

Read First!

Y9

Vocabulary Check

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6 Word Summary Can you summarise the whole text in just one short, six-word sentence?

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What is the purpose of this text? Who was it produced by? Who is it for?



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Y9 Art Unit 3: Expressive sketchbook



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ART MAKING ADVICE WHEN YOU'RE STARTING OUT- by Helen Wells Visual Artist

For about ten years, in my twenties, I avoided drawing or painting completely because I always wanted the outcome to be perfect, better than I was able to produce... The weight of my expectation was too heavy and my rare attempts at creating too disappointing to me, so I just stopped creating anything at all. It's a sad fact that I allowed fear of failure, fear of not being good enough, to stop me even starting. I allowed my own high expectations and harsh self judgement to steal so much joy, exploration and possibility.

I had a sketchbook when I was a child, which I loved, but as I became an adult I just allowed art making to leave my life. When I came back to art in my thirties, I tentatively started to keep a sketchbook, it was life changing for me...

I believe it was my sketchbook practice which led to me becoming an artist. Sketchbooks are where I found out about myself as an artist. They are where I have developed my art style, my skills, my knowledge... They were a safe private corner of the world for me to tentatively and then eventually... joyously make art. They are now my personal art laboratory, where I have and continue to, get to grips with how I want my art to look, feel and be... So here is the advice I wish I had given my insecure and unsure artist self when I tentatively started a sketchbook and cautiously returned to art making in my early thirties.. (PS I'm 47 now if you were wondering...)

1. BE A KIND PARENT TO YOUR CREATIVITY

I've now learnt to be a much kinder parent to my creativity. My obsession with how something looked back then actually stopped me creating anything at all, so now my focus is on something different. My sketchbook is not necessarily for pretty, finished things, it's for expression, self reflection and development...when the pages will look great, that's a bonus. The gap between your expectations and what you are able to create as you start may be large, as with any skill development, it takes time, and practice, so be gentle with yourself. It's called an art practice for a good reason!

2. EXPLORE AND EXPERIMENT

Exploration and experimentation leads to discovery, it allows me to sift through the 'mistakes' to unearth something more valuable and beautiful...knowledge about my own art making preferences. Bringing a sense of discovery, a sense of 'what if' to your art-making is always more beneficial, productive and useful than a sense of judgement.

3. REPEAT AND REVISIT

I encourage you to repeat and revisit subjects and ideas. This is something I do all the time. It allows me to fully explore a subject and develop it. It also means I don't have to keep coming up with a new subject or topic every time I create something. There is a wonderful interplay in this process between the familiar and the different. There is something reassuring about revisiting a familiar subject. There is also something exciting about trying to change it up, make it different and new. I love the idea of taking something that I've made before and evolving it, developing it and nudging it forward...It's also a great way to hone skills, learn about different materials and become more fluent in art making...

4. WHAT DO YOU LOVE IN YOUR OWN ART?

I think about, reflect and take note what I love in my own art. I let that be my guide-rope and map. I encourage you to think about what you like about your own art and do more of it...

5. DON'T STOP TOO SOON

I consider my art making to be a life long journey, so there is no rush to the finish line. I want to enjoy the ride, enjoy going off the beaten-track and enjoy all the meandering paths of my art making...There is always something new to learn, something new to try, a new technique to explore. For me there is no arrival point, just a long journey filled with different ways to make art, my art.

I invite you to just make lots of art, unsuccessful art, beautiful art and everything inbetween, because in that making you will increase your skills, your knowledge and discover a lot about your self, your art preferences and the art you love to make...



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5 unbelievable things to see at the 'Sea Creatures' exhibition

Ever wondered what an octopus is packing under those eight legs? Well, you're in luck. This summer in London, a new exhibition is lifting the lid on creatures of the deep so you can explore the intricate (sometimes gruesome) insides of the ocean's weirdest and most amazing denizens. Using ethically sourced and painstakingly preserved specimens, 'Sea Creatures: Life Beneath the Ocean' reveals the incredible anatomies that allow aquatic life to thrive. Find out how rays give birth to live young, discover the unusual organs needed for life on the sea floor and catch a glimpse of an octopus's junk.

1. A massive minke whale

This minke whale, affectionately known as Hai Hai, was the first ocean mammal to undergo the complex plastination process. Popping the hood on Hai Hai has provided a valuable insight into the anatomical adaptations that allowed mammals to move into the ocean, making her a landmark in marine education.

2. One whopper of a shark

The whale shark is the world's largest fish, with the heaviest specimen ever recorded weighing 23.7 tons – that's just slightly less than two London buses. Despite its five-foot mouth span, this gentle giant is a filter feeder, existing on a diet of krill and fish eggs. Put down your whey protein, Brad. #bulking = caviar.

3. H-h-half of a penguin

The king penguin might not be able to fly, but it can dive to depths of 985 feet in pursuit of a snack, chowing down on squid, fish and crustaceans. Pingu packs a fair bit of blubber under his skin, but considering king penguins can survive the harsh conditions of Antarctica (where temperatures drop below -50), we'll let him off the Weight Watchers track.

4. The big fish without a tail

The mola mola is a hella hella big fish, growing up to 13.7 feet in length and weighing as much as 5,000 lbs (that's more than a caravan). The largest bony fish in the ocean also lays the most eggs of any known vertebrate, dropping up to 300 million in one sitting.

5. An eight-legged friend

It seems like just yesterday Paul the Octopus was getting himself into hot water with German football fans, and now you can discover exactly what it was that made him so good at opening those boxes with this display of octopus vulgaris. To be fair, with eight legs and three hearts, you'd be an animal oracle too.

Written by Rachel Funnell for the Timeout

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Y9 Art Unit 1: Words in Art



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'FOUND' WORDS: PRINTED PACKAGING, LABELS AND LAYERS

Ever since the cubists first collaged real newspapers and bottle labels into their still-life paintings in around 1912, artists have been making use of 'found' printed letters and words to add visual interest or texture to their work.

Kurt Schwitters added bus tickets, sweet wrappers, stamps and other scraps of throwaway printed papers to create delicate detail in his beautiful textured collages. Pop artists made use of the high-impact visual qualities of advertising and slick product packaging. Eduardo Paolozzi used these 'found' printed papers directly in his collages, while Andy Warhol lifted product brand names and advertising slogans for his prints.

WORDS AND SHAPES

Concrete poetry arranges words and letters in a visual way; the work is as much about its layout as about the meaning of the words. For his *Poster Poem (Le Circus)* 1964, Ian Hamilton Finlay uses a mix of coloured fonts and quirky arrangement of text to suggest the fun and dynamic activity of a circus. *Ajar* 1967 is a concrete poem constructed of one word, repeated in a bent list which illustrates the meaning of the word through its shape. The poem is like a sculpture made of words.

WORDS THAT TELL STORIES

Letters and words aren't only used pictorially art – for the shape, texture and detail they can add to an artwork. Artists also use words linguistically – in a way that we might associate more with literature – to create narratives.

Tom Phillips used a 'found' narrative as the starting point for many of his prints. He worked directly onto the pages of printed books, isolating phrases or parts of words and then combining these with paint and collage elements to form a new verbal and visual narrative.

Article taken from the Tate website
[Letters and Words Coursework Guide | Tate](#)



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Why Are Ransomware Attacks Emerging?

The modern ransomware craze began with the WannaCry outbreak of 2017. This large-scale and highly-publicised attack demonstrated that ransomware attacks were possible and potentially profitable. Since then, dozens of ransomware variants have been developed and used in a variety of attacks.

The COVID-19 pandemic also contributed to the recent surge in ransomware. As organisations rapidly pivoted to remote work, gaps were created in their cyber defences. Cybercriminals have exploited these vulnerabilities to deliver ransomware, resulting in a surge of ransomware attacks. In Q3 2020, [ransomware attacks increased by 50%](#) compared to the first half of that year.

How Ransomware Works

In order to be successful, ransomware needs to gain access to a target system, encrypt the files there, and demand a ransom from the victim. While the implementation details vary from one ransomware variant to another, all share the same core three stages

Step 1. Infection and Distribution Vectors

Ransomware, like any malware, can gain access to an organisation's systems in a number of different ways. However, ransomware operators tend to prefer a few specific infection vectors.

One of these is phishing emails. A malicious email may contain a link to a website hosting a malicious download or an attachment that has downloader functionality built in. If the email recipient falls for the phish, then the ransomware is downloaded and executed on their computer.

Another popular ransomware infection vector takes advantage of services such as the Remote Desktop Protocol (RDP). With RDP, an attacker who has stolen or guessed an employee's login credentials can use them to authenticate to and remotely access a

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computer within the enterprise network. With this access, the attacker can directly download the malware and execute it on the machine under their control. Others may attempt to infect systems directly, like how WannaCry exploited the EternalBlue vulnerability. Most ransomware variants have multiple infection vectors.

Step 2. Data Encryption

After ransomware has gained access to a system, it can begin encrypting its files. Since encryption functionality is built into an operating system, this simply involves accessing files, encrypting them with an attacker-controlled key, and replacing the originals with the encrypted versions. Most ransomware variants are cautious in their selection of files to encrypt to ensure system stability. Some variants will also take steps to delete backup and shadow copies of files to make recovery without the decryption key more difficult.

Step 3. Ransom Demand

Once file encryption is complete, the ransomware is prepared to make a ransom demand. Different ransomware variants implement this in numerous ways, but it is not uncommon to have a display background changed to a ransom note or text files placed in each encrypted directory containing the ransom note. Typically, these notes demand a set amount of cryptocurrency in exchange for access to the victim's files. If the ransom is paid, the ransomware operator will either provide a copy of the private key used to protect the symmetric encryption key or a copy of the symmetric encryption key itself. This information can be entered into a decryptor program (also provided by the cybercriminal) that can use it to reverse the encryption and restore access to the user's files.

While these three core steps exist in all ransomware variants, different ransomware can include different implementations or additional steps. For example, ransomware variants like Maze perform files scanning, registry information, and data theft before data encryption, and the WannaCry ransomware scans for other vulnerable devices to infect and encrypt.



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5 Key Takeaways From Adam Savage's Book 'Every Tool's A Hammer' presents a wonderful intersection of practicality and philosophy

1. Follow Your Secret Thrills

Adam explains that we all have our own unique "secret thrills." These are the weird little things that catch your attention and delight your mind. They can be *anything*: a particular patter of dialogue that you find strangely exciting, the design of a prop in a movie that ignites your imagination, the styling of a piece of architecture that grabs your eye and holds it a moment longer. These secret thrills are strange — maybe even unexplainable in a way — and yet they exist at the very core of your individual uniqueness. Pursuing them is how you discover yourself, define your brand, fall into your groove, and become an energetic idea machine.

2. The Good Side of Obsession

Following your secret thrills is how you start, but "digging right through the bottom of the rabbit hole" is how you take your interests to the next level. If you want to achieve something — if you want to turn an idea into a reality — you must let yourself, get a little obsessed.

"As a society, we have a very suspicious view of obsession...That is a shame, because when it comes to creativity, when it comes to making things, when it comes to success at anything, obsession is often the seed of real excellence."

Society always seems to put pressure on us to find balance — and yes, there is a place for that. But in balance we may be sacrificing that single-minded persistence which carries us to true achievement. Was not every great painter, every great scientist, and every great author in some way obsessed?

3. Lists and Momentum

"Every single project I do involves the making of lists. I make them for organization, of course, but I also make them for assessment, for momentum, as a stress reliever, and counterintuitively (at least to my eighteen-year-old self), to improve my creativity and free my thinking."

Adam makes his to-do lists on grid paper with little boxes drawn next to each action item. When a task is completed, the box gets filled in. If the task isn't finished but he has made tangible progress, he draws a diagonal slash through the box and fills it in halfway. This simple approach allows him to see briefly exactly how far along he is and visually supports his sense of forward movement.

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4. See Everything, Reach Everything

"If visual cacophony is the philosophy of my shop space, of *where* I work, then first-order retrievability is the philosophy of my process, of *how* I work." Visual cacophony? First-order retrievability? What's this about?

"Visual cacophony" is a term Adam uses to describe the quality of a shop that's partly chaotic, but full of tools and materials that are readily available and kept in plain sight instead of neatly tucked away in drawers or hidden in cabinets. This visual availability keeps your subconscious aware of all manner of possibilities that might otherwise be forgotten. It creates a space loaded with inspiration and potential.

"First-order retrievability" is Adam's philosophy that when he enters flow, he doesn't want anything to slow him down. His tools and materials should be always within arm's reach. Anything he can do to increase speed and efficiency and not disrupt his momentum when he's in the zone is fair game and totally worth it.

These principles work for Adam, but both come down to understanding that the space you work in reflects your mind, your process, and your philosophy of work. You should think about these things. You should design your space. You should seek to understand yourself. You should seek to refine your process. You should be mindful of your philosophy of work, for that is the "meta-tool" that enables your entire creator-ship.

5. A Powerful Tool: The Deadline

"Deadlines are about helping yourself. They are the chain saw that prunes decision trees. They create limits, refine intention, and focus effort. They are perhaps the greatest productivity tool we have, and you don't need a Time Life series of books to learn how to make them."



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How Does Fruit Become Fashion?

The connection between influencers, fashion trends, and fruit.

By SARA RADIN

According to Hannah Watkins, Senior Editor at trend forecaster WGSN, "Influencers are the new catwalks for us and social media stars are the new celebrity for the consumer." But how, exactly, do these trends start?

Watkins references the ways in which the avocado sensation in the last decade naturally moved into fashion: "We saw smiley faced avocados decorating everything from bedding to men's shirting. We even spotted avocado bikinis! The color itself, avocado green, also became a must-have tone for 2017," explains the editor who spends her days predicting trends across prints and graphics. Due to this, "conversational prints are often a reflection of changes in consumer attitudes towards food. It's often a mirror image of food fads or dietary shifts," she explains further.

Sometimes an influencer or a hashtag will drive a popular fruit motif to become popular. Watkins offered the examples of Beyoncé's 2016 Lemonade merch, which included an embroidered lemon logo cap that drove an influx of citrus fruits in fashion, as well as the #watermelondress, a trend born on Instagram circa 2017.

In the last few years, fruit prints have popped up on the runways at brands like Prada, Gucci and also thanks to covetable products by emerging brands such as HVN and Susan Alexandra, who just launched a fruit-filled collaboration with Champion and Urban Outfitters this week. There's now a Instagram account dedicated solely to striking fruit arrangements —@FruitAssembly.

"In turbulent times, fashion has historically been a way to escape and inject a dose of light-heartedness and creativity. These frivolous conversational prints are the perfect antidote to today's political climate," Watkins asserts. Rachel Gentner, Pattern + Graphics Editor at Fashion Snoops, says, "Printed compositions reflect our needs through fashion as the food focused prints offer an organic connection to the simplistic values from the Earth and offer a natural aesthetic."

Suitably, Shanu Walpita, an independent trend forecaster who focuses on youth culture, believes, "There's a symbiosis between print and subcultures, lifestyles, eras, moments, places and memories." Due to this, certain prints are often associated with pastiche or nuance.

Plus, as the resale market continues to boom, '90s and noughties kitsch fruit prints could reflect the younger demographics' affinity for conscious consumption and authentic, pre-loved apparel. In this way, Watkins believe apps like Depop and Poshmark are bringing vintage pieces back into the limelight. As farm-to-table dining and vegan eating rises, these organic fruit prints thus appeal to shoppers who embody a health-conscious mindset.

So, could the Sumo orange be the next avocado? It seems totally possible, especially when someone influential like Eva Chen is sharing the lesser-known treat with her 1.1 million followers. It's only a matter of time before we start seeing sumo orange printed dresses, skirts, underwear, and more.



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Edgar Allen Poe - The Tell Tale Heart (Narrated by James Mason)

Narrator: True, I'm nervous. Very, very dreadfully nervous. But why would you say that I'm mad? See how calmly, how precisely I can tell the story to you. Listen. It starts with an old man. An old man in an old house. A good man, I suppose. He didn't harm me, I didn't want his gold, if gold there was. Then what was it? I think... I think it was... his eye. Yes, that eye, the eye. That. His eye staring. Milky white film. The eye, everywhere, in everything! Of course, I had to get rid of the eye. For seven days I waited. You think me mad, what madman would wait, could wait so patiently, so long? In the old house, with the old man, and the eye that... Then on the eighth night I knew. Tonight! Still, I waited, while time slowed, stopped, ebbed out. For an hour I did not move a muscle. I could feel the earth turn... The eye... Hear the spiders spinning. In the house, the grinding grumble of decay. And then, something else. Dull and muffled, and yet... Of course! It was the beating of the old man's heart. He knew! So strong for such an old man. Louder then, and still louder, for all the world to hear, I know! I had to stop it!

[Narrator screams as he strangles the old man]

Then it was over. The heart was still. The eye was dead. I was free! But there was still work to be done. I replaced the planks so cleverly, no eye, not even his, could have found anything wrong. **[Knocking of the door]** Huh? So soon.

Police Officer: The neighbour's reported a scream. We're obliged to investigate.

Narrator: A scream...my own gentlemen. A childish dream, but come in, please. You'll want to look through the house.

Police officer: That is our duty. Where's the old man?

Narrator: Gone to the city.

Police Officer: You're up very early this morning.

Narrator: The dream I spoke of, it awakened me.

Police officer: When did he leave?

Narrator: The old man? Yesterday.

Police Officer: How long will he be away?

Narrator: Two weeks, perhaps longer...

Police Officer: Nothing out of place here.

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Drama Year 9 Term 1



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Narrator: There is his bed. There is his cupboard. All in order.

Police Officer: Quite in order.

Narrator: All quite in order.

Police Officer: Yes, nothing amiss. **[About to leave]** You understand when a complaint is made, we have no choice...

Narrator: **[Interrupts the officer]** Stay please...Such a wretched hour...I was making tea; a hot drink will break the chill. Surely, it would surprise good people to know how much evil the night conceals from their eyes, but not yours to be sure.

[Sound of a teacup smashing on the floor]

Narrator: Wha...wha...what was that? Yes, yes, of course, the hot water. It won't do no harm to the floorboards. I'm a little less tidy with the old man away.

[Sound of dripping]

Narrator: Then I heard it. It might have been an ant, a clock. But no. Louder, and still louder. They must hear it, and yet they sit and talk and talk. Of course they must! They know, they do! They're torturing me, watching me, letting it beat so that I... That I... Stop it! Stop it, you devils! Yes, yes, I did it! It's there, under the floor! Oh, stop it! It is the beating of his hideous heart! True, I'm nervous. Very, very dreadfully nervous.

[slams hand on prison door, sound echoes down the hall]

But why would you say that I'm mad?

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Schools don't need to bin Shakespeare – but it's time for us to teach him differently

Apparently Shakespeare is the latest victim of the culture wars, with some fearing the Bard is about to be thrown out of classrooms across England in the name of decolonisation. Wokeness has already culled the dead white man from American curriculums, we are told, so surely it won't be long until we follow suit. Right?

But the inconvenient truth – which isn't quite so headline-worthy – is that decolonising the curriculum isn't about burning copies of Macbeth, or chucking Charles Dickens' Great Expectations in the bin. It's not even about only studying writers from marginalised identities. As a mixed-race English teacher who believes strongly in diversifying the English syllabus, for me, it's about re-examining the lens through which we view texts in the first place – shifting it to become more critical, more aware of the forces at play both within and around a text. Decolonisation may sound radical, frightening even to some, but this is what great English teaching already does.

So much of Shakespeare is about power: who holds it and who doesn't and why. And this is the fundamental question of our divided and troubled age. Examination of gender is critical to studying Romeo and Juliet. The portrayal of race is fundamental in analysing Othello. Grappling with the antisemitism in the portrayals of Shakespeare's Shylock or Dickens' Fagin is key. To teach students, through literature, to challenge the status quo.

Young people don't need to be taught that injustice exists because they see the results of systemic prejudice all around them – they are drowning in the impact of divisive and discriminatory policies. By refusing to acknowledge this, we neglect the chance to empower students to examine the power dynamics that dictate our world. To eventually enact change. Call me a biased English teacher, but literature is the perfect medium for this.

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Y9 Geography Term 1:
Tourism



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Planning a holiday? Here's what us Brits complain about the most abroad:

As its peak holiday season, millions of Brits will be heading for the airport for a picture perfect holiday. However not all of them turn out as planned. New research reveals the most common holiday problems that Brits experience abroad. From suffering with booking problems, to experiencing dirty swimming pools, the list below exposes what us Brits tend to complain about the most when on holiday.

The top three complaints by Brits abroad:

Poor quality of room or cabin (38%)

Cleanliness of room or cabin (34%)

Food not being cooked properly (16%)

As well as these top three, customers of HolidayTravelWatch.com also said that 12% experienced a dirty or unsafe swimming pool, 11% had suffered cold food, and 9% had suffered with sewage smells.

8% had suffered with booking problems, and 6 % experienced a burglary within the hotel, apartment, or villa resort.

90% said they would support the introduction of a 'Holiday Safe Certificate.'

Consumer Director of HolidayTravelWatch, Frank Brehany, says: "During peak holiday season we speak to holidaymakers daily that are affected by all of these complaints. Never before has it been so important to watch holiday budgets, so it's especially concerning to see 15 per cent of holidaymakers have been victim to hidden costs.

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History Year 9 Term 1



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Roughly twelve months lie between the Queen's Golden Jubilee summer and Polly Nichols's murder on 31 August 1888. She was to become the first of the five canonical victims of Jack the Ripper, or those whose deaths the police determined were committed by the same hand in the East End district of Whitechapel. Her murder was followed by the discovery of the body of Annie Chapman in a yard off Hanbury Street on 8 September. In the early morning hours of the 30th of that month, the Ripper managed to strike twice.

In what became known as the double event, he claimed the lives of Elizabeth Stride, who was found in Dutfield's Yard, off Berner Street, and Catherine Eddowes, who was killed in Mitre Square. After a brief pause in his murdering spree, he committed his final atrocity on 9 November: a complete mutilation of the body of Mary Jane Kelly as she lay in her bed at 13 Miller's Court. The brutality of the Whitechapel murders stunned London and most of the newspaper-reading world. All of the Ripper's victims had their throats cut. Four of the five were then eviscerated. With the exception of the final killing, all of these violent deaths occurred in the open, under cover of darkness.

In each case, the murderer managed to abscond, having left not a trace of his or her or their identity. Given the densely populated district in which these killings occurred, the public, the press, even the police believed this to be remarkable. The Ripper always seemed one ghostly, ghoulish step ahead of the authorities, which bestowed upon the murders something extra terrifying and almost supernatural. The Whitechapel-based H-Division of the Metropolitan Police did the best they could with their resources, but having never before faced a murder case of this scale and magnitude, they quickly found themselves overwhelmed.

House-to-house inquiries were conducted throughout the area and a wide variety of forensic material was gathered and analysed. The police were besieged with statements and letters from those who claimed to be witnesses, those offering assistance, and others who just liked spinning tales. In all, more than two thousand people were interviewed and more than three hundred were investigated as possible suspects. Even with additional assistance from Scotland Yard and the City of London Police, none of this yielded anything useful. Genuine leads were certain to have been lost among the swirling wash of paper they were forced to process. In the meantime, as constables scribbled into their notebooks and followed potential malefactors down dark alleys, the Ripper continued to kill.



Vocabulary Check

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Why Use Standard Form?

Did you know that Earth is 4543000000 years old?

We know you skipped reading all those zeroes, so we will tell you in a simpler manner, that it is 4.543 billion years old. Do you see how reading numbers a certain way makes them easier to understand?

Standard Form was developed in order to easily represent numbers that are either very large or very small. Here are two examples of large and small numbers. They are expressed in ordinary form instead of standard form to help illustrate the problem:

The Andromeda Galaxy (the closest one to our Milky Way galaxy) contains at least 200,000,000,000 stars.

On the other hand, the weight of an alpha particle is 0.000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,006,645 kilograms.

As you can see, it could get tedious writing out those numbers repeatedly.

What is Standard Form?

Using one of the above examples, the number of stars in the Adromeda Galaxy can be written as: $2.0 \times 100,000,000,000$; So we would write 200,000,000,000 in standard form as: 2.0×10^{11}

Every number can be expressed in Standard Form. In our first example, 200,000,000,000 should be written as 2.0×10^{11} . This could be written as 20×10^{10} , but to simplify the rules of Standard Form the lead number should be stated as a number less than 10, followed by as many decimal places as necessary.

It is often difficult to grasp just how large the planets actually are. There are a number of ways to measure a planet, including diameter, volume, and surface area.

For example, Mercury is the smallest planet in our Solar System. It has a diameter of 4,879 km, and a surface area of 174800000 km² (we could call this 1.748×10^8 km²), which is only about 11% of Earth's surface area. Mercury's volume is even smaller in comparison at 60830000000 km³ (or 6.083×10^{10} km³) which is only 5.4% the volume of Earth.

Read First!

Y9 Spanish Term 1 :
Somos Así



Vocabulary Check

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WHAT IS A QUINCEAÑERA AND WHY IS IT SO IMPORTANT?

Although a *Quinceañera* may appear at first glance to be simply a festive, lavishly adorned birthday party, it also has a deeper significance that extends to the girl's personal self. The *Quinceañera*, which literally translates to "the girl who is 15," signifies a young girl's transition in becoming a mature woman who is capable of independence in that she can make her own decisions and symbolizes her transition and growth into womanhood. It also plays a symbolic gesture in that it reaffirms her beliefs to her church and her personal faith. This celebration has a religious ceremony followed by a party and combines a blend of traditional customs with contemporary.

This coming-of-age ceremony plays an important part in preserving the heritage and cultures of the individual. Similar to the process of planning a wedding, the quince requires the same amount of effort, time, and proper preparation in order to make the person's birthday a memorable event. A girl usually invites her friends and family, as well as others who have made an impact in her life. In addition to organizing this gigantic or intimate party, the girl must decide on all the details from her court to the venue, as this is custom-tailored to her preferences.

Like a "Sweet 16", the quince's symbolic and memorable significance has a profound impact in the lives of the individuals, as it is a giant step toward their future.

The most important part of the celebration is the church, as it's traditional *quince* religious affiliations go hand in hand. This solemn ritual may vary depending on venue, but usually a speech is given and customary demonstrations are proposed during the ceremony.

There are also many traditions that go alongside hosting a *Quinceañera*, for instance, the dances that the girl and her court will perform, which may include the entrance, waltz, toast, and "*baile sorpresa*" (surprise dance). Ceremonially, a girl and her father dance together as it signifies the young woman's first dance.

All in all, the *Quinceañera* party has meaning to it as well in that it reflects the individualism of the girl and can reflect her background, culture, and beliefs along with her own quirky sense of style. This fifteenth birthday party is an exciting, significant event that demonstrates her public declaration of showing her maturity and its emotional ties to herself, her faith, and her culture play a big part in the quince as a whole.



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Solo Performance

How do you get better at your instrument?

Many performers struggle to identify exactly what they need to do to improve their playing of an instrument.

Technical skill

Technical skill is the ability to play the notes of your chosen piece. When you choose your performance pieces, make sure that the technical skills required are comfortably within your abilities. If you are playing something you struggle with, you will not be able to spend time on other elements such as expression and style.

Expressive control

Expressive control is your ability to understand the music and communicate this to others through your performance. You will be able to demonstrate your skill through shaping phrases and playing the dynamics, tempo and articulation indicated by the composer. To achieve this, you should be able to play the technical elements of your piece confidently.

Stylistic awareness

When you are playing a piece, it is important that you understand the style of it. Baroque and Classical pieces have conventions relating to specific articulations. If you are playing something in a jazz style, you may be required to swing the quavers. If you have an instrumental teacher, they will help you shape your performance to make it as musical as possible.

Broader skills

Internal pulse. As well as playing the correct rhythms, can you play in time with other people? If you are playing by yourself, are you able to maintain a regular pulse?

Ability to work with others. A good rehearsal process is important for a good performance. If you are performing with others, are you able to rehearse your pieces effectively? Getting from start to finish is only the beginning of the process.

Improvisation. If you are going to include this in your performance, make it clear what your stimulus is and make sure your improvisation is shaped appropriately.



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The Heart by Bill Bryson

(Extract from 'The Body- a guide for occupants')

The heart is the most misperceived of our organs. For a start, it looks nothing like the traditional symbol associated with Valentine's Day and lovers' initials carved into tree trunks and the like. (That symbol first appeared, as if from out of nowhere, in paintings from northern Italy in the early fourteenth century, but no one knows what inspired it.) Nor is the heart where we place our right hand during patriotic moments; it is more centrally located in the chest than that. Most curious of all, perhaps, is that we make it the emotional seat of our being, as when we declare that we love someone with all our heart or profess a broken heart when they abandon us. Don't misunderstand me. The heart is a wondrous organ and fully deserving of our praise and gratitude, but it is not invested even slightly in our emotional well-being.

That's a good thing. The heart has no time for distractions. It is the most single-minded thing within you. It has just one job to do, and it does it supremely well: it beats. Slightly more than once every second, about 100,000 times a day, as many as 3.5 billion times in a lifetime, it rhythmically pulses to push blood through your body—and these aren't gentle thrusts. They are jolts powerful enough to send blood spurting up to three meters if the aorta is severed.

With such an unrelenting work rate, it is a miracle that most hearts last as long as they do. Every hour your heart dispenses around 70 gallons of blood. That's 1,680 gallons in a day—more gallons pushed through you in a day than you are likely to put in your car in a year. The heart must pump with enough force not merely to send blood to your outermost extremities but to help bring it all the way back again. If you are standing, your heart is roughly four feet above your feet, so there's a lot of gravity to overcome on the return trip. Imagine squeezing a pump the size of a grapefruit with enough force to move a fluid four feet up a tube. Now do that again once every second or so, around the clock, unceasingly, for decades, and see if you don't feel a bit tired. It has been calculated (and goodness knows how, it must be said) that during the course of a lifetime the heart does an amount of work sufficient to lift a one-ton object 150 miles into the air. It is a truly remarkable implement. It just doesn't care about your love life.



Growing Up as a Reluctant Catholic

By Eden Kennedy

As a quiet toddler in 1967 suburban Denver, I didn't mind an hour in church once a week. It was mostly a chance to wear my special clothes—I remember the particular excitement, one Easter Sunday, of being buckled into a pair of white patent-leather Mary Janes—then roll around seatbeltless in the back of the family station wagon, a white Ford Country Squire with blue vinyl upholstery.

Those oblivious years slowly gave way to a more big-girl awareness of how things worked in the Catholic world: nuns wore black sacks and sat over *there*; priests wore colorful robes and got to be in charge of everyone; girls wore lace veils for their first communion; only boys could be altar boys and help with mass. And everybody had to sing.

Singing meant opening your mouth and letting other people hear your voice go up and down while you praised God. That seemingly innocent activity unearthed what would turn out to be my two biggest phobias that stuck around well into adulthood: making my voice heard, and telling anyone how I felt.

And that is when I learned to lip-sync.

But there was a different stressor in church that, by the time I was twelve or so, became impossible to avoid: the moment when our fusty old priest asked the congregation to exchange a "sign of peace" with those around them. The standard procedure consisted of a few simple words accompanied by a warm handshake. Once the fringe-and-tambourine Folk Mass Era of the Peace Hug came upon us, however, it was possible to find yourself in an embrace with a stranger. I was too old to hide my face in my mother's sleeve, and if I found a sudden need to tie my shoe, people would politely wait for me to finish. I could not get around the requirement to grasp the hands of strangers right and left, raise my gaze to about tooth-level, and mumble, "Peace be with you."

I learned to fake it pretty well, as most introverts do. It's easier when you know what's coming, and church services are nothing if not predictable: there's plenty of time to breathe into a paper bag and visualize keeping your palms dry. But for me—a lip-syncing pre-teen introvert—church was a place I was beginning to dread. On top of the forced singing and intimacy, it took me away from reading books or bouncing a ball against the side of our house. Instead of working to develop the same inner fortitude I would later use to smile and slowly close the door on people selling magazine subscriptions, I began looking for any excuse (stomach aches were at the top of the list) to skip church altogether.

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Read First!



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Making jeans takes a toll on the environment. Dyeing denim its signature blue guzzles water and uses toxic chemicals. But a new technology could lower the cost of blue denim and pollute less. The trick: Add an all-natural plant-based chemical to the dye. It's known as nanocellulose.

"Our research was dedicated [to finding] sustainable technologies for better processing of textiles," says Smriti Rai. She's a textile researcher at the University of Georgia in Athens. Her team showed [nanocellulose can cut water and chemical consumption during dyeing](#). They shared the details in the October 21 issue of Green Chemistry.

Jeans' blue colour comes from a pigment known as indigo. Indigo does not dissolve in water. Textile makers must treat indigo with harsh chemicals to make it soluble. Then, they dip denim in a vat of this solution. But even now the dissolved indigo doesn't want to stick. It takes multiple dips to turn the cloth blue.

All of this pigment-treated water is also full of hazardous chemicals. Many of these pollutants may not be removed by water-treatment plants. Later, when that treated water is released into the environment, it can pollute waterways. But the team's innovative new dyeing technique "totally eliminated this chemistry," says Rai. "We just mixed [solid] indigo particles with nanocellulose." No toxic chemicals needed.

Cellulose is a tough organic [polymer](#) found in plants cells and wood. It's also the material that makes up paper. Nanocellulose consists of the same fibers, only on a billionth-of-a-meter scale. They're shaped like eyelashes, but only a thousandth their size.

To give denim its blue hue, the researchers add indigo powder to a hydrogel containing a small amount of nanocellulose. Hydrogels are a type of polymer that absorbs water. The researchers make theirs just runny enough to smear onto denim. Then they screen-printed the coloured goo onto the fabric. This step does away with need for a vat of dye. It also eliminates 4 % of the water needed for dyeing.

The scientists are all fans of jeans. They appreciate their comfort and durability. But ultimately, Rai says, owning fewer jeans would be the greenest option of all. Buy only as many pairs of you need, he says. And [wash them less often](#). Treat these jeans, he says, like the hardy garments they are.

Read First!

Year 9 Science



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British rock band Coldplay has pledged to reduce CO₂ emissions by 50% on their upcoming world tour, compared with the previous one. The measures to mitigate Coldplay's carbon footprint during the 2022 tour will include the use of solar energy, biofuel, a mobile rechargeable battery, renewable grid electricity, as well as a "kinetic floor" to convert fans movements into energy.

Coldplay said on their website that a kinetic floor would be installed in and around the stadium so that fans' jumping up and down during the performance can be converted into energy and help power the show. There will also be electricity-generating bicycles so that fans can choose to charge the show battery actively.

The mobile battery, developed in partnership with BMW, can also be charged from multiple sources, including recycled cooking oil from restaurants, solar energy, and grid renewables.

Wherever possible, Coldplay will use grid power from 100% renewable sources. At the same time, it will also install solar tiles in and around the stadium and on the stage, ahead of the performance to charge the mobile battery.

The band will also use sustainable biofuel, namely hydrotreated vegetable oil (HVO), for generators and in buses and trucks. Biofuel and electric vehicles will be used for ground transportation wherever possible, Coldplay said. The tour has been carefully routed to minimize air travel, but there will still be some flying during the tour, including on charter flights. The band expects some backlash for flying on private jets even though they intend to pay a surcharge for sustainable aviation fuel (SAF).



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Why is my Poop Brown?

Three-quarters of your poop consists of water and most of the rest is food your body didn't digest.

Once it exits the digestive system, poop is usually a shade of brown, regardless of the appearance of whatever you've had to eat and drink, because it contains a chemical your body makes.

That chemical, [stercobilin](#), is a product of the breakdown of [hemoglobin](#) – an iron-containing protein in red blood cells that allows oxygen to be transported around the body. Without stercobilin, your poop would probably look pale or even white. That's because most of the chemicals that give food many different colors are completely broken down in the digestive process.

Red blood cells live for only around 120 days before they are eventually replaced. As the hemoglobin they contain breaks down, a yellow protein called [bilirubin](#) gets produced.

Bilirubin eventually makes its way to the liver through the circulatory system and is modified and then secreted into the small intestine by the liver in the [form of bile](#). Bile, a yellow-green fluid, helps your body digest and absorb fats. While your body does absorb and reuse some bilirubin as the food you're digesting moves through the small intestine, the rest of that bilirubin becomes stercobilin – which your body must dispose of.

And that stercobilin gets combined with the stuff you're digesting, making your poop brown by the time it exits your body.



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New type of stellar explosion that could explain a 13-billion-year-old mystery of the Milky Way's elements

The Conversation, Published: July 7, 2021

Until recently it was thought neutron star mergers were the only way heavy elements (heavier than Zinc) could be produced. These mergers involve the mashup of the remnants of two massive stars in a binary system.

But we know heavy elements were first produced not long after the Big Bang, when the universe was really young. Back then, not enough time had passed for neutron star mergers to have even occurred. Thus, another source was needed to explain the presence of early heavy elements in the Milky Way.

The discovery of an ancient star SMSS J2003-1142 in the Milky Way's halo — which is the roughly spherical region that surrounds the galaxy — is providing the first evidence for another source for heavy elements, including uranium and possibly gold.

In our research, we show the heavy elements detected in SMSS J2003-1142 were likely produced, not by a neutron star merger, but through the collapse and explosion of a rapidly spinning star with a strong magnetic field and a mass about 25 times that of the Sun.

We call this explosion event a “magnetorotational hypernova”.