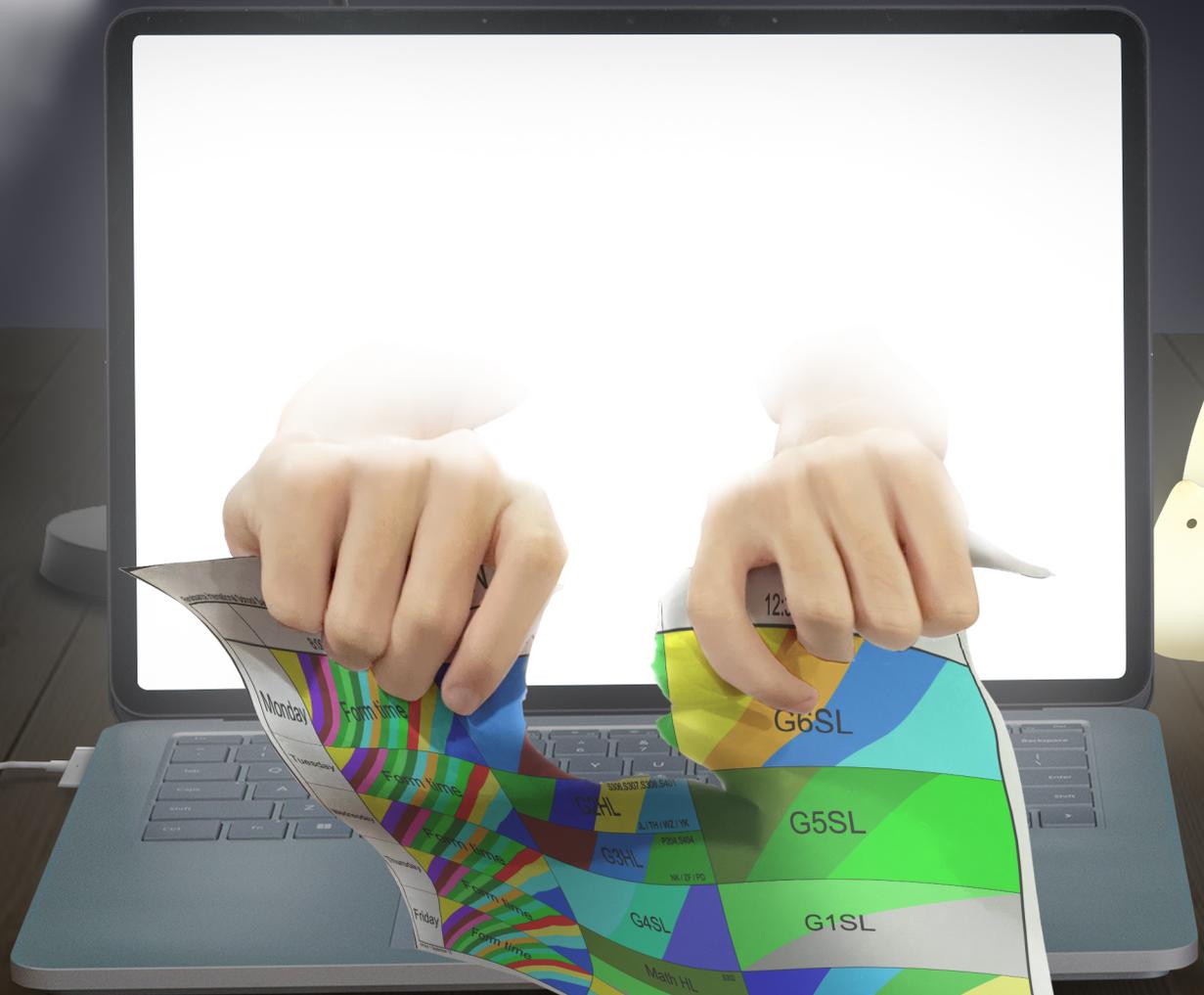


TALKTOWN

— EDITION 22 —

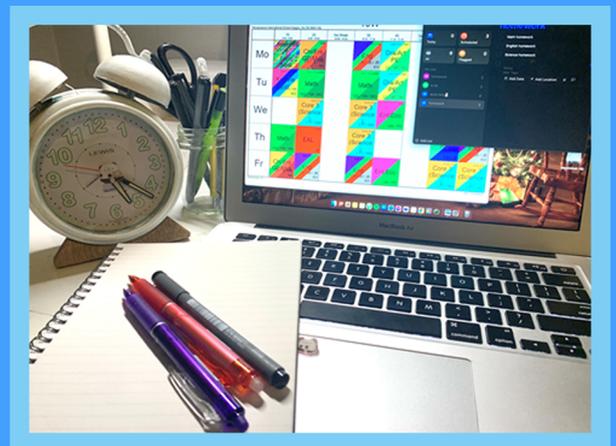


WHICH TIME TABLE IS BETTER?

BY: NGUYEN LY TRA MY (ROSE) 9J EDITOR: NINI 9J

On August 22, every form teacher sent the first version of the necessary timetable to their own class. And the first schedule has been designed with three main things including form time and the other two activities where the lesson of the subject is differentiated differently depending on the class. Everything seemed to be going well, but as you know, the duration of a lesson to take place is around two and a half hours which was considered to be quite long for some students. After a few months of using the “old” version as well as finding it ineffective for some individuals, the school decided to create a form in which students would be able to vote for one between two distinct types of timetables. (The old and the new one). After the occurrence of some discussions and decision making, students eventually had to use the brand-new timetable with six activities (one hour for each subject) per day. Through this, one question is posed, which timetable is better when comparing the first and the second timetables (since we have been using the alternative one for more than 2 months, so I am sure everyone will be able to answer this question just for a better adaptation)? Here is the summary to what students have thought about it:

When talking about the timetable that appeared on August, students mostly discussed the number of subjects they had. In their general opinions, even though each lesson often took longer, the amount of work they received was not as piled up as what they considered the second timetable to be, and because it takes longer time to study, so it also helps them to complete the task faster and have a deeper understanding about the subject.



After hearing some ideas supporting the first side, let us have a look at the students who chose the other timetable. For them, this new schedule contains less time for each subject, which students considered it as good enough (1 hour per each). Furthermore, they said that this timetable also contains the average time to study and have more time on the subjects they consider to be more important like English,



Science, Math. They also really like the thirty minutes break that helps them to relax and be ready for the next class. Unlike the first one, the students also have some study-time to catch up for homework or relaxing for an extra 1 hour.

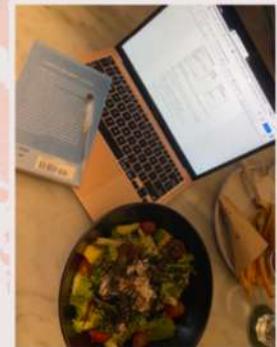
In conclusion, we had a chance to hear different ideas as well as thoughts of students in this article. What about you? Would you choose a timetable with 3 activities but each will take more than 2 hours to study or a timetable with lots of activity with just exactly 1 hour per each?

A NEW CHAPTER.



Covid has created a huge impact on all of our lives in a blink of an eye, from the hobbies we enjoy to the studies we do every weekday, our everyday routines were replaced with learning to adapt to this abrupt change in circumstances, which left many of us surprised and unmotivated. However, things are changing, for example, our school is aiming to focus on its students' voices meaning house events will become more inclusive and no longer be just sports. Moreover, our school's parliament is focusing on balancing work load and allowing younger students to develop Round Square IDEALS and learn to be independent.

Parliament is changing to become a more student-voice-focused community, that is, there is no longer just the head boy and head girl shouldering all the responsibilities, rather, parliament now contain smaller committees such as the House Events committee, the FOBISIA committee, the Eco committee, the Round Square committee, and the Service Committee. By having these committees, it allows younger students in parliament to develop skills such as leadership and problem-solving skills, which is an extremely crucial skill to have! Furthermore, with the revised system, this allows the work to be balanced and fair for every parliament student and allows for a more organized system. Overall, by dismantling the previous hierarchical system and delegate tasks to smaller groups within parliament, it allows the younger students to have a chance at leading events and solving issues, helping develop the younger students' crucial skills that will help them in the future!



Another aspect that parliament is working on is revising the House points. Every year our school hosts the same mandatory house events where students attend with "gaining house points" as their motivation, however, a little birdy told me that this year's events will be completely different, a whole new approach! To provide more insight, our school is shifting their approach into a more student-focused perspective. Which is to say, there are up and coming house events that will cater more towards a variety of student activities. This allows students to feel more included and will heighten their interests. Since this has never been done before, everything is still very much under wraps and still highly theoretical, however, one thing is for sure, our school this year will be hosting many new events- events that you probably can't even see coming or imagine so please continue to stay on the edge!



Overall, there are multiple major aspects that are hoped to be addressed this school year. Additionally, our school is working hard to fulfil our wishes which puts faith and assurance in the student body that their voices are being heard. With the fresh and new upcoming events, we hope to see more students participating in activities as now there is a wider range of events.

JENNY & VIVIAN 10G

BO BURNHAM: INSIDE, A REVIEW

BY BELLA 10W & ANNIE 9J

If you are not already feeling claustrophobic enough, the 1 hour and 30 minutes music, comedy, standup cinema, "Inside" by Bo Burnham will sure induce those fears of confinement even more. You may have heard of Bo Burnham from his standup comedy pre-pandemic, YouTube, Vine, TikTok, or any social media platform. Regardless, how you discovered Bo, He's been infamous for leaving the audience addicted to his songs with catchy beats, humming to the memorable tunes, and "Inside" was no exception.

Directed, written, edited, and even filmed by himself alone. The special follows Bo, as he is trapped inside his Los Angeles home during the Covid-19 Pandemic, with nothing but his deteriorating mental health and thoughts. It follows many captivating themes such as mental health, isolation, childhood, race, capitalism, self-awareness, the internet, and so much more, but for the sake of not getting too philosophical, we will keep it simple with some quick summary, and only touching on necessary parts.

Bo has already directed other shows before, but "Inside" had a darker tone than other specials or concerts he has made, it was also more personal to him, touching on topics like self-reflection, personal mental illnesses, personal perspective, by expressing and coping through his songs and jokes.



"Unique comedy special discusses sex, depression, suicide."



The special does not really have a chronological order between the beginning and the end, it is filled with musical performances with occasional segments of Bo communicating his feelings towards the world. The movie kicked off with a song called "Content", about how Bo was sorry for being on a hiatus but came back with some content about drawing comparisons to the audience on how a father gives his child their favorite food, each section starts and ends abruptly, with no coherence, as he indicated at the start of the show. He performs a song called "FaceTime with My Mom (Tonight)" about Face Timing his mother's concerns. He then sings "How the World Works" to instruct children about nature, but the sock puppet he introduces begins singing about a variety of controversial topics, including historical atrocities and labor exploitation, before chastising Burnham for expressing his viewpoint.

We could also see Bo Burnham editing his films, commenting on his own videos, cracking jokes, and even celebrating his 30th birthday inside during those scenes. Things grow more twisted as we move closer to the finale, as Bo personifies himself as the internet, He examines the origins and evolving nature of the internet in "Welcome to the Internet," inviting viewers to connect with a diverse amount of information, some cheery and others tragic. The film concludes with Bo Burnham coming outdoors after being stuck inside, with audio of the crowd cheering and laughing as he desperately attempts but is unable to return inside.

Generally speaking, there is a lot to uncover in this special; some would call it a "chaotic masterpiece," while others disagree; some approach the special philosophically, while others watch it for enjoyment. The audience could not help but be awestruck throughout the special as they listened to such well-written music and marveled at how well-thought-out the special is. The lighting and camera work are astonishing and the fact that Bo Burnham did it all by himself stunned everyone. Regardless of how you see it, it is one of those special that is different for everyone, depending on who is watching it.

According to Rotten Tomatoes, the special has a 93 percent approval rating based on 45 reviews with an average rating of 9.2/10. "A claustrophobic masterclass in comedy and introspection, Inside is a beautifully bleak and hilariously hopeful special from Bo Burnham" says the website's critical critique. So, seeing and criticizing the special yourself is the best method to determine if you find it relatable or not; it is entirely up to you whether you want to watch this contemporary style of humor however if you appreciate dark comedy; claustrophobic effects and well-written music, you will certainly enjoy Bo Burnham's 'Inside.'

Education perfect international school language championship

BY: Sarah & Thao 11L

As situations regarding COVID-19 took over the ability for schools to function, our students have been forced to adapt to the new online learning environment starting from 2019. Throughout the months, several programs have been added to many teachers' lessons to provide a variety of teaching techniques. Some failed to meet standards as teachers lacked the ability to track their students' progress, but some grew to heights and proved that it was worth the school's investment.

One of the standout programs that has been adopted by many classes was "Education Perfect." Education Perfect is an educational application from New Zealand that has gotten over 4000 schools, 1 million students and 60 countries. It was created by the founders due to their struggles in learning languages vocabulary and has been extended to many other subjects like Math, Science, English, Humanities, ... and offering lessons for different levels.



The system has been used by several schools before, such as BIS and ABCIS, and were evaluated as "successes", it provides an informational and safe platform for students to study courses under their teacher's monitoring. Furthermore, tests and assignments can be set by teachers to track student's achievements and knowledge.

With the aim of bringing a high-quality learning platform, Education Perfect has been hosting friendly competition events with a variety of subjects for students from different schools and countries to join and compete. This is the first time our school has joined a language competition on Education Perfect, from the 26th to the 28th of October. All students have exactly 2 days to try their best and learn as much as they can within their selected language.



In our school, students from year 9, 10, and 11 entered Chinese, French and EAL subjects. By finishing lessons, answering questions, and doing quizzes to gain points. Together, all students' cumulative points will be added to represent the school. Renaissance offered 220 students and it must be said that the competition was not totally fair as several schools had thousands of competitors; however, the aim of the game was to enjoy the experience and so no students were pressured to earn prizes or beat fellow competitors.

Our language students joined the competition very enthusiastically resulting in our school ranking 3rd in Vietnam. We also get some significant individuals that did extremely well: Leo from 9G was ranked the 5th globally in general and ranked 1st place globally in ESOL/EAL subject with James (9J), Annie (9J), Yolanda (10G) and Thao (11LL) ranked top 100 globally in Chinese.

We interviewed some of these students and their teachers, and here are some of their responses. First, Mr Darcy: "From this competition, and as a teacher, I feel really rewarding to know our students are so motivated and independent in learning. I also want to give the credit to my colleagues, as our students always give out their best, not only for this competition, but learning in general."

We also managed to get in contact with Leo, our global 5th place participant: "I was so excited that I could be a part of my school to compete with other students from other schools. I was nervous but at the end I did really well, and I will try even harder for the next competition."

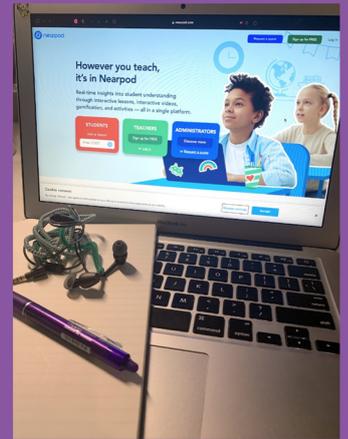
Overall, the experience was highly enjoyable. Our achievements were more than anyone could've expected and the efforts some students were brought to light which brought a pleasant surprise to their teachers. We certainly believe that joining friendly competitions (especially online) gave students an opportunity to enjoy the learning journey as well as to find joy in their daily lives. The process was amusing yet competitive and fiery, which gave a refreshing escape for our students. Therefore, we hope that these competitions will happen more in the future.



Should we use Nearpod more?

BY: Khoi 9G & Chi Dung 9J

Before COVID hit, Teams has been the go-to app for communication in school. It does the job of giving the teachers and students a global means of communication. But ever since online learning started, using meeting apps such as Teams every day isn't perfect and can be lacking at times. Before online learning, these shortcomings were resolved by us being in class with the teacher directly for half of a day. Now that the direct interactions and all of its perks are gone, Teams alone can't carry online learning entirely.



That's why schools have started implementing other things to connect more with each other. Nearpod is one of them, and it is a great way to engage students in learning with accessibility for visual aids when accompanying the unengaging meetings in Teams.

First of all, there are issues that happen in Teams but not in Nearpod. For example, if the teacher is experiencing Wi-Fi problems, it would affect screen-sharing quality and lose time during a lesson. Other problems such as microphones not working could also affect the teaching lesson. Worst of all, Teams fails at being an engaging app between the low-resolution video quality, choppy screen sharing experience, making videos look more like PowerPoint presentations in terms of frame rates. The sometimes-monotonous experience of online classes combined with the myriad of interruptions makes for a jarring learning experience that can affect what the student can learn or remember. This is where Nearpod comes in.



A unique feature of Nearpod is the ability to hand out quizzes. This ability is a great way for teachers to see and test the knowledge of students after finishing the presentation in real time without a competitive setting compared to apps such as Kahoot. Additionally, quizzes could improve memory retention of what the student has

Presenting other content is also made much easier. In Teams, the quality of screen-shared content can be hindered through bad Internet connections. However, Nearpod allows you to share the videos themselves, improving the quality a great deal.

That being said, Nearpod isn't an alternative to Teams, it's another addition to the tools that teachers can use to lessen the jarring experience of using the more basic features in Teams. With the lockdown possibly extending for a bit longer, teachers should be able to use a wider range of tools to give their students a smoother and more rewarding experience.