

BEST OF THE BETHS

EDITION #37



THE BEST OF OCTOBER 2025



BEST OF THE BETHS

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LAST NIGHT I DREAMT OF REBECCA AGAIN



RONNIE 13H3



Rebecca is a 1938 Gothic novel written by Daphne du Maurier. One of the most famed pieces of writing of modernity, it follows an unnamed narrator—or, perhaps, heroine—as she marries a ‘Max(im) Winter’ and leaves her position in Monte Carlo to pursue a life with him (and his dead ex-wife) at his estate, Manderley. The novel famously opens with the simplistic yet haunting line: ‘Last night I dreamt I went to Manderley again’ (note the literary features including assonance, diacope, and the *in media res* structure also!)

Prior to reading *Rebecca*, it had a certain ‘allure’ about it. When I went to St John’s College, Oxford, for an English Study Day, some other students and I were sat around a table as the professor asked each of us, individually, what we were currently reading. Whilst I had said *Wuthering Heights* (part lie, part truth, as I had only read 20 pages or so in a month...), the most recurring work was *Rebecca*. Every time its name was mentioned, the professor seemed satisfied—intrigued, almost. That night I went home and decisively ordered it.

Rebecca initially scared me when it arrived, however. It is quite a lengthy novel, and I tend to avoid those (particularly in early- and mid-20th-century literature, for the general writing style and preferred themes usually do not interest me). Nevertheless, I sat down and gave it a shot. If it seemed to possess universal acclaim, so much so that somebody I knew was tackling it for their coursework, there had to have been *some* merit in it, surely. Commonly this would be followed by the idiomatic ‘famous last words’, but no; it *did* have merit to it, and I began to perceive it by the novel’s famous *first* words.

Unlike Milton, whom one has to get used to, Du Maurier’s diction is haunting, simple, perfectly paced, and refined. It is the one thing about the novel that I cannot critique. The author does not lose herself in atmospheric description (of which there was plenty opportunities to do so in, such as Manderley’s gardens, its large interior, the port-like cabin by the sea), but rather balances it with psychological detail and a proto-postmodern Gothicism. Any opportunity to misinterpret the beginning of the work, particularly the *slightly* rushed love affair between the narrator and Winter, as the original ‘BookTok Romantasy’ is quickly snuffed out by the writer’s skilful exploration of how Max’s deceased wife, Rebecca, comes back to figuratively haunt both friend and foe at Manderley.

Rife with themes of homoeroticism, vampirism, legalism, and aristocracy, *Rebecca* seems to have aged incredibly well. Whilst it obviously retains the characteristics and literary merits of its era (1930s England, fading Gothicism), it too feels as though it could have been published today, exploring the meaning of female identity and its interaction with other women (ironically emblemised in du Maurier’s bisexuality) within a romantic and androcentric (male-focused) sphere.

This, in my opinion, is its most prominent merit: longevity. Unlike contemporaries or predecessors such as Camus or Wilde, the author achieves dramatic effect through a whirlwind plot, rather than occasionally stretched or hyperbolised syntax/diction.

Upon finishing *Rebecca* (a reading experience of which I shall not narrate, for speaking about the text feels like revealing a spoiler at every time), I understood why the allure was there. It is, in all honesty, different. It may not be encapsulated in the most 'flashy' writing style, nor have the most intriguing plot on paper, but du Maurier's combination of literary elements and cultural interests into one whole brings it a freshness and mystique unlike the majority of works then and today. As in my review on *Paradise Lost*, here are 5 things that specifically stood out to me within the novel:

1. Rebecca's bisexual characterisation, reflecting Daphne du Maurier
2. The permanence of objects (Rebecca's pens, notes, dressing-gowns) against seemingly mutable humans (the narrator, Maxim, Rebecca herself)
3. The continued theme of Life imitating Art, derived from Wildean philosophy (both the narrator and Rebecca dressing up as the painting of Caroline de Winter)
4. The lack of sexual conduct between Maxim and both Mrs de Winters, hinting towards asexuality or homosexuality
5. The tension between internal knowledge and outward appearance (Rebecca's inward evil versus her benevolent behaviour), linking to the 20th-century fascination with epistemology/the study of 'knowing'

This list could likely go on and on, but those 5 are some of the most interesting aspects of the novel that earn it both casual readership and literary analysis. Out of 5, then, which, again, I am so sure du Maurier would wish to know: 4.5/5. Such may seem generous, but I truly am just striking some luck with my reading choices recently. Therefore, if you are looking for a read that satisfies both intellectual curiosity and everyday boredom, I point you to *Rebecca*. Nothing explicitly ground-but nevertheless a breath of fresh air (P.S. I imagined Rebecca as Jaime Murray and Maxim as David Corenswet—let me know what you imagine each as if you get to reading it).



COUNTRY DEBT: FRANCE



ARJUN 10B



Money, money, money. That's what seems to make the world turn. And when it runs out, the governments shut down, parliaments dissolve, and prime minister after prime minister resigns. If you haven't realised it yet, I'm talking about the state of France. Last year Emmanuel Macron called a snap election, much like the one Theresa May called, which works like this. The French President has the power to call it at any time as long as there has been over or equal to a year's time since the previous dissolution. This means that there have to be elections for new officials within 40 to 90 days of the announcement.

Quite like Westminster, the French government is split into 2 chambers, the Assemblée Nationale and the Senate, which are the House of Commons and the House of Lords, respectively, in the UK. The way that French politics works is that there is an elected president who articulates and processes much like a prime minister in the UK; however, they empower a prime minister who then deals with the official projects. The prime minister is not voted in but appointed.

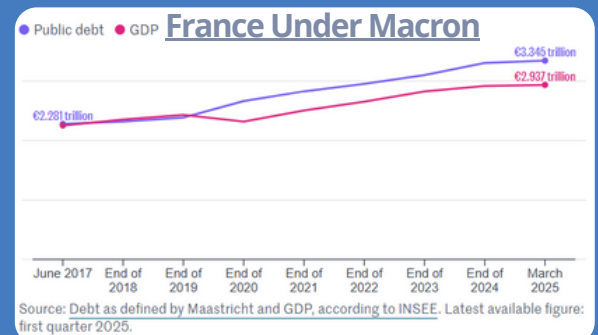


Fig.1

However, after a year since the Assemblée Nationale regrouped and began processing the laws and bills that were suspended, a lot of money had to be borrowed to keep the country running. As of the last verified figures, France's debt is currently 114% of its GDP, a whopping 3.35 trillion euros. This is the problem they face. With a very developed society come very complex problems. This debt has been mounting for quite a while and reached the 100% threshold in the third quarter of 2019 when the pandemic started. It's worth noting that it only hit that mark in the 1870s after the Franco-Prussian War, hitting 113%.

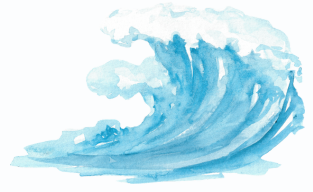
Now at the time of writing, France's 6th prime minister has stepped down after proposing a massive cut to public spending in the 2026 budget due to this rapid growth in debt. Debt isn't just from wars, but a lot of it is from providing for the people in terms of social care and pensions. When the government proposes the budgets for the year, they try to satisfy people's social care over the interest that makes the debt pool larger. As more and more countries reach the 100% threshold, we will see more economic instability and social pressure, as people want their social care and the value of their currency to stay the same.

As for those who think if we just get rid of the debt, everything will be fine. Remember that putting a lot of money back into circulation at once, always does more harm than good.

THE LADY FROM THE SEA



EVIE 13A2



The Lady From the Sea is the is London's Bridge's Theatre latest production running for over only two months. This play is an adaptation of Henrik Ibsen's classic by director Simone Stone and stars Alicia Vikander, Andrew Lincoln, Joe Alwynn and more. The play explores themes of desire, loss and rebirth and contains mature themes over the course of almost three hours. This play follows the story of Elida (Alicia Vikander), a woman who feels trapped within her marriage despite the comfortable and quiet luxurious nature of her marriage to her neurologist husband, Edward. However, an unexpected turn occurs as her former lover returns and she is forced to face her daring past and in turn confront her desires and choose between the safety of her current life and the freedom of her past.

The set design is impeccable as the stage converts into a pool and a rainstorm to immerse the audience into the play's themes of freedom and the sea. The conversion of the plain stage into a rainstorm was a genuinely astonishing and visually incredible. The storm emphasised the chaos of the play and its erratic melodrama. The strong and almost vicious downpour could allude to the tension and angst upon the stage and between the characters. The shift to the ordinary stage to the pool in the centre of the stage was truly impressive as it happened in a matter of minutes.

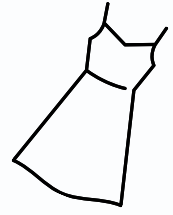
The dialogue was so intriguing as it mixed drama and humour that seems to flow throughout the play. Both Andrew Lincoln and Alicia Vikander deliver great performances when portraying their confusion and frustration towards their misfortune. However, I found that the most outstanding performances came from the secondary characters: Asa (Gracie Oddie-James), Hilda (Isobel Akuwudike) and Lyle (John Mcmillan). These actors delivered an almost electric energy in their performances as they not only provided comedic relief through their witty banter but also their own compelling stories or struggle and difficulty.

While I found the interlocking storylines interesting, others have criticised the production for adding too many contemporary themes, such as climate change and online culture, which made the play feel oversaturated with concepts and left some themes underdeveloped. Some have criticised the play in saying that the three hour runtime made the play feel heavy and slow, particularly the second half as new revelations piled up. While I can agree that the play felt heavy at certain times, I believe that the play did not feel prolonged and the three hours passed by so quickly as it kept me consistently engaged and interested.

THE PRICE OF FAST FASHION



TEGAN 13H1



The main business model of any fast fashion company is buying more for less, the price of 1 shirt could be equivalent to 10 shirts on a fast fashion brand. This model is especially desirable to younger people who wouldn't have much money, yet still want nice clothes to go out in. We buy cute, fashionable outfits for very little, then never wear them again. Brands like Shein market overconsumption as a glamorous and aspirational lifestyle. Temu's slogan "shop like a billionaire" makes people who aren't as wealthy as billionaires feel like they can live the same lifestyle as them.

Shein was founded in China, in 2008. It was very popular in the east, but it never really caught on in the west, until 2019. COVID-19 started, and everyone suddenly got stuck inside. Fashion brands became 100% reliant on online sales. Shein's production stages allowed it to keep up with the always changing trends. However, each step of the garment making process has horrible effects on the environment. The production of fabric is often the most chemical, water and energy wasting stage of garment making. Dyeing the fabric uses huge quantities of water and chemicals, as they repeatedly dye the fabric and then rinse with water. All of these liquids are then flushed away into the surrounding wildlife, destroying it. This process is then repeated to accommodate for the 700 - 10,000 new designs added to the website - daily.

Shein's marketing strategy allows consumers to be ignorant to the harm it is doing to the planet. Its main advertisements are through mostly through social media platforms like Tik Tok, Instagram etc. It will often contain a video of an influencer opening their package and really complimenting everything about it: the materials, the colour, the feel, and especially the price. Shein's main customer target is teenagers who feel the need to always wear different clothes, but could never afford to buy a wardrobe to accommodate this want. Teenagers are also less likely to really think about the consequences fast fashion has on the environment, and how horribly the staff at these companies are treated.

In 2023, China Youth Daily conducted a survey to gain insight into their readers shopping habits. Nearly 80% of 1,001 respondents admitted to struggling with an online shopping addiction. Just over 50% attributed this to a fear of missing out on amazing deals, while 45% say they use online shopping as a therapy for the stresses of daily life. This suggests that fast fashion is not just about needing clothes, but it also a form of therapy for some, either for daily life, or the security of knowing you haven't misses out. This is greatly manipulated by companies in order to grow their sales, which is often why you see companies having ridiculous sales all the time. There will always be more sales, but they would never tell customers that, it would give people security.

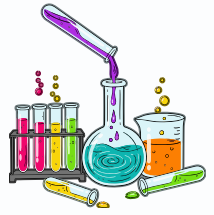
Ultimately, it is not the individual's fault that this is the way the fashion industry runs. There is a reason it's working, and there has been a lot of research gone into optimising this business model for limited costs and maximum profits. But there are things the individual can do to reduce or eradicate brands like Shein from their shopping lists. Charity shopping is always a good option. While it is sometimes rare to find a really nice piece of clothing for some, it is so rewarding when you do. It is also a very sustainable way of shopping, as they are all pre-loved items, which will hopefully be loved by you too, and the money earned by the purchase will go to a good cause! Another sustainable way to shop is through Vinted, it is almost the online version of charity shopping. There is so much more variety on Vinted, so you are more likely to find something you genuinely like. Most items are on there are pre-loved, and you often find some fairly expensive clothes on there for very cheap (compared to the retail price). This way, we can still enjoy fashion, without contributing to the destruction the fashion industry is causing.



AI IN MATERIALS SCIENCE



*HARVEY 12B2*¹*



Materials science, the exploration and discovery of new materials and new combinations of the base elements found in the natural world for the hope of fine - tuned properties that aid the world of today. In recent years, with the emergence of Artificial Intelligence, the sciences have seen vast changes and a need for adaptation to both combat and utilise aspects of the neural networks produced via the connections of computer code. The energy - expensive processes of AI, have been used in multiple occasions from simple questions from students, to writing full essays to simulating theoretical ideas or designs.

Artificial Intelligence has been mainly used in two forms by the scientific community, Machine Learning and Deep Learning. By “feeding” the neural networks previous data and information, AI can simulate vaster possibilities in a much shorter time span than the laborious efforts of experimental identification by human scientists.

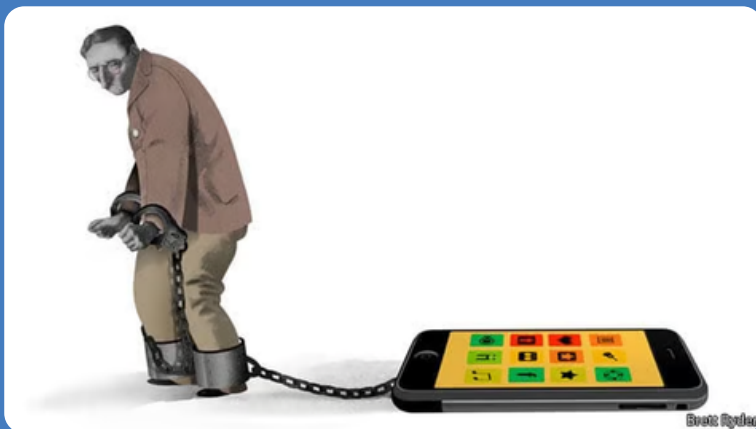
However, as with all scientific experimental data, just because it applies to one place, does not mean that it is universal. Through this simple and yet grounded idea, results produced by various AI models (such as Meta’s Mattergen or Google’s Deepmind) were scrutinised by Materials scientists globally with the false hope of triumph. Unfortunately in many cases the results that the machine had provided, were either not unique, infeasible or unstable. This last point affected the most number of results due to the clear differences between the perfection of the computer simulated world, in comparison to the gruelling reality of the real, natural world.

An example of this can be seen in the efforts to mitigate the effects of CO₂ release into our atmosphere, a common greenhouse gas cause by the burning of fossil fuels and the continuation of heavy - duty industrial processes. In Materials Science, the current focus in this field is to generate a reactive and porous material that can bind to and react to the carbon dioxide whilst not letting it out. This form of a store would be revolutionary, although unfortunately all current ideas are not economically feasible nor physically possible based on ideas around disorder in crystal structures.

What does the future look like for the sciences?

Clearly AI is an important tool in the sciences to carry out tasks at a greater speed, allowing scientists to focus on cognitively challenging tasks and discoveries. At the time of writing, AI is still making swathes of errors and mistakes, especially in the more difficult sciences and more complicated regions.

Despite the best efforts of computer scientists and programmers, the complexity of the human brain is immense. Trillions of synaptic junctions in a seemingly messy pink gelatinous structure weighing around 1kg. Its ability to store memory and stay energy efficient is extremely unique, and a clear disadvantage of AI now, in the sheer amount of energy that it takes to access different bits of information. So, whilst science fiction novels point to the idea of the all powerful AI, currently it has many flaws and so we still need to be here to ensure that the truth is spread, rather than the mistakes of AI. To ensure a future for our society and the race of humans, we must educate ourselves on the processes of the world so as not to be a slave to the words of AI.



Left :
<https://www.economist.com/business/2012/03/10/slaves-to-the-smartphone>

Image from Berkeley Lab, as seen in Volume 646 of Nature - 2nd October 2025

NOBEL PRIZE IN CHEMISTRY



HARVEY 12B2²



On the 8th of October 2025, the Nobel Prize in Chemistry was announced to a group of scientists, for further developing the field of crystal structures and idealising properties and characteristics for potentially beneficial use in our society.

What Was It?

The discovery was awarded to three scientists : Susumu Kitagawa, Richard Robson and Omar Yaghi, for their work on metal-organic frameworks, allowing for processes such as carbon dioxide extraction from the air into a porous material. This works by providing a material with “gaps” in it of an exactly equal fit to the size of the molecule, allowing for the carbon dioxide to be trapped.

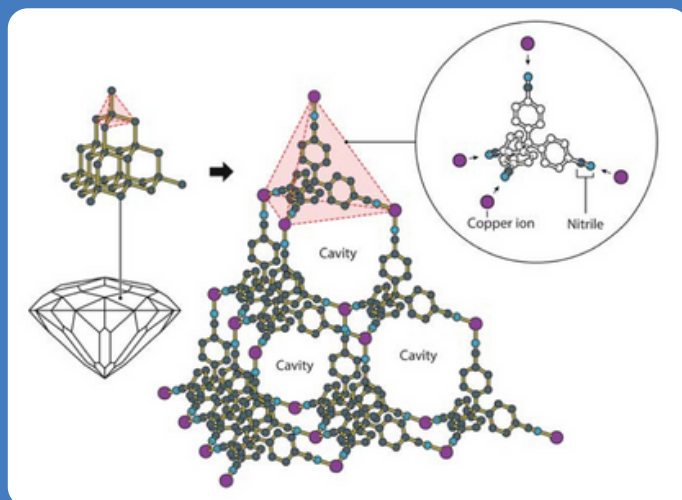
Another application for this technology is in the extraction of water from the air of a desert to help with irrigation and agriculture, which could significantly improve the lives of those living in dry and arid locations.

Advanced Chemistry

Within the realm of chemistry, the synthesis of molecular structures remained pretty difficult to determine in larger structures of higher dimensions, such as shapes similar to the diamond lattice of covalently bonded carbon atoms. The idea behind the Nobel Prize this year was to be able to accurately predict and synthesise a 3 dimensional molecular structure and to include cavities within it to allow for molecular absorption from the surroundings.

With further development in the field of metal-coordination geometry and crystallography towards the latter half of the 20th century, it became more accurate and easier to predict larger and more complex structures.

Due to their properties, the materials have been used industrially in gas purification and filtration, with the main idea to be able to place these around the vent of a power plant, such that it absorbs the greenhouse gas emissions and so preventing the possible negative impact that it has on our world. The main basis behind the importance of this type of material is the fact that it is extremely good at absorption and trapping gases within it, especially at high temperatures due to its chemical stability provided by its lattice structure.



*This diagram was taken from the Nobel Prize description of the prize on chemistry :
<https://www.nobelprize.org/uploads/2025/10/advanced-chemistryprize2025.pdf>*

This is the reason why the research is truly remarkable as there are materials around today (such as ice) that do have spaces within their structures for gases to occupy. In fact, this is the reason why ice is often translucent, as dissolved gases within the lattice structure refract light in such a way that the material is no longer transparent. This is clearly different from if the water used in freezing is boiled as the gases are all removed thus providing a close to pure liquid (as impurities are likely to come in when others leave).

Why Has The World Not Changed?

Unfortunately, as with a lot of chemistry that receives prizes and applause, this technology is currently not ready to be used due to its lack of commercial viability. Also, once used it is extremely difficult to extract the gases from the cavities provided. Whilst this is good in the sense that it will definitely trap the correct molecule, it also means that these materials are currently single - use.

Due to the single - use nature of a lot of these materials, it provides an additional challenge of where we need to store all of these materials to prevent further release of carbon dioxide. Currently, efforts of this kind are being made in the Environmental / Earth sciences, with the idea of CCS - Carbon Capture and Sequestration. This method involves the liquidation of carbon dioxide and then the use of a pump to force it into an impermeable set of rock (most likely encapsulated by a hydrocarbon trap). Often times this 'hydrocarbon trap' is from a previous extraction of oils, a clear advantage as this trap is extremely effective at keeping everything within it.

Final Words

Whilst in this article I have only managed to briefly summarise the true importance of these discoveries and ingenious ways of thinking, there are multiple other bands of research that are all of incredible importance that have not been noted here. Some examples include developments in biology, physics and in economic theory, all of which are awarded alongside the Nobel Prize in Chemistry. As a suggestion for further reading into newer technologies for those interested, I would check out resources surrounding the development of RNA medicines as an innovative feat that could pave the future in how we perceive medicinal treatment. An examples use of this was during the Covid pandemic, from which a vaccine was developed.

For those of you who have an interest in chemistry and the physical sciences, as well as the biological sciences, I would recommend reading articles that are Open Access to the general public on Nature. Whilst these articles are definitely more detailed and complex, it can act as introduction to the world of academia for those who are interested.

Some information summarised from:

<https://www.nobelprize.org/uploads/2025/10/advanced-chemistryprize2025.pdf>



‘THE LIFE OF A SHOWGIRL’

SEREN 13W1



On October 3rd, Taylor Swift and her music lovers left The Tortured Poets Department era and entered the dazzling ‘Life of a Showgirl’ era. It is Swift’s 12th studio album, where she broke music industry records once again as it becomes the biggest album sales week in streaming, with 3.2 million sales and 300,000 unites from streams. Taylor Swift also gave the fans the opportunity to attend a screening of The Official Release Party of a Showgirl, which consisted of an insight into Swift’s creative visions behind the songs in the album through the behind-the-scenes documentary and an exclusive viewing to a music and lyric videos.

Swift chose to tease her new album, on the video promo of the New Heights podcast, which her boyfriend, Travis Kelce and his brother Jason Kelce host. It was then officially announced on August 13th, when she featured on the podcast. She gave a full explanation of what the album was, describing it as “everything that goes on behind the curtain”, during the Eras Tour and commenting on how her “main goal were melodies that were so infectious that you’re almost angry at it and the lyrics that are just as vivid but crisp and focused and completely intentional. The names of all the songs on the album were disclosed, with Swift making it explicit to fans that would be the conclusive amount of songs on the album. Fans were beyond excited with the announcement, with many of them seeing this as a way to overcome their Eras Tour blues and October 3rd could not come sooner for many. In the weeks leading up to the release, Swift kept fans on their toes by releasing numerous different variants, each crafted to depict the “showgirl” visuals.

The album was a stark contrast to that of the American singer-songwriter’s previous one, which was characterized by themes of heartbreak, self-loathing and anger. Whilst this difference was well received by some, others were quick to criticise. A number of fans, saw it as not being Swift’ best work due to them being disappointed and underwhelmed with the song-writing and furthermore believing it to not matching the theme of the album title. For the fans who were in fact in love in the album they appreciated the exciting riffs and overall melodic shift.



BETHS BOOK NOOK



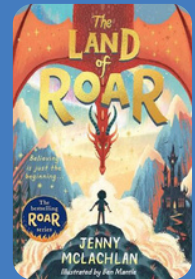
PERCY 7C



Now that the days are getting shorter and the air is cooler, it's the perfect time to curl up with a good book. Whether you're into magical adventures, mysterious worlds, or dragons and danger, I've picked out some great reads to keep you turning pages this October.

The Land of Roar by Jenny McLachlan

What if the imaginary world you made up as a child was actually real? That's what twins Arthur and Rose discover when they get pulled into the magical land of Roar: a land full of dragons, flying islands, and unexpected danger. A great pick for fans of fantasy and adventure!



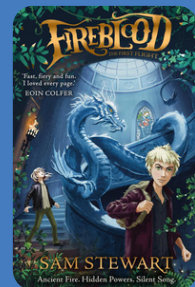
A Clock of Stars by Francesca Gibbons

When Imogen and her little sister follow a silver moth through a hidden door, they end up in another world with danger around every corner. This book is full of magic, monsters, and royal drama. Perfect for fans of Narnia.



Fireblood by Sam Stewart

With dragons, secret powers, and a huge quest, this story follows siblings Finn and Tula as they discover they are "firebloods" with ancient magic in their blood. It's packed with action, mystery, and cool creatures. Great for readers who love epic adventures.



Spirit Warriors by Ashley Thorpe

This one's a bit spooky (just right for October!). A group of children discover they're connected to ancient spirit animals and must protect the world from dark forces. It's exciting, powerful, and gives major "secret hero" vibes.



So grab a blanket, pour yourself a hot chocolate, and dive into one of these great books. Happy reading!

BALLON D'OR



GURSHAAN 10H



As we know, the Ballon D'Or award ceremony has come to an end, however that doesn't mean the awards aren't still incredibly important.

As the best football player in the world is celebrated it is still important to remember all of the nominees; we have some of the best players that have ever touched the game before included in this list, in which some people may believe that they we're robbed.

However back to the topic at hand, the nominees consist of:

Jude Bellingham (England, Real Madrid)
Ousmane Dembélé (France, Paris Saint-Germain)
Gianluigi Donnarumma (Italy, Paris Saint-Germain)
Désiré Doué (France, Paris Saint-Germain)
Denzel Dumfries (Netherlands, Inter)
Serhou Guirassy (Guinea, Borussia Dortmund)
Viktor Gyökeres (Sweden, Sporting CP/Arsenal)
Erling Haaland (Norway, Manchester City)
Achraf Hakimi (Morocco, Paris Saint-Germain)
Lamine Yamal (Spain, Barcelona)
Etc.

Now although they're all extremely strong competitors, after a difficult decision it was chosen that Ousmane Dembélé, in my opinion the most rightful winner of the Ballon D'Or. However contrary to popular belief, some may say that Raphinha was the most deserving candidate. But I personally think that that is completely wrong! In addition to this, lest we forget the female winner of the Ballon D'Or Aitana Bonmatí! A greatly deserved winner for the award.





ACID VS LAVA



DAANISH 8C

Hello readers. I have a question for all of you, yes every single one of you. Have you ever wondered, “Who would win in a fight — acid or lava?” Now, this might seem like a boring question for most, but it’s definitely an interesting one for the curious. While most people may not have thought about it, for those who have, you’re in luck. I’ve done the research to compare these two powerful forces of nature so that you don’t have to. Read on to discover the facts and find out which one is truly more destructive.

What is Acid?

Acid is a substance that has a pH level lower than 7. Common acids include substances like hydrochloric acid (found in stomach acid), sulfuric acid (used in car batteries), and citric acid (found in lemons). Acids can be either strong or weak, depending on how easily they split into hydrogen ions when dissolved in water.

Acids are usually corrosive and can break down many materials, including metals and living tissue. This makes acids useful in a variety of industries like cleaning. However, strong acids, like sulfuric acid, can cause serious burns and damage if not handled carefully.

What is Lava?

Lava, on the other hand, is molten rock that is blasted during volcanic eruptions. When magma from beneath the Earth’s surface escapes through vents, it becomes lava as it reaches the ground. Lava is extremely hot, with temperatures ranging from 700 to 1,200 degrees Celsius

There are different types of lava, including pahoehoe (smooth and rope-like) and a’a (rough and jagged). Lava flows can be slow and steady or fast and destructive, depending on the type. Lava is dangerous not just because of its heat but also because it can destroy everything in its path.

Which Is More Destructive?

Now, having learnt about what acid and lava is, we need to actually understand which is more powerful and how they compare.



VS



The Destructiveness of Acid

Acids are corrosive substances that break down materials they spread on. Strong acids like sulfuric acid can quickly damage metals, rocks, and living tissue. Acid rain, caused by pollution, slowly wears away buildings and statues made of limestone and marble. However, acid damage usually stays limited to where the acid directly contacts a surface and depends on how strong the acid is and how long it stays in contact.

The Destructiveness of Lava

Lava is molten rock that can reach temperatures up to 1,200 degrees Celsius. When it flows, it burns, melts, and buries everything in its path, including plants, buildings, and roads. Lava can cause wildfires and release harmful gases, adding to its destruction. Its damage happens quickly and covers a much larger area than acid, often permanently changing the landscape.

Finally, the moment you have all been waiting for - The Conclusion

Both acid and lava are powerful forces that can cause serious damage to the environment and materials. Lava is generally more destructive because its extreme heat and greater volume of molten rock can destroy everything in its path quickly and leave permanent changes to the land. Acid also causes damage, but it usually works more slowly and only affects the surfaces it directly touches.

Therefore, when comparing their overall impact, **lava is the stronger and more destructive force.**



ALL QUIET ON CAPITOL HILL



JOSHUA 10W



Why did the US Government shutdown?

The shutdown happened because Republicans and Democrats could not agree to pass a bill which allows for funding of government services into October and beyond. Under the US governmental system, the different segments of government have to reach an agreement on spending plans before they can be enacted.

When they couldn't agree in time, parts of the government had to stop working. This is called a government shutdown. During a shutdown, some government workers stay home and don't get paid until the problem is fixed. Only the most important services, like the police, hospitals, and the military, keep running.

Things like museums, national parks, and offices that deal with paperwork or benefits often close. This can affect millions of people across the country.

The main reason for the argument was that Republicans and Democrats disagreed about how to spend money. Republicans wanted to cut back on spending, while Democrats wanted to keep funding certain programmes like healthcare and education. Because they couldn't agree, the whole process stopped.

Shutdowns can also hurt the economy because people spend less money, and businesses that rely on government work or tourism can lose out.

Overall, the US government shutdown shows how big political disagreements can cause real problems for everyday people. It's a reminder that teamwork and compromise are important in politics.



HOCKEY: THE LONDON YOUTH GAMES



OLLIE 10E | SEAN 10B



For at least the past five years the Bexley London Youth Games boys hockey team has been well represented by Beths and 2025 was no different with four scholars playing in the team: Rowan 8H; Ollie 10E; Christopher 10E; Sean 10B and Callum 11H helping as an assistant coach: he had been a player in the squad for the previous three years, so brought his wealth of knowledge and experience to the training.

Stage 1: The Trials

The trialists came from two rival clubs in the Bexley borough, but we had to put the rivalry to one side if we were hoping to get a chance to play on the distinguished Olympic pitch. The trials were hard and competition was high. The trials tested us in many different aspects of the game, we were pushed far, but even if we didn't make the team, we learnt loads. The trials were weekly throughout May and June, so it tested our commitment, as well as our ability. In the end the people those who were the best in these two fields were going to get picked. To qualify to represent Bexley Borough for hockey you have to be a resident or attend a school in Bexley in Years 7-9, so for a few of us trialling, it was our last chance.

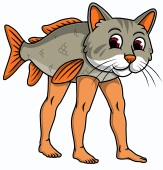


Stage 2: The Games

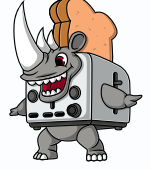
It was an early start to arrive at the Lee Valley Hockey and Tennis Centre by 9am, but it was worth it for the experience to play on the famous Olympic Pitch which had been relocated to Lee Valley after the London 2012 Olympics. The first two games were tough, we were pitted against reigning champions Bromley and a prominent Lambeth side. We came out of the first game only losing 1-0, we played well, and in the second game we lost 3-0. We had lost 2 in 2 but we came back even stronger winning against Enfield 1-0 and winning against Barnet 1-0. After the first round of matches we were told we had narrowly missed out on being part of the Cup competition, the top 10 teams go through and we had placed at position 11 out of 25. Instead we would be competing for the 'Plate'. Due to this, we had another four games ahead of us and we were already knackered. We didn't get a win in the plate games but we got three draws and one loss. Sadly, we did not place in the 'Plate' competition, but it was a great day and a fabulous experience. It was also great to be on the same team as those we sometimes play against! A great but very long day.

We hope that Beths continue to have a good representation in the Hockey squad at the London Youth Games for many years to come.

THE RISE OF BRAINROT



MOHAMMAD 8B



Hello everyone (again!) and I hope you all had a good month. Today I'm going to be writing about 'brainrot', how it has evolved and changed over the years, and my opinion about it. So let's not waste any more time (and writing space 😊), and dive straight in.

The origins of the word 'brainrot'

Even though most brainrot might be relatively recent, the word 'brainrot' itself is nothing new. The earliest mention of the concept of brainrot was in the 1854 book "Walden", where the author compared declining intelligence in Europe to, in his own words, "potato rot" (If you didn't know, there was a potato famine in north-west Europe in the 1840's) In recent times, the word was first used in 2007 on Twitter (now X), to refer to dating-game shows and video games. It rapidly increased in fame on Discord around 2020, where it evolved to include lots of different memes, phrases and other words.

Different examples of brainrot

After the word brainrot blew up in fame, Gen Alpha (people born from 2010 - 2024) started to use the word brainrot freely and in their day-to-day life. The first major brainrot terms were 'sigma', which was used to mean a leader/alpha male person, and the Ohio and subsequently 'Fanum tax' memes that evolved into brainrot. Around the same time, the word 'skibidi' was also dubbed, which referred to the YouTube shorts series 'Skibidi toilet'. Later on the word 'gyatt' was also introduced, meaning the buttocks. Currently, the most popular 'traditional' brainrot is 67 (which you might have heard of), where people shout 67!!! whenever either number is said while moving their hands up and down.

67



The creator of the 67 brainrot

Italian brainrot

Recently (since about January), a new type of brainrot has emerged - Italian brainrot. This includes mashups of animals with inanimate items, and most images of Italian brainrot 'figures' are made by generative AI. The first 'character' in Italian brainrot was Tralalelo Tralala - a three-legged shark with Nike sneakers, whose name was created when an AI video of Dwayne Johnson featured him saying nonsense words - Tralalelo Tralala included. The trend started with @eZburger401 posting a video of Tralalelo Tralala, which immediately blew up, before being taken down due to being Islamophobic. Another Islamophobic Italian brainrot was Bombardiro, whose description when translated from the original Italian, mocks Gaza and Islam in general. However, some Italians have pointed out that blasphemy (the act of disrespecting a God/deity) is used as a filler word in Italian, and that the video had no Islamophobic intentions, even if it makes fun of Muslim Gazan children.



Tralalelo Tralala, the first Italian brainrot

Personally, I don't like Italian brainrot (and most brainrot in general), and the way it has risen to fame, but that's just me. Thank you for reading, and I hope to see you all next edition!

UN MEETING ENDS IN CONTROVERSY



MUHAMAD 9W



On the 9th of September 2025, the annual UN Meetings hosted in New York, commemorated its 80th anniversary around the theme of: "Better together." This was, in fact, ironic, as the opposite occurred this year.

What was discussed?

Climate change and the Gaza conflict seemed to be the main topics for discussion this year, so here's a breakdown of what happened:

- Brazilian president, Luiz Inacio da Silva, linked environmental issues to economic justice and announced ambitious emission reduction goals ahead of COP30, which Brazil plans on hosting.
- Surinamese President, Jennifer Geerlings-Simons, highlighted the vulnerability of low-lying coastal areas to rising sea levels and called for more international action.
- Brazil, Suriname, South Africa and Slovenia supported reforming the UN Security Council to include border representation.
- The annoying orange, Donald Trump denied climate science, calling green energy policies a scam and the carbon footprint a hoax. As if that wasn't enough, he questioned the purpose of the UN and accused it of promoting, instead of preventing invasions due to its migration policies.



The controversy

The controversy was soon to begin when Donald Trump quoted that recognising Palestine as an official state would be like welcoming an act of terrorism. As of September 2025, the UK, Belgium, Malta, Canada, Australia, Luxembourg, Monaco, Portugal, San Marino and Andorra all recognised a Palestinian state.

South Africa accused Israel of genocide, and Indonesia offered to deploy 20,000 peacekeepers to Gaza. Turkey described the situation as a genocide perpetrated by Israel and criticised the lack of visas for Palestinian officials. Colombia advocated for a powerful army of countries to create a peacekeeping force to stop the genocide in Gaza.

The real controversy was when Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu rejected the unilateral recognition of a Palestinian state, calling it a reward to Hamas and defended his country's military actions. He later followed that up by attacking the recognition of a Palestinian state in his speech, prompting dozens of delegates to walk out of his speech. Israel then boycotted the 2 state solution conference thought of by France and Saudi Arabia.



WORLD MENTAL HEALTH DAY



ISHAQ 10B

What is World Mental Health Day?

World Mental Health Day is where we celebrate the focus of mental health. The day was on Friday 10th October. It is an international day to raise awareness for mental health and support each other's mental health and prevent mental illness. This day focuses on stress relief also on self-care and relaxation.

How can mental health affect us?

Mental health can affect us by constant fatigue (being someone who is tired after a full night of sleep), Additionally it can be with someone that gets easily irritated or easily withdrawal, loss of appetite of food or eaten too much food, Negative talk to yourself like saying "You're not good enough.", Wasting time or physical / mental exhaustion, finally frequent headaches or stomach aches. These are red flags not just "bad habits,".

Why is exam stress so common?

1. High expectation:

Teachers, parents, staff and us place high expectations on academic success.

2. Comparison culture:

Social media has made it easier than ever to compare one's performance or study routine with others, creating self-doubt.

3. Uncertainty about the future

The fear of uncertainty about the future adds a psychological burden beyond the exam paper. The continuous questions by relatives and families puts us in stress.

4. Lack of emotional support:

We feel misunderstood or dismissed when they try to express their academic anxieties. No one actually understands what we go through even in our studies.

Healthy strategies to cope with exam stress:

1. Practice short mindfulness break:

5 mins of deep breathing or guided meditation can reset the mind and reduce anxiety.

2. Create realistic study plans:

You can study with the Pomodoro Technique which is 25mins and 5 mins break which can boost our focus without burnout.

3. Talk with someone:

Encourage conversations with teachers, staff or even wellbeing champion

4. Move your body:

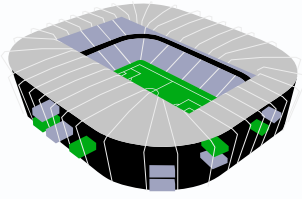
Light physical activity can lift mood and improve your confidence.

5. Don't forget about sleep:

Make sure you don't sacrifice your sleep as a well-rested brain performs better than a tired one.



BARCELONA TRIP 2025



EHIMEN 10W



Hello everyone! It's Ehimen in 10W and I'm here to tell you about the trip that me and many other scholars in both Year 8 and Year 10 embarked on to Barcelona, Spain to play in the World School Games Football Tournament with teachers: Mr A. Jones Mr Sansom, Mr L. Jones and Mr Rushbrook.

Friday 10th October 2025 (First Day)

First, we met up at around 2:20am at Hall Place, leaving at 2:30am and arriving at London Gatwick Airport, around 3:15am. After getting through check in, bag drop and then security, we reached the departure lounge, containing our boarding gate, shops, restaurants and many other amenities. Although, it was around 5 in the morning, me and some of my friends decided to have a very light meal at Nando's, which was very delicious if you ask me. By 7am, we were on our flight, departing Gatwick at 7:30am and leaving the plane at 10:20am, to arrive in Barcelona, resulting in a 2 hour and 50 minute flight.



Before 12pm, we entered a coach, that took us to the Barcelona Megastore, where the journey took no longer than 25 minutes. Next to the Megastore, the monumental Spotify Camp Nou greeted us in formidable fashion, with construction still taking place, which will take the stadium to a monumental 100,500 spectators, after already being the stadium with the highest capacity in Europe before, (99,000) retaining its title. During our visit, to the megastore, we went to a wonderful immersive experience, that possessed all of the indispensable, crucial and pivotal parts of Barcelona Football Club, including their 5 stupendous UEFA Champions Leagues to Lionel Messi's (G.O.A.T) 8 remarkable Ballon d'Ors and 6 gobsmacking Golden Boots!



We left the Barcelona Megastore at 2:50, arriving at the beautiful Cambrilis Resort by 4:08 in the afternoon. After, setting ourselves into the new environment, we went to the opening ceremony, which was an enjoyable experience where we walked from the entrance to the main area where the pool is, where we were sat down and every school's captain went on stage to wave the flag their school is representing. The atmosphere was truly electric, and became even more lively when a freestyler came on stage and starting doing moves, I doubt Ronaldinho, would even be able to attempt correctly! After the ceremony, we had some free time before Lights out at 10pm. Wow! What an eventful day the first day was, a lot of stuff definitely occurred that just had to be documented on in this article.

Saturday 11th October 2025 (Second Day)

The next day, we woke up early at 6am, to have breakfast at 6:30am, giving us time after to get ready for the 1st matchday, where we reached the Football Salou Training Facility at 8:46am. After Day 1, the Year 10 team were 3rd after a decent start we knew that there was a lot to improve on. We had dinner in the evening at 7:15pm and then had free time, where most of us went to the 5v5 football pitch, where it was more like 30v30, considering it was boys vs girls, with many other schools on the campus and the pitch was packed with people from all over the world. Even some of the PE teachers came down to the football pitch to watch us and a hundred other children having fun in the recreational areas of the resort, which got our free time extended for a short period of time.



Sunday 12th October (Third Day)

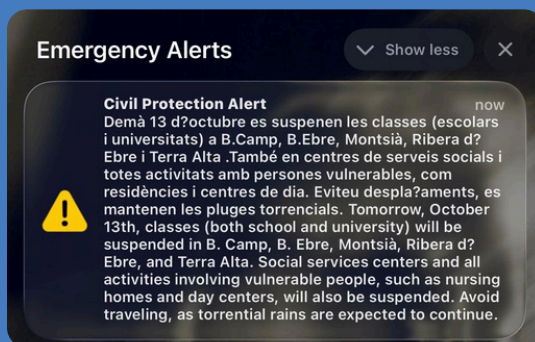
We had now reached the final day of games, for both Year 8 and Year 10 and the final day before we started our travels back to England for the following day. We had woken up earlier today at 7:00am to have breakfast at 7:30am. On This day, the Year 10's went to the pitches a bit earlier than the Year 8's, with the Year 10's arriving at the pitches at 9:33am to play our final match of the group stages, which we won, taking us 2nd in the group and landing us in the Semi-Finals of the Cup against a fierce Dubai College side, that had scored 28 goals in the group stages and conceded NONE. In the match, us Year 10's persevered effortlessly, giving Dubai College a tiring and hard game, where either side were unable to convert, therefore we were sent to pens where we sadly lost.



Following this, we then lost our game for 3rd and 4th, in the cup, where most of us could admit that we were not up to par nor standard, which can seem frustrating at first but can also be seen as a learning curve for us and an important lesson for the team as a collective in the future to work as a TEAM, and not get on each others backs so much.



On the brighter side of things, after the match, The Year 10's met up with the Year 8's where the B team had won their last match, securing them 3rd in the Shield! After, we watched the Year 8's A team final match which was sent to penalties where Beths' very own incredible goalkeeper Seb was able to put up save after save and Kayode was apt to score the final penalty securing a win in their last match and 3rd in the Shield! What a way to end the tournament and the final day of Games.



Monday 13th October (Final Day)

After, a wonderful few days, we had now reached the final day before we returned back home to England. It was an experience that I, personally will never forget and I would just like to thank the Whole PE Department and all the staff that made this trip. Thank you for reading this article, bye!

NASCAR: TOP CHASE ELLIOTT COMEBACKS



FAEQ 10B¹ [EDITOR]



Hello again, readers! Welcome back to Best of the Beths if you've been reading before; if this is your first time, then welcome to the newsletter that is (and has been) 'produced for students, by students' since 2019! I am Faeq (**pronounced: Fi-eeek**) of 10B, the editor of the newsletter, and if you read my last piece (based on BoTB's history), you might be able to remember that I hinted at a motorsports-related article for this edition! Now, I've covered NASCAR quite often in the past year or so, but I've nearly never focused a piece on one particular driver (the only exception to that was a bonus gallery to do with Kyle Larson in the May 2025 edition).

So, for this month (for a main reason you'll discover later), I have decided to focus on Chase Elliott, driver of the #9 Hendrick Motorsports Chevrolet in the NASCAR Cup Series as well as NASCAR's Most Popular Driver (from 2018 onwards). Elliott is currently one of the sport's top drivers, and has been for quite a few years now. He's been with Hendrick Motorsports his whole Cup career, driving the famed #24 car (2016-2017) before taking the helm of the #9 (2018-present). In (nearly) 10 full-time seasons in Cup, he's had quite a few notable comebacks and recoveries, and this article will state a few of the most notable ones (in no particular manner of ordering). So without further ado, let's begin!

***1) 2019 Charlotte ROVAL (/Charlotte Road Course): September 29th**

It was at this time where Chase Elliott was (at least, starting to be) regarded as one of the sport's best drivers when it came to road courses, following two victories at Watkins Glen (2018 - for his first-career Cup Series win - and earlier in the 2019 season). He was one of the favourites for this race too, and after starting 19th he gradually worked his way through the field and eventually went on to win Stage 2 of the race. But, with 45 laps to go he locked up his tyres and went straight on into (what used to be called) the Heartburn Turn barrier on a restart, dropping him right down to the bottom of the field.

Yet despite the damage on the front of the car, the #9 Chevrolet would *still* be the fastest car on track. Elliott would pass car after car before eventually returning to the race lead with 6 laps remaining, and from there he would cruise to a third victory of the 2019 campaign, one that would also start a run of 4 consecutive wins on road-courses (going into the 2020 season). Post-race, he would return to the Heartburn Turn barrier for a spectacle that matched his stunning comeback. He edged his way up to it for a burnout, followed by quite a moment of personality from Elliott, which is arguably one of NASCAR's best-ever post-race celebrations. And now it's without a doubt that Elliott's charge at the Roval in 2019 has firmly become a NASCAR classic!




This is of course one of Chase Elliott's most special victories, yet he felt as though it '**never should have been special in the first place**'. Even so, this comeback firmly cemented the #9 as one of NASCAR's best road racers at the top level; Elliott would also win the Cup Series' next two road course races for good measure.

(IMAGE CREDIT: Twitter)

*2) 2025 Circuit of the Americas: March 2nd


Now we fast forward around 5-and-a-half years, to the early stages of this year's NASCAR Cup Series season. Here we are again at a road course; we already know that Chase Elliott runs quite well on that type of track, but he hadn't won a road course race since 2021, when the Cup Series had the Generation-6 package. The driver of the #9 had a few chances to get a victory turning left and right in the first three years with the Next-Gen car (Watkins Glen 2022 and Indianapolis 2023 to name a couple), yet things didn't exactly fall his way. He's still a favourite on road courses these days though; he qualified 3rd on the grid for the 2025 Texas Grand Prix...





Only to get turned at the first corner by Ross Chastain on the first lap, sending him to the bottom of the field (again). A pit-stop at the initial stage break would help to sort out the broken toe link attained from the collision, and after restarting 36th he would make his way forward. Furthermore, his #9 car would be fitted with fresh tires at the final caution, and from there he would surge his way up to P4 by the drop of the chequered flag. In fact, for the most part during the final 5 laps, Elliott's lap times were at least **half-a-second** faster than the race leader as he slashed the gap down from 9.312s to 5.274s. Perhaps if he had 5 to 10 more laps, he could have got this one... This was still quite a good drive from #9, who logged his first top-5 finish of the 2025 season!



Chase Elliott vs The Leader

Last 5 Laps at Circuit of the Americas



Lap	Pos	Laptime	Leader Time	Difference	Gap to Leader <small>(seconds)</small>
91	8th 	1:42.103	1:43.149	-1.046	9.551
92	8th 	1:41.526	1:41.765	-0.239	9.312
93	5th 	1:41.193	1:43.136	-1.943	7.369
94	5th 	1:40.836	1:42.404	-1.568	5.801
95	4th 	1:42.445	1:42.972	-0.527	5.274



Elliott had been wiped out on the first corner of the very first lap by Ross Chastain, sending him to the very back of the field. he'd eventually Above are Chase Elliott's lap times in the final 5 laps of the EchoPark Automotive Grand Prix relative to the race leader. Using this data, it could perhaps be sensible to say that with another 10 laps, (provided he maintained this pace), he may well have been in contention for the victory even with the Lap 1 incident.

(IMAGE CREDITS: NASCAR Insights via Twitter and Getty Images)

*3) For the 2020 NASCAR Cup Series Championship: November 1st - 8th

Now, this one doesn't just happen over one race, but rather the final two of the 2020 season. Let me give you some quick context: Chase Elliott (easily) made the NASCAR Cup Series Playoffs in 2020, and after having made it to the semi-final round (aka. the Round of 8), he found himself 25 points behind 4th place in the playoff drivers' standings. This effectively put him in must-win territory as the Cup Series headed to Martinsville (the series' shortest circuit at 0.526mi) for the eliminator race that would determine the four title finalists (aka. Championship 4) for the last race of the year at Phoenix. Elliott needed a win at Martinsville, and after retaking the lead with 43 laps to go, he would hold it to take victory and automatically advance to the Championship 4.

Now we advance a week to the season finale at Phoenix Raceway, where Elliott qualified P1, but had to start at the back of the field as his #9 Chevrolet failed pre-race technical inspection **twice**. Yet despite being far back from his championship rivals (Joey Logano, Denny Hamlin and Brad Keselowski), Elliott would finish 3rd in Stage 1 and move up to second in Stage 2. During the final stage, he made the decisive overtake on Logano with 42 laps ago before driving into the Arizona sunset to not only win at Phoenix, but also become the 2020 NASCAR Cup Series Champion. After standing on the brink of elimination, back-to-back wins for Elliott at the most crucial time gave him his first (and as of the time of writing/so far only) NASCAR Cup Series Championship.



The victories at Martinsville and Phoenix were the 10th and 11th of Chase Elliott's Cup career, and are definitely two of the most important. Back-to-back wins to close out the 2020 season made him the 3rd-youngest driver to win the NASCAR Cup Series Championship, just days away from his 25th birthday.

(IMAGE CREDIT: Getty Images)

4) 2025 Kansas II: September 28th

Here we are, then. This comeback right here is the main reason why you are viewing this article right now. As of the time you are reading this, it'd have been just over a month after Chase Elliott did something simply spectacular to close out this year's Kansas playoff race. But first, as always, some context! The Cup Series also raced at Kansas in the spring, where Elliott had speed that could contend for the victory, only for issues on pit road to relegate him to P15. But like the spring, Elliott was also fast in the fall, again leading laps and in the conversation for the race win before being shuffled back to 10th ahead of the final Overtime restart... But the minute that followed was magic.

In a matter of two laps, the #9 Chevrolet soared from P10 to P1 to defeat not one, nor two, nor three, but **four** of the day's dominant Toyotas! He started the last lap by making quick work of Joe Gibbs Racing teammates Christopher Bell and Chase Briscoe, before then taking advantage of Denny Hamlin (also JGR) and Bubba Wallace's (23XI Racing) battle for the lead, which saw both of them make contact. Hamlin then tried to defend as Elliott came charging below, but the #9 bounced off of him instead to not only claim a narrow 0.069s victory, but also lock in to the Round of 8 in this year's Cup Series Playoffs!



Having gone from 10th to 5th by the start of the final lap, Chase Elliott had 4 Toyotas dead-ahead. With the advantage of fresher tyres, combined with Hamlin and Wallace's costly squabble for the lead, Elliott crossed the line ahead of all of them to complete a comeback from oblivion in just one minute at Kansas. The victory was also Elliott's 2nd of 2025 and first at Kansas Speedway for 7 years (he also won the 2018 Playoff race there). And if you were to watch this comeback, it's definitely a spectacular piece of driving! 😊

(IMAGE CREDITS: NASCAR.com and Getty Images)

That will do it for a short compilation of Chase Elliott's best comebacks! Thanks for not only taking time to read it, but also trying to understand with any NASCAR terms you might not have understood, if any (I also tried to give you some context while keeping it a bit short)! If there are any questions, please feel free to contact me [@22B-Ojelade-Faeq](#) on Microsoft Teams or Outlook, or in-person if you can find me! Should there be any questions, and if you want to take part in Best of the Beths, please contact/speak to Miss Stevens, the organiser of the newsletter!

I may have said it at the beginning, but perhaps it's a bit more clear to you that Chase Elliott really is one of NASCAR's best drivers - even despite having sustained a fractured tibia in a snowboarding accident back in 2023! From the ROVAL classic of 2019 to the spectacular Kansas comeback of a few weeks ago (which will actually become, at least, a month by the time you're reading this), there are many great drives and recoveries that NASCAR's Most Popular Driver has put on; the ones in this article are some of (and arguably) the best ones!

And who knows? By the time you're reading this, Chase Elliott *might* have just put on yet another comeback for the 2025 NASCAR Cup Series Championship (I could well be wrong, but I might end up being right from this article's last update as well)! For now though, thanks for reading this one, but before you advance with the next topic, I actually have a bit of bonus content for you to view...

[*WRITER'S NOTE: This article was last updated on October 17th 2025. Facts and statistics within the article are as of that date; some of them might have changed by a future date while others may have remained the same! Anyways, I hope you enjoyed part 1 of my content for this edition, now quickly for Part 2!]

NASCAR: CHASE ELLIOTT'S BEST VICTORIES (BONUS GALLERY)!



FAEQ 10B² [EDITOR]



As I said, before you move on, I have a bit of bonus content for you! I'll admit, a bonus gallery with pictures that (more often than not) relate to my main article is something that I tend to produce, and have been doing quite often recently! There may be some ideas in my articles that I mention, yet bring back into these galleries to illustrate it further to you! Speaking of illustration, I thought that while I'm focusing on Chase Elliott this month, I'd help to illustrate 12 of his best victories from his NASCAR Cup Series career! Don't worry; these galleries are short to look over, so have a quick glance at these photos and move on to the next topic when you're ready! Enjoy!



1) 2018 Watkins Glen: In his 99th Cup Series start, Chase Elliott would hold off Martin Truex Jr. to claim the first win of his career at the Glen, and the 250th for Hendrick Motorsports. He'd also receive a push from 7-time champion and teammate Jimmie Johnson [also pictured, #48] after he ran out of fuel following the last lap!

(IMAGE CREDIT: Getty Images)



5) 2019 Watkins Glen: Fast forward another year, and Chase Elliott posts the most dominant performance of his career! In the 2019 Watkins Glen event, he led 80 of the 90 laps from pole (P1 on the grid) and once again held off Martin Truex Jr. for victory.

(IMAGE CREDIT: Getty Images)



6) 2019 Charlotte Roval: Now this one was the first of a few that will also have popped up in my article. As you may already know, Chase Elliott locked up and went straight on into the Turn 1 barrier on a restart before charging back through the field to claim a stunning victory.

(IMAGE CREDIT: Getty Images)

(continues on next page →)



9) 2020 Charlotte Roval: #9's ninth career victory came in a race where track conditions changed from wet to dry early on, and he also overcame a loose tyre in Stage 3. Furthermore, this marked his fourth consecutive triumph on a road course!

(IMAGE CREDIT: Getty Images)



10) 2020 Martinsville II: Elliott came into the Round of 8 finale 25 points below the cutline, yet he would win his way into the Championship 4 after leading 236 of 500 laps for his most wins in a season (four... at that point, at least).

(IMAGE CREDIT: Getty Images)



11) 2020 Phoenix II: A week after the victory at Martinsville, Chase Elliott would have to rally through the field after failing pre-race technical inspection twice. Yet the #9 would make his way forward quickly and eventually win at Phoenix and to clinch his first Cup Series Championship.

The title would also be the 13th for Hendrick Motorsports, and the first for an Elliott since 1988 (when Chase's father Bill [right, bottom picture] won the championship). Post-race, Chase Elliott also celebrated with teammate Jimmie Johnson [#48, top picture] in a moment that is regarded as the 'passing of the torch' at Hendrick; Johnson retired from full-time NASCAR competition at the end of the 2020 season (the neon yellow numbers on the #9, #24 and #88 cars were a tribute to him).

(IMAGE CREDITS: Getty Images)



12) 2021 Circuit of the Americas: Elliott's first win of 2021 (the season his title defence) came in a rain-shortened inaugural race at the Circuit of the Americas. It was Chevrolet's 800th win in NASCAR along with Hendrick Motorsports' 268th, tying them for the most all-time by an organisation.

(IMAGE CREDIT: Getty Images)

(continues on next page →)



13) 2021 Road America: The 2021 contest at Road America marks Elliott's seventh and last road-course triumph to date. He would come alive in Stage 3 and hold off Christopher Bell as the Cup Series returned to the Wisconsin track after 55 years (1956 being the last event there).

(IMAGE CREDIT: Getty Images)



16) 2022 Atlanta II: Atlanta Motor Speedway was transformed into an intermediate-superspeedway in 2022 (NASCAR's first year with the Next-Gen car), perhaps to Elliott's advantage as he won both Stages and the race, marking his first of two triumphs on home soil (the other came this year)!

(IMAGE CREDIT: Getty Images)



18) 2022 Talladega II: A week after crashing out at Texas, Elliott would rebound and defeat Ryan Blaney [2nd, #12] for victory on NASCAR's largest oval by 0.046s, as well as a place in the Playoffs' Round of 8. Little did he or anyone know that this would be his last win for quite some time...

(IMAGE CREDIT: Getty Images)



19) 2024 Texas: Following a troublesome 2023 season (which included a fractured tibia, a one-race suspension for actions at Charlotte *and* missing the Playoffs), Chase Elliott finally returned to Victory Lane at Texas in April 2024 after a few crashes that sent the race into Overtime.

He'd celebrate this win with a 'Polish victory lap' in honour of Alan Kulwicki (the 1992 Cup champion), who also raced with Hooters as the sponsor on his car. And for a further fact, this would be Hooters' last race in NASCAR after Hendrick Motorsports ended sponsorship with them due to their failure to meet the team's financial commitments.

(IMAGE CREDITS: Getty Images)



(continues on next page →)



21) 2025 Kansas II: This victory is the latest entry on Chase Elliott's list. On a day where Toyota dominated, Chase Elliott went from P10 to P1 in one minute, capping the comeback by taking advantage of contact between Denny Hamlin and Bubba Wallace in the final corners of the final lap to give the victory to Chevrolet instead!

(IMAGE CREDIT: Getty Images)

That's the end of the gallery!

This was just some bonus content, but thanks for having a quick look at this bonus gallery I put together; even if it were a 20-second glance, thanks for paying some attention to this! Again, if there are any questions about this or the newsletter in general, do ask either myself (@22B-Ojelade-Faeq on Microsoft Teams or Outlook, or in-person) or Miss Stevens, depending on the context of your query! I'll admit, it was fun getting to create these two pieces, mainly owing to the fact that this is based on one of my favourite drivers in the sport (not my *absolute* favourite, but a favourite nonetheless)! But at the same time, it was also a bit of a challenge in terms of trying not to go too advanced with my NASCAR knowledge to a point where'd you still understand 😊! Anyways, that'll do it for my content this month; thanks for viewing, and until next time, goodbye! 🙌

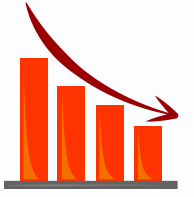


[*PRODUCER'S NOTE: This gallery was last updated on October 17th 2025. Like my article, all facts and statistics mentioned are as of that date; while some of them may stand, others may change by a future date! Hopefully, you found this interesting though; see you (hopefully) in November!]

LOWERING ATTENTION SPANS



DAVID 10H



When was the last time you had a completely tech-free hour? An entire day away from your phone or tablet? No texts, notifications or aimless browsing? If you have, impressive, but if you haven't, I don't blame you. The fact of the matter is, our daily lives today are all tethered to our smartphones and computers and all things digital, which funnily enough are some of the biggest and most harmful distractions for the modern-day man.

Indeed, researchers have found many pieces of evidence that over the past couple of decades, people's attention spans have shrunk considerably. Research conducted by the American Psychological Association has cited that the average attention span has decreased, from 2.5 minutes in 2004, to 75 seconds in 2012, then to a further 47 seconds from 2017-2023. Research conducted by Microsoft in 2015 showed that the average attention span of Gen Z students was only 8 seconds, 4 seconds less than that of millennials. But why exactly is this the case?

Well, the study attributes the results to the generation's massive exposure to multiple screens, ever-changing and innovative tech, as well as changing forms of content. You see, Gen Z is used to immediate answers. A quick Google search or asking an AI machine like ChatGPT, questions can easily be answered on the spot - and follow ups can be asked too. Being the first generation to be fully raised with social media and technology, Gen Z has the highest daily screen time.

In a study that used screen capture technology to analyse mobile device screen time, researchers at Stanford University and Pennsylvania State University found the median number of times participants interacted with their phones was 228 times. Each session - on average - lasted for only 10 seconds. The numbers help to give clues on what's going on with our attention, however, it's hard to definitively say from the research what's actually happening. So let's dig a bit deeper.

See, when your attention is disrupted, your ability to learn is impaired, due to the fact that the new object of our focus interferes with memory encoding, how we save information. Encoding requires long enough engagement and interaction so as to move said information from the short-term memory to the long-term memory. If during this process, we're constantly engaging with new things, our engagement - and by extension our learning - suffers as a result.



Most people make the mistake of thinking that because working and responding to texts at the same time is multitasking, when in reality, due to our limited cognitive resources, we're just task-switching. Dr. Gloria Marks of the University of California estimates that on average, it takes us 25 minutes to get back to our original task when interrupted. She offered a whiteboard analogy: when we gather information we need for our internal whiteboard, we have to spend time writing it down, but when we switch, due to limited cognitive resources, we have to erase and write our new thing, then when we switch back to our original activity, the cycle continues.

In the Penn State - Stanford Experiment, of the 228 times students went on their phones, 34% of the time were interactions with social media. There's a reason - known as the Social Media Dopamine Loop. See, notifications activate the reward pathways in our brain, releasing dopamine (the 'pleasure' neurotransmitter), hence motivating us to come back for more. Our brain always seeks satisfaction, that deadly dopamine hit, which is why you may feel the need to check your phone even if you *haven't* actually received a notification.

We can also link the Social Media Dopamine Loop to the rise of short-form online content. You know what I'm talking about - the TikToks, the YouTube Shorts. These are algorithms that deliberately favour bite-sized yet highly engaging content, taking advantage of the human tendency to adapt to new stimuli, making focus difficult. However, experts have also argued that people aren't actually being less attentive - but rather, more selective due to the vast amounts of accessible content there is now.

There's a lot of evidence to suggest that attention spans, on average are decreasing - but is that more reflective of our evolving environment or people's ability to retain information. Yes, there are things that make it easier or harder to stay focused, but ultimately we hold the power of deciding where our attention goes.

But seriously - do some people really have lower attention spans than goldfish?

MCFLY - WONDERLAND: ALBUM REVIEW



HADI 11A

Album Background

'Wonderland' (2005) is the 2nd album by British pop-rock band McFly and my sister has dared me to review it. This album features a large rejection of the surf rock of McFly's previous album, instead opting for a baroque pop sound (basically P!ATD without all the emo-ness). The album shot straight to no. 1 at release, and contained four top 10 singles - 2 of which also hit no. 1, including the pop track 'All About You'.

Track Listing

1. I'll Be OK
2. I've Got You
3. Ultraviolet
4. The Ballad of Paul K
5. I Wanna Hold You
6. Too Close for Comfort
7. All About You
8. She Falls Asleep: Part 1
9. She Falls Asleep: Part 2
10. Don't Know Why
11. Nothing
12. Memory Lane

MCFLY



WRONG
McFly!!!



*My Review

1) I'll Be OK (7/10) - A decent pop rock track and a decent opener. It's so glad that he'll be OK. Peaked at No. 1.

2) I've Got You (8/10) - A catchy pop-punk tune that calls back to the band's debut album.

3) Ultraviolet (8/10) - This song introduces the more orchestral motif of this album and employs the usage of standard band instruments as well as sitars. Peaked at No. 9.

4) The Ballad of Paul K (6/10) - AKA 'The Ballad of a Drunk'.

5) I Wanna Hold You (9/10) - Even more orchestral aspects to this song as well as a surprisingly good guitar solo. Easily the heaviest song on the album. Peaked at No. 3.

6) Too Close for Comfort (6/10) - Iris if it was made in the UK. Sounds a bit like post-hardcore in the final chorus!

7) All About You (9/10) - A classic pop track, leaning heavily into the baroque pop aesthetic of the album. Peaked at No. 1.

8) She Falls Asleep: Part 1 (7/10) - A cosy little instrumental.

9) She Falls Asleep: Part 2 (10/10) - A great ballad.

10) Don't Know Why (7/10) - Very self explanatory, but these guitar solos are genuinely awesome.

11) Nothing (6/10) -

12) Memory Lane (8/10) - A nostalgic pop rock ballad to end this album, right back where we started.

Overall, the album is pretty good for what is basically a boy-band record. The best tracks in my opinion are 'I Wanna Hold You', 'All About You' and 'She Falls Asleep'.

I rate this album... 7.5  10!

BEST OF THE BETHS

EDITION #37



A Note of Thanks



Thank you for reading the 37th edition of Best of the Beths!

We started this academic year with a special design for a special occasion (the newsletter's 6th anniversary), and with that occasion came the largest-ever edition of the newsletter, making for a very good start to the year for this platform. Since then, the team have been working hard to continue the strong opening to the year in this edition, and it was also nice to see more students becoming a part of this platform! Some new names are making their debut here in an edition that's the **fifth consecutive one to have 30 or more pages**, so if one of your friends/peers has done so here, please do congratulate them!

That's just one statement to note, and it must be said that we should also be celebrating the fact that **at least one scholar from each and every year group in this school** contributed towards this publication! With this superb start to the 2025/26 academic year, it's only fair that we commend this amazing newsletter team on what they've done already amongst the busy start to the new year at Beths. The November edition will of course be next up, and the question now is: will we have another statistic/fact to applaud then?

Maybe, but this time in Best of the Beths, we covered affairs in two of the world's biggest/most recognisable countries, the rise of AI in materials science, book recommendations for the autumn season, a comparison between two dangerous substances, the rise of memes and sports (for both our community and across the world) - to name only a few that made up yet another jam-packed edition of the newsletter! 'In fact, 'jam-packed' would even be a great way to describe the newsletter's recent form, as in the last 5 editions combined (including this one), there's been an average of **39 pages** full of news, reviews and much more!


BEST OF THE BETHS

EDITION #37




That'll do it for the time being, but until we return for Edition #38, please feel free to click the red button below and visit the Newsletters section of our school website for some past publications if you haven't had your fill of the newsletter (which we hope you haven't)! Just click on the drop-down menu, and you will find over 30 of the newsletter's previous editions, from the very first one made from Microsoft Publisher in September 2019, to the current-day counterparts, including the 6th anniversary edition (and this one shall eventually be on the list, perhaps when you're first seeing this)!

For now though, it's been another successful effort from the newsletter team to bring this to you; we hope you've enjoyed what we've had to say this month and we also hope you're looking forward to what we'll be sharing with you come the end of November! Thanks for reading the 37th publication of Best of the Beths (the newsletter that's been produced *for* students, *by* students since 2019) - until next time, it's goodbye from us! 🙌



Want to read more before we return? Please click
here for some prior editions of the newsletter for
now; see you soon!



Note written by Faeq Ojelade of 10B, Editor of Best of the Beths

Regards from the Best of the Beths Newsletter Team! See you next time!

