



DWARAKA DOSS GOVERDHAN DOSS VAISHNAV COLLEGE (AUTONOMOUS)

Sanctum for Value Based Quality Education And Enthusiastic Learning

DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH (SHIFT II)

SKYLARK



**MESSAGE FROM
THE PRINCIPAL'S DESK**



“The mind is not a vessel to be filled, but a fire to be kindled.” - Plutarch.

It is a matter of great pride and satisfaction for Dwarka Doss Goverdhan Doss Vaishnav College to bring out the Newsletter ‘SKYLARK’ from the Department of English, Shift II. The newsletter will henceforth be dedicated to the expression of students' creativity and the integration of departmental activities. It will be a space to learn, explore, write, and reach out.

Today, the role of an institution is not only to pursue academic excellence but also to inspire the students to be lifelong learners, critical thinkers, and productive members of an ever-changing global society. Providing qualitative education, inculcation of cultural values and environmental consciousness irrespective of the pandemic is the need of the day. A committed and supportive management, dedicated teachers, co-operative administration blend harmoniously to create this institution as a student centric college. I congratulate the Editorial Board for their diligence and dedication in making this newsletter. I assure that the commingling of optimism, hard work and novelty exhibited by our young minds will certainly stir the readers' minds and transport them to the realm of unalloyed joy and pleasure. My heartfelt congratulations to the staff members and the students for their fruitful efforts.

Happy Reading!
With best wishes,
Dr. S. Santhosh Baboo,
Principal.

PANDEMIC AND BLENDED LEARNING

“The secret of change is to focus all your energy, not in fighting the old but on building the new.”

- Socrates

Treading through the challenging times of the pandemic, humanity is in the wake of a new normal. The effect of the COVID-19 pandemic is perceived by the world nations as one of the most life-changing experiences of the century. With a myriad of transitions arriving in every aspect of human life, the realm of education is not an exemption. The onset of the virus outbreak has foregrounded the importance of blended learning in the educational sector now more than ever.

According to the World Economic Forum, over 1.2 billion students around the world are out of the traditional classroom mode of learning, owing to the pandemic crisis. Cognising the issues of technological ableness and connectivity, the shift to online learning has ushered in high growth and investment in education technology. The advent of virtual classrooms has undoubtedly caused a renaissance in the education sector with the transformed role of teachers as facilitators. This evolution of the role of teachers is of great significance in language classrooms.

With teachers as facilitators in this current context of online classrooms, language learning process has become multi-dimensional. The use of technological aids by teachers has long been helpful in assisting language learning. However, the virtual classroom condition poses a current need to utilise these aids on different planes of linguistic acquisition and improvement. The concern of the virtual classroom discourse is not only the prescribed curriculum but also the cyberspace communication between the students and the teacher.

The virtual classroom premise also demands for innovative ways of utilising textbooks and academic resource materials. In fact, the present mode of education challenges

the relevance of textbooks over independent learning via the internet. The pandemic era also presents a need for academic institutions of the world to focus on scenario planning to improve life-based educational experience for the learners.

On the other side of the virtual veil of the present-day classrooms, the students experience a new level of autonomy over their learning process. The online learning method offers multiple opportunities for the learners to develop qualities of self-learning, inquisitiveness, and scenario adaptability. Even though the technical difficulties faced by the students in the virtual learning process cannot be overruled, this shift to cyber learning must be perceived as a precursor to the future knowledge acquiring process.

As in the words of the renowned British academician, Peter Hilton, “Adaptability to change is itself a hallmark of successful education”, the pandemic era promises a scope to explore new arenas of learning. The changing times envision post-COVID-19 classrooms that provide blended learning premises wherein the traditional classroom meets with the technological learning space.

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ACADEMIC ACTIVITIES OF THE DEPARTMENT(2019-20)



Mr. Srinivasan Premkumar, the Interim Director, The American Centre (USIS Library - Chennai) at the workshop on e-Resources.
- Lion's Edifice auditorium, D.G. Vaishnav College, 27th September 2019.

Workshop on e-Resources

Cognising the world's constant ascension of delving into the internet for information especially in higher education, the department organised a workshop on e-Resources on September 27, 2019 to create an awareness of the availability of e-resources for the benefit of the students.

Mr. Srinivasan Premkumar, the Interim Director, The American Centre (USIS Library -Chennai), served as the resource person. He apprised on the eminence of e-resources that reports information from all around the world to our gadgets and about the various online sources offered by the USIS library which would enrich the knowledge of the learners and facilitate research activities among the students.

E-quiz on Essentials of English Language

Inspired by a sublime vision to stimulate the minds of the teaching fraternity and students across the country during the COVID-19 pandemic, an E-quiz titled 'Essentials of English Language' was conducted on 20th May 2020. The quiz comprised of 25 challenging questions focusing on three vital areas, namely English Language Teaching (ELT), Business Communication and Research Methodology.

This venture served as a great opportunity for the department to adapt new technologies and instill a sense of learning in those yearning to explore and excel in the academic environment.

Webinar on Use of Online Games in Language Learning

Propelled by the ever-increasing dependency on the virtual modes of pedagogy, owing to COVID-19 crisis inhibiting the relay of knowledge to the student community in classrooms, the department sensed the indispensable need to offer a refreshing perspective to online teaching and organised a webinar on the 'Use of Online Games in Language Learning' on June 1, 2020 via Google Meet. Dr. Sujatha Menon, Language Expert/Trainer from Jazan University, Saudi Arabia acted as the resource person for this distinctive webinar.

The participants were enlightened on the various online educational games and their impact on the language learning process among students that makes language learning a comprehensive experience rather than an enigmatic activity.



Dr. Sujatha Menon,
Language Expert/Trainer
Jazan University, Saudi Arabia

Workshop on Scrabble Game – An Enthralling Language Enhancer Resource

As a part of an initiative to infuse language competency among young learners, a virtual workshop on 'Scrabble Game - An Enthralling Language Enhancer Resource' was organised on October 15, 2020 via Google Meet.

Mr. Ranganathan Chakravarthy, the third best competitive scrabble player in India, was the resource person of the workshop. The resource person illuminated on the potency of the game that could hone the memory skills and enhance the vocabulary of the students which are important in improving language skills and to attain success in the highly competitive world.



Mr. Ranganathan
Chakravarthy, International
Scrabble player.



UPCOMING EVENTS

KNOW YOUR LANGUAGE

Workshops (On Campus)

Department of English Shift II organises 'Emoting in the New Normal': A virtual theatre workshop on presenting characters in the new normal performance spaces, Resource person: Ms. Nimmy Babu, Executive creator and language trainer at Crea-Shakthi, 30 December 2020, between 2:00pm to 4:00pm, Join via Google meet code: meet.google.com/yac-gvki-vqi. Participation restricted to 100 members.

Online courses (Off Campus)

- * **British Council:** "Reading for Life- Engaged Reader. Inspired mind.", 17 Jan, 2021; INR 1,500/-
Visit: <https://www.britishcouncil.in/events/reading-life-engaged-reader-inspired-mind>
- * **British Council:** Free online course for adults and children, 7 Jan, 2021, 4:00pm to 6:30pm, Visit: <https://www.britishcouncil.in/library/events/free-online-library-sessions>
- * **British Council:** Course on 'Employability skills courses' Visit: <https://www.britishcouncil.in/english/educational-institutions/employability>
- * **British Council:** Course on "My English;" 50 hours, six weeks, INR 4,750, time options are available. Visit: <https://www.britishcouncil.in/english/online/classes/myenglish>
- * **SWAYAM:** Free English language for Competitive Exams, Jan 18, 2021 to April 09, 2021, (12 weeks), Exam date: April 24, 2021.
- * **SWAYAM:** Free course on 'English literature of the Romantic period, 1798-1832', Jan 18, 2021 to March 12, 2021, (8 weeks), Exam date: March 21, 2021.
- * **SWAYAM:** Free course on 'Introduction to Modern Indian drama; Feb 15, 2021 to April 09, 2021; (8 weeks), Exam date: April 24, 2021.
- * **SWAYAM:** Free course on Soft skill Development, Jan 18, 2021 to March 12, 2021, (8 weeks), Exam date: March 21, 2021.
- * **SWAYAM:** Free course on 'Speaking Effectively' Jan 18, 2021 to March 12, 2021, (8 weeks) Exam date: March 21, 2021.
- * **edX:** Free course on 'Public Speaking', Jan 4, 2021, (3 weeks, 4-6 hours per week)
- * **edX:** Free course on 'The language of leaders: learn to speak with confidence', Self-paced course, (4 weeks, 1-3 hours per week)

"The English language is a work in progress. Have fun with it."

- Jonathan Culver

The pandemic has surely changed our lives. Language is no exemption. The editors of the Oxford English Dictionary released special updates in July 2020, citing the importance of documenting the impact of COVID-19 pandemic on English language. Did you know that according to the OED editors, the pandemic produced only one true word and that is the acronym COVID-19?

Not only masks, gloves and sanitizers have become an indispensable part of our life, but a list of some trendy COVID words. Here's Sara and Meera having a 'new normal' conversation.

M: Hey Sara! Look I've bought mirror-studded masks for you.

S: Oh wow! That's great, Meera. But I am really worried about the *maskne*.

M: Maskne? What's that?

S: It is the acne breakouts from wearing face masks.

M: Oh, I didn't know that the '*rona*' season could be this bad.

S: You meant to say the *corona* season?

M: Yes, it is the trendy shortened version of the pandemic's name in the US and Australia.

S: You've surely become like your Aussie *quaranteam*.

M: I'm sorry, Aussie what?

S: Quaranteams. They are online teams created during lockdown to help workers deal with the changing working circumstances. By the way, when is our next virtual meeting with our clients?

M: I think it's on *Blursday*. Sorry, no one seems to keep track of time this lockdown. So, it's all blurry days, Blursdays....

S: That's enough, don't get me started about the lockdown effects, I'm already doomscrolling and depressed.

M: I guess, *doomscrolling* should be a tendency to continue surfing through bad news, right?

S: Yeah, buddy. Why don't we have a *coronacation* to lighten up the day?

M: Sure, sure. A low-cost vacation during the COVID pandemic, why not? But only with masks on!

S: YES, SIR!

EMINENT ERUDITES



Louise Glück, a seventy-seven year old celebrated contemporary American poet, and a woman of extreme literary erudition, received the Nobel Prize for Literature in 2020. The Nobel committee praised “her unmistakable poetic voice that with austere beauty makes individual existence universal”. For her “writing is a kind of revenge against circumstance - bad luck, loss, pain”. Presently, she works as an English professor at the Yale University.

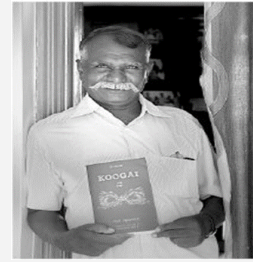
Glück has received several prestigious awards, such as the Pulitzer Prize (1993) for her work *The wild Iris* and the National Book Award (2014) for *Faithful and Virtuous Night*. She has published twelve collections of poetry and some vol-

umes of essays on poetry. She uses a forthright and candid language which makes the readers to understand, relate to, and experience her poetry intensely. Her writings are characterised predominantly by the themes of childhood, family life and her endearing relationship with parents and siblings.

Glück’s second work *The House on Marshland* (1975) is considered as her breakthrough work by critics, signalling her “discovery of a distinctive voice”. In the poem, “Gretel in Darkness” she explores trauma through the lens of the fairy tale “Hansel and Gretel.” Gretel, the sister, is tormented by the horrific memories of the witch she murdered to rescue her brother. However, her father and brother refuse to acknowledge her suffering as they prefer to believe that life has returned to normal and thus abandoning Gretel to her own pain. Written in an edgy, jolting free verse, “Gretel in Darkness” evokes the claustrophobia and isolation of trauma.

Louise Glück photographed early in her career as poet and educator.

Image source: The Library of Congress



Cho Dharman, an Indian Tamilwriter, is the recipient of the Sahitya Academi award (2019) under the Tamil Language category for his novel *Sool*. The novel depicts the life of ordinary people, the richness of traditional knowledge, agricultural practices, and water management. The novel captures the destruction of the waterbody *kanmaai*, in the language of the *Karisal bhoomi* (rain-fed areas) of Kovilpatti, his native village.

Cho, has authored nine books, won several awards and much critical acclaim for his novels, non-fiction, and short stories. His novel *Koogai*, won the Iyal Award of the Canada-based Tamil Literary Garden. It is a stunning account of Tamil lives in post-independence India and was translated into English as *The Owl*. With his naturalistic writing style, the book serves as the voice of the marginalised people. Though he hails from the Dalit community, he does not identify himself as a Dalit writer because he believes there is no need for literary reservation and his themes are universal.

Image source: The Indian Express, dated 6th June 2015.

BOOK SHELF

“Becoming is never giving up on the idea that there’s more growing to be done.”

- Michelle Obama

Michelle Obama reminisces the experiences of her life in her book *Becoming*. Obama’s commentary on the existing social discrimination derives its political fervour from her Afro-American birth and upbringing. The writer reflects with great candour about her self-searching journey, amid a hostile, racist and a patriarchal society. With the central motive of creating optimism in the minds of the readers, the book also works as an antidote to curb the fear of life.

Becoming is anything but a simple summation of the success story of the former First Lady of the United States. It is an honest memoir that confides in its readers the struggles of an indomitably spirited Afro-American woman,



both in the personal and professional sphere. The book clearly represents the double discrimination faced by a Black woman who is keen on making a big political change in her country. Michelle Obama describes her ordeals as an ordinary working woman like balancing the personal and the professional, her emotion-

al outbreak and her political hardship.

Her rigid affirmation “I’ll show you”, and Barack Obama’s supportive affirmation “you can”, transformed into the people’s hopeful proclamation “we can” which led her to the White House. The writer’s extraordinary sense of humour comes vivid in her anecdotes of her family conversations and her rapport with the Queen of England. With Michelle Obama’s lucid style of writing, *Becoming* is the perfect inspirational read which is of great relevance in today’s challenging times.

Image source: Goodreads



STUDENTS' CORNER - CREATIVE WRITING

MY DEAR MONITOR

My doors were closed
from March
And reading the same book
with torch
Never ever been distanced
From you my dear monitor,
But now!
Masked myself for safety
From the unmasked
Ones.

Ha ha! I sanitize my room
Like never before;
And I sanitized you my
dear monitor, hope you
can remember it,
We watched TV shows, web series
And lot more
Near the locked window.

It was September
Last week, I spent
My freshers' day
With you.
You made me to chat with
Strangers and befriend
A Few!
The funniest part of the day
Is our early morning
Zumba class.

I have conducted few
Virtual events, they went
Ridiculous
I studied a lot, I
I related some and I created a few!
I have connected with the
Society ever been before.
Thanks for everything my
Dear monitor.

- Anusha Yadhav
I B.A Journalism

CHANGE AND HOPE

We often hear this
"Change is the only constant in life"
But accepting and living with sudden
Change is not that easy.
Changes occur in everything, everywhere
Even the sky doesn't have the same clouds every
time.

Pandemic arrived along with a lot of changes.
Learning gets changed with advanced technology.
Once holidays were holy-days for us,
But this time we wait for the holidays to end.

"Good morning" messages are replaced just by
"join the class with this link"
The sentence "I will send you out"
Turned into "I will remove you from the meet"
"I want silence in the class"
Just replaced by "kindly mute yourself student"

Nowadays note-taking process has become the
easiest work.
We take notes very shortly by screenshots.
The network connection breaks the bond
Between students and teachers.
We usually hate problems in our life,
But we start to love the word 'technical problem'.

Online classes lets us be ourselves,
Whatever we like to do,
Sit, eat or sleep,
We can do with freedom.
No one is to blame for online classes.
It is the need of the hour.
We can just hope for a better tomorrow.
Just hope for the real meet to occur.

- Swathi
I B.A. Journalism

COVID - PRESENT

Lakhs of people suffered a lot,
Small or big, weak or strong
We need to break the chain,
Be a good host,
Not for the ghost.
Maintain social distance,
For our life's existence.
Online classes, a period of time,
Creating a disciplined and joyful routine,
Once the teacher says to unmute,
But now, they force us to mute.
Punishments bring happiness,
Assignments bring sadness.

- Monishaa S.
II B.Sc. Biotechnology

ONLINE CLASS (HAIKU)

In my own cramped room,
amidst confusion around,
waiting for the class.

Inside bird's nest,
waiting to fly far away,
immured in a cage.

-Venkat Ramana Sriram
I B.Com. A&F 'A'

A PANDEMIC TUTELAGE

People used to occupy and roam all over the street,
Covid made us to stay at home and enjoy some sweet,
Lorry, truck, cars are polluting the world,
This pandemic made our days gold.

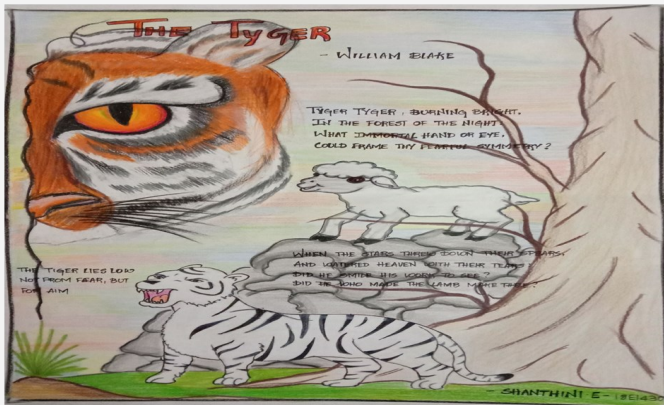
Lots of days, missed to enjoy with the guest,
Quarantine days gifted us the best,
Very less is the time spent with our family,
Covid made us consider them holy.

Lots of humans lost their gain,
Less pollution brought more clouds of rain,
We missed a lot of fun,
And need to stay away from our loved one.

We had lots of fun as back benchers,
Now parents had become our teachers,
We use a mask for the while,
And I missed to spread my smile.

- Gugan S.
I B.Com Honours

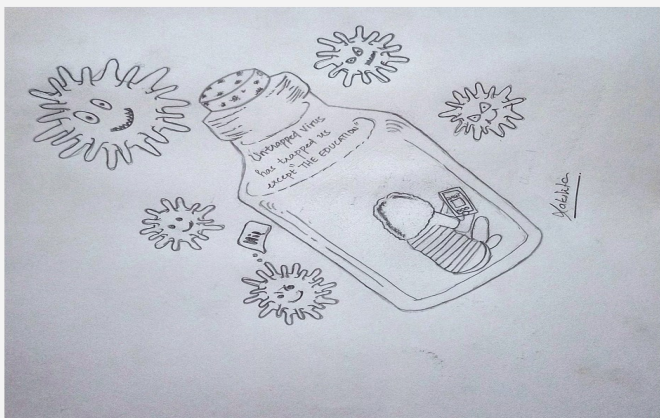
STUDENTS' CORNER - ARTWORK



E. Shanthini, III B.Sc. Biochemistry



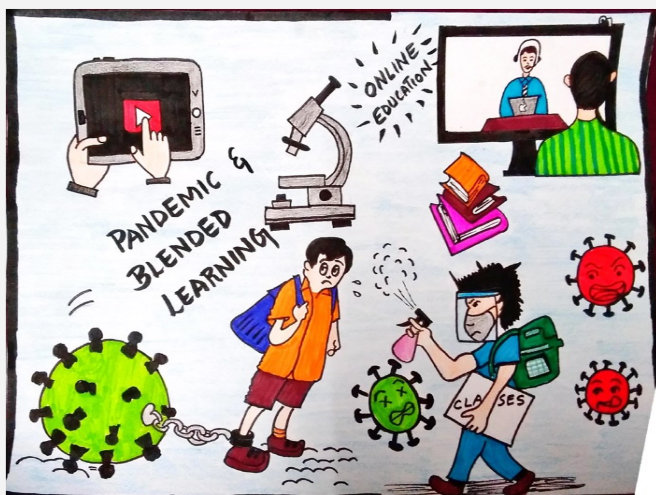
D. Nithya Shree, III B.Sc. Biochemistry



Rakshita, I B.Com. Statistics



J. Ajitha, I B.Sc. Computer Science 'B' Section



Dhivya Priya, I B.Com. A&F 'C' Section

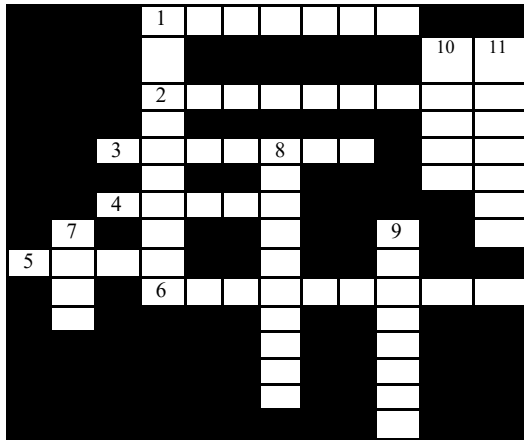


N. Divya, II B.Com. A&F 'A' Section



THE EDUTAINER

CROSSWORD



CONNECTIONS



Example: The pot calling the kettle black



Connect the above images and find the idiom



Connect the above images and find the proverb



Connect the above images and find the proverb



Connect the above images and find the proverb

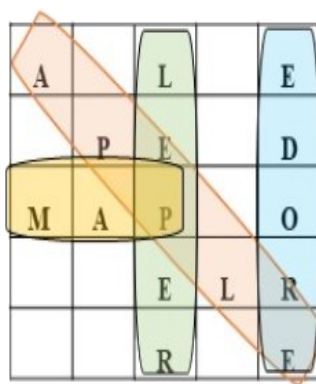
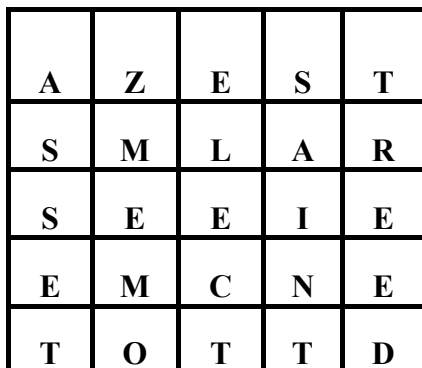
ACROSS:

- To give up completely or absolutely.
- A temporary alliance for combined action.
- Someone who is not qualified or skillful.
- Name of the protagonist of Lewis Carroll's children's novel published in 1865.
- Sediment from the fermentation of an alcoholic beverage.
- Destruction or slaughter on a mass scale.

DOWN:

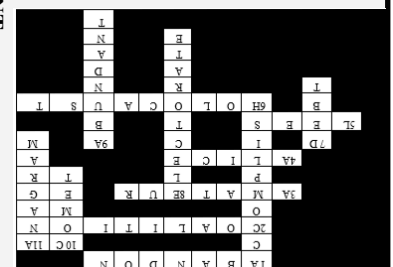
- Successfully completing a work.
- The state of owing money.
- The people in a country who are entitled to vote in an election.
- Anything available in large quantities.
- Dirty snowballs moving around in outer space.
- Creation of new words from the existing word by rearranging its letters.

WORD HUNT



- WORD HUNT:**
- Amend
 - Asset
 - Tree
 - Saint
 - Deer
 - Zest
 - Elect
 - Memo
 - Alms
 - Reed
 - Tot
 - Set
 - See
 - Sect
 - Meat

- CONNECTIONS:**
- Beat around the bush.
 - An idle brain is the devil's workshop.
 - A stitch in time saves nine.
 - A bird in hand is worth two in the bush.





STUDENTS' TALK

The students were asked to share their opinion on the topic, *Pandemic and Blended learning.*

What is your first thought when you heard classes are going to be conducted via online mode?

I thought it is going to be tough because seeing the phone screen for long hours is straining. I also thought it is going to be incredibly challenging for both the teachers and students as it is a new experience for both of us.

-Waha Meenu Bhai M, I B.Sc. Psychology

What do you like and dislike about online learning?

As a student with online classes I feel isolated and interaction is also very less. Sometimes, network issues delay connectivity with the ongoing classes and the eye straining causes health issues. The main advantage of online classes is that from any location we can connect with the class and there is no chance of missing any classes. There is a better understanding of the topic as the teachers explain us through videos, PDFs and PPTs.

-Khyathi Chauhan, II B.Com. C.S. 'D'

Which one do you prefer- virtual classroom or regular classroom and why?

Absolutely regular classes, because we can meet people, talk to them in person, understand the teacher's perspective and act accordingly. But none of this is possible in online class and it is hard to make friends online. People's thoughts can be easily miscommunicated. I want to feel the class ambiance and the college atmosphere. I really feel good about our college ambiance and I wish to experience it and learn.

-Subash, I B.A. English

Have you picked up any hobbies during the pandemic?

Yes, I have been practicing guitar, it helps me to stay positive and energetic. It feels like playing music is now a part of my life and that will always have a positive impact on me by boosting my confidence.

-Avinash Iyer, I B. Com. A&F 'B'

Has the pandemic changed your perspective on life?

Yes, obviously it has changed my perspective on life because it taught me how to manage my time and be responsible. It helped me to analyse myself and make myself stronger from within. It showed me the real value of time and life. At last, it taught me the actual meaning of survival of the fittest and the primary thing about life is to be alive.

-Dharan Raj, I B.A. Sociology

What are your suggestions to make online learning a better experience for the students?

I would really love if teachers do not pressurise students to turn on their cameras, not because they are shy, it is just some people do not want to share their personal space. I think that classes should not be continuously taken or only one subject should not be taken for a long time. Additionally, screen time is not good for the eyes.

-Praneet M Jain, II B.Sc. Vis. Com. 'A'

What is your take on blended learning?

Blended learning may fit for those students who have a goal to study and who have access to electronic gadgets. If the student is disinterested in studies, then he/she will take advantage of the gadgets and while away their time futilely.

-Rohith Goswami, II B.Com. Gen. 'B'

Have you come across any newsletters? If so, name a few.

Yes, I have come across a newsletter in my school times titled "Viveka Vani" which contained articles about the activities that took place in the institution.

-Sharmi Sri, I B.Com. C.S. 'C'

What do you expect in a newsletter?

Newsletter should consist of news about a particular topic or interest. It should contain reports and information of all activities held in an organisation. It should be unique and informative.

-Avinash Iyer, I B.Com. A&F 'B'



THE EDITORIAL BOARD:

- Dr. K.K. Lakshmi, Head of the Department.
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