this is quite a radical view, one could argue that this is in line with democratic values, as social order is imperative for the protection of individual rights.

However, what happens when the law that an individual is breaking does not concern society, and therefore, one can argue, doesn't impair social order? John Stuart Mill, a classical liberal, famously put forward his idea of the "harm principle." He stated that the government should not intervene with peoples' negative freedom unless it was damaging to third parties. Therefore, how can it be justifiable for the sovereign to interfere when an individual is performing a self-regarding action, such as speeding on the motor way when there are no other cars around, or taking a recreational drug? If the point of the law is to safeguard other individuals, then in this case, the individual may not have an unconditional obligation to obey the law, as he is not harming anyone but himself. However, it can also be argued that individuals need normative guidance, so such actions by legal institutions could potentially be justified. Assuming that citizens have deferred to elites on the basis that they have a better judgement, they must abide the law even when self-regarding actions are concerned.

Another theory of political obligation is the fair cooperation theory. The functions of a democracy are to provide representation, accountability and legitimacy, as well as fundamental rights to its citizens. It would be impossible to picture a functioning democracy which didn't provide these basic, innate or "natural" rights, such as those to a fair trial. The rule of law is necessary because it provides fairness, as no citizen is above the law. Citizens have a duty to obey the law in order for the democratic state to function properly, because if everyone obeys the law, then in theory, everyone is equal. John Rawls' philosophy of "justice as fairness" highlighted "the duty of fair play." The fair cooperation theory also suggests that all citizens are part of a cooperative scheme of work from which they all benefit from, but in order for this scheme to work, all participants have to sacrifice or restrict their freedom to some extent. An example of this in practicality would be citizens

paying their taxes (a restriction on economic freedom) in order to benefit from welfare, security and other schemes. In essence, since citizens are mutually benefitting from the scheme, they have an obligation to obey the law.

However, Robert Nozick seemed to contradict this view. He explains that we can fall into a trap, where obligation will be forced upon us by others, when benefits are conferred to us (without explicit consent). Another criticism of this theory as a justification for political obligation is that it can only be legitimate if the failure to obey of any participant in the scheme would lead to harm to the scheme and the other participants involved in it, which ties in with Stuart's harm principle. Smith argues that since the government "scheme" is so large, its citizens can get away with disobeying the law and not harming anyone, which cripples the idea of fairness in political obligation.

Another theory for political obligation is the benefit theory. Socrates famously stated that we owe a "debt of gratitude" to governments, just as we owe to our parents, for everything that they provide, and it can be argued that citizens of a democratic state have an obligation to comply with the law simply because of the services the state provides that benefits its citizens. In fact, Socrates himself refused to disobey the law and escape his execution when he was accused of "corrupting the views of children," because he argued that it would not be fair for him to obey the laws that benefitted him (namely education), and break the ones that didn't.

The theory of gratitude suggests that all citizens must repay a debt owed to the government for all the services it provides by obeying the law. The fundamental problem with this theory is that it assumes that all citizens benefit from the welfare state, however, citizens don't benefit from such systems equally, and some might not benefit at all. One could argue that if citizens aren't benefitting from such systems equally and fairly, this cannot justify political obligation, because all citizens have to obey the law unconditionally. Furthermore, one could address the fact that wealthy taxpayers might be giving more in taxes to the state then receiving from its welfare (which they might not even use). Therefore, it's questionable whether simply providing these services sets the grounds for an unconditional obligation to obey the law as some individuals never asked for them and may not even use them. The benefit theory also suffers from the same fundamental problem as the consent theory, because once again, there is no clear "opt-out" option from state benefits. In conclusion, many theories attempt to justify political obligation on different grounds. I have discussed the concept of natural duty, as well as the consent, fair cooperation and benefit theories. Despite the fact that it's pretty obvious that complying with the law is necessary in almost all cases in order to ensure the continuity of the state and the operations of societies, it also becomes clear quite quickly that there are flaws with such a cast-iron statement. The main problem is that it's virtually impossible to come up with a universal reason for why all citizens have to obey the law, and any such attempt is almost bound to fail. Even though the reasonings behind such a concept seems to be incredibly obvious, morals, ethics and laws aren't innately universal, and therefore, they aren't relative to everybody. While these theories, as well as alternate associate theories, highlight the importance of political obligation in many ways, it's also important to recognise that they are rudimentarily imperfect.





# **THE CHALLENGES IN ACHIEVING ECONOMIC GROWTH**

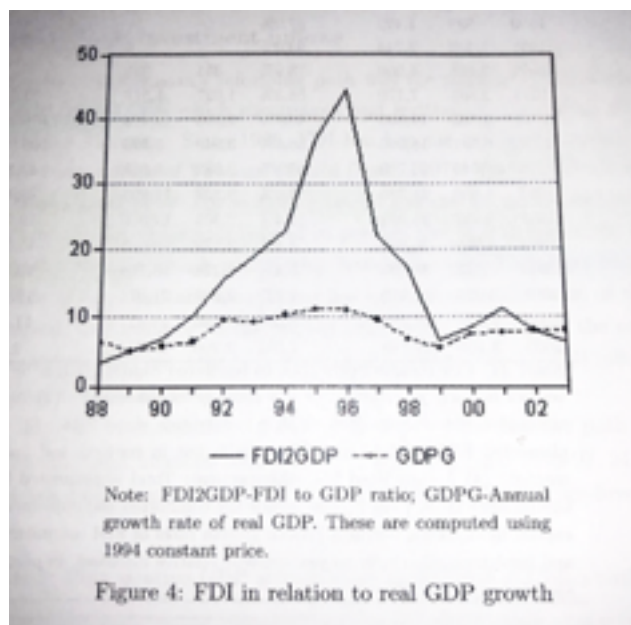
**WRITTEN BY STEVEN HONG (YEAR 12)**

With a view to continuously improving the living standard and well-being of people, economic growth has become the ultimate target of many nations in the modern world. However, a great ideology towards governance and resources allocation is of paramount importance for such a development to be successfully achieved. There are a few examples illustrating the mechanisms behind which the “great ideology” has been brought to reality, namely Singapore and Vietnam.

The first ideology would be the level of transparency of the government. It is commonly known that corruption leads to inefficient use of tax revenue that is supposed to be invested in the development of the economy, for instance, investments are directed to unnecessary infrastructural projects rather than being spent on enhancing healthcare services in the countryside. This reduces the trust in the government of taxpayers, and as fewer people pay tax, pressure would be left on the rest of the workforce, which as a result exacerbates the number of people paying tax (Štefan Šumah, 2017). The problem of transparency has been solved by the Singaporean authority, via strong investments in anti-corruption agencies such as CBIP (Corrupt Practices Investigation Bureau), introducing strict punishments to bureaucrats involved in bribes so as to ensure that “every dollar in revenue would be properly accounted for and would reach the beneficiaries at the grass roots as one dollar, without being siphoned off along the way.” (Lee, 2000, pp. 182-184). As the government becomes more reliable, the Singaporean will be more willing to work and pay tax, which contributes to the increasing total output of the economy and expanding the tax budget for the government to spend on infrastructure and social welfare. With the figures illustrated in Table VI, it is undeniable that with the leadership of a transparent government, Singapore was lifted from a poor country to an Asian economic miracle, becoming one of the nations with the highest income per capita in the world.

Another ideology leading to rapid growth would be opening the economy to free trade and FDI (Foreign Direct Investment). Integrating into larger trading areas means that the country can expand its market to foreign countries, where there might be higher demand for goods than domestic demand. This is a chance for such

market economy model, such as Vietnam. As Vietnam joined two trading organisations respectively ASEAN in the 1990s and WTO in the early 2000s, its economy successfully attracted thousands of foreign firms to invest in the industrial sector including textile and electronics, creating jobs for many people. Vietnamese GDP based on the current trend is expected to overtake Singapore in the next 10 years. (Janice Lim, 2019).



However, “development” does not always simply imply economic growth, the growth in the material life of the general population. “Development” also stands for the better fairness in the society. Such social indicators are often referred to as a trade-off economic growth: the faster the economy grows, the bigger the gap between the rich and the poor becomes. This can be detrimental to the economy in the long run as the rich only account for a smaller percentage of the population, thus their consuming power is not as much as the middle class and the underprivileged (Joseph E. Stiglitz, 2015). And from a moral viewpoint, the fact that elites in the economy use money to gain power against the poor or “buying justice” (Joseph E. Stiglitz, 2015) in other words, should not be acceptable. As a result, besides the fact that a transparent government and an opened gate to trade and investment are needed, an equitable society where welfare is evenly distributed should also be ensured, so that the economy of one country can develop speedily and sustainably.

## References:

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**Table VI.**  
Singapore’s  
performance  
on six corruption  
indicators, 2017

Indicator	Singapore’s performance
Corruption Perceptions Index	6th/180 (84/100)
Diversion of Public Funds	4th/137 (6.2/7)
Irregular Payments and Bribes	3rd/137 (6.7/7)
Organised Crime	5th/137 (6.4)
Ethical Behaviour of Firms	3rd/137 (6.2)
Public Trust in Politicians	1st/137 (6.4)

Sources: Transparency International (2018, p. 2) and Schwab (2017, p. 263)

countries to increase exports, which is a factor of total output, therefore boosting economic growth. Prime examples of this can be observed in the case of countries that are reformed from centrally planned economy to

# IS MATHEMATICS ONLY A TOOL FOR SCIENCE?

WRITTEN BY AVANTIKA YEKA (YEAR 12)

Mathematics is officially defined as: the study of shape, space and number using reason and usually a special system of symbols and rules for organising the, by the Official Cambridge dictionary. Science is generally defined as: creating and applying models for reliable prediction and control of the natural world. To science researchers and scientists, mathematics serves as a critical and essential part of data analytics as a method of devising a formula to explain the fundamentals of nature. But how much has mathematics been an influence on science? Maths has been an important tool into identifying the basic growth areas of science and technology. Humans are highly sophisticated beings- the product of years of evolution. Humans are capable of extreme intelligence. However, the generation of the 21st century, after years and year of mathematicians behind them have decided not to use their brain power to its full potential, becoming fully dependent on calculators to solve small and simple sums and rely on other people to cross-verify their answers. Maths is everywhere. The Fibonacci sequence is one of the most known concepts in Mathematics. Mathematicians have studied this sequence for decades- not only is this used in maths but used throughout everyday life. Applications of the Fibonacci sequence in real life include the number of petals in a flower. Famous examples include the lily,

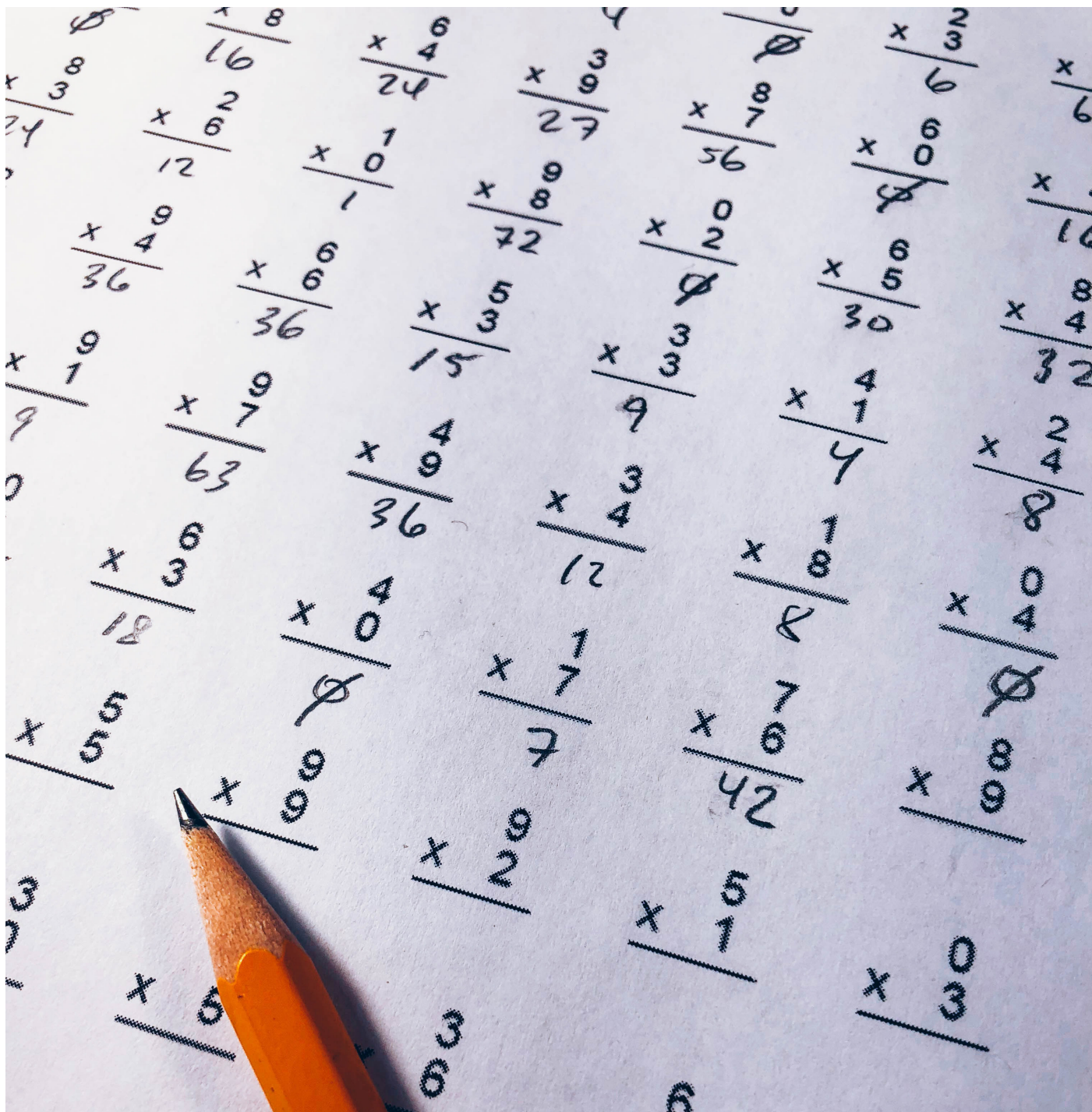
which has three petals, buttercups, which have 5, the chicory's 21, the daisy's 34, and so on. Phi appears in petals on account of the ideal packing arrangement as selected by Darwinian processes; each petal is placed at  $0.618034$  per turn (out of a  $360^\circ$  circle) allowing for the best possible exposure to sunlight and other factors.

Pythagoras' theorem also has real-life applications. The first example is in painters painting a wall.

Given 2 straight lines, you can calculate the length of the longest side through Pythagoras' theorem. This application is extremely useful in real-life as it helps painters determine how tall a ladder needs to be to safely place the base, away from the wall so that it doesn't fall over. In this case, the ladder is the hypotenuse. Take for example a painter who has to paint a wall which is about 3m high. The painter has to put the base of the ladder 2m away from the wall to ensure it won't tip.

A second real-life application to Pythagoras' theorem is trying to calculate the shortest path to take while driving a car. Taking an assumption that two friends are meeting at a playground, John is already at the park but his friend Lucy needs to get there taking the shortest path possible. Lucy has two ways she can go – she can follow the roads getting to the park – first heading south 3 miles, then heading west four miles. The total distance covered following the roads will be





7 miles. The other way she can get there is by cutting through some open fields and walk directly to the park. You can apply Pythagoras' Theorem to work out the shortest distance that Lucy can take. Students as young as 4 are expected to start learning maths. They learn to count, add, subtract and multiply- these are the basics. The complexity of maths tends to increase as students get older. From simple counting numbers to Pythagoras' theorems; soon they are expected to use calculus and integrate and differentiate equations to work out the areas under curves of graphs. The concepts in maths tend to get harder as students tend to get older. In science however, the fundamentals are taught as the beginning and as the courses begin to progress, they

go into more depth and detail so that students get a better understanding of how the world works. Maths can explain the answer to many of the world's questions, however, the focus of unsolved or unsolvable problems lie within the subject itself. This is the difference between description and explanation. Maths is excellent in qualitative description, but limited as a qualitative explanation. This is where science comes in. Science can explain theories of the origin of the world to how the smallest atoms and compounds formed. In conclusion, I believe that Maths isn't just a tool for science however, maths has been an important tool into identifying the basic growth areas of science and technology as well as new ideas and developments.

# IS NETFLIX THE DEATH OF CINEMA AND THE SAVIOUR OF FILM?

WRITTEN BY MEHER KUMAR (YEAR 12)

Netflix is a media-service provider and a production company. Founded in 1997 and today one of the biggest companies in the world for streaming and downloading films and series. As a production company, Netflix has original films and series that release on Netflix directly. With other competition with Netflix such as Amazon Prime Video, Hulu TV and Apple TV+, Netflix is at third with Amazon Prime Video and Hulu TV ranking at 1st and 2nd. Cinema is one of the oldest industries ever. Ever since the late 19th Century when film was first invented, cinema was also invented around that time. Netflix being the death of cinema is almost impossible because Netflix is a streaming site that does not have every single film or series you would want to watch. Adding to that, it doesn't not stream the film as soon as its release in cinema.

Audiences would enjoy watching films on the big screen with a tub full of popcorn because, honestly, audiences can be quite restless when it comes to entertainment. After trailers are launched, there are only really two opinions: 'I loved it' and 'I hated it'. Those who loved it are practically restless before the release of the film and then when it releases they run to the cinemas to entertain themselves. Those who hated it, will most likely wait for it to arrive on Netflix, if it ever does, or they may never even watch it. Netflix is a streaming site that unfortunately does not stream all content and this is one of Netflix's weaknesses as its competition may be able to get more rights to the films i.e. Amazon Prime Video which streams all content with some that are free and others that need to be rented or bought. On Netflix, no films need to be bought or rented but it also doesn't have everything that would want to be streamed. When we look at Netflix being the saviour of film, I believe that that is a positive statement. The reason being is because Netflix allows audiences to watch and re-watch films after it has been

released and taken down in theatres. It allows those who were unable to watch at the cinema to be entertained on Netflix. Netflix originals have also been introduced which increases the number of people watching Netflix and may decrease the number of people going to the cinema however that does not mean that Netflix is the death of cinema.

Even though it may not take long for cinema content to reach Netflix, the better the film in cinema the more people watch it in cinema and that means if it is available to stream on Netflix then this leads to the saving of film as it is not just taken out of theatres and when you are lucky it may be available on TV. With Smart TVs coming in, it also increases the use of Netflix and other streaming sites such as Prime Video, YouTube etc.

Another point to make, is the prices for a ticket for one film is extremely expensive compared to the price of a subscription to Netflix each month. An adult ticket at Cineworld comes to around £10.50 and an adult ticket at Vue is between £9.99-£11.99. Netflix has three different plans with different benefits. The Basic Plan coming to £5.99 allows you to stream all content however not in HD and the number of users at one time is quite low. The third and best plan is the premium plan in which all content can still be streamed with ultra HD available at £11.99. This clearly elucidates the popularity of Netflix over cinema in terms of prices and how much you can stream.

Overall, in conclusion, I believe the Netflix is not the death of cinema because of its limited streaming content but it may reduce the use of cinema due to prices. Netflix is, however, the saviour of film, because it can be streamed after it has been taken down from theatres and can also earn the film more money after it has given rights to Netflix.









**NORD**

QUÉBEC

MONTRÉAL

OSCAR

GASPÉ

PRINCE-ÉDOUARD

NOUVELLE ÉCOSSE

HALIFAX

YARMOUTH

BOSTON

PROVIDENCE

NEW YORK

TRENTON

PHILADELPHIE



# SPEAKING A SECOND LANGUAGE MAY CHANGE HOW YOU SEE THE WORLD

WRITTEN BY SOPHIA PARTOAZAM (YEAR 12)

Languages are vital for having a greater global understanding of the world which we live and learning about the different values that people in different countries share. Learning languages help develop strong cognitive and social-emotional skills such as improving your memory and giving you the opportunity to diversify your social networks by using your language capabilities to form new friendships and encourage connection among peers. When you learn a language, you are quite literally learning a new way of seeing the world and more likely the languages you speak influence your thoughts and perceptions in many other ways as well. As Federico Fellini describes it “A different language is a different vision of life.”

Cultural perception is viewing a situation or concept through the eyes of an individual's native environmental and social influence. The great significance of being knowledgeable and appreciative of other cultures is that it helps prevent and overcome ethnic and racial division, minimize stereotypes and allows exposure to new experiences which will enhance a better understanding of the world and enjoyment of more authentic travels. Languages are vital for having a greater global understanding of the world which we live in. They give us the opportunity to broaden our prospects and to expand awareness and understanding of how culture interacts with business. In other words, languages are part of what makes people who they are, they make them stand out in some circumstances and feel safe in others. Speaking from personal experience, I believe that learning a foreign language has given me the opportunity to broaden my prospects and to expand my awareness and understanding of how different cultures interact. Ever since I was very young,

my parents always encouraged me to take part in as many activities as I could and broaden my horizons by obtaining a wider range of languages. Today at the age of 16, I realize how positively influential that has been to me. Being an American Iranian, fluent in English and Farsi who also speaks Italian and has an understanding of other languages, namely Spanish, French and Latin, has made me realize the extent that these languages guide me into making choices on a daily basis and on various occasions on my journey away from home.

Attending an international school such as DLD has shown me two sides of how languages can affect one's daily communications. On one hand they make me feel part of a community. Whenever I feel homesick I know that there is always someone I can turn to that will understand me and has probably gone through a similar situation as me. Frankly, I believe at the end of the day people from the same cultural background tend to interrelate more. On the other hand, I don't feel limited by any language barriers or excluded due to a lack of apprehension of other cultures. It is important to realize that one of the best qualities to possess is getting along with everyone and to try to recognize other opinions, religions, socio-economic backgrounds and understand the different cultures. This is well stated in Nelson Mandela's quote: “If you talk to a man in a language he understands, that goes to his head. If you talk to him in his language, that goes to his heart.”



# THE ELEMENTS OF COMMERCIALY SUCCESSFUL MUSIC

WRITTEN BY MARIA TSYUPKO (YEAR 12)

There are 280,000 songs released on Spotify weekly and 50 million songs on Apple Music, which is an insanely high amount. So what exactly makes some songs stand out from the rest? There are many factors affecting the process of creating music that could potentially become commercially successful, however these factors can be categorized into three main points: the song, the recording/production and external factors. The process of creating a song consists of the creative part which is: lyrics, music, themes, and deciding whether it is individual or a collaboration. Then the process moves onto the second part which is the recording. The artist goes into the studio where the song comes to life. This can be achieved with musicians or the band or software based. The process then moves onto the mixing stage where individual elements blend using different production techniques which is then followed by the mastering stage. Finally the song goes into the industry world where labels, music managers, and PR companies all get involved to promote and sell the artist. Let's begin with the first stage of the process; the song. Before creating an allegedly commercially successful piece of music, it is evidently required to actually create a song. This is the beginning of the process of creating a commercially successful song. There are certain things to take into consideration in order for a song to hit the criteria of most songs that have been successful in the past. These things are: a strong hook/melody, relatable lyrics, and its production. In order to place these elements and make them fit well together, it is necessary to plan the song out. The planning process of writing music differs to every artist, however the core points that most take into consideration is creating a melody, structure, the key and chord progression of the music and deciding which instruments to use. The structure of a song is very important. The instrumental has to make sense to the listener. It needs a solid and cohesive structure to appeal to the general public. A common structure used in music is:

Introduction - Verse 1 - Chorus 1 - Verse 2 - Chorus 2 - Bridge - Chorus 2 - Outro

Adding pre-choruses prior to each chorus is optional, however it could aid with adding more fluency to the music. I used that structure but also added pre-choruses because I found it easier to write lyrics according to that structure. Relatable lyrics are also a very important feature to music with the structure mentioned before. This allows for the listener to be able to feel close to the song and relate to it, hence listen to it more. An example of a commercially successful song with the structure above is "Dance Monkey" by Tones and I, which is currently #1 on "Billboard's Top 100" chart position. The first criteria that successful songs of the past share in common is a strong melody/hook. If a given song's hook is memorable as well as distinctive and unique, it will most likely be easily recognisable and more appealing to the listener. The hook of my song "Losing Control" is "It seems like I'm losing control". A common feature used for catchy hook lyrics is repeating the chorus hook at the end of each verse so that the listener gets familiar with it. As well as that, it makes the lyrics flow better and is usually easier

to understand. Another important factor to take into consideration when writing a song is its genre. The song is most likely going to be acknowledged by a wider range of people, as long as it's marketed well, if it is in a genre that is trending at the time that you release it. In 2018 in the U.S., 21.7% of the total music album consumption was hip-hop and rap, 20.1% pop and 14% rock. The song "Roar" by Katy Perry was very successful during its time and one of the things that affected that is that it is a pop song. However, of course, it isn't the only thing that affected the success of this song, it is the combination of all these elements as well as great marketing. The song that I have written is in the style of indie pop which is a subgenre of pop music. In my opinion, a song is most likely to be commercially successful if it has a catchy chorus and good instrumentation. Apart from that, the vocals are a very important element that affect whether the song will be loved by the public. If the vocals do not work well with the song or simply sound bad such as out of tune or not in time, the song won't sound the same as if it would if the voice would fit the instrumental. During the process of writing the lyrics to my song and choosing how I would sing it, I encountered several problems. Due to the fact that I am primarily a guitarist, I found it difficult to sing the melody I had written with the guitar and then had to work a lot on the voice during the production process. I also found a problem with a particular line: "Left me to deal with this mess". "This mess", has two consonants hence it could be mistaken for "smurfs". Only after having had worked and almost finished the song, I realised with the help of my teacher, that I should've written "the mess" instead which would most likely remove any sort of confusion with the lyrics' comprehension. Overall, all those elements having to do with the song in combination with the recording as well as external factors, should guarantee the commercial success of music. After having created or thought of a song idea and planning it out, it is very important to take all recording factors of the piece of music into consideration. The production and arrangement of the song is incredibly crucial to how the song will end up sounding like. At the time of recording music, factors such as: instrumentation, choice of backing tracks, recording techniques, and the final arrangement are very important. Choosing which instruments to use depends very much on the genre of the song. In my case, it was indie pop, hence I decided to use the electric guitar, bass guitar, drums, vocals, and some organs to create "ear candy". These instruments are constantly used in indie music. An ear candy is a sound that is temporary; it comes in to create a new listening experience and then quickly disappears to create an interest and break up the monotony of the mix. This could be a short riff or lick by the guitar. If you write a song in the genre of jazz and use a techno beat and bass, that wouldn't work. After choosing which instruments to use in your mix, it is necessary to know what each instrument will be playing and then decide the order that you will be recording them is. If we use my example, I wrote the riff of the song on the guitar, hence I figured out the BPM I wanted the song to be in and then recorded the guitar to a click. I then added drums, then the bass and organs, and then finally the voice. A problem I came across after having had recorded the

instrumentation in that manner was that the guitar was a bit out of time with the drums. I learnt that it is crucial to first record drums, then guitar, and then the rest of the instruments. The recording progress of music in a band consists of the band playing their instruments into microphones or interfaces. The drummer is usually isolated to improve sound. After playing through the track, the other musicians come back and overdub their instruments to the drum beat that has been previously recorded. In my case, I recorded all of the instruments by myself, so I layered them starting with guitar, then drums, bass and voice. After recording all the instruments, vocals and adding MIDIs, it is logical to begin the process of mixing and mastering. The mixing process of the song can change the quality of the recording both positively as well as negatively. The necessary things to adjust and plug-ins to add to the mix determines how well it will sound. These are: cutting and tailing, balancing the volume levels, panning the different tracks, equalisation, compression and other dynamics effects, and then reverb, delay and modulation effects. So all in all, providing the best monitor mix possible. In the process of producing my song, I used several mixing techniques which have been used in very commercially successful songs. The two most recognisable techniques I used were the famous “Abbey Road Reverb Trick” and “Side-chain”. I used both of these on my vocals. The Abbey Road reverb consists of inserting an EQ before the reverb in an auxiliary track (bus) to shape the reverberated response by tweaking the input signal with the EQ. You set the high pass filter to 600Hz and the low pass filter to 10kHz and then add a notch at 2kHz. The reverb instantly becomes very subtle despite the large amount added. Located below is a screenshot of this trick in my Logic project.



The side-chain effect consists of using an alternative audio source to trigger a processor. I used this feature on the delay on my voice in order to avoid the delay from sounding muddy which can lead to losing most of the lyrics. Audio 8 is the vocal track below.



A very common misconception about the commercial success of a song is that it all depends on whether the song is good. Meanwhile this is a factor that plays a big role in this, there are many external factors which are essential to the success of music. These include: musical starting points, marketing and promotion, and the record label/publisher/self-distribution.

The musical starting point of artists always differs. People come from different cultural backgrounds, families and surroundings and thus have completely different opportunities and approaches to becoming an artist. For instance, if one individual comes from a family that has ties with the music industry, it is more likely that the family has contacts with people working for a record label and that could increase the chances of being signed. Apart from that, being born into a family that is heavily invested into music could mean that the child growing up in it has more experience with playing an instrument or singing well. However in my opinion, I think that if someone is committed to being a musician, and makes the right decisions, they will be able to succeed in this industry. Marketing and promotion is the most crucial factor out of external points that affect commercial success of music. This is due to the importance of actually delivering one's music to the market. Without good marketing, no one would even know you make music. This is where big record labels come in handy; labels have a large reach in advertising. Due to their large budgets and contacts they can spread awareness of a song in a very efficient manner. However, because of the large advances in technology, promoting your music is much easier on the internet via social media platforms such as Instagram, Twitter, and YouTube. If an unsigned artist were to have a large following on the internet, their music could be commercially successful. Going back to the record labels, being signed to one has its advantages and disadvantages. The advantages are that all the individual really has to think about is creating music that is interesting and in their style, and the label handles the business side of the whole thing. However, labels tend to take a large percentage of artists' earnings from record sales and live performances. Simply put, what labels really do is invest in you as an artist, and they are more likely to sign someone that already has put a word out for themselves both online and in real life such as shows and gigs as that will increase the chances of the label earning back the investment with a profit. Something important to take into consideration are record deal contracts. They can be very dangerous and attempt to lock you into the label with very poor conditions, but that is not always the case. It is important to always have a lawyer or someone who knows a lot about this topic revise a signing contract thoroughly. There have been many cases when artists got completely controlled by their labels without them having had agreed to it. Due to the increase of unsigned artists growing large fan bases by themselves, labels now tend to only sign those that have already established themselves in the music industry making small artists that might have a stronger work ethic or more “talent” unable to get signed. Then again, because of all the technology nowadays, it is relatively easier to be a musician without the help of a big label. There are many distributor companies that post your music onto streaming platforms such as Spotify and Apple Music for an affordable price such as: Distrokid, TuneCore, CD Baby, and many more. Another way of promoting your music is using a publisher. A music publisher is an individual working for a company that works similar to a record label, however instead of dealing with both the recording and the promotion of your music, the publisher can claim your work, in exchange for promoting it. In my opinion, the best option is being an unsigned artist. That is because you have full ownership of your music and you can make the creative decisions based on your likings; basically no one controls you. Choosing whether being a signed artist or not really depends on the individual and their circumstances.

In conclusion, what really does make music commercially successful is a well-balanced combination of the three main factors which are the song, the recording/production and external factors. After having researched this topic, I found myself planning my song out in a more coherent manner and spent more time focusing on the marketing aspect of the song. I think that if an artist with a distinctive/new sound followed these factors, they could make their music very commercially successful.







# A FRESH TAKE ON A CLASSIC TALE

WRITTEN BY SOFIA SKURIKHINA (YEAR 12)

Much like it is done for famous novels and books, it is quite common nowadays to see old plays being re-adapted and even re-written, in order to not only capture the attention of those who are new to theatre but to also offer older theatre aficionados something new and original. Mike Lew's *Teenage Dick* takes Shakespeare's famously acclaimed Richard III and transports it to a different, completely unexpected location — a high school. Richard, played by Daniel Monks, is portrayed as a quick witted 17-year-old who feels alienated from the rest of his peers because of his hemiplegia. The play sees Richard who, in an attempt to achieve the post of senior-year president by running against Eddie (Callum Adams), a popular high-school jock who often derides and bullies him, decides to persuade Anne Margaret (Siena Kelly), Eddie's ex-girlfriend, to accompany him to the school dance. Used to living his life in the shadows not only of those cast upon him by Eddie but also by everyone else in the school, Richard's character is dominated by dark, vile and cruel thoughts, both in regards of himself and the people around him whom he has come to despise ardently. Whilst his main quality is his wit, he is often seen putting it to bad use, as he plots against seemingly the entire world, profoundly and unconditionally angry at everyone for casting him out. Even when Anne accepts his invitation to prom and the two bond and warm up to each other, from the two of them dancing together in Anne's studio to Anne trusting Richard with her secret, Richard always seems conflicted. There is

a duality to his nature, a constant turmoil going on in his mind which fragments his character — his conflict lies in his desire to be “feared yet loved”, states critic Michael Billington in his own review, thus alluding to the choice Richard has to face by the end of the play, between the power he will gain by being senior-year president or Anne's love. It is interesting to see how, even in this new, teenage-oriented environment, Richard seems to be stuck in a very Medieval mindset, constantly bringing up the idea on how “the ugliness on the surface must, does and always will portray the ugliness of that which is inside”. This aspect can be particularly seen in his last soliloquy, or even in his decisions following Anne's death. His beliefs on the world and on himself render the play extremely paradoxical and very much not about what is happening in Richard's life but rather what is happening in his mind. In fact, whilst Richard obsessively convinces himself of the fact that he cannot be loved or accepted because of his disability, his friend Buck, played by Ruth Madeley, a wheelchair user, is well inserted into the social environment of the school and is respected and loved by her peers. The play portrays the paradox between that which is seen and that which lies within, a struggle which is incredibly common in teenagers in our very image-oriented society, thus rendering, in my opinion, Lew's adaptation quite interesting and contemporary, successful in leaving a lasting impression if analysed in depth.

# SHAKESPEARE DIED OVER 400 YEARS AGO. WHY ARE WE STILL STUDYING HIM IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS AND AT UNIVERSITIES?

WRITTEN BY KIARA SFORZA (YEAR 12)

William Shakespeare has revolutionised the way people perceive the world and has tremendously influenced modern day culture. 400 years on, we are able to relive and experience England in the late 16th century rendering his plays as a unique gift to our culture with his language and imagination universally recognised. Anecdotes and comparisons that are applicable to everyday life all derive from his great literary works; such as 'to be or not to be that is the question' or 'you must be the Romeo to her Juliet'. He was an immensely talented and skilful crafter of the English language and "his metaphors have made each of us all the richer as readers and writers." Even after 400 years, his plays continue to feel "alive" and are still "very present" (As noted by Bushnell), much like his presence is felt all around the world. Literature comes from a depiction of collective culture at a specific era which Shakespeare executes perfectly and allows for it to evolve into all of the following eras. Shakespeare pierces every aspect of human history and it is of high importance in understanding English past and the evolution of literature. Although his playwrights were far from being scriptures, his sacred characters will always be a source of inspiration. Shakespeare prevails a significant amount in modern-day entertainment. His influence ranges from the fictional band, the Weird Sisters in the Harry Potter series, based on the three witches in Macbeth, to the Game of Thrones whose characters resemble the rich and layered characters found in Shakespeare's works. Trapp states that we all know "a Portia or a Henry V or a Banquo or a King Lear or a Richard III when we see them, no matter what the context" and that although these recognisable characters could become shop-worn and stale over time, it is not the case in Shakespeare's hands. In fact, they are fresh and real, rich and memorable and are used by modern day playwrights continuously. His characters are ones that all generations are able to identify with in some way. People are able to "understand Hamlet's despondency; recognize Othello's envy; and feel Lear's decline". These characters possess familiar traits that people are able to relate to whilst simultaneously being able to surprise us out of our complacency, and in this way, are deemed endlessly fascinating. It is the modern-day relevance of Shakespeare's eloquent language and his characters that are complex, mixed with the themes of love, betrayal, jealousy, envy, fear, lust, pride, and grief, that are what make his plays so applicable as they are all issues that matter to us today, adds Trapp. Most importantly, the characters developed in Shakespeare's writing are able to teach generations about the

danger of blind desire and ambition as well as the complexities of hubris but most importantly the intricacies of lust and depths of the human mind. His plays are able to speak "complicated truths to all manner of audiences and readers for hundreds of years". By not studying him, humanity is leaving behind an essential part of the past. With the modernisation of cell phones and social media, by not studying such vital parts of English history and what essentially revolutionised English language and brought in radical ideologies, it will simply be forgotten in a few generations. Shakespeare's importance cannot be simply forgotten as he has contributed with gold pieces of works. Shakespeare's works also serve as a moral rearmament. With works such as Hamlet and Macbeth, the tragic heroes serve as powerful examples of the consequences of blind ambition or revenge. In Hamlet, Polonius' hypocritical nature corrupts the principle of personal integrity by pandering his daughter and spying on his son.

Patriotism and puritanical prejudice kept Shakespeare subordinate whenever he appeared in almost every curriculum during the first half of the last century. This is due to the ideas that Shakespeare introduces in his plays which could be seen as radical. He challenged many societal norms in his plays such as the expectation and belief in 'one sex'. In As You Like It Shakespeare places emphasis on the fluidity of gender and in Othello he confronts racial issues. Shakespeare affords meaning to all human experiences; concerning everything from gender, family, and political intrigue, to fame, race, and class which are all memorably explored in his plays. Shakespeare is undoubtedly central to English Literature as despite his writings being considered 'old', he has been able to adapt to all modern day situations. As noted by Trapp, "Shakespeare's character are plots are both of his time and for all time. His plays allow us to see ourselves anew". This is further emphasised by Professor Zachary Lesser who's belief is that Shakespeare's constant relevance and centrality to English Literature "means he changes constantly because the way we think about literature changes." The Shakespearean world allows for students to be open to a whole new perspective through his point of view. They are immersed into the beautiful strangeness that is Shakespeare's world; one in which, for instance, "men can become women and women can become men." His plays "inspire thought, and his capacious works invite reinvention". Plots that are quintessential to Shakespeare such as Romeo and Juliet, Macbeth

and Hamlet are all based on old stories and myths that he has been able to rework into his own material. This tends to be challenging for most poets, however for Shakespeare it is instinctual. This is what marks Shakespearean work as it has a depth to it and references that range to many other strains of literature and history marking him as one of the most important and influential figures of the 16th century. Trapp even remarks that “Shakespeare was a masterly adapter, and his work is largely based on borrowing and interpretation. It’s only fitting that his plays have in turn been reworked endlessly.” Nevertheless, it should be noted that perhaps the technique for understanding Shakespeare’s art and the true meaning of his writing is too difficult for students to comprehend. If that is so, then it should be advised that the greater insight of Shakespeare’s work to be exposed to those who are more willing to appreciate his masterpieces. The teaching of Shakespeare should be entrusted to people who have achieved an understanding of him and can maintain a perspective on the reason for reading him through all the “diversions of project teaching of correlation and integration, and of dealing with students of all degrees of ability and multifariousness of background”. The excellency of Shakespeare’s contemporary influence is manifested by the ways in which high school students can draw on his works and apply them to other modern literature. For instance, what Shakespeare writes about can be interpreted in two ways: how the original audience would have viewed it, or students can apply the issues raised in the plays to modern politics and political machinations. This has recently been brought to life in our own English classroom where Macbeth alluded to Moby Dick in the sense that Captain Ahab is “a grand, ungodly, god-like man ... above the common” whose pursuit of the great white whale is a fable about obsession and over-reaching. Just as Macbeth and Lear subvert the natural order of things, Ahab takes on Nature in his determination to kill his prey – and his hubristic quest is doomed from the start. Another example was when a Brave New World drew on The Tempest as even the title draws on it; “O brave new world, / That has such people in ‘t!” Like Caliban, John “the Savage” is an outcast despised for his appearance and Huxley is exploring ideas about the power of art and the nature of humanity. Consistently, Shakespeare does the same in his haunting and possibly final play. Furthermore, the plays were written for a particular set of shared conventions and codes by which the audience understood the performance, Mazer says, and yet there’s enough there for later artists to appropriate material from which they can make their own theatre pieces. “In Shakespeare the characters come to understand one another’s feelings by the act of empathy and in the audience, whether or not we share values with them, we empathize with them.” This sentiment has survived through the years and even to this day, we are able to empathise with the characters due to the effect of his writing. Shakespeare embodies cultural aspects from everywhere ranging from history and mythology to the Bible. Shakespeare instils values in modern generations and allows for a deeper understanding in history and serves as a reminder of important historical events.

Moreover, the manner in which Shakespeare examines the way in which the characters engage with the politics, social aspect, and aesthetics of nature; and the use of ideas from psychology and cognitive studies to look at what Shakespeare says about how our minds work. This includes in his works such as Othello in which Freudian aspects can be applied in regard to the psychodynamic approach explored by Freud; how the id, ego, and superego represent certain aspects. The superego can be seen as a representation of societal values whereas the id is the animalistic aspect of human nature. Shakespeare brings in multidisciplinary topics together to create a unified concept. He depicts the collective consciousness in a particular era which encompasses history at the time and unravels the mysteries of the mind which are all

reflected in his literary style. For example, the manner in which he makes reference to historical figures is a process of drawing on the semantic and episodic knowledge of the time which consequently transforms itself into metaphors and symbolism. His enthralling use of imagination that resonates with audience over generations attest to intertwined mental processes. Furthermore, in schools Shakespeare is used to teach history. Margo Todd, a professor History that specializes in early modern English and Scottish history says she uses Richard III and Henry VIII in her classes. “Richard III is a great play, Henry VIII is not, but both are great historical pieces,” she says. Both works give a positive picture of the Tudors who ruled England. “We can perceive our postmodern predicament in Richard III’s power plays; our culture’s grappling with gender binary can be discerned in Twelfth Night’s probing of gender roles and expectations,” Trapp explains. “Shakespeare most likely did not imagine that his works would be so integral to our culture 400 years after his death.” His works embody the aura and power of the past that still reside within us. Moreover, Shakespeare can be served as a criticism as it questions the tidy Elizabethan world picture that has been accepted as a paradigm of Renaissance studies. Critics such as Stephen Greenblatt have prompted us to view Shakespeare from postmodern political and social vantage points.

In conclusion, as Gary Taylor’s Reinventing Shakespeare illustrates, Shakespeare’s adaptability to different eras is unlike any other poet; each generation which adapts his works is able to mirror the values of that age. The Romantics embraced him as a fellow alien, sensitive to their lonely, nightingale-like state. For the Victorians he was their moral and educational guide, leading them steadily through the rubble of materialism and social decay. Today, he has achieved the statue of a cultural icon, a source of quotations that can be employed to promote urban art programmes as well as computer and ball point pens. Shakespeare’s relevance in our society emphasises the importance of him being studied with care, especially in English departments where his works qualify as useful weapons in drama and poetry. Therefore, Shakespeare is and should continue to be taught in secondary schools and universities due to the amount of our “daily discourse that we owe to his wordsmithery”, as asserted by Trapp. Common phrases used on a daily basis such as “tongue-tied” and “in a pickle” or “wear one’s heart on one’s sleeve” are all citations of Shakespeare. His phrases were so unconventional and ingenious that they have fully penetrated the English language.

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# CRITICALLY EXPLORING BOWRA'S NATURE OF THE HERO

WRITTEN BY THOMAS WATSON (YEAR 12)

Achilles does not fit modern sensibilities. He is a killer, arguably a rapist, certainly a pillager. He is sulky, high-strung and oh boy, is he temperamental. He can be pitiless – actively enjoying the iron in his heart – and he can be murderously cruel. Yet there is still something fundamental about him to which we can all relate, even if it is also something particularly hard to rationalise and explain. He is faster, sharper, bigger, brighter and more important than other men. He is more beautiful. He rides on deeper emotional currents (when Achilles is upset, he is seriously upset). He is semi-divine and wholly precious. Other men cannot even aspire to be like him. At his most resplendent, men cannot even bear to look at him. He is simply above and beyond. Achilles in short, is a hero and taps into a need that most of us have to worship and admire. This human need to venerate was something Homer understood and exploited to glorious effect in the Iliad. Most obviously, and brilliantly, he does this by keeping Achilles off the scene. In the first line of the Iliad, Homer may ask the muses to sing about the wrath of Achilles – but the man himself appears in the poem surprisingly rarely. Homer is careful to give him mainly the big moments – the beginning, the climax, and a few crucial turning points. There are books and books in which he is barely mentioned. But, of course, all the time he is off the scene, his presence only grows. Every other feat of arms, every brutal kill, every spear cast invokes a comparison to the absent hero – and is inevitably found wanting. We know that, even at his most terrible and shining, Hector would not have a hope against Achilles. The audience knows, saddest of all, that Patroclus is but a

shadow of his great friend, the armour he has borrowed from him is an all but empty shell, and that where Achilles would sweep all before him, he is doomed to fall. All the killing, all the struggle, all the pain – all is made futile because we know that if Achilles were on the scene it would turn out differently. Yet it isn't just Achilles' supernatural power that makes him such a compelling hero. It's also his fallibility. Three thousand years ago, just as today, hero worship had to have its negative aspect – the hands reaching up to drag the star from the podium, the mistakes that make the successes seem all the more remarkable. Achilles, too, has to spend his time in the muck. One of the most famous passages in the Iliad comes at the start of Book 18, when Achilles learns that his beloved companion Patroclus has been killed by Hector, stripped of his armour (the very armour Achilles lent him before he sent him off to battle) and that Trojans and Achaeans are now fighting over his naked corpse. A dark cloud of grief shrouds the hero and, we are told, he defiles his face with ashes from the fire and collapses. He is at his most moving when he's at his most human, weeping, knowing he's done the wrong thing, knowing that fate is going to pummel him as a result. Even at the height of his fury, Homer also takes the time to render Achilles helpless, sweeping him up in the river Skamander, reminding us that even he has limitations. But Homer doesn't just beg our sympathy. We also see Achilles being evil. Above and beyond the aforementioned sulking, and those actions that do not square with 21st-century morality, are outrages intolerable even in his battle-hardened society. No one, god or Greek, can

approve of Achilles' attempts to defile Hector's corpse. But again, such actions are a mark of someone who just has to go that bit further, that bit madder with grief, that bit deeper into the maelstrom. Furthermore, the troughs Achilles plumbs just make the heights seem all the more exalted. His calm enjoyment of the funeral games and level-headed generosity to the competitors, the sympathetic hearing he eventually grants poor old Priam – both seem all the more impressive after his previous derangement. The Iliad is a masterful investigation of a character whom we just can't help but look up to: a lesson in charisma for any age. However it can be argued that the Trojan Hector is the hero of the epic "The Iliad" and not the Achilles and there are several reasons for it. Hector is fighting to prevent the annihilation of his nation in the face of the wrath of the Greeks for the action of the Trojan prince Paris in stealing the wife of Menelaus. Hector views the act of Paris as wrong, but fights for Troy and all that it stands for as can be seen from these words of Hector to Paris "Paris," said he, "evil-hearted Paris, fair to see, but woman-mad, and false of tongue, would that you had never been born, or that you had died unwed. Better so, then live to be disgraced and looked askance at" (Book three). Achilles on the other hand participates for the glory that this war is going to bring him, even if it means his death. The motivation of Hector is selfless, while the motivation of Achilles is selfish. Hector holds the position of a traditional hero with the Trojans and is their undisputed leader looked upon with respect. "When Hector heard this he was glad, and went about among the Trojan ranks holding his spear by the middle to keep them back, and they all sat down at his bidding". (Book three). On the contrary Achilles is a feared warrior in his camp, but at loggerheads with Greek kings Agamemnon, who want his presence on the battlefield as a motivation for the Greek army, which can be seen from this speech of Achilles to Agamemnon "You are steeped in insolence and lust of gain. With what heart can any of the Achaeans do your bidding, either on foray or in open fighting? I came not warring here for any ill the Trojans had done me. I have no quarrel with them. They have not raided my cattle nor my horses, nor cut down my harvests on the rich plains of Phthia; for between me and them there is a great space, both mountain and sounding sea". (Book one). Throughout the book Homer paints Achilles in a near godly fashion. The human ingredient of fear is absent in Achilles and this makes his acts of bravery and valiance beyond the means of a mere human. On the other hand Hector is seen in the as a human with all its failings including fear. Even in life cause fear, but how fear is conquered even at the pain of death makes a human a hero. The scene of the killing of Hector by Achilles brings this out to the forefront. Hector alone outside the walls of Troy runs away from Achilles demonstrating the human characteristic of fear. He however overcomes it to come and face Achilles and meet his death in spite of the pleas

of his father King Priam "Hector, my son, spurn not this breast, but have pity upon me too: if I have ever given you comfort from my own bosom, think on it now, dear son, and come within the wall to protect us from this man; stand not without to meet him. Should the wretch kill you, neither I nor your richly dowered wife shall ever weep, dear offshoot of myself, over the bed on which you lie, for dogs will devour you at the ships of the Achaeans". (Book twenty-two). Respecting the bodies of fallen enemies is an expected characteristic of a hero. The manner in which Achilles treats the body of Hector after his death in revenge for all the comrades of Achilles that Hector has killed in battle demonstrates a mean streak in Achilles and not the characteristic of a hero. He conveys his intentions of this to the dying Hector in these words, "Though Priam son of Dardanus should bid them offer me your weight in gold, even so your mother shall never lay you out and make lament over the son she bore, but dogs and vultures shall eat you utterly up". (Book twenty-two). Overall there is no clear definition for what the nature of the hero truly is. The changing societal expectations and views mean that the views on what makes up a hero are changeable and adaptable. Therefore perhaps the underlying factor to make a hero is their ability to last through time and be remembered. In this regard Achilles is the greatest hero without question. Whether he is the inspiration for Alexander the Greats conquests or renowned throughout the modern western world as the most fearsome warrior, Achilles has the untouchable and unremovable crown of being the most iconic and symbolic hero. Despite Hector's obvious greater moral strength and admirable qualities particularly in the face of adversary, he lacks the memorability and fame that elevates Achilles. He is singular and represents his own moral code whereas Hector is representative of a society, Achilles can transcend throughout time because he is the greatest; to an almost God-like extreme. It requires Hector to be killed by Achilles for him to fully achieve his heroic status and yet the death of Achilles occurs outside the realm of the text. He does not fit within the pages of the poem for he is uncontrollable and that individuality and soloist mentality, though not ideal for classical warriors, aids him in reigning the most important, influential and powerful hero in the epic. In his rewriting of the heroic code which allows him to be forever known he immortalises himself in a fashion Hector simply could not. In short, Achilles has achieved the ultimate form of kleos and time; he will never be forgotten.





# MUSIC WRITTEN FOR COMPUTER GAMES IS THE MOST IMPORTANT GENRE OF OUR TIME

WRITTEN BY PARMIDA ESLAMINAZARI (YEAR 12)

In comparison to the past, computer games play a significant role in people's lifestyle. Playing video games is one of the most common hobbies and there is an extreme competition between various companies to make the most interesting computer games. One of the features that makes the game more stimulating is the music. To begin with, getting the right type of music playing at the right time in a game can be really powerful. Music is often the main element in a game that sets the scene and contributes to the mood of any game. If you don't choose your music carefully, you will be missing a trick and an opportunity to really engage with those playing your game. Also, it makes your game that bit more memorable by creating a catchy theme tune. These tunes often stand-alone as great pieces of music and so if you've invested in a great soundtrack, people will come to appreciate that and associate that theme song with your game. Moreover, the music guides the player in different situations. It is undeniable that it encourages player through the levels and tells the main story of the game. Therefore, if you get the wrong music, you can ruin the game players experience. Besides, there is no doubt that the music has direct correlation on the emotions and the mental of the player. In other words, If the music is catchy and absorbing, the player is likely to play more and increases the rate of the video

game. Finally yet importantly, video games have a plethora of genres, namely strategy games, sports games, action games, or they can even be long journeys. So, the music ought to be connected with the theme of video game. It is crystal-clear that a good emotional music boosts the quality of the computer game. As the game goes through higher levels, and music should be more dramatic and helps the player to stay in the mood and feel the excitement of the game to do their best and pass the level. The more impact, the more success. A good reason why you should listen to the background music It can improve your focus, motivation, and productivity. As video games have become more and more mainstream, the soundtracks have gotten bigger and a lot more impressive. This trend can only continue in the coming years, which is a good sign for both the video game industry and the music industry. As a conclusion, not only the music written for computer games has been increased significantly, but also it has profound effect on the ranking of the game. I espouse the idea that even if it is very effective, nevertheless might not be the most important genre of music. There are other music genres that we have to mention them, such as Film music and Theatre music. They are also very effective and the most important part of the movie and theatre.

# ALL HISTORY IS SIMPLY THE VIEW OF HISTORIANS

WRITTEN BY TUDOR MIHAILSECU (YEAR 12)

“Quid est veritas” - Pilates once famously said (what is truth?). This rhetorical question is a demonstration of the uncertainty of truth and how it can be interpreted, as truth is only a fact in a subjective context. History is the recorded knowledge of past events and accordingly the reflection of a historian or multiple historians' personal truth(s). A personal truth in the 21st century is merely as good as a personal view and thus history is a collection of personal truths, expressed as the view of historians. We can rarely achieve historical truth, as for a statement to be considered absolute, it has to be a universal truth. However, in order to assess whether history is simply the views of historians or if absolute truth exists in history, we have to consider different philosophical schools and apply a metaphysical system, whilst interpreting several historical events. Analytical philosophers of history have tended to be divided on the subject of historical truth, as the realists have favoured a coherence theory, whilst those with constructivist and idealist learning have favoured a coherence theory. Nevertheless, we first have to understand what we refer to as truth. We do not experience reality directly. Reality is experienced by an individual through his/her perceptual filters. Just as Karl Marx disagrees with Adam Smith's economic theory and will barely appreciate his personal 'truth' on 'Laissez-Faire' approach and the invisible hand of market theory. This is a good example which shows us that perceptions are influenced by our attitudes and past experiences. Let's consider for example Plato's Allegory of the cave. The Greek philosopher provides a good explanation of how truth is subjective and limited to human beings. One of the 'prisoners' is liberated after spending all of his

life in a cave and begins to integrate into society. After a while, he returns to the cave and his former 'inmates' consider his new reality unacceptable and classify him as a lunatic. The question that emerges is who's the truth is the truth and the immediate answer for a person that lives in modern society would be that the person that was released is right as he has been exposed to wider contextual knowledge. In the 21st century, contextual knowledge of different individuals is only differentiated by a marginal level of acquired knowledge. However, if this is true, we will never know which historian is right or wrong as it is merely impossible to say which of them has a better understanding of certain circumstances. Moreover, as the gap of the contextual knowledge is minimal, it is impossible to judge which one of them is closer to or has achieved historical truth. As stated above, truth is not absolute, however, we still have to achieve a certain conclusion when we consider history. For instance, we can apply the concept of historical fact, when historians build their reconstruction on historical evidence. However, the most striking thing about history is that facts are no longer accessible to direct inspection. Therefore, historians have to base their thesis on historical evidence in the shape of archives, oral testimony and physical evidence. And although we can all agree on facts such as the communist manifesto, published in 1848, it comes down to historical opinion to decide whether Stalin was a Stalinist or a communist. This is where the bounds of historical truth are met. Just as philosophers that were mentioned above can not decide on truth, so are historians limited to their interpretation of historical evidence. It is easy to say that all history is based on



personal opinion, but at the same time, we can identify historians that are closer to historical truth by the method they use when writing about a certain event, person or any past concept in general. Particularly David Hume is well known for his principle of association and more precisely for our matter, causation. Causation divides “all objects of human reason or enquiry’ into two exclusive categories: relations of ideas and matters of fact. On one hand, we have relations of ideas are intuitive of demonstratively certain just as the angle of a Euclidean triangle sum up to 180 degrees, whether or not we can see the actual triangle. On the other hand, we have matters of fact which rely on the way the world is and cannot be established by demonstrations. This has helped develop mechanisms that allow us to discover the truth. One example is the correspondence theory, which states that a statement is true if it corresponds to the facts. For example, the fact that America is an independent country is based on the existence and recognition of the declaration of Independence. Therefore, historians can use this as a tool to come as close as possible to the truth, basing all of their statements on existing facts and thus using the correspondence theory. As a result, all history is not simply the view of historians. Philosophers and methodologist have helped create a system that historians can use to demonstrate a historical argument and find the truth. The other important method we have to take into consideration is the coherence theory. This theory is based on the fact that a belief is true if and only if it is part of a coherent system of beliefs. For example, many people believe in the Theory of Gravity, although, gravity

has not been proven to exist. This idealist concept is emphasised through Harold H. Joachim’s interpretation: Truth in its essential nature is that systematic coherence which is the character of a significant whole. This can help us understand the way historians use the coherence theory when writing for example about the life of Jesus Christ. Although there is some possible evidence of his existence, the truth of his life is claimed by a coherent system of Christianity. Sceptics such as Bernard Russel tend to attack this method of achieving truth as a belief system can be created almost out of thin air. Therefore, many historians argue that coherence should be used as a mode of verification. Thus, allowing them to get closer to historical truth and not rely on pure assumptions of a larger context. As a result, this method alone could potentially lead to all history simply be the view of historians and we have to use it as a test rather than a research method.

In conclusion, a deeper philosophical understanding allows us to argue against the existence of truth whatsoever. However, we aim to assume that truth is real and understand the methods that need to be used in order to find it. Not all history is simply the view of historians, as mentioned above. The Historians that come close to historical truth are the once that apply multiple methods, based on philosophical truth and metaphysics. The correspondence and coherence methods are great examples of such methods. As mentioned above, they allow us to transform opinions into facts and myths into history.





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