

*the new and improved..*  
**Perspectives**  
April 2025 by the MCC



MCC

pers·pec·tives

[noun]

2. Particular attitudes towards or ways of regarding something; Points of view.

**B**ack bigger and better - say hello to the new MCC Perspectives. After a 3-year hiatus, we've sprung back into action with our Spring 2025 edition. With a fresh new design, and even more topics for discussion, Perspectives is here for your reading pleasure. The MCC of 25-26 is looking forwards to publishing even more editions of our fantastic newsletter, so make sure to tune in.

I would describe myself as someone who values excellence, challenges myself and actively works to make a difference. I'm intellectually curious and demonstrate my confidence and passion through my various roles and responsibilities, such as being Deputy Head Boy.

I have a strong passion for law, particularly corporate law, as I enjoy analysing complex issues and engaging in critical discussions. Debate is another interest of mine, as it enables me to think on my feet, articulate arguments persuasively, and consider different perspectives. I'm also deeply committed to promoting diversity and inclusion, which is why I lead the MCC and take part in initiatives like the Black Apprentice Network. Beyond that, I find fulfilment in supporting others, whether through tutoring young students or advocating for wellbeing as a Wellbeing Champion. Music is another passion of mine—I play the saxophone and enjoy performing in school concerts. Overall, I enjoy opportunities that allow me to think critically, lead, and make a meaningful impact.

I wanted to become the Head of the MCC as I wanted to make a difference in BETHS and promote cultural diversity. I wanted to plan engaging, fun, and memorable events for everyone in the school, no matter their age. I feel like I've managed to do this through our events so far: Y2K Day, MCC Bake Sale and the MCC Raffle.

I have a very ambitious vision for the MCC. I'd like to widen participation on a school-wide level and encourage each individual in the school, no matter their age to take part in MCC activities and events. For the future, I think it'd be a good idea to do a collaborative event with other schools in the borough in order to promote cultural unity across multiple schools, and also bond closer with people in these schools. In addition, moving forwards, I'd like to place a greater emphasis on mental health and donate more to charities that deal with youth mental health and suicide prevention following the passing of our dear friend Alex Cardoza.

*-Uriel Akinbode  
Head of MCC and Deputy Head Boy*



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# Student Reflections on Lent

**Martin Litchev**

Head of Perspectives

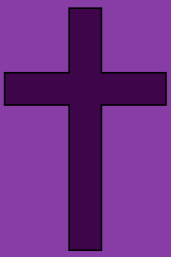
## A brief overview on Lent

Lent is a significant period in Christianity, it lasts for 6 weeks and prepares Christians for the celebration of Easter. This period is marked by solemnity and soberness as it marks the beginning of preparations for the commemoration of Christ's death and resurrection. Lent calls for Christians to ready their hearts and minds to remember the life of Jesus. The Lent period begins with Ash Wednesday, named after the customary practice of blessing ashes being used to make a cross on individuals' foreheads, symbolising the beginning of their Lenten fast. The 40 days that Christians fast for during Lent are symbolic for the 40 days Jesus spent in the desert, where he fasted and avoided temptation from the devil. The way this fast is carried out varies amongst Christian denominations. Those belonging to traditional or Orthodox denominations follow a strict fast, abstaining from meat, fish, eggs, and fats from Ash Wednesday to Easter Sunday.

Others instead opt to give up a single indulgence for Lent, such as alcohol or chocolate. Many also use Lent as an opportunity to intensify their bible study. The final week of Lent is known as "Holy Week", the final week before Easter. This begins with Palm Sunday, when Christians remember Jesus' triumphant arrival into Jerusalem, church services will often include processions of palm leaves symbolic of those laid at Jesus's feet as he rode into the city. Following this is Holy Monday, when Jesus cleansed a temple which was being ran like a market. Then Holy Tuesday sees Jesus return to Jerusalem from Bethany, using a fig tree as an example to teach his disciples. Spy Wednesday commemorates Judas's betrayal of Jesus. Maundy Thursday commemorates the Last Supper Jesus shared with his disciples, in which he predicts his betrayal by Peter. Finally, Good Friday is when Christians around the world remember Christ's crucifixion and burial.

In this article, I have compiled a few student reflections on Lent. On behalf of the whole MCC, we wish the Christian community a Holy Lent.

## What does Lent mean to you?



To me, Lent is one of the greatest experiences for a Christian to undergo. Lent is a 40-day period in which Christians can fast or give up a specific food or activity, and they spend the time period regularly praying. As Christians, we are made in the image of God and try to live our lives as such, and Lent is inspired by Jesus' fasting experience, as explored in the Gospels of Luke and Matthew. Jesus fasted for 40 days and 40 nights, tempted by the Devil – despite this, he persevered. Christians are encouraged to do the same – fasting / giving up something for 40 days, practicing self-discipline and restraint by resisting the temptations that we find in our everyday lives. While Jesus ate nothing on those days, our human nature requiring us to eat serves as a reminder of Jesus' power, helping us get closer to God while still serving and admiring him – the ultimate goal of many Christians. Personally, the challenge that goes into fasting throughout the day not only helps me feel closer to God but also helps me to become a humbler and less stressed person. It reminds me that I have the luxury of food and hydration and that there are many other less fortunate than me, and so it helps me to take a step back whenever I'm stressing about problem, and see it in a whole new, less intense, light.

-Edwin De-Ben Rockson

For me, Lent is a period of sacrifice wherein I can give something up in order to remind myself of the sacrifice Jesus made to save humanity from our sins. The act of sacrifice serves as a constant reminder, so I can keep the thought of Jesus in mind at all times. Lent can also serve as a time of reflection, setting yourself a bar and having to go over it, even beyond the religious context, it can be a period of self-improvement through the act of giving things up, which opens it up to people outside of the faith.

-Gabriel Campbell

Lent is an important period for Christians as its the time where Jesus spent 40 days and 40 nights wandering the desert alone without any food. Jesus was even tempted by the devil himself multiple times to deter him from God. But Jesus stood strong with the will of God and resisted. He triumphed over the devil's persistence. To me, Lent is a trial period of sacrifice to give up something that we enjoy and value just like Jesus for 40 days and nights. It is an opportunity for me as a Christian to reflect with God and show him my faith to Christ himself. For Lent, I gave up my PS5, I value it a lot, but I decided to sacrifice it to show God that he's worth more than anything, the loss of such an important item can never compare to the love I hold for Jesus Christ. Mathew 4:1-11. "The strong resilience of Christ to the devil is an inspiration I wish to follow throughout my life".

-Irewole Ogunyemi



# Student Reflections on Ramadan

## A brief overview on Ramadan

Ramadan is the 9th month of the Islamic year, and it's arguably the most holy month of the year for Muslims. In Ramadan, Muslims fast from pre-dawn to sunset, a period of 11-16 hours (depending on the time of year), for 29-30 days. This fasting entails sacrificing food and drink, and if married, abstaining from sexual activities during sunlit hours. The ultimate goal of fasting is attainment of God-consciousness, known as taqwa in Arabic, meaning a state of constant awareness of God. From this awareness, a person's discipline and self-restraint should grow, as well as their incentive to do good deeds and avoid evil. In terms of who fasts, all Muslims who have reached puberty are obligated to fast. However, certain people for whom fasting would be considered a hardship are exempt from fasting. This includes pregnant or nursing women, women on their periods and the elderly. The exempts make up for their lack of fasting by feeding a poor person for every day of fast which they miss. During Ramadan, those fasting usually get up before dawn to eat Suhur, a modest breakfast-like meal, and either begin the day or go back to sleep. At sunset, they break their fast with a variety of light foods such as dates, soup, or fruit. This is known as Iftar.

At the end of Ramadan, Muslims celebrate Eid ul-Fitr, meaning "Festival of the Breaking of the Fast". Children traditionally receive a variety of gifts from parents, relatives, and friends. A special prayer and sermon are held on the morning of Eid, followed by a community celebration. In this article, I have compiled a few student reflections on Ramadan. On behalf of the whole MCC, Ramadan Mubarak to the Muslim community.





Ramadan is the best time for us to get closer with Allah (God) with continuous acts of worship and prayers throughout the month, whilst also getting closer with our Muslim brothers and sisters in Mosques and outside. It is also a time for us to become better individuals by carrying out countless good deeds that we can do as well as reflecting on our past sins and constantly repenting, making sure that we leave all of it in the past. Additionally, Ramadan is a way of expressing our strengths in the Muslim community, especially when going through each day of the month with the sacrifices of food, drinks and sleep.

Fasting can be very demanding and punishment for those that tend to struggle with no food or drinks for most of the day, which is why Muslims tend to wake up in the middle of the night (before our first prayer of the day) to eat and drink anything that can aid us in getting through the day (which is where the aspect of sacrificing sleep comes from). Some extra sacrifices may need to be made during the day in order to conserve some energy, but this ultimately depends on your strengths and how you feel about it.

-Khaleed Yusuff

## What does Ramadan mean to you?

### How do you cope with the demands of fasting in your everyday life?

Although to others Ramadan may be a time to sympathise with the less fortunate in the world, to me it's a chance to get closer to Allah. It's a time where the Shaytan is locked up which allows us the opportunity to worship Allah. As a result, we build up spiritual discipline which we hope lasts until the next Ramadan.

When you first start it can get very difficult especially during the summer however after a few times it gets better, and your body gets used to it. To help me keep energised for the day I eat a pre-dawn meal which is usually very hefty to keep me energised for the rest of the day. I also ensure I drink plenty of water and the thirst is definitely the hardest part about fasting. Most importantly, I like to keep myself busy so that I'm not constantly thinking about food, and I think about those less fortunate who aren't able to eat or drink.

-Safwan Rafid Ullah





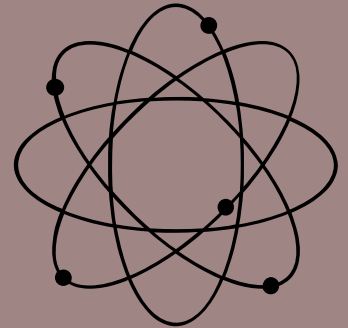
# Ethnic Women in STEM

**Okeoghene Oyeye**

Head of Perspectives

## Katherine Johnson: The Hidden Figure Who Reached for the Stars

Born on August 26, 1918, Katherine Johnson was a mathematical prodigy who defied racial and gender barriers to become one of NASA's most influential scientists. Growing up in Greenbrier County, West Virginia, she faced limited educational opportunities for black students due to segregation. Determined to pursue her passion for mathematics, she moved 120 miles to Virginia, where she graduated at just 18 with degrees in both Mathematics and French.



Her brilliance earned her a spot in a prestigious mathematics program, one that had previously been exclusively for white students. However, even as she excelled, she faced racial discrimination throughout her time there and left the program. At NASA, Black women were often seen as assistants rather than equals, excluded from important meetings and decision-making processes. But Katherine refused to accept these limitations. She ignored segregation rules, used the 'whites-only' restrooms, and attended meetings that traditionally excluded coloured people and women in general.

Her exceptional skills and fearless determination earned her a place on an all-male engineering team, where she challenged both racial and gender stereotypes. She played a crucial role in the success of NASA's Apollo 11 mission, helping put the first humans on the moon, as well as Apollo 13. Despite her groundbreaking contributions, her achievements went unrecognized for decades due to her race and sex.

It wasn't until 2015 that she received long-overdue recognition when President Barack Obama awarded her the Presidential Medal of Freedom, the highest civilian honour in the U.S. Her story was later recognised and put on the big screen in the movie 'Hidden Figures', inspiring new generations to break racial barriers and reach for the stars.

Katherine Johnson's legacy proves that talent, determination, and courage can overcome even the toughest obstacles. She was a pioneer who changed history.



Ever since I was younger, my parents pushed me to do well, I never got it until I was older though and realised the importance of stability. Especially as a black woman - a respected career which focuses on helping others is one I would love to be apart of.

-Naomi Mungu

I aspire to pursue STEM as I feel motivated to strive in an area that isn't dominated by people of my gender or race as it feels good to overcome societies expectations and stereotypes of me. To be honest, what motivated me to pick STEM is mostly the fact that I was good at science and maths but now that I am actually learning these subjects, I've come to like them and see a future for myself where I utilise these lessons in my career.

-Simisola Eniolorunda

I aspire to pursue STEM, specifically biology and chemistry, because I have always had an interest in these subjects since early in secondary school. I enjoy the practical side, where I get to do hands-on work as opposed to sitting in class all day, but I also appreciate learning the theory behind these sciences. They challenge my thinking and innovation, especially through problem-solving aspects such as analysing practical work, working out difficult calculations, and understanding how the human body functions.

My specific motivation for pursuing STEM is my passion for dentistry. I hope to help people in the same way dental professionals have helped me through my orthodontic treatment.. Studying biology and chemistry will provide me with the knowledge I need to achieve this goal.

-Ifeoluwa Ogunnaike

The pandemic really taught me the importance of science and that people will always need those in a stem career, therefore reinforcing the stability of a career in stem. Not only my passion but talent in science has motivated me to pursue a career in stem. A dream of mine would be to discover something that would help the world significantly.

-Zarah-Lou Pallu

## Ethnic Women in STEM at Beths

We commend our wonderful teachers here at Beths as well, for excelling in a field where it is particularly hard to as an Ethnic Woman, including:

Ms Dennis

Ms Sarkar

Ms Moffat

Ms Adriaans

Ms Fernandez

Ms Wong

Ms Sharma

Ms Smart

# Diving Deep into Asian Culture

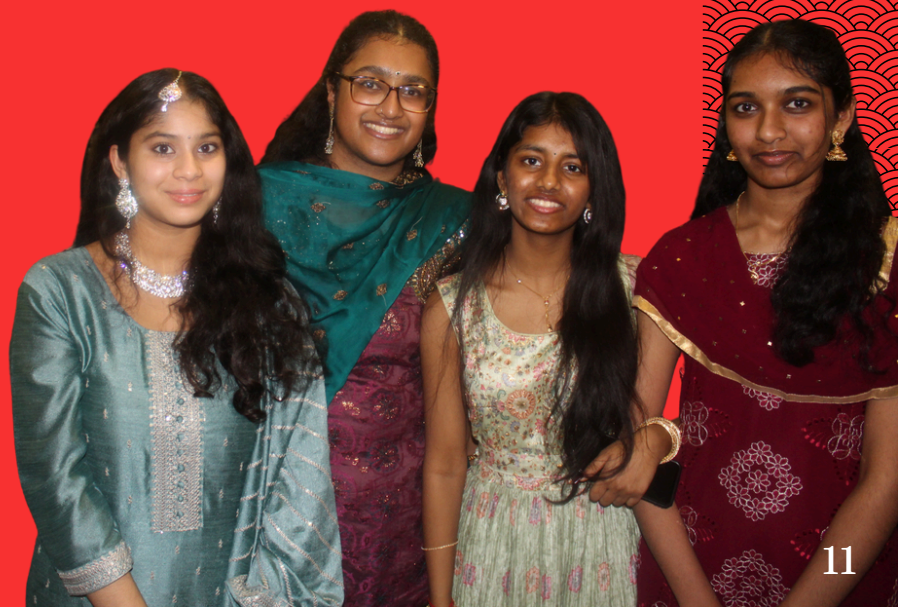
**Kelly To**

Operations

## What is Asian culture?

Out of the many 48 Asian countries that make up half the total world population, there are so many different customs and traditions, from styles of clothing and food to the festivals celebrated. I believe that every country is truly unique and even within each country, there are distinct variations in culture depending on the region. For instance, I think Vietnam has a good representation of this. After watching the popular Vietnamese artist, Hòa Minzy's music video titled, 'Bắc Bling (Bắc Ninh)', featuring Xuân Hinh and Tuấn Cry, I could see the showcase of multiple cultural traditions, through the displays of job occupations, village activities and even subtle portrayals of national values.

This music video deeply inspired me as, though comedic in nature, there is a level of celebration of the culture, reminding us of the importance of honouring where we came from and how we came to be the people we are today. The video demonstrated how core values such as family and hard work (to name a couple) can be built upon to become the foundation in creating a society that we know today. Hòa Minzy was able to successfully interweave as much of her region's culture into the music video as possible; she based the beat and melody off the instruments traditionally played and linked the lyrics to what she wanted to say about her region, introducing the viewers to a vast array of beautiful locations through scenic shots, and she hinted at cultural values and norms. One of the scenes that really stuck out to me was when Hòa Minzy was surrounded by elderly women and the camera focused on one of them smiling. To me, this emphasised how being surrounded by family and even "fictive kin" could be enjoyable as your network of people could easily bring you comfort, security and a sense of belonging. This support system is always dependable on when in times of need; there is a strong subconscious obligation to help your community, which reflects one of Beth Grammar's own values.





The incorporation of the 'rap' genre into a melodic song not only makes it more modern and appealing to the younger generation, but it also conveys the message that once again, core values can be built upon by the newer generations to come to construct their own society with their own understanding of different cultures. However, the element of appreciating and respecting pre-existing traditions remains, making the music video a musical masterpiece in my opinion.

To conclude, I would recommend others to also watch the music video for themselves to gain a better understanding of various cultures, but also to learn more about their own culture because at the end of the day, it is important to take pride in your cultural background and appreciate the foundation that your ancestors laid out for you. Events such as 'Culture Day' and 'MCC Showcase' exist for these very reasons!



# Mini Ghana Independence Day Interview

**Okeoghene Oyeye**

Head of Perspectives

In Honor of Ghana Independence Day being on March 6<sup>th</sup>, which marks 68 years of freedom since, 1957, Oke has conducted a mini interview with Edwin, a Ghanaian within Beths, all about Ghana.

What's your favourite thing about Ghana?

I would have to say the high energy. All throughout Ghanaian culture, in every aspect, there is such high energy. From the celebrations to the clothing, you can feel this energy in the upbeat dances, the bright and punchy clothing, such as Kente Cloth and the hard-hitting powerful music – it doesn't count as a Ghanaian party if there isn't afrobeats playing loud enough that you can emotionally and physically feel the music.

What is your favourite food? And why?

A slightly unorthodox answer, I think I would have to say my favourite Ghanaian food is bofrot. It classifies as a type of donut, and is commonly called Puff-Puff, particularly in other countries like Nigeria. Perhaps I just have a sweet tooth, but not only is bofrot simple to make, but it tastes so sweet and feels so fresh and soft. It's also incredibly nostalgic to me, and I'm sure many other Ghanaian and even African individuals, as I have fond memories of my parents returning from house parties with a haul of fizzy drinks, hard sweets, chin chin and, of course, bofrot.

Infamous question: Nigerian or Ghanaian jollof?

There is a small minority of Ghanaians at Beths Grammar School. A minority of a minority. But I can't let that prevent me from speaking the truth, and that the truth is that Ghanaian Jollof Rice is better. ALWAYS. Whether you throw in some vegetables, or – mind the stereotype – have an egg on the side, Ghanaian Jollof Rice always comes out on top and I will die on that hill.



# Editor

Bolu Olojede

# MCC

Uriel Akinbode  
Samuel Saliu  
Bolu Olojede

# credits

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