

THE SIXTH

12 PTC



Australian Bushfire Disaster

Since late December 2019, 600,000 hectares of land in Australia has been on fire. This was caused by climate change making the dry season much worse than normal with temperatures reaching an average of 41.9 Degrees Celsius across the country.

The fires have had a drastic effect on Australian wildlife and livestock. 25,000 Koalas have been killed by the fires so far, decimating an already endangered species. Also 100,000 cows and sheep are dead, which will lead to devastating effects on farmers and the economy.

28 people have been killed so far, and the fires have destroyed almost 2,000 houses. The Australian government has been given £1 billion in aid, and this money is mostly going towards paying volunteer firefighters and wildlife aid.

To donate money to help Australia's wildlife, visit www.worldwildlife.org.

Death Penalty

We interviewed four year 12 students on their view on the death penalty, here is what they said.

John

"I think that the death penalty shouldn't really be a thing. If a person commits a certain crime, of such significance, then I would feel like death would be good. They should suffer and should live a long hard life in a cell to pay for what they did. I believe that by killing someone you take away their human rights, so then where are your human rights?"

Fay

"I believe that the death penalty should only be used in a certain case. This is because everyone deserves a second chance, and every single person deserves to have a chance of being resurrected into a better person. I believe that the death penalty should only be used if that person has no desire to change for the better and only if you fully know it was them who committed the crime"

Charlie

"I am very for the death penalty. If you commit a serious crime e.g. murder or rape multiple times you therefore lose all of your human rights and do not deserve to live. Putting them in jail for a very long time costs our government money. If you are sure that it was that person who did the crime then they should receive the death penalty"

Anna

"I feel like the death penalty is a nice way out. Whatever the person did then they should feel the same pain, but not literally. They deserve to be tortured for a very long time and suffer for what they have done. They should be put in jail for life and have to suffer every single day for the rest of their lives."

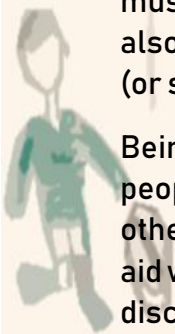
The Importance of Sport

Sport is a very important thing throughout your school life. It is especially important when coming to the later part of your education e.g. exams.

One important aspect of sport is the mental side. Playing sport you enjoy has proven to reduce stress, and help you through stress. For example, playing a little bit of sport during your exams will make you stress less and it will make it much easier to do. This will make exams and studying much, much easier, by knowing there is a quick escape in sport so you won't be worrying for too long. Therefore, sport is vital when you are dealing with stressful times.

Another important aspect of sport is the physical side. With the physical benefits of taking part in sport: such as having a lower resting heart rate, stronger bones and muscles, and to improve the ability to perform daily tasks with little difficulty. Exercise also brings feel good endorphins when done, which can lead to a positive frame of mind (or self-esteem) that can be carried over to both school work and out of school study.

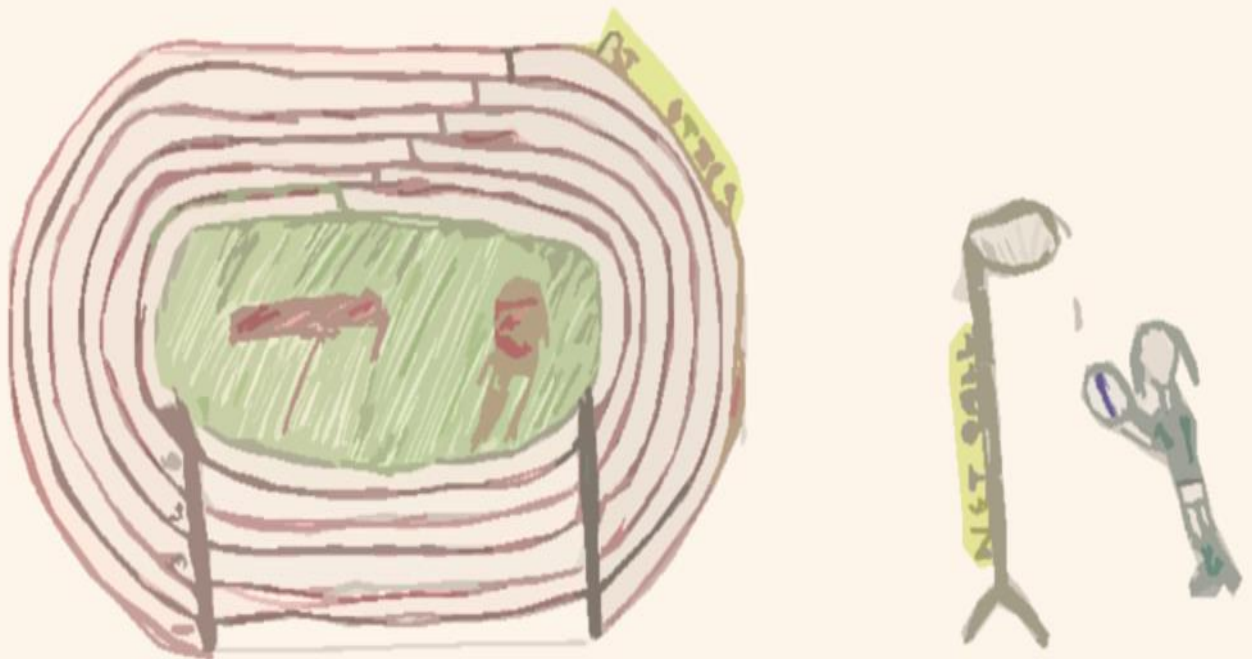
Being a successful sixth former involves having the ability to socialise with many people. Participating in all team sports allows sixth formers to make friends with others who have a similar interest in regards to sporting activity. This socialisation can aid with later opportunities in both leisure and work time, where it is appropriate to have discussions with family members colleagues and friends.



Matthew Scott reviews: A Brief History of Time – Steven Hawking

A Brief History of time is a very detailed collection of science topics studied by Steven Hawking. It includes his opinion on many other physicist's work, discussing their relevance to science and how they were accepted at the time of their discovery. He evaluates their acceptance into changing modern societies, with many discoveries contradicting strong religious beliefs. With these theories he discusses how they could coincide with a god. He uses known scientific theories and discoveries to explain how all particles are affected by different forces. He explains the different types of forces, such as gravitational and electromagnetic and their effect on the universe. He also describes his study on the Big Bang Singularity, showing how the universe has been expanding ever since. He includes his study of quantum mechanics, describing how particles are split up into matter particles of the universe and force carrying particles (such as waves). He then discusses how every particle has an antiparticle. In other chapters he talks about how atoms, once thought to be the smallest element of the universe, can be divided into protons and neutrons which are made of quarks. In the final chapters he analyses his study on his main field of work: Black holes, where he discusses their existence and possible uses. Furthermore, he suggests abstract theories such as observation and showing time as a concept, with space-time a 4-dimensional concept. Finally, he explains how scientists have been trying to find a single theory which describes how the universe works which is the prime goal of Physics today.

This book considers many complex, detailed, scientific theories condensed to make it easier for people without an extensive physics knowledge to understand and relate to. Therefore, overall, I thought it was very interesting and I understood some of the content. However, other theories were so advanced they would require additional reading to completely understand.



Interview with Mrs Ellis-Williams on Veganism

'Veganuary' is a yearly challenge that many people take part in. The aim is to remain vegan for the whole month of January. To explore veganism further here is an interview from Elizabeth Porter (from a farming background) with Mrs Ellis-Williams, who has been vegan for 5 years:

Will you be participating in 'Veganuary' this year?

"I have been vegan for 5 years so, yes I will be."

What made you decide to be vegan?

"I was a vegetarian before I was vegan and my main reason is animal welfare. I think that animal welfare is not as good as it could be in intensive farming, there is a lot of mistreatment of animals by farmers. I'm not saying that is the case in every farm, we do live in a rural area where a lot of farmers would argue that their animals are cared for perfectly. Which I'm sure they do. But, you can't walk in to a supermarket or a restaurant and know exactly where the meat is sourced from. So, I chose to stop eating meat. Then, I chose to be vegan because I read about the dairy industry and how intensive that can be as well. The milk from cows is essentially for their calves and when calves are born only some more ethical farmers keep them with their mothers. But, others take them away and it seems very distressing to cows.

There has also been lots of research in to the plant based diet and you can find perfectly good substitutes whilst getting all the good nutrients, vitamins as well as protein."

Did you know that farmers take the colostrum from cows and give them to their calves?

"Yeah and I always get in to this conversation. I do know that, but that it's not for the length of time that they would usually have." But, they only produce colostrum for 24 hours and that gives them the anti-bodies they would need to survive. "Then what happens to the male calves?" They go for meat. "Again, I just don't really think that is necessary. I do understand there would be an impact on farmers and the economy. That is why I'm not a vegan who preaches to everyone that they should change their diet. I understand that we do live in a community with lots of farmers. But, through the reading I have looked at, I also understand that you can't go in to Tesco and know if the cows that produce the milk have had a good quality of life with their calves for a decent amount of time. For example, I do still eat eggs however I source them from chickens that are completely free-range because I think that is acceptable.

My year 9's actually told me that if sheep don't get sheared then they can get lice and I didn't know that. So, I am open to change my lifestyle. I do like meat but at the moment I just don't think that standards of farming are high enough, for me."

What are the pros and cons of being Vegan?

"The pros are that you do feel good about yourself as it is a much healthier diet. I am interested in veganism so I have researched it and I do support it. So, I do know that your cholesterol levels are much lower, also rates of cancer amongst vegans is much lower because you are not eating as much meat. You also tend to get ill less.

The cons are that in Cumbria you are limited in choice of where to eat, if you go out. I do think it is getting better but, I can't go in to a supermarket and buy a sandwich. Still, I think 'Veganuary' this year has been much more widespread and helped this."

What is your opinion on the importation of vegetables that are out of season and the emissions

this causes?

“Good question. I think it does raise an ethical balance. Because, I can’t say that the way I do things is the ‘correct’ way. People may argue that if they eat meat and local vegetables then their doing it the correct way.

Another thing is palm oil as well. A lot of vegan products have it in and there is a debate on how ethical that really is. I consider that as well, so know I’m looking for products without: meat, gelatine, dairy or palm oil in them. I try to eat locally sourced foods but it is almost impossible. I think it’s up to everyone individually to do their bit and I believe I’m doing mine. Yeah, I think a lot of people don’t realise that eating imported fruits and vegetables causes lots of carbon emissions. For example, one return flight to Costa Rica has the same carbon footprint as eating red meat for over 70 years and that is where lots of fruits and vegetables are imported from. Personally there are other reasons I don’t eat meat, besides environmental reasons. For example, the slaughtering process itself. I believe animals are sentient beings with feelings and going to a slaughterhouse must be a traumatic experience. I see it as incredibly inhumane. I’m not sure if there is an alternative but I know that it is not as humane as it could be, right now.”

Do you think that protesting for veganism is going to make being a farmer in the UK unsustainable? And do you think that this would widen the market for even more unethical foreign farms?

“I do see that cheaper meat from the UK is imported for example, there is lots of bacon imported from Denmark and Holland. They do have lower standards than us. The only thing I do, in regards to protesting, is raising awareness that this is my choice and if someone asks me about it I will talk to them. But, I don’t want to impose my beliefs on anyone else. I am also sympathetic to the fact that I work in a farming community. I think if more changes happen that could be a possibility but, for right now I just appreciate that there is an alternative diet, and that there is a choice.

My husband has used his choice to eat meat but he is still much more aware and chooses to source local meat. He often prefers to come to local butchers and not buy cheap imported meat from supermarkets. I think local supermarkets should use local meat too and raise their standards. I would hate to see it impact farmers and I would go back to eating meat if standards of welfare for animals were raised and enforced by the government.”

What do you think of the 138,000 farmers with jobs threatened due to more people adopting a vegan lifestyle?

“I wasn’t aware of that. I totally agree with a farmer with poor standards of welfare for animals losing their jobs and being prosecuted. I wonder if after we leave the EU standards will be changed still, I would hate to see it impact our local economy. But, farmers who set and stick to high standards don’t deserve to lose their jobs.”

(Thank you to Miss Ellis- Williams for taking part in our interview)

-Elizabeth Porter, Alexandra Hayes and Starr Blackburn.

Some snaps of Year 12 in the Common Room

