

Vasant Valley TODAY

SCHOOL WATCH

Vaad-Vivaad Pratiyogita, Class 9

1st: Ayushmaan Aashish Kher
2nd: Katyayani Jha
3rd: Dhairyra Kataria

Prompt Based Creative Writing

Class 6

1st: Kabir Bahl
2nd: Kyra Dhar and Miheeka Bagla
3rd: Geetika Jain

Class 7

1st: Sara Jay Kumar
2nd: Darsh Puri and Sumair Gupta
3rd: Jia Noor Singh

Class 8

1st: Kian Kuber Nagpal
2nd: Taanvir Sood
3rd: Vira Chhatwal and Inaayat Passi

Class 9

1st: Arhaan Kaura and Kavin Bhatia
2nd: Anahita Kukreja

Class 10

1st: Prakriti Mahajan
2nd: Kartik Vatsal Vaish
3rd: Tia Goculdas and Simran Shina Kumar

Class 11

1st: Daanish Khizer
2nd: Ayush Narain Mathur and Tia Gulyani
3rd: Aahana Banarjee

Class 12

1st: Saniya Sidhu
2nd: Devansh Gupta & Ishita Zutshi
3rd: Kabir Singh

Speed Maths 7, Class 12

Winner: Veeraj Jindal
Students who did well: Aditi Singh, Dhruv Kumar, Prithvi Singh

The Inter House Science Quiz for classes 11 and 12

1st: Green House (Ishaan Khanna, Dhruv Kumar, Shubham Kalantari, Aryan Menon)
2nd: Yellow House (Abhijeet Aulakh, Soham Kacker, Arnav Sethi, Adi Singh Vohra)

THE END OF AN ERA

On the 16th of August 2018, India marked the end of an era as Atal Bihari Vajpayee, the longest lived Prime Minister of India passed away at the age of 93. In many ways, however, his ill health had deprived India of his euphonious oratory, sparkling wit and laughing eyes since he departed the national stage in 2004. Now, sadly, the loss is permanent.

Atal Bihari Vajpayee's six year stint as Prime Minister was definitely a memorable one and he leaves India the better for his contributions to it. His pioneering Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan, which put serious money into primary education, his stewardship of economic reforms, and his skilled management of an unruly coalition have left a towering legacy.

Many will speak of his Prime Ministership, his political leadership of the Bharatiya Jan Sangh and then the Bharatiya Janata party, both of which he built up to national prominence and led with grace. India, however, has witnessed many great Prime Ministers and political leaders. What distinguished Mr. Vajpayee from the rest was his "insaniyat"-his humanity.

More than the specific accomplishments, Vajpayee should be remembered for the way he achieved them. His gentle, patient disposition, his unfailing courtesy, his graciousness of conduct and his all-encompassing humanity leave a towering legacy.

We live in a time when the "ruling party" has become synonymous with the ruthless, single minded acquisition of power and its deployment in disregard of all others. Vajpayee harked back to a kinder, gentler era. He spoke with enormous respect for his opponents and predecessors. As he had said in his elegy, "the sun has set, yet by the shadow of the stars we must find our way." That was the essence of Atal Bihari Vajpayee- a great-heartedness that embraced even those with whom he disagreed.

Atal Bihari Vajpayee was the embodiment of benevolence and forgiveness and is renowned for his quality of being accommodating. Unlike other politicians that are racing to decipher the complex intricacies of becoming powerful and are money-minded, Mr. Vajpayee has managed to leave behind a great legacy due to his acumen and wisdom, both of which enabled him to be a prominent statesman and a respected leader.

Even today Atal Bihari Vajpayee's name resonates through the country loud and clear. Even after the end of his era as prime minister, he was and will always be put up on a pedestal that he has earned his rightful place on. He showed us all that it was possible to defy international pressure and do what was right for the country.

While we mourn the death of Atal Bihari Vajpayee, we should stop for a moment and give gratitude to his life as one of the most brilliant democrats. He proved that a "strong" government is not all we need but good governance in the true sense!

Anahita Jain, Sanah Kapur and Tanvi Bahl



1951: Associated with BJP



1977: Became external affairs minister



1992: Awarded Padma Vibhushan



1996: Became PM for first time



1998: Became PM for second time



1999: Became PM for third time



2015: Awarded Bharat Ratna



2018: Passed away in New Delhi

VOICES IN VASANT VALLEY

ZORAWAR KALRA

'Masala' up the world

A very common saying is 'passion starts at a young age'- Mr Kalra is one of those uniquely fortuitous ones who has discovered his passion early. In this instance, food was the passion. Mr Kalra was one man 'who lived to eat and not eat to live'. He is known for his famous restaurants- Masala Library and Farzi Café. It's his aim to add the 'essence' of science in food and bring 'desi' food on the international pedestal. He believes that "food is the essence of life."

He credits his inspiration to some specific food-related experiences, ranging from his late grandmother's Rishta Kofta, to El Bulli on the outskirts of Barcelona, to the bed and breakfast tour in Scotland. His family was very open to the idea of him becoming a chef, and during his speech, he said-

"My father told me this before I started- Think about something you would do for free. Then think about how to make money out of it."

NAYANTARA RAI

Spreading a vision

Nayantara Rai, an alumnus of our very school, a former news anchor and now the Chief of Bureau at ET Now, led us through an interesting talk through the aspects of journalism and her very own school life. She spoke about how you may grow to be good at something and gave her own example, of how she had failed math through her school life but got a job that required her to calculate on live television! She emphasised on focus, and how it can take you to places you never imagined.

She told us that as a part of the new generation, we have the power to report whatever we see, and that we live in an age where each person can completely change the world. With this empowering view, Ms. Nayantara Rai gave a final goodbye to her enraptured audience.

"Always be prepared for the unknown. The only way to be prepared for the unknown is to have faith in yourself and confidence in yourself."

ANIL RAI GUPTA

Conceive, believe, achieve

Anil Rai Gupta, the owner of the company Havells India Limited, taught us all the secrets to being a successful businessperson by sharing his personal experiences and the hardships he had to face. He taught us that business is all about people and how they connect, if you cannot manage people right, you cannot manage a company. He stressed on the importance of values like hardwork, compassion and dedication which ultimately helped him achieve his own goals. He also spoke about how "You are never born into a title, but have to earn it".

He spoke about entrepreneurship and how it is about risk taking. He also said that entrepreneurship is a state of mind. He said that we should always work for a bigger cause than profit and how the most important thing to do was to create our own path and not just follow others. He gave a truly inspirational talk which taught us how to conceive, believe and achieve.

"Success is not a sprint, it is a marathon."

KAPIL DEV

Bowling into everyone's hearts

Mr. Dev started his interaction by speaking about his childhood and days in school, and very truthfully confessed that he wasn't a great student but was an aspiring athlete. He inspired all the students from different age groups by saying "It is important not to go for the marks, but to build a strong personality and character." He further emphasised his ideology on building a good character by talking about his idol, the late Nelson Mandela. Mr. Dev said that Nelson Mandela, in his unparalleled capacity to forgive, showed that he truly was a man of great character. He had built his personality over a period of time, even after spending many toilsome years in prison, and Mr. Dev admired that about him.

Mr. Dev ended his interaction by addressing the issue of children aspiring to duplicate or copy the stars that they idolize. He said-

"Duplicates can never be better than the original, so be you, and create your own identity."



An initiative conceived by students of Vasant Valley School to inspire leadership and encourage cross-cultural exposure amongst students, via interactions with leaders and achievers.

ROSHNI NADAR

Balance that scales

Ms. Roshni Nadar- the Executive Director and the CEO of HCL Enterprise, returned to Vasant Valley as a guest speaker after studying at the school as a student for 7 years. After graduating from Northwestern University and becoming a news producer in London, she went back to business school. She thereafter moved back to India and joined HCL, where she was then appointed as the CEO of the company by her father.

She calls herself a first generation inheritor, but soon after inheriting HCL, she made a big achievement of her own by founding a leadership academy in Uttar Pradesh called Vidyagyan. Vidyagyan provides free education to meritorious students of classes 6-12, and the initiative has helped countless students get admission to reputed colleges all across the world. Ms. Nadar believes that philanthropy is a state of mind, and that those with the capacity to give, will do just that.

“At the end of the day, whether you’re a man or a woman, merit is what determines whether you are good or not.”

ISHITA ANAND

Every Bit counts

Ishita Anand went to DU to study Literature, got involved in theatre and even took a liking to film-making. At 21 years of age, she started her very own company to allow filmmakers to come together and share their stories. Her company, however, shut down in a mere ten months. This would leave most people disheartened. She, however, was extremely passionate and joined BitGiving, which is India’s first online social crowd-funding platform.

BitGiving allowed stories to come through and be heard. Ms. Anand has been able to reach out to the beating hearts of those in need of a small push to help them reach their dreams. Through BitGiving, creativity found its number one supporter, and money became the last problem of thousands of people.

“Opportunities come and go, hurdles come too. Life usually doesn’t make sense, but in retrospect, everything happens for a reason. So be passionate, and you’ll look back and smile.”

MALLIKA DUA

Laughter from the heart

Amidst the amalgamation of excitement, inspiration and wisdom, Ms. Mallika Dua engaged in a Q&A session in which she spoke about her journey as a comedian and actor, her belief in the power of the fine arts and her way of dealing with internet trolls. Growing up, one thing had always been clear for her- she wanted to be a performer. When asked about how she got into comedy, she spoke about her love for acting and being on stage and how she would often rewrite her lines adding her own punches, the result leaving the audience in splits.

Ms. Dua also spoke about her firm belief in humour being open to interpretation. She told us that while acting it has never been her purpose to please everybody, rather she focuses on those who appreciate her style of humour. She also gave her insights on the comedy industry in India, its slow growth and lack of representation of women. Her story, talent and passion for her work truly left us all inspired.

“The stage is the kindest place for any artist to thrive.”

ANUJA CHAUHAN

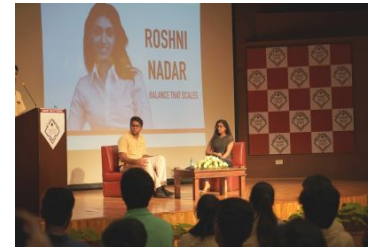
Yeh Dil Maange More!

Anuja Chauhan’s books explore the struggles that young people living in big cities face when dealing with love. Even though she is popularly known as a chick lit writer, she does not like it when “people put labels on everything and everyone”. In 2010 she left a successful career as an advertising copywriter to spend more time with her three children and focus on her novels.

Mrs. Chauhan thinks young and aspiring writers are too focused on vying for attention and standing out. In doing so, they handicap themselves by becoming self-conscious, and as a result they cannot write freely. She tells writers to say what they want to say and to not worry about how their work is received.

She also shared a few insights about advertising. She believes that advertising is shallow, but teaches us how to be resilient because we are always dealing with people who are trying to put us down.

“If you want to be interesting, you have to be interested.”



I am a tree and my name is Pride of India. My leaves are big and they are like lily pads. I have a rough bark and pink and purple leaves. Did you know I make my food on my own? I do photosynthesis. My roots are used to cure stomach aches. My flowers are used to make perfume too. I like sunny and rainy days. I don't like litter around me. Many people think I am beautiful. I am proud of my name because I am named after the world's best country, India!

Radhika Goenka II - C

I am a tree and my name is Silver Oak. I have beautiful yellow flowers and very thin leaves. I also live in the Jhoola Bari in Vasant Valley School. I love people doing bark rubbing and leaf rubbing on me. But I don't like dust storms. I talk with my friends Bottle Brush, Neem, Ficus and others. I make my food called glucose. Water, sun-light and carbon dioxide help me in a process of making food. It is called photosynthesis. **Nora Chhatwal II - C**

PREVENTING A MONUMENTAL DISASTER

Did you know that by the time your great-grandchildren come into this world, they may not be able to see this beautiful World Heritage Site, the Taj Mahal, unless we do something now to save it from the numerous threats it has been facing. India's only Wonder of the World, built in 1648 by twenty-thousand workers and one thousand elephants, took twenty years to make, using the finest translucent marble and twenty-eight types of precious and semi-precious stones. The translucent marble makes the Taj change colour according to time of day. At sunset it is orange, in the early morning it is pearly white, at high noon it is a dazzling white, and at night it is aqua blueish-white. Thousands of people visit it every day.



The cause of the discolouration of the marble is caused by burning garbage, illegal sandmining, diesel genset fumes, vehicle fumes, industrial emissions, crematorium fires and forest fires. The Yamuna, on which the Taj partly rests, is also facing problems. Toxic chemicals, sewage, garbage and untreated waste is being dumped into the river in large quantities. All the fish in the Yamuna have died and algae has taken over. Chironomids, a type of insect that feeds on the algae, sits on the Taj's marble for two days and takes off leaving green stains, which are its waste.

Now we come to the big question – 'Can the Taj collapse?' The Archaeological Survey of India is in charge of the Taj Mahal but the rest of the city is taken care of by different organisations that do not discuss the way forward with each other. The Taj is the victim of their conflict. The foundation of the Taj is made mainly of Sal and Ebony wood, all of which need water of the Yamuna to stay strong. Yes, the Taj, which has been standing for nearly 370 years can, in fact, collapse, if the Yamuna were to dry up. If we want to preserve this one-of-a-kind wonder we must spread awareness and act before it is too late. **Meera Shukla V - A**

THE INDIAN EXPRESS

Incredible India is inviting its ilk,
 Unity in Diversity, shimmering as Silk,
 Incredible India is beaming with pride,
 Hop on Bharat Express,
 let's go for a ride
 Delhi, Dispur, Dehradun, Deogarh,
 Kanpur, Kannur, Kashmir, Keonjhar,
 Jaipur, Raipur, Bilaspur, Chhattisgarh,
 All one family, this is your Ghar!!!
 Delicious Dhokla, Unique Utthappam,
 Amazing Appam, Pleasing Payasam,
 Curries and Kababs, Tunday, Galouti,
 You're in Luck-Now in Lucknow,
 what variety!
 Language or Religion,
 Dress code or Seasons,
 Different opinions, we Agree to Disagree,
 But tied by a single thread of our Indian-ness
 God bless our India with prosperity,
 Bhagat Singh and Rajguru, Nehru and Gandhi
 Have fought for our passage to freedom you see
 This train ride is ending, but not the journey,
 Long live my India, May you forever be Free.

Joshua George Kathett IV - B

WATER

Water, water all around,
 Water we keep safe and sound.
 Wasting water is just not good,
 Save all the water that you could.
 You drink a bit but the rest you throw?
 That is something,
 to which you should say no.
 The leaky tap drips day and night,
 Don't forget to turn the tap shut tight.
 Just think of all the water lost,
 How many lives that may cost.
 So save water and do your part,
 And have a much more happy heart.

Abeer Datta IV - B

राखी का त्योहार

आया राखी का त्योहार ,
 है यह बहुत मज़ेदार।
 लाता है यह अपने साथ
 खुशियों की बहार,
 भाई-बहन को देते उपहार।
 मिलकर मनाता है
 इसे पूरा परिवार,
 सब पकाते हैं स्वादिष्ट आहार।
 जो बढ़ाए भाई-बहन का प्यार,
 वही है राखी का त्योहार।

ऋतिका 5 अ



आज की दुनिया

केरल के मुख्य मंत्री का दावा- 'सेंटर' ने 'यू.ए.ई.' से ७०० करोड़ की सहायता लेने की अनुमति नहीं दी- खारिज कर दिया गया है। इसकी वजह से काफी राजनीतिक टिप्पणियाँ शुरू हो गई हैं।

तेजिंदरपाल सिंह ने भारत का पहला गोल्ड मैडल 'एशियाई गेम्स' २०१८ में 'शॉट पट' में जीता।

इंद्रा नुई, भारतीय महिला जो पेप्सीको की 'सी.ई.ओ.' थी, को २०१८ का 'एशिया गेम चेंजर' पुरस्कार मिला।

'स्पाइस जेट' भारत की पहली 'बायोफ्युएल' फ्लाइट २७ अगस्त को लांच करेगा।

अमेरिका के सेनेटर जॉन मक्कैन, वियतनाम युद्ध के हीरो और राष्ट्रपति उम्मीदवार, की ८१ साल की उमर में कैंसर से मृत्यु हो गयी।

Asian Games 2018

The Asian Games, also known as Asiad, is a continental multi-sport event held every four years among athletes from all over Asia. The 18th Asian Games are being held in Jakarta and Palembang, Indonesia from 18th August to 2nd September 2018. Forty different sports and over four hundred events are included in this tournament with participants from forty five Asian countries. This year there are about eleven thousand-three hundred athletes expected at the games.

As of now, the top contender is China, with a total of one hundred and sixty-seven medals. India is ranked at the ninth place with a total of thirty-six medals. The men's and women's Indian Hockey team have so far captured the hearts of all Indians by their excellent performances in the recent matches.

The women's team mauled Kazakhstan by beating them 21-0, missing the Asian Games record for the highest goals scored by just one goal. The men's team, on the other hand, marked India's biggest international victory by beating Hong Kong with a score of 26-0. Besides Hockey, many young and emerging Indian athletes such as Hima Das, Vinesh Phogat, Shardul Vihan and Saurabh Chaudary have won medals in various events such as wrestling, shooting and athletics.

This year, India has 527 participants, the largest number of participants in a diversity of events India has had in a long



time. We wish all the Indian athletes the best of luck and hope that they represent the country with sportsmanship and glory.

Arshya Gaur

Who is Indian?

Assam's National Register of Citizens (NRC), which lists all Indian citizens in the state, could render thousands of Indians stateless and create a human rights disaster. The final draft of the NRC excluded four million residents, and many of them are Muslims. Those not on the list have a few months to prove that they or their ancestors had entered India before the eve of the Bangladesh War of 1971. This is difficult because often records are lost or simply do not exist. The list is riddled with errors, with some members of the same family included and others excluded.

Those who cannot prove their citizenship will become part of a new underclass, with none of the rights or privileges the constitution guarantees to its citizens, and may end up in detention camps. If the NRC is extended to other Indian states as some BJP officials have stated, the situation could spiral out of control.

The reality is that India, like most modern nations, is made up of immigrants- many Indians are descendants of people who came from elsewhere. If we recognize that fact, we should not focus on discriminating against our fellow countrymen and instead ensure that everyone is treated equally.

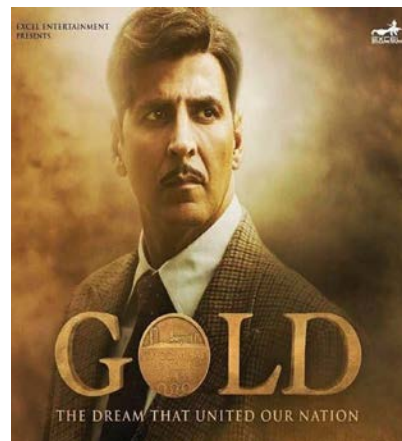
Tara Jing Gopinath

गोल्ड

'गोल्ड' एक ऐसी फिल्म है जो भारत के हर नागरिक को बहुत गर्व महसूस करवाती है। ब्रिटिश साम्राज्य से स्वतंत्रता प्राप्त करने की अवधि की यह कहानी हमारे पूरे देश की एक बड़ी जीत है। यह सिर्फ एक स्पोर्ट्स फिल्म ही नहीं है। यह दिखाती है कि कैसे एक समय के बाद हमारा देश अपने पैरों पर कैसे वापस उठा और हमारे उत्पीड़कों को हरा पाया।

यह तपन दास के आसपास केंद्रित है, एक भारतीय, जिसने 1936 में जर्मनी के खिलाफ हॉकी टीम की जीत को देखा था और एक नई टीम को बनाने के लिए कड़ी मेहनत की; ऐसी टीम जो भारत को गर्व पहुँचाएगी। यह फिल्म हमें विभाजन की क्रूरता के साथ-साथ भारतीयों और पाकिस्तानियों के बीच मित्रता और विभाजन दिखती है।

इस फिल्म में कई दृश्य हैं, जो थियेटर छोड़ने के बाद भी हमारे



साथ रहते हैं। मित्रता से लेकर देशभक्ति, यह सारी चीज़ें इस फिल्म में शामिल हैं। अगस्त 15 को प्रदर्शित की गई यह फिल्म हमें भारतीय जनता का एक आदर्श चित्रण है, जो सबको जरूर देखनी चाहिए।

काव्यिनी गरोडीया



KERALA FLOODS

The state of Kerala recently experienced floods so destructive that they've been called the worst floods experienced by the state in the past century. The death toll crossed four hundred, with many people still reported missing. Now, even as the waters recede and people return to destroyed homes, they are faced with the daunting task of cleaning rooms filled with dead fishes, slush and maybe even poisonous snakes.

Our response to the disaster isn't lacking in any means with the Indian Air Force, the Indian Railways, the UAE and many other organisations stepping in to provide medical aid, monetary assistance, food, water and shelter to the affected Keralites. Nonetheless, one can't help but wonder whether the floods could've been prevented from causing as much damage as they did.

While Kerala received a stunning cumulative rainfall of 2344.84 mm in the past few months as compared to the usual 1649.3 mm, this rainfall isn't as much as what caused the Great Floods of '99 that Kerala experienced in 1924. And yet, the damage caused to both life and property is equally severe. So, were heavy rains truly the only reason for this disaster?

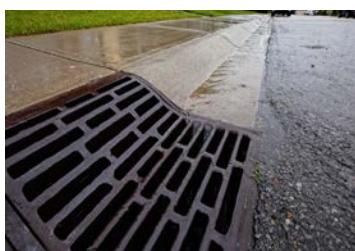
Due to the heavy rains, Kerala and its neighbouring states have been forced to open many of their dams which were dangerously close to overflowing. However, they did so without proper intervals between the opening of multiple dams and this contributed to the heavy flooding. A study revealed that many of these dams didn't have an emergency action plan in place for disaster management. Pre-and post-monsoon safety inspections had not been carried out for many of these dams either. Does it surprise anyone that many people are calling the Kerala floods a man-made disaster?



However, man-made disasters can always be prevented. Be it landslides caused by deforestation or gas tragedies like the one in Bhopal, all man-made calamities can be prevented with proper regulation of rules and meeting all safety requirements specific to any field. So, what can we do to prevent anything similar to what happened in Kerala from happening again, anywhere else?

All our assessments of flood risk currently assume a static, steady-state system where rivers respond in the same way they have in the past. We need to accept the fact that the climate and rainfall patterns around us are changing. This will ultimately result in the rivers and their basins becoming more dynamic and prone to change.

With these changing times, the rate at which rivers change- along with our response to the same, with urban drainage and flood mitigation measures- will play a significant role in determining whether we can avoid such man-made floods from occurring again. This involves updating our flood-risk assessments, proper pre-and post-monsoon safety inspections being conducted for every dam, and state governments coordinating with each other before they open their respective dams for any reason.



Flooding is a challenge across individual, local, regional and global scales. It is set to increase in the future and its impacts will only become more damaging. We need to improve individual and societal resilience to such disasters- whether they are natural or man-made- so when flooding does occur it isn't the disaster we are currently witnessing unfold in Kerala.

Nonetheless, in the aftermath of such a catastrophic event it is important to recognize the efforts of countless individuals and organizations across the globe who offered their time, resources and sympathy to those who suffered through these immense floods. It is this very effort that has provided hope to many whose lives had descended into sudden chaos, and these charitable acts are continuing to save numerous lives even today.

Prakriti Mahajan, 10

VVIQ

Q: What does the word misanthrope mean?

"To tie a rope wrong." - Kathleen Kyra Ireland

"When you miss an important shot." - Nihal Kang

"Someone who aims at something and misses."

-Anonymous

"Vampires." - Ahliyaa Bakshi

"An uncharitable action." - Yuvraj Mamik

"A type of chart paper." - Devashi Jain

A misanthrope is a person who dislikes humankind and avoids all human contact.

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