

2023 **NEWSLETTER PEARL EDITION**

*VIII PALO, situated in the heart of Kraków where pearls of wisdom enrich minds and illuminate souls.*

# Newsletter 2023

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# ADDRESS AT THE ALUMNI CONVENTION OF THE VIII PRIVATE ACADEMIC HIGH SCHOOL ON THE OCCASION OF THE 30TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE SCHOOL

by Mr Jerzy Waligóra, the Founder Director Principal of PACK

11.03.2023

It is with deep emotion and great joy, I welcome you to this gathering at this hospitable auditorium of the Faculty of Chemistry at Jagiellonian University. To all those present at the Alumni Convention of the VIII Private Academic High School organised by the Foundation of the Friends of the School "Education with Empathy" on the occasion of the School's 30th anniversary. I would like to extend my warmest welcome to the Graduates representing all year groups, from the first graduating grade of 1997 to the last graduating grade of 2022. A total of 1,054 pupils have graduated from our school and there are currently 470 students. I am also delighted to welcome representatives of the teaching staff, both those currently teaching and – and particularly pleasing – our retired teachers.

I do not intend to speak at length, as I have already addressed the school in our anniversary book, which was given to all those present at the ceremony. I don't want to play the role of Konrad, who doesn't want to leave the stage and create the false impression that the VIII PALO is me. On the other hand, I have contributed to some extent to building up the position of our school, but these achievements would not have been possible without the commitment and efforts of our teachers, to whom I would like to express my sincere gratitude.

From the very beginning of our High School, which began its first school year on 1 September 1993 (it started in March 1993 with a preparatory course), I was keen to ensure that our pupils and later graduates did not have to be ashamed of their school, while non-public schools, especially private ones, were spoken of in various ways, often unflatteringly. In most cases, pupils decide their choice of secondary

school, and the reputation of a school in their so-called "town" is of vital importance to them. That's why we have made a concerted effort to create a positive image for our high school and tried to do it consistently, regardless of the various difficulties, because it was not an easy process, painless, or immediately effective. But, we were single-minded – and this ultimately determined our success. A steadily growing number of applicants came to VIII PALO, motivated to learn, and keen to pursue their interests with extracurricular passions, and appreciative of the lack of the usual high school pomp. Particularly outstanding graduates are honoured with a nail with their name engraved on it, which they solemnly drive into the banner's spar (so far, fifty-two graduates have received this honour, but the act itself was only possible after the school received the banner, which happened on its tenth anniversary).

Among the various factors that counted in these development efforts, I would mention, first and foremost, constantly setting

new goals, not resting on past achievements, but stepping out of one's comfort zone into the realm of the next challenge. As well as the increased costs of running our school, there were also the entailed curriculum changes, modifying the educational offer, adapting and preparing the teaching team (also in terms of staff) for new tasks. And, as with everything new, there was always the risk that the venture would turn out to be inoperative.

The second factor that has played an important role in building the school's high position on the educational map of Malopolska is the quality of the teaching staff. We have managed to invite a group of excellent teachers, passionate about their profession, outstanding people, constantly improving their skills and expanding their knowledge. Many of them have developed and are developing their academic careers in parallel to teaching at our school. It is worth mentioning at this point that there are currently four post-doctoral and 23 doctoral teachers working at our high school. Our teachers also act as advisors



and conduct various workshops and training in the field of subject methodology. In addition, they are often involved with school teams by preparing the content side of regional competitions, etc. Besides, many members of our teaching staff are original personalities and interesting people with broad horizons. All this must translate positively into the final results of education, although, I admit that it is not always easy to manage such a team of outstanding individuals.

Another circumstance, I have to mention here when talking about VIII PALO's journey to the summits of education, is the openness of our teachers to the changing needs of the school's students, all done by fostering extracurricular interests, and supporting student initiatives. It is thanks, among other things, to this approach that for many years now we have been able to boast about our annual winners and finalists of olympiads and –also international – competitions. Also, for many years now, our high school has invariably won the title of Golden School. Hence, we welcome students who need support and who often achieve impressive results. This gives us great joy and satisfaction because it means that we are fulfilling one of the important goals of non-public education, which is to adapt educational methods to students' needs and expectations.

What also sets VIII PALO apart from other schools in our region is the degree of extensive international cooperation, and this extends to all students, not just – as one might think – those attending the International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme. We currently organise student exchanges and carry out didactic projects with schools in Germany (the oldest exchange, was almost 30 years ago), India, the USA, Norway, and Nepal. In addition to cooperation with partner schools, pupils' participation in international symposia and conferences (e.g. MUN) plays an important role in the area of international cooperation; to date, our pupils have participated in youth bodies in France and the USA on several occasions. No one needs to be convinced of the benefits of such contact between our pupils and their peers from abroad, which sometimes turns into lasting friendships. Teachers also benefit from international contacts;

several dozen teachers have already completed study visits and language and methodology courses abroad (e.g. in the UK, France, Germany, Denmark, Iceland, Malta, and Cyprus) as part of the Erasmus+ programme.

As we all know, a school is not only an institution to educate, but also to support a student's family during his or her upbringing. One tool that excels in this work is volunteer service. This is a long-standing tradition at our high school, which almost from the beginning has provided our young people with the opportunity to get involved in various aid initiatives (such as supporting the Alma Spei Children's Hospice, participating in the Szlachetna Paczka (Noble Parcel) or the Christmas Aid Orchestra, and most recently helping Ukraine). The most deserving volunteers receive an honourable award: the Carmel medal.

I will stop at these few aspects of the school's work, as it is not my intention to compile a catalogue of the achievements and successes of students and teachers or to report on the thirty years of activity of VIII PALO. I just wanted to point out those elements, I consider important for the qualitative development of our establishment.

On the occasion of the school's anniversary, meetings between alumni and current students of our high school were held during the previous and current school year as part of a series of 30 meetings for the 30th anniversary. Accounts of these meetings have been posted on our Foundation's website. We are immensely grateful to all the alumni who agreed to take part in these meetings. I have to admit, I am impressed by the wonderful life achievements of our graduates, who are now managers, architects, doctors, lawyers, IT specialists, bankers, artists, teachers... These achievements consist not only of completed and prestigious studies, defended doctorates, and excellent professional careers, but also a social sensitivity, openness to the needs of others, involvement in various pro bono activities, and an awareness of the duties incumbent on the so-called "decent man", which they follow in their everyday lives. Our series of jubilee meetings have made me aware of the vast scale of post-secondary achievements of our

graduates, and I have perceived the richness and uniqueness of their life paths, at the end of my directorship, as a pre-retirement reward. After these meetings, I left with a feeling of professional satisfaction and pride in our graduates.

A future-oriented outcome of today's convention could be – if this idea finds the approval of the alumni present here – would be the establishment of a Guild, to use an old Polish word (or Co-Fraternity) of Alumni within the framework of the Friends of the School Foundation Education with Empathy. Its essential task would be not only to maintain and develop the alumni's contacts with our high school, but also with each other, taking care to maintain their links with the school and to be its ambassadors in their social and professional environments. Doubling up with VIII PALO as its alumna and for some time a teacher, Patrycja Wach is prepared to take on the organisation of the VIII PALO Alumni Guild, provided the alumni present here are willing to allow this initiative. I don't think it is necessary to have a secret vote on this, but your approval by acclamation, would be welcome! We encourage all willing alumni to get involved in the Guild, please contact Patricia for this.

Let me conclude by expressing my thanks to all those who have been involved in the preparation of the Alumni Convention, both the members of the Council and the Board of the Friends of Education with Empathy Foundation, as well as the teachers and current students of VIII PALO.

And to all of you, dear Alumni, my sincere thanks for accepting our invitation and being present at this celebration, which in many cases meant having to overcome various obstacles, including sometimes a long journey. All the more reason for us to be grateful to you for cherishing the memory of our school and the bond you feel with it. On behalf of the teaching staff and myself, I wish you continued success in life, fulfillment in everything you undertake and to have only good people around you. And, don't forget: you are always welcome within the walls of our school, so don't just come and visit us on special occasions. All the best to everyone here!



## The IB Diploma Programme in Our School

# 'IF YOU ARE NOT MOVING FORWARD, YOU ARE MOVING BACKWARD'

by Ms Ewa Dudek, Vice-Principal, IB DP Coordinator

The quotation above is often referred to by the headmaster of our school, Jerzy Waligóra, when he detects traces of stagnation and inertia. The introduction of the International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme (IB DP) to VIII Prywatne Akademickie Liceum Ogólnokształcące was one of many examples of continuous improvement introduced to our school. The IB DP is an internationally recognised and demanding educational programme. In 2010 it was considered the obvious choice to widen our educational programme to develop more inquiring, knowledgeable and caring young people. The foundations of this programme were largely already in place in our school. These consisted of a wide network of international contacts; a clear focus on academic achievement and honesty; an environment where constructive feedback is valued; and the role of voluntary work and service in young people's development is appreciated.

A different outlook on organisation and priorities of high school education are important values of the IB DP programme. And, it is not for us to say which programme, Polish or IB DP is better. It is more about trying out different approaches to do the same tasks and in this respect IB DP offers many alternative solutions in comparison to the Polish curriculum. *Internal assessment* which is part of a student's coursework is a case in point. It has to be completed by every student and from six subjects including maths which is for many students an unpleasant surprise. The topic of the assessment is decided in consultation with the teacher, the student then works independently (with some direction from their teacher) concerning the conduct of research, sourcing relevant materials, analysing the data based on the gained knowledge and preparing an outline of work. The outcome comprises several pages of work which constitutes about 20% of the grade of the Diploma. It is not difficult to guess that this process requires carrying out a variety of activities like: independent research of the problem raised by the thesis statement, looking for the sources and assessment of their credibility, application of school knowledge in the analysis of the chosen problem, assessment of the chosen research methods, reformulating one's expectations, effective communication with the teacher supervising the work about the strengths and areas for development, work on the structure of such a comprehensive text as well as using appropriate language. To make matters worse all of this has to be completed within a certain deadline decided at the beginning of the IB DP programme. And, it is my strong belief, these IB DP programme activities are priceless elements for both the teacher and the student.

The above shows what an IB candidate might expect in this programme. Thus, one must raise the following questions: Is the prospect of such work intriguing or rather daunting? Do you feel tempted to leave your

"educational comfort zone" or do you prefer to develop within a well-known framework? The answers to these questions may be a starting point when considering if this is the right programme for a given person. [...]

The IB curriculum is made up of six subject groups and in VIIIth PALO the following subjects are offered:

Group 1 (Literature): Polish, English SL/HL

Group 2 (Language Acquisition): English B HL, German, Spanish, French (ab initio or B HL/SL)

Group 3 (Individuals and societies): History SL/HL, Geography SL/HL, Psychology SL/HL, Economics SL/HL, Business Management SL/HL

Group 4 (Sciences): Biology SL/HL, Chemistry SL/HL, Physics SL/HL, Sports, Exercise and Health Science SL, Computer Science SL

Group 5 (Mathematics): analysis and approaches SL/HL, Mathematics: applications and interpretations SL/HL

Group 6 (the Arts): Visual Arts SL/HL, Theatre SL/HL

Students are required to choose one subject from groups 1 to 5. The sixth subject can be chosen from group 6 or it can be an additional subject from groups 2 to 5. Three out of six subjects need to be taken at higher level (HL – 6 lessons per week), the remaining at standard level (SL- four lessons per week). Moreover, each student is required to take the core subject Theory of Knowledge (TOK) which ends with a written assignment (around 1400 words), as well as write a research paper (Extended Essay, up to 4000 words). The works are assessed externally and the result is added to the final exam results. The condition that allows a student to obtain IB Diploma also includes Creativity, Activity, Service module. Examinations are taken in all the six subjects and English is the language of instruction in our school.

A few statistics to complete the picture:

- 240 students have completed the IB DP programme in our school;
- 99,5% students have been awarded the IB Diploma, the majority of them bilingual;
- the average number of points on the Diploma in recent years was 36,7 (i.e. 81% out of 45);
- the average subject grade in recent years was 5,67 (also 81% of the highest possible grade 7)
- 18% of the graduates have achieved 40 or more (out of 45) points on their diploma.

To conclude, the IB DP programme has been taught in VIIIth PALO for thirteen years and we believe it makes both students and teachers aware of the need for honest appraisal of facts, critical assessment of data and information, caution in drawing conclusions and openness for self-reflection.



# A FEW WORDS, A MOTHER of FOUR PALO GRADUATES

by Mrs Beata Kuczek-Maruta

Last April, I was extremely pleased to have taken part in the 30 years Jubilee of VIII PALO Graduates. The connection of our family with "the school on Karmelicka Street" as we call it, is strong, and our PALO memories are still vivid. Four of my children have finished both Junior and Senior High School in the span of the fourteen years. That time obviously meant countless parent-teacher meetings- a duty which I gladly said goodbye to. However, it is thanks to those parent-teacher meetings that I realized my children attended a very good school with an interesting curriculum and a high standard of education, a school that monitored



their progress and reacted in time if there were any problems, a school that effectively communicated with the parents. All of my four children after graduating were accepted to universities of their choice and this is a direct confirmation of the quality education in VIII PALO.

However, as a parent, what I consider to be of the highest value of VIII PALO is a friendly and inspiring environment where young people can learn and develop in line with their interests and predispositions. Each of my children is a completely different individual, and as teenagers they had quite different interests, attitudes towards learning or extra-curricular activities offered by the school. However, they all found their place in VIII PALO, and the expectations concerning decent education aside, the school accepted how much each of them was prepared to commit and to what extent they were willing to benefit from the offer available at school.

All of this was not without any problems, and I still remember periods of prolonged illnesses or persistent truancy. In each of these



situations the school, in cooperation with us, was looking for some practical solutions, primarily with the welfare of the pupil in mind. The fact that even after graduating my children (and other graduates) would appear at the beginning of the school year or they would come to the school's autumn picnic in Zabierzów, bears out how important their relationship both with the teachers and the students was.

I congratulate the school on a beautiful 30 years' jubilee and I am glad we could be a part of VIII PALO history. And, I have to stress, any time somebody asks me for recommendations of a high school, "the school on Karmelicka Street" is always my first choice.

## A SPEECH BY ONE OF OUR SCHOOL'S GRADUATES

by Łukasz Walter

I am honored to say a few words as a graduate of VIII PALO on the occasion of its 30th anniversary.

Let me remind you the last words of our school anthem: 'And you, who



are you? You kiss goodbye to the gate and you want to say you felt nothing?'. Today it's been 17 years since I passed my final exams and 'said goodbye to the gate'.

I would like to quote other words of our anthem: 'When I look back, after a couple of years, I realize it might have given me something after all'. Indeed, I appreciate how much I owe to the fact that I have been a part of VIII PALO high school community.

I think that there is no need to mention, thanks to VIII PALO, I am prepared for my further studies and professional work. There is either no need to mention how much I have learned. I don't have to say it, because

it is obvious for everyone who has graduated from this school.

Today, I'd rather focus on the strong emotional bond I have kept with the school. I think that this feeling of attachment to the school is shared by all graduates. That is the reason why so many graduates came to the reunion from different parts of Poland, Europe, and beyond.

Time spent in high school is undeniably unforgettable. This is the time when we make mistakes and learn from them, when we get to know ourselves and find out what are our interests and plans for the future. Thus, memories from high school are often vivid and easy to recall.



# MEETINGS WITH THE SCHOOL'S GRADUATES

by **Zuzanna Sępkowska year II**

It is not uncommon for high school students, even in the later stages of their education, to feel uncertain about their future. With numerous paths to choose from, it is understandable for us to be indecisive when presented with so many excellent options. Constant changes in plans are to be expected and are nothing out of the ordinary. However, it can also be overwhelming and cause anxiety. To help us imagine life after high school, PALO organized a series of meetings held in celebration of its 30th anniversary. For these meetings, past graduates were invited to share their insights with us, the students.

The meetings, each lasting about two hours, were organized in December, with the final one taking place on the day before Christmas. Students gathered in the school's auditorium, which is equipped with a projector and speakers. Since many of the graduates live outside of Poland, the meetings had to be conducted via video calls. However, this did not diminish the experience, as students were encouraged to ask questions and actively engage with the speakers.

Most of the invited graduates attended the school during its early years. We got to learn about what the school looked like thirty years ago and just how much it has changed. All of them fondly recalled their time in PALO and attributed their academic successes to the amazing staff here. Many of these graduates now reside abroad, which in itself is a testament to the linguistic education they received at our school.

The graduates pursued various careers, ranging from HR management to running independent companies. However, they all had one thing in common—they pursued higher education after their time at PALO. Our guests had plenty of universities to choose from, and while this was not surprising, one graduate from the Uniwersytet Jagielloński shared a surprising insight about his academic experience after high school. He expressed regret over attending university and warned us about choosing the right path. Despite completing a seemingly useful degree in law, he realized that he had rarely used it over the past decade; in fact, only once when enrolling in different college seminars. The work he did after

university did not require the skills he had learned at UJ. This revelation was indeed shocking and triggered a series of second thoughts in the attending students. And, afterwards, we discussed the importance of higher education in today's world during our breaks and homeroom class.

On the contrary, other graduates shared anecdotes from their university experiences, demonstrating its value. However, the focus shifted to their high school memories, which many were most interested in. One graduate shared his experience as an LGBTQ+ teen living in Krakow three decades ago. Despite society being less accepting at that time, he found PALO to be a safe space where both students and teachers were respectful of his identity. These meetings provided valuable insights and guidance, especially for second graders who will soon face the important decision of choosing AP subjects. I hope that thirty years from now I will get to partake in such an event as a graduate, celebrating PALO's longevity and sharing my insights in the process. Cheers to many years to come!

Więcej pod adresem: <https://edukacjazempatia.org/30-spotkanz-absolwentami-na-30-lecie-viii-palo/>

When I look back at my time at school, I have before my eyes, rehearsals for theatrical performances, I can see the legend of the school – Prof. Kowalski asking in his characteristic voice about the ‘causes, course and effects of the French Revolution’. I can also see Prof. Kowalski playing a game of bridge on a trip to Zawoja. I have memories of a trip to a ‘research station’ near Jordanów and to a partner school in Luneburg. I recall a family picnic in Zabierzów...

I remember how great relations we had not only with classmates, but also with teachers. I recall conversations during school breaks, those in the teachers' room and some advice and tips I follow to this day.

I would like to express my gratitude to an important class tutor in my life – Prof. Birek. She taught us not only geography, but more importantly, she showed us realistic approaches

to solving different problems and sensitivity towards other people. I am not mentioning any more names, because I do not want to omit anyone. About each of the school professors, I can tell one or more anecdote, but what is really important is that I can tell what I learned thanks to them and it is not just about knowledge from school textbooks.

My memories are probably intertwined with the memories of all other graduates and they create a specific ‘mosaic of memories’.

We should, however, be aware that thinking of school should not be limited to memories, knowledge from lessons and acquired skills. Particularly important are personal ties and friendships that remain to this day. When I look at the graduates from different years, I want to quote Jacek Kaczmarek: ‘I don't know what dream I'm dreaming/ which star is

shining upon me/ when among these familiar faces/ I'm looking for the faces of children.’.

Indeed, we are a bit older, some of us already have our first strand of gray hair, we have accumulated new life experiences. It does not, however, affect our friendships. Let me again quote Jacek Kaczmarek who sang: ‘we have grown our own sprouts/ our own leaves, everyone for themselves/ and roots, of course – in exile, in the country, in graves/ Down, sideways, up towards the Sun/ to lose, rightwards and leftwards/ who'll remember that in the end/ it's still one and same tree’.

And, this is what I remember 17 years after ‘saying goodbye to the gate’. On behalf of all our graduates, I would like to thank the Headmaster, Prof. Jerzy Waligóra and teaching staff for these wonderful memories, and I wish the school many more years of success.

# 30 YEARS JUBILEE CELEBRATIONS

by Maja Ożóg, PDP2

Our high school was established in 1993 by our renowned headmaster, Jerzy Waligóra. More than thirty years ago, Ph.D. Waligóra dreamed of providing an educational system that would help families to cope with the complexities of modern life in an alternative way. And, he did it! This year, we are celebrating thirty years of our school. Ph.D. Karol Dudek-Różycki among a few teachers and a group of students did everything they could to help our headmaster organize a celebratory jubilee for our lecturers, graduates, and parents.

It all took place at the Department of Chemistry of Jagiellonian University – our partner college. The whole event started with a few speeches from our headmaster, teachers, and parents. Whereupon, the headmaster told us about the hardships and joy of running our esteemed institution. After the speech, an award was presented to him as a token of thanks and congratulations. Then, after hearing a few more important voices recounting positive experiences and memories related to PALO, guests



Piotr Kołodziej, teacher of Polish, congratulating Prof. Jerzy Waligóra, Director Principal of PACK on founding the school

had the opportunity for some more laughter. M.A. Tomasz Wawrzyniak presented a collection of photos representing key moments in the last 30 years of our school's daily life. After these beautiful reminiscences, the audience had the pleasure to watch a play, „Wedding on Olymph” prepared by Dr. Janusz Waligóra and Dr. Piotr Kołodziej in cooperation with our students.

The play told two stories. The main plot was the title wedding with Hades [Jakub Gašior, 2A] and Cora [Alice Liffredo, 1B] as the bride and groom. As we learned in the first scene, the wedding gift from Zeus [Piotr Machnik, 2A] was a Horn of Plenty, which went missing. Teiresias [Igor Gaška, pDP2C] got the task of finding this horn. In the meantime, we were introduced to various Olympus personalities such as Helena [Jagna Jarzyna, 2B], her husband Menelaos [Mikołaj Socha, 3D], and Kora's mother Demeter [Michalina Nikiel, 1B]. Nevertheless, the wedding was also attended by characters slightly less Olympian, but equally prominent, namely Chopin [Hanna Wolanin, 2A] and Jadwiga – Queen of Poland [Tymon Bilski, 2A].

The second theme, interweaving the wedding scenes, was presented in the form of a series of commercials. Their protagonists were the anonymous He [Jan Jerusalem, pDP2C] and She [Amelia Jurasińska, pDP2A]. Through these characters, short but meaningful stories were told. Thus, we met the Princess and the Knight, the Bartender and the Teacher, the unemployed Harvard and Cambridge Graduate, and fortune teller Mathias, the Parents, and the Lovers.



Angelika Miroń, teacher of English as a hostess

Preparations for the performance lasted weeks. To make sure everything was flawless on the anniversary day, our students and teachers worked hard on the lyrics, acting, decorations [M.A. Dorota Tomalska], and the soundtrack [Maja Ożóg, pDP2A], there was a lot of laughter during the rehearsals, and crying did not occur, except perhaps in the form of amusement. This was one of the many valuable experiences in our students' lives that they have experienced thanks to our school. Everyone got something out of it, and we're not necessarily talking about Jadwiga's sword or a bucket of KFC from the Olympic wedding. This play has been performed on only two occasions – its premiere was at the Jubilee and the second time was when our student actors were saying goodbye to this year's graduates with their performance.

After the students' play guests were invited to a less official part – a meal with each other. While eating dinner they could hear the stunning music of the school's band. It's a group formed in November 2021 by PALO



Prof. Jerzy Waligóra, Director Principal of PACK, extending his thanks to Ms. Ewa Dudek, Vice-Principal, IBDP Coordinator



Prof. Jerzy Waligóra, Director Principal of PACK, extending his thanks to Ms. Ewa Zagrodzka for her charity work and her particular sensitivity to other people



students. At the anniversary, one could see Mateusz Starostka on the electric guitar, Maja Waligóra as the bassist, and Jakub Gąsior on the drums, all playing to the vocals of Sonia Stelmach. This group has played for the school at a lot of events such as pre-graduation balls or – like in this case – our jubilee. If you would like to hear them outside of school, I can also tell

you “as a secret” you can find them at their own concerts. Meanwhile, at the anniversary, guests could hear timeless Polish chartbusters such as *Cykady na Cykladach* by Maanam or *Wszystko czego dziś chcę* by Izabela Trojanowska, and songs from foreign artists like *Tie you mother down* by Queen, and *Johnny B Goode* by Chuck Berry. I am sure,

these classic hits brightened the less official part of the whole event.

And, after the concert, our guests tried to catch-up with each other and had conversations that were full of memories from their high school days. Blissfully, it was so heartwarming to see some of the many reunions made during this wonderful event.

## Fragments of the School Play “The Wedding on Mount Olympus”

by Piotr Kołodziej, teacher of Polish, translated by Maja Ożóg, PDP2

### Advertisement I

**She; He**

*Each talks on the phone.*

**She**

Organize an aircraft carrier for me... Six helicopters and two thousand extras...

**He**

For how many people? I figure about three thousand....

**She**

Budget? About three hundred million... Cameron or Spielberg... I don't know yet, but it must be on a grand scale...

**He**

Budget? What are you worried about the budget? The guests will pay. Progressive...

**She**

In the lead role? I think Brad Pitt... he tentatively already confirmed... What?... Scarlett Johansson would be the best...

**He**

Who is invited?... The most important people in the city, in the country and even in Europe... No, she won't be there... Neither will he.... She will be... He will be.

**She**

You listen, I must go because I have a meeting...

**He**

Okay, then I'll see you there.

*They hide their phones and greet each other.*

**He**

Well, how are you doing with this super production?

**She**

I haven't done anything like this before, and I don't think anyone in the world has. A real challenge. And how's your event going?

**He**

Girl, multiply your challenge times five, and you'll feel a makeshift for what I'm up against...

**She**

And what occasion is it actually for?

**He**

What do you mean, the whole world is talking about it... Thirtieth anniversary, a big, gutsy thirtieth anniversary.

**She**

But what? The collapse of communism in Europe?

**He**

Not the fall, but the uprising, not in Europe, but in Krakow, and not communism, but the VIII PALO. Thirty years!

*Sound signal, they turn towards the audience and speak together.*

**She and He**

VIII PALO – the best school, the best people, the best memories. Enrollment is up!

### Advertisement VI

**She; He**

*Scene at a Mercedes car dealership. He has a Mercedes sign with him*

**He (as car dealer)**

...so, what kind of car are you looking for?

**She (as car buyer)**

Sir, a white one.

**He**

Yes, we have these. Anything else?

**She**

Well... so that it has heated seats.

**He**

Our Mercedes has not only heated seats but also the steering wheel, armrests, and buttons for the radio.

**She**

Well, does it also have a reversing camera?

**He**

Ma'am, every our Mercedes not only has rearview cameras as standard, but also 360-degree cameras and infrared cameras.

**She**

And, it doesn't have terrible gas consumption, as I have a long way to go to work.

**He**

And where do you work, if you don't mind me asking?

**She**

At VIII PALO!

**He**

Oh, and is it a good school, because I'm just looking for a high school for my son?

**She**

Please – the best one.

**She and He**

VIII PALO – the Mercedes among schools! Enrollment is up!



## Scene VI

### Helen; Hedwig, whom wanted Litvinus

*Music "Paris, Paris." Helen enters with a dancing step. She pulls out a portrait of Paris, dreamy, repeats in rhythm....*

#### Helen

Paris, Paris... My beloved Paris, where is your grave, where is your grave... I would so like to see you again, though in a dream, though you are a ghost....

*Hedwig enters with crown and scepter.*

#### Hedwig

Forget about Paris altogether. Paris will not be there. I have to talk to you.

#### Helen

Oh Zeus. Who are you?!

#### Hedwig

I am Hedwig, by God's grace queen of Poland, mistress and heiress to the lands of Cracow, Sandomierz, Sieradz, Leczyca, Kuyavia and Pomerania....

#### Helen

Oh Dionysus! I don't know you or any of these lands. Have you been drinking?

#### Hedwig

I am Hedwig, by God's grace queen of Poland: I do not drink, I will not betray my husband, I will not abandon my homeland.

#### Helen

Is this supposed to be some kind of allusion? Watch your words, you are talking to the queen of Sparta.

#### Hedwig

And I am Hedwig, by God's grace queen of Poland. And, don't play opossum.

#### Helen

I know what you mean, but you don't understand anything. Guilt and sin do not burden me, but inexorable Fate, who has human plans for nothing.

#### Hedwig

Fate has nothing to do here. I for my homeland married a shaggy Lithuanian, who was three times older than me. I was faithful to him and served Poland with all my heart.

#### Helen

What can I do, what depends on me here. Here the world is harsh, manly, Spartan mores ....

#### Hedwig

Take an example from me: how many hospitals, how many homes for orphans, how many schools I have founded.

#### Helen

What hospitals, what schools?

#### Hedwig

Such that will last for centuries, like the one by the Karmelicka route, where heroic struggles with fate are waged by a man of all virtues – Hercules of education, Achilles of education, Zeus of schooling!

#### Helen

These are some fantasies, not to say phantasmagorias. I, Helen, by the verdict of unfortunate fate wife of Menelaus, tell you that there are no such men.

#### Hedwig

And I, Hedwig, wife of a shaggy Lithuanian, by God's grace queen of Poland, tell you that there are!



## Learning from Our School's Graduates

### by Stanisław Anioł, PDP1

In recent times, the students of the VIII PALO High School were graced with a unique opportunity to interact with their school's graduates. This meeting was not only a chance to reminisce, but also a platform to draw inspiration and gain valuable insights regarding their future professional pursuits. The event was held in the school hall and our school's principal, Jerzy Waligóra, warmly welcomed each of the graduates, each had visited the school after many years, and all the graduates shared their roads to success. Each meeting was distinct, with different tales, memories, and unique pathways, but they all originated from the 8th PALO High School. The alumni included doctors, lawyers, engineers, entrepreneurs, artists, and many others, each with something inspiring and motivating to share.

During the meetings, students were provided with a glimpse into the success stories of our school's former graduates and it was described how they achieved their goals. It was an astonishing opportunity to learn that there are multiple paths to success, and one's interests and passions can lead you there. The graduates shared their adversities, failures, and challenges, highlighting the importance of perseverance, determination, and hard work to succeed. The guests recounted their arduous paths, but their persistence

and obstinacy in pursuing their goals eventually led them to their current positions. The meeting underscored the significance of persistence in the face of difficulties and encouraged the students to pursue their aspirations.

Moreover, the meetings provided students with an opportunity to ask questions and gain specific information from their predecessors. They learned about different career paths, expectations in various professions, and the skills that are essential to achieve one's goals. The alumni offered advice on college selection, career planning, and coping with the pressures that young people experience. They also shared their school life experiences and offered tips on coping with the challenges of learning. Not only did the event allow the students to learn from the various mistakes of our school's graduates, it also gave them a chance to reflect on their current problems, ups, and downs, from a new broader perspective.

Overall, the meetings with the school's graduates offered the students an opportunity to draw inspiration, broadened their perspective, and reflected on their own current problems and challenges. It empowered them to pursue their passions, embrace perseverance, and make conscious decisions regarding their future professional paths.





# EVENTS

## INTERNATIONAL INTER-SCHOOL DEBATE

by **Michał Musielak**  
International Exchange  
Coordinator

Between July and August 2022 – Maksymilian Konaszewski – an VIII PALO student from 4th grade took part in the third edition of the International Inter-school Debate organised by the Stepping Stones High School from the city of Aurangabad in India. The debate was held online. Students from 22 schools from countries all around the world participated. Students had the opportunity to discuss given topics, presenting arguments either for or against specific propositions depending on the team to which they were assigned. The winning team was chosen by a group of jurors consisting of the teachers and the headmaster of the school that organised the event. Maksymilian's team had to discuss the topic, and forward their arguments "for" the following motion: *"Peer Pressure Absolves Delinquent Teens From Culpability"*. The team performed perfectly, convincing the jurors of their arguments, thus, defeating their opponents. Congratulations!

## OEES – City Infrastructure and the Youth

by **Maciej Osmański, IB1**

On the 23rd of November 2022, I attended the Open Eyes Economy Summit in Kraków, accompanied by many of my schoolmates and teachers. The programme included lectures on various topics, many of which I found fascinating. However, one was especially noteworthy. "Miasto dla młodych: Sesja inspiracyjna" led by Zuzanna Karcz was a captivating lecture discussing how Polish cities' infrastructure affects youth and what issues it may cause. This topic was of particular interest to me, as I live in the suburbs of a big city, and the issues discussed affect me daily.

The leading point of the presentation stated that the present city infrastructures are insufficient in answering the pastime needs of young people. It was said they have few spaces in which to comfortably spend their free time with each other, which makes socialization harder. This was regarded as a serious issue due to the importance that socialization has on adolescents as a developmental process. Moreover, many spaces that could serve as meeting grounds within the city, such as skateparks or football courts, are not ideal for the general public, as they are by design, dedicated to a certain sport, and are usually occupied by those who wish to practice it. Indoor spaces, like restaurants and cafés, also pose difficulties as they usually require financial input to allow time

inside. Though that cost may not be much on its own, paying it every time one wants to spend their free time with peers may result in absurd cost over the long-term. Because of this, many teenagers meet inside shopping malls, which do not require unplanned expenses, this creates large crowds. something these spaces are not designed for. These circumstances make it hard for Polish youth to spend their free time in the city. The speaker argued, the local government should take much better care of its young residents, suggesting free-of-charge public spaces that offer a place to sit and rest in a large group. Such resting spaces proved to be a success in Barcelona which struggled with similar issues. Thus, this presentation's points seemed to be credible and if adopted, they may offer tangible improvement to the problem.

I have personal experience with the limited amount of resting spaces in Kraków and I believe the solutions offered during the lecture would minimize the dissatisfaction felt by the Polish youth. During the presentation, I felt understood, as the narrative aligned with the reality I experience. I was glad to hear this issue being discussed and the solutions I heard filled me with hope for the betterment of Kraków's infrastructure.

# Open Eyes Economy Summit Key Points

by Oliwia Kalemba, IB1

On November 22-23 The International Open Eyes Economy Summit (OEEES) was held at the ICE Congress Center in Krakow for the 7th time, the theme of which was credibility in social and political life. I had the pleasure of participating in this edition of the congress.

The 7th OEEES was opened by the Mayor of Kraków, Jacek Majchrowski, who expressed his satisfaction with the fact that the idea of Open Eyes had materialised in Kraków and that in this edition it will be possible to talk about the challenges of today's world in a wider spectrum. He pointed out that we must speak about the economy together with other aspects, i.e. culture, society and values, and the Congress shows how to combine these various elements. He also emphasized the role of the city in the process of creating innovation, which has the opportunity to develop when we are dealing with a responsible local government, which strives for individual types of combined innovation, thanks to which the city should develop economically, and hence, this will influence its development.

The next speaker of the inaugural session was the Ombudsman: Marcin Wiącek, who spoke about the importance of economic freedom enshrined in our constitution,

although it may be subject to restrictions, they must be preceded by laws and not, as was the case during the COVID-19 pandemic – by regulations. As a punch line, he pointed out that an entrepreneur is both a subject and a recipient of human rights, and limiting economic freedom must be justified.

Mark Brzeziński, the US ambassador of Poland, was also invited to participate in this session, he spoke, among other things, about the benefits for Poland resulting from the introduction of nuclear energy, arguing, it will strengthen the strategic relationship between Poland and the US, The ambassador added, it should contribute to the economic growth of our country and will be a significant step towards severing Europe's energy dependence on Russia.

An interesting plan for the development of Polish cities was presented by Mateusz Zmyślony at the session entitled MasterPlan CALIFORNIA: what will the reality of our cities look like in 30 years? Mr Zmyślony pointed to the similarities of Poland to this American state, which included: similar population, similar geography (territory between the mountains and the sea) and economic similarities such as strong agriculture and the dynamic potential in the field of

new technologies. In his speech, he pointed to the potential of the emerging Silesian-Cracow supercity, which in his opinion, from the perspective of the time of travel, is slowly becoming one economic organism, which in a few years will lead to the creation of the largest agglomeration of Central Europe with a population of 5.5 million and huge opportunities.

Mr Zmyślony said, we should set three goals in the MasterPlan for Poland: 1. Further development in the fields of achieved successes – i.e. focusing on industries such as automotive, household appliances, furniture, windows/doors/gates, IT, and outsourcing. Poland should not only become the factory of Europe but should strive to develop global branded labels; 2. Silicon Basin – we need to dynamically develop the hi-tech, IT, semiconductor and process sectors. 3. Fabryka Snów – our gaming industry has great potential and is developing rapidly, which is why Poland should have ambitions to become one of the world's largest centres of production of audio-visual content (games, series, educational platforms). In his opinion, Poland should start to heal its complexes and acquire more and more self-confidence, because according to IMF research, it is the most dynamically developing economy in the world and it would be a pity not to use this potential. Whether it will succeed – time will tell.

On the second day of OEEES, I had the opportunity to participate in a discussion on the future of Ukraine („What next with Ukraine?") with the President of PR Bronisław Komorowski and prof. Paweł Kowal from the Institute of Political Studies of the Polish Academy of Sciences. The gentlemen talked about the probable scenarios of ending the war in Ukraine and about the fact that the interests of Poland are identical to the interests of Ukraine. That is why our support for Ukraine in joining the European Union is so important. Our membership in the EU and NATO is a guarantee of security and stability, therefore







our attitude towards war must be the same as that of the rest of the Western world.

The key point of the second day of the Congress was the presentation of the report „Poland’s Economic Credibility Index”, which analysed 150 indicators in 7 areas of social and economic life, i.e.: the rule of law, freedom of economic activity, the credibility of public finances, stability of the financial system, protection and safety at work, quality of public services and public infrastructure, and respecting international obligations. The report indicates that our economic credibility has significantly decreased in recent years (2019-2021), which is a result of high inflation and the failure of government anti-inflation measures. During the discussion, it was pointed out that there is a major problem with public finances, and we may have problems in the coming years, due to the fact that the government might have to sell government-bonds instead of providing subsidies.

In the thematic block ‘Green Deal’ – energy, food, health, and the need to change the food system in its present form was discussed, i.e. one should strive to abolish competition in the food production industry, as it contributes to the destruction of small and medium-sized enterprises, thus, the creation of cooperatives should be developed as these would allow producers to cooperate in the production of food, especially healthy food.

The congress was concluded by its initiator, prof. Jerzy Hausner who emphasized that „the credibility of the state should be established on the foundation of the rule of law, legal order, normativity and observance of rules – otherwise, instead of institutional responsibility, irresponsibility will appear, and the law, instead of being a norm, will become an instrument of injustice.”

## Open Eyes Economy Summit Reflection

by Krzysztof Mierzowski, IB1

The 2022 Kraków Open Eyes Economy Summit was a very interesting experience. As I reflect on the discussions and presentations, I am struck by the wealth of insights and perspectives that were shared by experts stemming from both academia and politics.

One key theme that emerged for me was the importance of sustainability and social responsibility in today’s business environment. The inspiring presentation by Anders Wijkman on the need to drastically rearrange the economic system we live in made it very clear that companies and governments must be proactive in addressing environmental and social issues if they want to pursue equality and sustainable development.

Another key takeaway for me was the national need to embrace new technologies and approaches in order to stay competitive. The presentation on “The Strategic Benefits of the Nuclear Deal” by US ambassador Mark Brzezinski was particularly eye-opening. It clearly outlined the various benefits of nuclear energy and showed how they could be achieved through cooperation between our two countries. I hope Poland will be successful in the pursuit of nuclear energy, be it with or without the help of the USA.

Overall, the Kraków Open Eyes Economy Summit was a valuable opportunity for me to learn and be challenged to think differently. I am grateful for the opportunity to have participated and hope to be able to attend similar events in the future.

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## THE SCHOOL VOLUNTEER CLUB

by Katarzyna Żywko & Katarzyna Gucwa-Zielińska,  
Coordinators of the School Volunteer Club  
translated by Michał Kamiński, IB1 student

The past few months have been a period of remarkable activity for the students of our School’s Volunteer Club who work in four groups dedicated to endeavours benefiting people, animals, nature, as well as the club’s development. Thus in our club, all students have the opportunity to explore various fields and discover their own strengths and interests.

Our volunteers attended a conclave on the interpretation of Ukrainian poetry led by Ms. Professor from the Pedagogical University. They also participated in workshops on cooperative development conducted by the coordinator of the Cultural Institute of Lesser Poland. Additionally, the students engaged in workshops for animals, where they crafted toys and bedding to be donated to animal shelters in need. The group focused on environmental activities, plans to organize a school-wide book exchange, and conduct educational workshops for elementary school students. During these workshops, the volunteers will share their knowledge and passion for nature. As a yearly tradition, our school actively participated in the Szlachetna Paczka initiative, providing support to Mrs. Janina and Mr. Joseph—a family with a challenging past. With the tremendous commitment of our students and those from the Pedagogical

University, we successfully renovated the couple’s roof and donated various items, including clothing, a night lamp, and a washing machine. One of our volunteers described her visit to the family in the following manner: “When we arrived at their home with the packages, Mrs. Janina stood in the doorway, with a big smile on her face. She waved to us even from a distance and warmly invited us inside, ensuring we were not cold. She prepared tea for us, and we began to unpack the gifts. She was overwhelmed with joy when she unwrapped the night lamp. Tears of joy streamed down her face as she repeated that her ‘benefactors were true angels’. Right after unpacking the washing machine, Mr. Joseph went to set it up in the bathroom. He embraced Janina and exclaimed, ‘We won’t have to wash by hand anymore. isn’t that wonderful?’ Their happiness grew with each package opened [...]” In January, the volunteers had the opportunity to participate in the Wielka Orkiestra Świątecznej Pomocy, with this year’s funds donated to combating sepsis. Some volunteers also collected donations in the city during the final day of the event. A special collection can for this cause was installed in our school. Despite the event’s finale coinciding with the initial days of the Winter Holidays, several of our volunteers actively took part in it.

# DEBATING IN PALO

by Basia Baziak, PDP1

PALO has a wide range of extracurricular activities from sports to book clubs. The debating team has been active in this school for many years now, and we are extremely proud of its multiple achievements in competitions in Cracow and national ones too! I was shocked to find out just how popular debating is in Poland! Admirers of this kind of competition have created a fascinating community, full of open-minded, energetic, brave and intelligent people. Anyone who has ever had an opportunity to taste this type of rivalry should consider themselves extremely lucky.

The team from PALO took part in two competitions this year. The first one was Krakowska Szkoła Debaty. Most of its debates were held in school classrooms. We won three out of four of the debates and got to the quarter-finals, where we competed against High School V LO. It was quite an official event as it took place in Cracow's city council. Apart from the teams, teachers and judges, we had a large audience as students from both our schools agreed to join us and be a huge support to the participants.

On the contrary, Mistrzostwa Polski Debat Oksfordzkiej (MPDO) championships were partially online as it was a national competition. Unfortunately, PALO did not make it past the elimination round and thus, failed to qualify for the official competition which took place in Poznań. Despite this setback we are certainly more than ready to face our rivals again! Of course these achievements would not even be thought about if it was not for our wonderful coaches and experts, as they were always there to give us help and support throughout the school year.

The greatest challenge our school's team faced this year was definitely finding new students who would be interested in competing. Some of PALO's most talented debaters were unable to help us by taking part in our debates due to upcoming end of school exams, but was a lot of help during the preparations. In just a few months we managed to replace three former members with three new ones. In spite of the lack of experience, we all accepted the weight put on our shoulders. We managed to have a good team balance, worked hard, and in the end all of us achieved a degree of overall success. I joined the team this year, and in my opinion, this decision has changed my life and it has helped me to fit into our school community. In as much, I experienced a wonderful time getting to know students from other years and classes.

Getting into debating was a valuable experience and the skills acquired, such as: critical thinking, handling stressful situations and even working in a team, helped me in school and for sure will be a huge advantage in my future career. PALO's teachers tried to give us as much time as possible to prepare for our debates and make more progress, which was the kindest gesture we could possibly imagine. And so, I really look forward to the coming school year with its many challenges and competitions. Debating is a great form of competing and has taught me a lot. I would honestly recommend it to others as it was a great experience for me.

## „Sejmik” or the School Parliament

by Jagoda Stępień, PDP1

Sejmik is an event that takes place in our school once a year. It is usually at the beginning of the school year when a topic, which the high school students will elaborate on, is decided during the staff meeting. It is normally formulated in such a broad way that it allows for diverse interpretations and everyone can find some interesting area of knowledge connected with it. Students, groups or classes usually prepare their multi-media presentations, which last about a quarter of an hour, for a few months. They work under the supervision of subject teachers.

Thus, on Monday, 20th of March, our students finally presented their projects they had been working on so hard. This year's topic was "Water connects, water divides." As mentioned before, the theme could be viewed from a variety of angles. To give some examples of the topics presented the following medley can be listed: energy reusing and ecology, the history of ships, differences between American and British English, mythologies from all over the world, as well as chemical reactions and poetry. Apart from multi-media presentations, students were also allowed to illustrate the issues linked with the topic by using their artistic skills, in this case we could admire their drawings and paintings or even watch a film made by students. On the school staircase, we can still notice a group's project that shows the depths of the oceans. It is hung from the top of the building and goes down to the ground level. There are fish, sea organisms and of course, water. Other students chose to create and run workshops for children. They came up with the idea of making watercolour painting workshops for younger schoolmates, which they recorded. They presented the results during the online ZOOM meeting. We were also able to see a self-made movie recorded by the PDP1B class with an open ending. It tells a story with an interesting plot, full of literary and historical references. Every one of them alludes to water connections in culture.

The event itself happened to be online. Students and teachers were divided into different panels of groups of 5-6 projects. They connected at 8:30 am and finished the meeting around 3 pm. Some of them had a delay, and some ended earlier. All of it depended on the length of the presentations. Of course, this kind of organization had its pros and cons, but everything went very smoothly. Students were encouraged to ask questions and comment on the presentations.

Everyone put their biggest effort to be ready on time. Some of us had our projects done by December, and some had waited until there was little time left. Regardless of it, every group did a great job and we hope to see more of the same, or even better quality content next year!

Sejmik is a unique event in our school that makes us different from other high schools. It helps develop research and public speaking skills. It also fosters an in-depth understanding of the world around us.





# Polish School Debating Championships in Warsaw

by Aleksander de Mehlem, PDP2

In a thrilling display of intelligence, the school's debate team from VIII PALO, under the supervision of Łukasz Zych, recently took part in the Polish School Debating Championships and won two of the four rounds.

The competition in Warsaw on 19-20 November 2022 featured some of the most talented young debaters from schools nationwide. The teams were judged based on their ability to construct convincing arguments, effectively rebut opposing views, and present their points clearly and compellingly.

Despite stiff competition, the VIII PALO team demonstrated exceptional skill and poise throughout the match. They engaged in lively debates on various topics, including education, politics, and social issues, demonstrating their ability to think critically and articulate their ideas. Their efforts were rewarded in the second and fourth rounds, where they emerged victorious against their opponents. This is a testament to the hard

work and dedication put in by the team members, who spent countless hours honing their debating skills and preparing for the competition. Team captains Aleksander de Mehlem and Tymon Messing said about their success: „We are thrilled to have won two rounds in such a prestigious competition. It's great to know that our hard work has paid off, and we are proud to have represented our school so well.”

The school's principal, Jerzy Waligóra, expressed his pride in the team's achievement: „The students have made us proud. Their performance in the competition is a reflection of the high standards of education and academic excellence we strive for at VIII PALO. The school debating team from VIII PALO has shown that they have what it takes to compete at the highest level, and their success in the Polish School Debating Championship is a testament to their talent and hard work. We congratulate them on their achievement and wish them continued success in their future endeavors.”



## INTERNATIONAL DAY

by Michał Musielak International Exchange Coordinator

On the 4th of April 2023, our school held celebrations for the International Day. The event aimed to raise awareness among the students about the workings of international cooperation. Students who had participated in international school exchanges shared their reflections

and experiences and discussed their involvement in each event. The International Day was divided into two parts: The first part took place in the school auditorium. During the meeting, students who took part in exchanges with schools in Norway and Pompano Beach,

USA, as well as in the Erasmus program, shared their impressions and talked about their trips. The second part was held online on the Zoom platform. During this segment, students who collaborated with DPS Gurgaon – our partner school from India – presented their projects on the similarities between Polish and Indian cultures. The presentations showcased interesting facts about customs, art, music, and food from both countries.

We congratulate all students for their involvement!

# EARTH DAY IN PALO

by Maria Zamarska, PDP1

Earth Day is a global observance that is a powerful reminder of the importance of our planet and our collective responsibility to protect it. Celebrated on April 22nd, Earth Day brings people from all parts of the world together to promote environmental awareness and sustainable practices. It is a time to reflect on the beauty and abundance of the Earth, while also acknowledging the pressing challenges it faces. From climate change and deforestation to pollution and loss of biodiversity, it encourages individuals and communities to take action, fostering a sense of urgency and determination to preserve what's left and restore what has been destroyed of the Earth's ecosystems. Through education, activism, small everyday choices, and so much more, this day inspires us to become better occupants of our planet, ensuring a greener, healthier, and more sustainable future for generations to come.

As a sizeable community, students and teachers from PALO decided to come together and celebrate it by wearing the color green. Wearing green on Earth Day holds a symbolic significance and serves as a visual statement of support for environmental protection. The color green is often associated with nature, growth, and harmony, making it a fitting choice to represent our commitment to preserving the Earth's resources. By adding green attire to our outfits on Earth Day, individuals demonstrate their solidarity with the global movement for environmental sustainability. It is a way to express care for the planet, encourage conversations about environmental issues, and inspire others to take action. Wearing green becomes a visible reminder that our individual choices and collective efforts can make a difference in addressing pressing environmental challenges. It serves as a call to action, urging us to think consciously about our impact

on the Earth and take steps towards living in harmony with nature.

Other students that have an interest in geography also participated in Mr. Uliszak's GeoGuessr contest. In this year's e-sport tournament, eleven classes participated, each with a team of three students. The competitors' classmates were more than welcome to watch and cheer on their friends via Zoom meetings, where everything was being live-streamed. The winning team was gifted a one-year of GeoGuessr Pro for free. GeoGuessr is an online game that drops players into random locations using Google Street View. The objective is to guess the location accurately by exploring visual cues in the surroundings. Players place a marker on a world map to make their guess and earn points based on accuracy. It's a fun and educational way to test geographical knowledge and explore different places. A GeoGuessr tournament offers a unique and engaging way to celebrate Earth Day. By virtually exploring various locations around the world, players can develop a deeper appreciation for the Earth's diverse landscapes and ecosystems. The game encourages players to observe and analyze the environment, fostering a sense of connection with nature and promoting geographical knowledge. Additionally, GeoGuessr's use of Google Street View reduces the need for physical travel, making it a sustainable alternative to explore different regions without leaving a carbon footprint.

By playing GeoGuessr on Earth Day, individuals can have fun while learning about the world's wonders and reinforcing the importance of environmental conservation and sustainable practices. With this original idea of celebrating and bringing awareness to Earth Day, every member of the PALO community had a great time and learned something new about our planet.

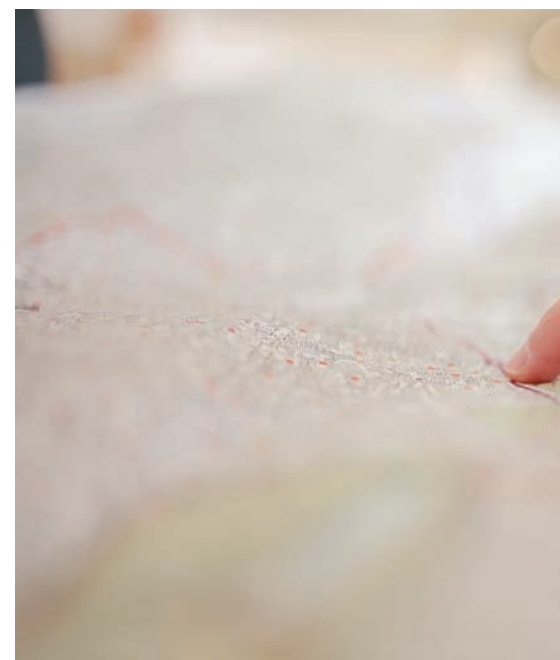
# THE EARTH DAY GAME – GEOGUESSR

by Natalia Grzanka, PDP1

Our school has organized a GeoGuessr tournament for Earth Day. GeoGuessr, an online game that challenges players to identify locations using only visual clues, brought together students from different school years and classes in a contest for geographic knowledge. Let's dive into this unique event that combined education, teamwork, and global exploration.

Students had some time to practise and prepare for the tournament. When the day had come, students gathered waiting for their turn to showcase their geographical knowledge and GeoGuessr guessing skills. The tournament aimed to foster a love for geography, gain new skills and promote teamwork among participants. The GeoGuessr tournament consisted of several rounds, each presenting a series of mysterious Google Street View images. Participants had to analyze the visual clues, landmarks, and street signs to determine the location as accurately as possible. Points were awarded based on proximity to the actual location. These were the eliminations, after which the actual rounds started.

The students also competed in other modes such as guessing the country





etc. Participants found themselves transported to random locations around the world, from city streets to villages, or even forests. Each round presented a unique set of challenges, testing their geographical knowledge to the limits. The teamwork was intense, as each group of students analysed every detail of the images, and engaged in discussions in order to guess the location as accurately as possible.

The tournament emphasised the importance of teamwork. The collaborative game encouraged students to play as a team. Undoubtedly, through this engaging game students have expanded their knowledge of geography in a fun and interactive way. As the rounds progressed, the competition intensified, because fewer and fewer groups of participants remained. The tournament ended in a breathtaking finale, where the top teams were to identify the last map. Some may think the final was easy because students had to guess the location in Poland. However, it's worth remembering that the guess needed to be the most accurate and the map of Poland didn't make the game any easier.

The GeoGuessr tournament not only showcased the passion and talent of the participants but also served as an inspiration for future generations of geography enthusiasts. The school's GeoGuessr tournament was successful, combining education, teamwork, and exploration. It demonstrated that learning geography can be an exciting and interactive experience.



## VIII PALO School Chess Competition Organized by the Students

by Heorhi Karenka, IB1

A chess tournament, organized by DP1 and DP2 students, took place on 20th April in the Batorego Street building. In total, 16 students from PDP and DP classes participated in the event, with the winner being a PDP2 student Kamil Borowiec, who took the prize home.



A photo from the first round of the tournament.

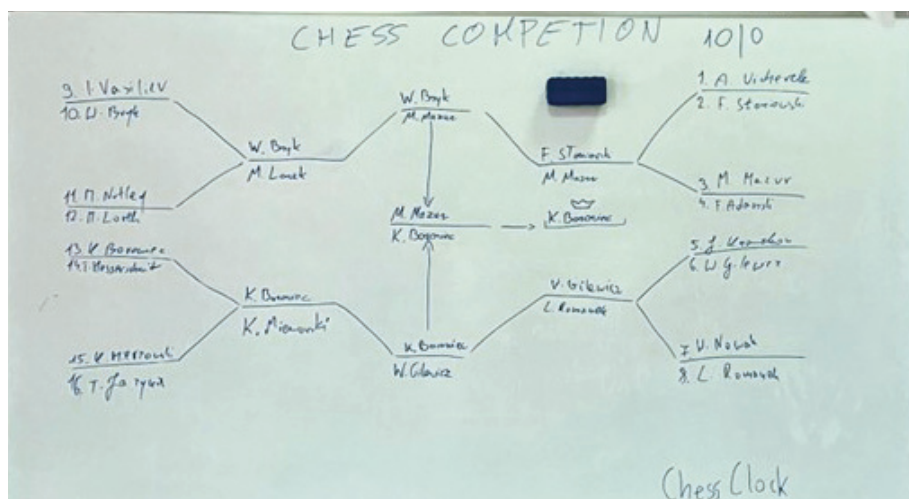
The primary motivation behind the organization of the event was to encourage chess among the students of our school. In order to promote the tournament, we sent a message to all students to notify them about the competition. Furthermore, we designed and wrote a promotional poster, which was hung in the corridors of the school. The competition was organized as a CAS project, organized as a playoff-knockout event, and took place after Wednesday's classes. Sixteen participants were randomly assigned their positions on four chess boards, and each played a 10-minute, rapid game with a 3 seconds increment added after each move. The timers were provided by the participants.

The overall atmosphere of the tournament was relaxed and welcoming. Every game started with a handshake and whenever someone won a match, their victory was accompanied by loud applause from all the spectators. The vast majority of the participants, even if they forfeited, stayed in class until the very last game, which helped to build suspense for the finals and gave support for the contenders as they played for the tournament's main prize.

In the final game, Kamil Borowiec encountered another Pre-DP student. After a while, he ended the game in a spectacular way with – checkmate. With 6 minutes still on the clock, he won the tournament, leaving the audience in awe, and claiming the modest prize of a box of chocolates.

The response from the participants concerning the tournament was extremely positive, with many of the contestants hoping for the next future event. The competition was a huge success, both in terms of the participants and chess games. The matches were played at a decent level, and many of the players showed a real aptitude for the game.

Hopefully, this chess tournament will not be the last such event. Thanks to it, with luck, many consequent tournaments will occur because it both challenges the organizers and the participants intellectually. Moreover, it plays a pivotal role in the promotion of chess in our school, so the students can explore their hidden talent in a safe and secure environment.



An image of the tournament standings

# EXCHANGES AND TRIPS



## The Polish–German Student Exchange with Johanneum Gymnasium in Lüneburg

produced with the help of GPT chat by Konstanty Kudla, Year III a

Participating in an inter-school exchange program between Poland and Germany was a truly incredible experience for me. Spending a week with a German host family and attending classes in a German school opened my eyes to new cultures and perspectives.

During our time in Germany, we explored the historic town

of Lüneburg, where we had the privilege of meeting the city's mayor at the town hall. We also visited a psychiatric hospital with a haunting history, which served as a powerful reminder of the atrocities committed during World War II.

In addition to these meaningful experiences, we embarked on two exciting daytrips. In Lübeck, we visited

the Hanseatic Museum, delving into the city's maritime heritage. Our trip to Hamburg included a visit to the renowned Elbphilharmonie, where we were captivated by its stunning architecture.

When our German counterparts visited Poland, we proudly showcased the rich history and heritage of our country. They explored Krakow's old town and marveled at the Wieliczka salt mines. We also spent a day in Wroclaw, forging lasting bonds and creating unforgettable memories.

This inter-school exchange not only broadened our cultural understanding but also fostered personal growth and lifelong friendships. It taught us the value of embracing diversity and the importance of remembrance and compassion. I am incredibly grateful for this extraordinary opportunity that will forever shape my perspective on the world.





# LE HAVRE

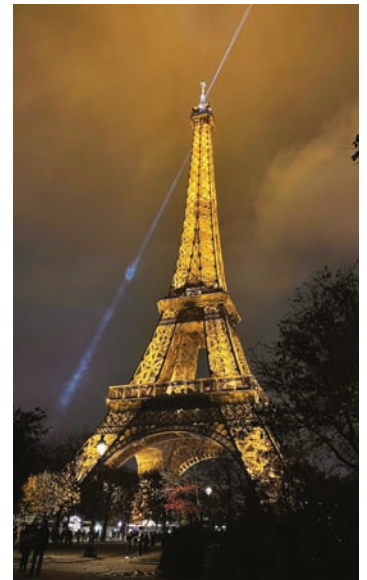
by Piotr Kołodziej, teacher of Polish literature  
translated by Michał Kamiński, IB 1

Between November 19th and 27th, 2022, a delegation from our school, representing Poland, once again participated in the Normandy International Youth Leadership Summit. The summit's motto was "Building our future on positive economy: Dreams of the new generation." The summit has been held annually since 2013 in the French town of Le Havre, near the ocean, organized by the Saint Joseph Institution in cooperation with the Polish coordinator, Prof. UP Dr. Hab. Piotr Kołodziej, a teacher from our school. Our school has been participating in the event since 2018.

The summit's discussions involve three-person teams from around the world, including delegations from Mexico, Spain, Japan, and a total of 25 delegations. In the 2022 edition, our school was represented by Nadia Popczyk, Marta Matura, and Jagoda Kędra. The students who delivered a particularly moving presentation were from Ukraine, our neighboring country, where a barbaric



Cliffs in Étretat.  
Photo P. Kołodziej



Eiffel Tower at night.  
Photo P. Kołodziej

war rages on. The summit always focuses on important and current global issues. This year's summit was held under the theme of "Overconsumption."

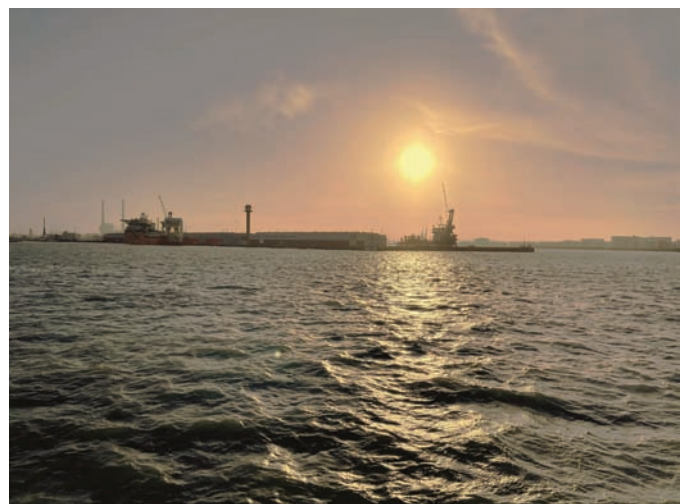
While the official language of the conference was English, we made an effort to speak French whenever possible, which was well-received by the French attendees. As the event takes place in France, we not only benefited from the daily classes and workshops as part of the summit, but also enjoyed the many attractions of this beautiful country, including its amazing cuisine. We explored Le Havre, a modern city adorned with remarkable artworks in public spaces. Le Havre has historical significance as a hub for French Impressionists; it is where Claude Monet painted his famous work "Impression" in 1872, giving the Impressionist movement its name. We also had the opportunity to visit the fabulous port in Honfleur, witness the stunning cliffs of Étretat, and, of course, spend two days in Paris. In Paris, we visited the unique works of Impressionist artists in the Musée d'Orsay and admired the world-famous Christmas shop windows at the Lafayette shopping center. Additionally, we took a night-time stroll around the Eiffel Tower and enjoyed delicious pancakes on its first floor. Looking forward to seeing you next year in Le Havre and Paris!



Visiting the town hall in Le Havre. From the left: Nadia Popczyk, Piotr Kołodziej, Marta Matura, Jagoda Kędra.  
Photo Anja (Netherlands)



Claude Monet, *Impression. Sunrise*, 1872. Photo P. Kołodziej



Sunrise in the port in Le Havre, 2022. Photo P. Kołodziej  
(this is where Monet painted one of his most famous pictures)

# NORMANDY INTERNATIONAL YOUTH LEADERSHIP SUMMIT 2023

by **Marta Matura, PDP2**

On the 19th of November, Jagoda Kędra, Nadia Popczyk and I flew to Le Havre for the Normandy International Youth Leadership Summit (NIYLS). We were accompanied by Dr. Piotr Kołodziej who is the Polish coordinator of the summit. It was a week-long event designed for students interested in politics and

taking on leadership positions in the future. Pupils from all over the world flew to France to be able to attend this gathering. During the day we worked in groups and took part in several workshops centered around over-consumption which is a very relevant and global topic. Besides the workshops we were able to discover several French cities

and enjoy the beautiful landscapes of northern France. We all stayed with French host families, which allowed us to fully immerse ourselves in French culture, which is also a large part of the reason we wanted to participate in this project. Overall, our participation in this summit provided us with a new and unique experience as well as new global connections.

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## Unforgettable Adventures: Exploring the Slopes of Italy on a School Skiing Trip

by **Mateusz Kisiel, PDP1**

Embarking on an exhilarating journey, students from VIIIIPALO have recently experienced an unforgettable school skiing trip to the picturesque slopes of Italy. The trip offered an excellent opportunity for students to embrace the thrill of winter sports, immerse themselves in a new culture, and create lasting memories with their classmates. This article chronicles the exciting adventures, breath-taking landscapes, and cherished moments that made this school skiing trip an experience of a lifetime.

### A WARM WELCOME IN ITALY

The eager students arrived in Italy on 30th of January filled with excitement and anticipation. As soon as they stepped foot in the picturesque alpine village, they were greeted by the majestic snow-covered mountains and the cosy charm of their accommodation (they stayed in Casa Alpina Salesiana-Hotel). The warm hospitality of the locals immediately made them feel at home, creating an atmosphere of camaraderie and adventure.

### HITTING THE SLOPES

Equipped with their skis and snowboards, the students wasted no time in hitting the slopes. Italy's ski resorts provided a perfect playground for both seasoned skiers and beginners. With a range of slopes catering for all skill levels, everyone had the opportunity to challenge themselves and improve their skiing abilities. Under the guidance of experienced instructors, students honed their technique, conquered new slopes, and gained confidence in their abilities. From carving through fresh powder to mastering tight turns, each day on the slopes presented an opportunity for growth and personal achievement.

### EXPLORING ITALIAN CULTURE

The school skiing trip wasn't just about skiing, it was also a chance for students to immerse themselves in Italian culture. During their free time, students ventured into

the nearby towns and villages, soaking up the vibrant local atmosphere. They explored narrow cobblestone streets lined with charming shops and cafes, indulging in delicious Italian cuisine, and savouring mouth-watering gelato. Visiting historical landmarks and museums, students learned about the rich history and heritage of the region, expanding their understanding of the world beyond the classroom.

### BONDING AND MEMORIES

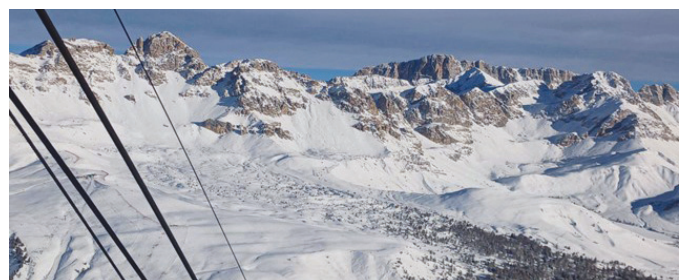
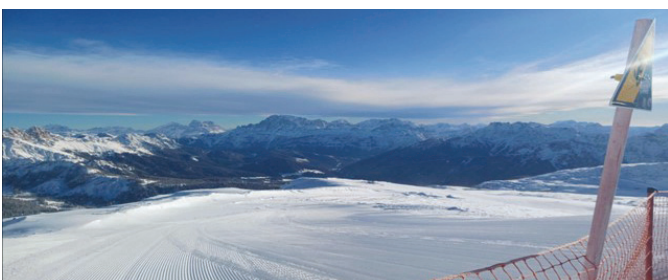
Beyond the adrenaline rush and cultural experiences, the school skiing trip strengthened the bonds between classmates. Students shared laughter, encouraged one another, and celebrated each other's accomplishments on and off the slopes. From après-ski gatherings to cosy evenings spent sharing stories and laughter, lifelong friendships were formed during this remarkable journey.

### UNFORGETTABLE SCENERY

Italy's stunning alpine landscapes provided a breathtaking backdrop throughout the trip. As students descended the slopes, they were treated to panoramic views of snow-capped peaks, idyllic valleys, and dense forests. The beauty of the surroundings was awe-inspiring, leaving an indelible mark on their memories.

### CONCLUSION OF THE TRIP.

The school skiing trip to Italy was an extraordinary adventure that combined the thrill of winter sports, cultural exploration, and the forging of lifelong friendships. From conquering the slopes to immersing themselves in Italian culture, the students of VIIIIPALO returned home with a wealth of unforgettable experiences and cherished memories. This journey served as a testament to the transformative power of travel and the lasting impact it can have on young minds, fostering personal growth and broadening horizons for years to come.







# An International Summit at Pompano Beach High School

by Karol Klupa, Karen Kobucka, Magdalena Piotrowska, IB1

Our group had a great opportunity to take part in an International Summit at Pompano Beach High School, Florida that lasted from 19th till 28th of January 2023. It was an invaluable experience, while staying at a local family's house, we learned a lot, not only about American culture, but also about the cultures of many other countries that participated in the summit.

During the approach to the airport we were filled with excitement. When peeking through the windows you could see the beautiful beaches and tall skyscrapers of Miami. The moment of landing was truly magical. As soon as we got off the plane we just couldn't process the fact that we actually were in Florida, in Miami! After passing the border control we got onto a bus with a group from Switzerland and started heading towards PBHS. There, we were picked up by our host families. We spent the rest of our day unpacking and sharing experiences we had had along the way to Florida with our families.

In due course, we adjusted our everyday life to our hosts and had an opportunity to experience another culture's routine. During our first two days in Florida, we had time to get to know our family. After getting used to their food, their lifestyle and a different time zone we spent time with our hosts.

In PBHS we had many multicultural activities. We were divided into groups made up of people from different countries. In these groups we had the opportunity to

exchange our experiences and share cultural differences. We also had some bigger school events that were part of the summit. We had an opportunity to see many performances prepared by all the countries, and got to know more about them. All of us took part in a Cultural Expo – an event where all the countries had to prepare a trifold about their homeland. However, the best part was definitely the shadow day. Each one of us was assigned a student to follow during classes, so we could see what their classes look like and how they differ from ours.

Apart from school activities, we also got a chance to visit other attractions in Florida. Two days after our arrival we took a trip to Miami. We explored a modern art museum SuperBlue with many breathtaking and interactive exhibitions. While heading to the HEAT Stadium, we drove through the Wynwood Art District and saw many beautiful murals. The game itself was very exciting and we got to see how Americans celebrate one of their most popular sports. Near the end of our exchange, we went on a trip to the Everglades swamps. While swimming in flatbed boats we could see alligators treading the water right next to us and we got to appreciate the true beauty of the Floridian nature.

We had a great time in the US and we hope that one day we will be able to invite our American hosts to our homes and show them what life in Poland is like. We had loads of fun and have learned many things about the US that we wouldn't be able to experience otherwise.





# POMPANO BEACH HIGH SCHOOL INTERNATIONAL SUMMIT

by Michał Kamiński, IB1

On 19th of February, our school team of eight students, alongside two teachers departed for Florida from Chopin International Airport. After two hours, we arrived in Munich for our connecting flight to Miami, which lasted twelve hours. Our voyage was part of this year's Pompano Beach High School International Summit, organised by the said high school with the goal of uniting students from all over the world. Delegations from fourteen countries participated in the programme – with some participating online due to visa limitations.

Our stay in the US lasted eight days (excluding two that were spent travelling). And, rather than focusing on the organisation of the summit (the details of where we went and what we did) this article will highlight all the incredible experiences we were lucky to have taken part in.



American students, I befriended during a computer class doing a country quiz (they failed it terribly)

## OUR HOST FAMILIES

Delegates from all countries, lived with their assigned host families for the duration of their stay in



View from the motorboat tour through the canals with my hosts

the US. We had been in contact with our hosts before the trip through WhatsApp, however, it was only when I met my host family in person that I realised how incredibly welcoming and warm those people were – and this is something most people who went on the trip can definitely relate to. It is important to say that the families themselves did not



Simon, and me with our host family during breakfast at an American diner.

gain anything financially from hosting us – and neither did the school – which had raised funds in order to finance the summit and its logistics. My family hosted – besides me – a guy from Slovakia named Simon (an amazing guy by the way), and we both agreed, our family made us feel at home, if not better, with all the care they exercised showing us the most of Florida and taking us to the best of places. It was in the host families that one could see the first contrasts between the American way of life and that of a given delegate – in the countless conversations and shocking realisations of how different our cultures and customs are – and at times how similar.



The Pompano Beach High School International Summit



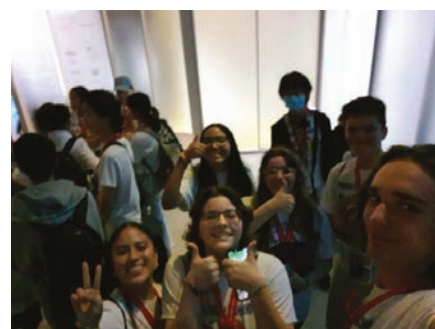
The Polish delegation was supervised by Ms Drzewiecka and Mr Musielak

## THE PEOPLE

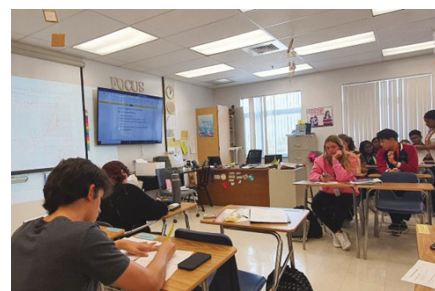
Having mentioned our host families, I cannot abstain from mentioning the students at Pompano Beach High School (at least those I met), and their friendliness and openness. It was truly surprising to me how kind everyone was, and I say this in respect not just to the students; everyone wanted to get to know – not just our cultures – but mainly us personally. Of course, the heaviest emphasis was put on our nationality, especially that it was an international summit. Yet, especially towards the later days, it became a background for making new friends.

## DELEGATES

Speaking of making friends – the delegates from the other countries were the defining feature of the summit and



Internationals



A typical American classroom and class



what made it a kaleidoscope of diversity and fun. Coming from all over the world – from Taiwan to Mexico – the delegates represented countries, some of the Americans had never heard of. Poland was widely recognized – partially due to the song “I took the wock to Poland” by Lil Yachty – everyone would constantly ask us if we knew it? (no one from Poland did). Slovakia for example, whenever it appeared in conversation, (if recognized at all) was mistaken by the Americans for Czechoslovakia, which was both hilarious and slightly depressing (especially for Simon). That is to say, everyone who was not American could recognize every delegate’s country, yet it was still surprising how difficult – and again – similar we all were.



Preparing for various cultural exhibitions

in which the international friends that I made in the US differed from my friends in Poland, was the fact that they were not from Poland, and that’s it. The history of our nations and their diplomatic relations played an important role in the summit – specifically in the delightfully political sense of humour which helped to create a friendly atmosphere of a common ground. All of this was further enriched by the wonder of globalisation – memes – funny both in Egypt and Ireland, apparently. Overall, the people we got the chance to meet at the summit were one of a kind, as they all came (or in the case of the Americans, who already lived there) with an attitude of extreme openness, something I have never seen anywhere else.



Ms Drzewiecka dancing the best Macarena, American students had ever seen

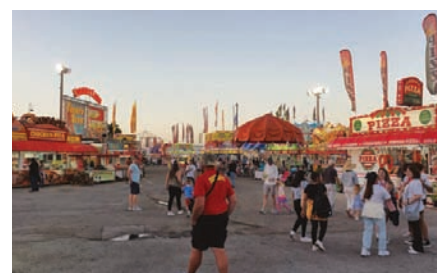
Most of us probably know – even subconsciously – what the US looks like, due to the popularity of American culture – and I can testify that the wide streets, suburban houses, and donut shops, were not that different from what I imagined. While of course, seeing it with your own eyes adds a certain magic to the place, the thing about the US (or at least Florida), is that it is not about the place – it is the people; and be it the local or international ones, meeting them was one of the best experiences of my life.



An online/in-class group meeting for students who couldn’t attend in person due to visa limitations.

Cultural differences were of course visible, especially during our cultural showcases. Nevertheless, it was a sort of a common ground which allowed us to understand each other. This helped us realise we were more similar, rather than different from each other. Although it depended on the country (the people from Taiwan were awkwardly introvert and barely spoke to anyone who was not Taiwanese), the only way

The summit was a great opportunity for many things. Making new friends from all around the world certainly tops the list, but seeing and experiencing the US lifestyle – as well as challenging our own presumptions – definitely follows right after. To quote one of my hosts: “Everything you see [about America] on TV is true”; it is a factual statement that (besides the narrational parts of any film), rightfully reflects what the US is.



South Florida fair



An alligator during the Everglades National Park airboat tour



The auditorium where the delegates presented their cultural performances



Teachers dancing during the ending ceremony



# NORWEGIANS VISIT US IN CRACOW FOR A WEEK OF CAS WORKSHOPS “MAKING GOODNESS MAKES YOU A BETTER PERSON”

By Michael Nutley, IB1

Our school took part in an exchange with a public IB school in a small city about an hour or so from Oslo, the Norwegian capital. The students were supposed to arrive in Cracow on Monday 27<sup>th</sup> March around 12, nevertheless, due to delays, they arrived around 2 pm. Their return flight was scheduled for the morning, on Friday 31<sup>st</sup> March.

The school arranged a programme for us, and the exchange students started with a shared lunch in Kwadrans, a restaurant near our school, we got a chance to socialize and get to know our soon to be friends. Later we were meant to go for a walk around Cracow. However, due to the delays the teachers decided we were free to do what we pleased with the remainder of the day. So we decided to hold a get-together where we were able to talk and dance to both Polish and Norwegian music. We would play a song then they would play one. This was a great ice breaker as we all became familiar with each other.

The next day we spent participating in a CAS workshop where we had to prepare a presentation in groups about how we would organize a charity project. We would be presenting our projects the following day. Till then we still had a full evening which we spent visiting a museum and then, the students split up. Some went home and a group went to Kazimierz where they ate *zapiekaniki*. Which was a great idea because if you are going to eat *zapiekaniki*, Kazimierz is the place to do it. Afterwards, a few other students and I went to play pool and darts which also ended up being quite good fun.

Apart from presentations which took up most of Wednesday's morning, we also ended up having a pleasant walk to Kościuszko Mound. On the summit of the mound we could see Cracow in its entirety. Despite living here for over 6 years it was still nice to see it especially on such a sunny day. Here is a photo of some of us:

The rest of the day we went bowling, then we returned home to get a good night's sleep.

Thursday we had an optional trip to Auschwitz. This was my second visit, but for all of the Norwegians, and a lot of Poles, this was their first time. Obviously, it was a demanding tour and I am sure it was solemn and troubling for all. This extermination camp was the largest Nazi camp during WW II where an estimated 1.1 million people died, mostly Jews.

After the visit to Auschwitz, we went for something to eat. Afterwards, we decided to have a little get together as a final goodbye for our exchange students. We danced and talked the night away and again everyone had a great time. I'm sure most our Polish and Norwegian friends and students utterly rejoiced this trip, and the last day was the cherry on top of the cake.

Friday was the day we had to say a farewell to our friends and wait for September when we will be able to see them again once we travel to Norway. We kissed everyone goodbye and were left alone to reflect on the week. I personally loved it and am so happy I took part in the exchange programme and I can't wait for September.



## A School Trip

by Michael Nutley IB1

DP1 had a joint school trip to Poronin. We departed from Błonia around 9 am on the 2nd of June. We went by coach and we visited a museum where we were shown the wildlife of the Tatra mountain range. Then we drove to Krupówki, which is the most popular street in Zakopane, we were able to buy souvenirs and eat in the restaurants. At our last stop, we visited the ski jumping hill and walked in the forest on a marked path. Interestingly, we had a pit stop at a hut that is used to make traditional Polish cheese called „oscypki”. At this point, we heard about the whole process and tried some milk that is necessary to make the cheese. After this we were transported to our lodgings where we spent the next three nights. The resort had a football field, a basketball hoop, a volleyball net, as well as an indoor pool with a jacuzzi and sauna. We spent the evening participating in outdoor and indoor activities.

The next day began with breakfast, then we had a two-hour walk with amazing views of the mountains and the countryside. Afterwards, we had some free time, so we could rest and spend time together. After lunch there was swimming time. I mostly enjoyed the sauna, and devoted some time for the Jacuzzi and the swimming pool. Once we showered and put on regular clothes, most of us played basketball in order to fill





# to Poronin

up the time before dinner. After the meal there was a school disco and we danced a lot, and from my perspective it was one of my favorite nights.

Sunday started with breakfast and then we had some free time before bowling. We played for two hours and had access to four alleys which was good because of the large number of us. For lunch we had pizza which was delicious. We returned, had some free time and then we had a short game that involved everyone. After, we had a treasure hunt which lasted about an hour or two. The day ended with packing since it was our last day. We got some sleep before the way back.

On Monday we woke up, took our luggage down and went to breakfast. After the meal we headed for a paintball arena. Unfortunately, we were not able to play. We had some shooting practice with a paintball gun, as well as a bow. There was also a field game prepared for us where we had to look for keys to disarm a fake bomb. Then we had lunch and went back to the coach which took us home.

All in all, the school trip was a success. The fact we did not play paintball was a bit disappointing, but when I reminisce the school trip a smile grows on my face which is always a sign of good time.



## Indo-Polish Exchange Presentations

by Mateusz Niżnik PDP1

It was April the 4<sup>th</sup>: “DPS GURGAON is inviting you to a scheduled Zoom meeting.”

No one until then had known that we were about to join a call that changed our lives forever... The distance between India and Poland is approximately 6200 kilometres. Yet our group of 10 lucky students could seamlessly talk together and give some great presentations.

And we had prepared “some great presentations,” but, on what specific topics? The biggest discussions revolved around our differences and similarities such as:

- Art
- Cuisine
- Culture
- Fashion and many more

A month of putting together our projects turned out to be one of our best experiences. You don't believe me? Here is what we have learned...

Indian cuisine has a history that has existed for over 6,000 years, a history where different communities and cultures still develop new flavours. From the Harappan civilization to the modern-day. Thus, a small number of traditional recipes have existed for thousands of years and are still widely used. The most popular dishes there are:

- Samosa
- Dosa
- Masala Tea (aka Chai)

The same goes for Polish cuisine – it has developed since the Medieval Ages when people ate their local produce. In spite of this, during the Renaissance, the art of Polish cooking was strongly affected by Italian vegetables, all introduced by Princess Bona Sforza. Nowadays, Polish kitchens are full of dishes prepared from seasonal vegetables and meat, for instance:

- Rosół
- Pierogi
- Schabowy

Our cuisines still have a lot in common, for example, Polish pierogies are unbelievably similar to Indian momos.

On the other hand, both fashion cultures have some visible differences. For example, Indian culture puts a premium on the many different characteristics of fabrics, for instance;

lightness, which is why silk is widely used, and as such, the Saree is India's most popular garment. Furthermore, due to British rule, the colonial era had a significant impact on Indian fashion. Western attire gained popularity among the urban elite, while rural and traditional clothing continued to be worn by the majority. In the modern era the way of dressing has been vastly influenced by Bollywood which caused the appearance of a lot more street-wear clothes.

In comparison, during the medieval era, Polish fashion was influenced by neighbouring countries such as Germany and Hungary. Traditional Polish attire consisted of long tunics, robes, and cloaks made from linen or wool. Women wore long dresses with embroidered patterns, while men donned tunics and trousers. Later on, the type of clothes people wore was greatly influenced by French fashion and other trends that came to us in the wake of two World Wars. Traditional Polish elements, such as embroidery and folk patterns, were incorporated into modern designs.

Another point of our meeting was a pursuit of understanding the contrast between both art styles. We were mesmerised by the work of two specific artists – Tamara Łempicka and Jamini Roy. First of which was best known for her polished Art Deco portraits of aristocrats and the wealthy and her highly stylized paintings. Her style was a blend of late refined cubism and the neoclassical style. Au contraire, Jamini Roy, was best known for combining traditional Indian and Western art styles to create new masterpieces. From calligraphy to animals to Jesus Christ, his work included many different subjects and motifs. He inflected these subjects with his unique modernist style.

That being said, we humans all have our differences and similarities. Understanding them only broadens our horizons and helps us gain a better understanding of the world. Throughout this project we have not only learned a lot about each culture, but also made deep connections that will be remembered for a long time. And who knows maybe we will all meet again someday, maybe on the coastline of India or Poland to give another cultural presentation, this time in person.

Between 30<sup>th</sup> May and 5<sup>th</sup> June 2023, 11 B class students went on a trip to Sicily to explore its historical heritage connected with the... Vikings. Here are some historical facts they have learnt and photos of some monuments they admired.

## The Vikings: Traders, Settlers and Explorers, or just Plain Ruthless Warriors???

by Antoni Żywczak, Doctor of Physical Sciences, Science Teacher in PALO

In recent years, we have had a flood of TV series, books and movies about the Vikings, such as the top-rated series; Vikings, The Last of Kingdom, or Viking. All these film images depict the Vikings as fearless warriors, brutal, and the destroyers of everything within their sight. Nowhere have I come across a depiction where the Vikings are presented as patrons of culture, and in circumstances where the world's greatest intellectuals would visit their royal courts. Nevertheless, during this era, the Viking world left behind a series of excellent constructions, along with the promotion of science. Accordingly, I will take you on a journey to the Kingdom of Sicily, a kingdom ruled by the kings of Normandy. The Normans were a strong group of feudal knights, from Normandy, in the north of France, who ruled this country. They were descendants of the Vikings who converted to Christianity and assimilated with the French.

The first Norman knights arrived in southern Italy in the early 11<sup>th</sup> century. They appeared at the request of the Lombards, who counted on their help to fight the encroaching Byzantium Empire. Similarly, Byzantium also called on the Normans to assist them fight the Arabs. What is more, after their conquest of Sicily, Arabian armies began to expand deep into the Apennine Peninsula. Over time, the Normans gradually

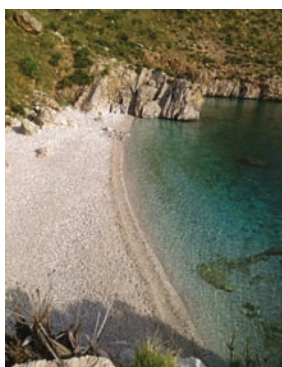
occupied territories taken over from the Arabs, as well as those that the Byzantines had given them possession. Thanks to these favorable circumstances, Pope Nicholas II, in 1059, transferred all the territories occupied by the Normans into their hands which allowed the creation of a Norman fiefdom. Thus, the path to Norman control of the region was open.

The Lombards and the Byzantines had no idea their invitation would completely change the political situation in these lands. The military advantage of the Normans, a lack of unity among the Arabs and the weakening of Byzantium's power allowed the former to create a dynamic mediaeval state. Robert Guiscard, son of the knight Tancred de Hauteville, united most of the southern principalities, and drove the Byzantines and Arab armies out of Italy. Later, Roger I conquered Sicily, and his nephew Roger II completed the work of his predecessors, having already united the region and given the state its final shape. From then on, Apulia, Calabria and Sicily were strong entities, and from 1130 these lands were known as the Kingdom of Sicily.

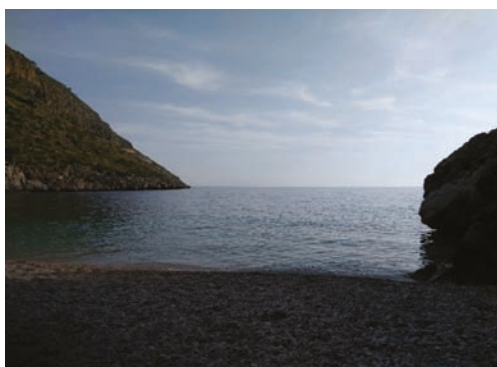
In due time, Roger II, accepted the royal crown in Palermo from the hands of Pope Anacletus II. Despite this rapid military conquest, the Norman kingdom of Sicily under Roger II was not a scene of ethnic cleansing or religious segregation,

and is now seen by commentators as a multi-ethnic and tolerant state, especially, when compared with the standards of the time, for example, this was the period of the first Christian Crusades. Normans, Jews, Muslim Arabs, Byzantine Greeks, Lombards and indigenous Sicilians descendants of the Greek population and the Romans of antiquity lived in relative harmony. This was despite several episodes of high tension between the Lombards and Muslims and the proactive policy of "Re-Latinization" and the Christianization of the island, including the resettlement of the Christian population from the Italian peninsula to Sicily. Even so, Arabic remained the language of government and administration for at least a century under Norman rule, and traces of the Arabic language still exist in the Sicilian language.

Henry Aristipus, a Latin canon of Catania and the first medieval translator of Plato into Latin, in a dedicatory letter to his 1160 translation of Phaedo, praised the court of Norman king William I of England a center of learning and culture. However, this tradition was initiated by Roger II, who surrounded himself with the languages of Greek and Arabic, and it must be noted, to a lesser extent, Latin. Accordingly, each of these cultures provided representatives of science and art to Roger's court. And, significantly,



The Normans used these bays during their invasion of Sicily



Cefalù Cathedral





Montreal Cathedral

there are Arabic poems praising the king and the beauty of his residence, and written records tell of Roger's interest in the natural sciences and his aesthetic sensibility.

At around 1140, an important, Byzantium theologian, Nilos Dozapatres, fell out of favor in Constantinople's court, and found shelter at the Norman court in Palermo. Commissioned by Roger II, he wrote a theological-historical treatise on the five patriarchates. Furthermore, King Roger II's scientific interests and openness to different cultures were evidenced by the Arabic book he sponsored with the poetic title *The Delight of Those Who Choose to Travel the World*, also known as *The Book of Roger*. The author of this book was the Arab geographer Muhammed al-Idrisi. He spent many years in Palermo working on his manuscript, which was completed in January 1154, shortly before the death of King Roger II. Significantly, al-Idrisi's tome contains a complete compilation of the period's geographical knowledge, and it was based on observations and accounts of merchants and travelers, of mainly Arab origin. Furthermore, the author knew that the earth was spherical, and thanks to this, his book was the most extensive and faithful description of the geographical world and its people in the Middle Ages. Al-Idrisi's book tells us, King Roger II was interested in collecting and refining geographic information. He questioned merchants and travelers, and sent special emissaries to verify information

and facts. The Arab chronicler al-Safadi writes about Roger's great intimacy and respect for al-Idrisi, who was allowed to enter the royal residence on a mule, which at the time was considered a great distinction and honor in the Muslim world.

The Norman kings of Sicily, wanting to build a solid state, offered artists and scientists from around the world a field of practice and a stimulating framework for discussion, based on the meeting of various traditions. In this context of mixing and interaction, an original form of architecture was born, which simultaneously combined contributions from Norman, Byzantine, and Arab-Muslim architectures into prestigious buildings, that were primarily religious and palatial. What influences can we find in this architecture:

### I. Norman influences:

Buildings based on the Latin cross plan, with Gothic and Romanesque facades and massive towers that now show the influence of Benedictine architecture, specifically Cluniac. There was a tendency to stylize these buildings with carved animal and plant images.

### II. Muslim Influences:

Concerning architecture, the pointed arch and the horseshoe (Moorish) arch are characteristic, and most representative of this influence: the upper part of this arch sometimes displayed a pointed arch, each with a semicircle that narrowed at

the base to form a horseshoe. The interiors feature stalactite decorations, called mukarnas, and these painted and carved polygonal planes still decorate domes, pendentives, capitals and corbels.

### III. Byzantine influences:

Regarding the architecture of religious buildings, this influence is characterized by a plan in the shape of a Greek cross with a barrel vault, crowned by a traditional Sicilian-Byzantine dome, placed at the intersection of the transept on a polygonal drum. There are no depictions of human figures in the sculpture. However, the most visible expression of Byzantine art is the mosaic, which covers huge surfaces with figures and various decorative motifs which ultimately developed into a monumental art form.

Thus, it could be argued, the Vikings ought to be demythologized. This conclusion is based on their open-mindedness and willingness to build a multi-ethnic state that incorporated various intellectual and architectural trends. When I was in Montreal, the location of Roger II court, I saw this beautiful combination of architectural styles, and I had such a reflection. People 800 years ago left such beauty behind them that has lasted and will last for centuries, and there will be nothing like it after us. Who had a more prosperous artistic soul, primitive warriors fighting in a wall of shields, or our developed and intellectual populace of the 21<sup>st</sup> century?





## Dancing with the Wind – Theatre Workshops in Gardzienice

by Amelia Jurasińska

From 24 to 26 March, a group of 24 students from our school participated in workshops organised by a theatre company called "Gardzienice". The ensemble took its name from the place where nearly 50 years ago all of

their activity had started, and that's exactly where we were heading – to Gardzienice near Lublin.

The Centre for Theatre Practices is located in a great area of green

turfs. On those, we can find a few old-fashioned buildings in light colours. Several years ago they were renovated from their foundations to roofs. There are two spaces where the actors perform: the Palace





and the Granary, and at least two residential buildings, as well as a few other structures.

The workshops primarily focused on movement and voice. The facilitators, who were all experienced physical theatre actors and workshop leaders, guided us through various exercises based on stretching and pair work. Every day after breakfast we did workouts outdoors. The weather was beautiful – sunny with a little bit of a gentle breeze.

Apart from morning activities, we also did different physical workouts throughout the day. We were taught to attach importance to issues connected to flexibility and mobility, which were essential for the next activities: cheironomy, Pyrricha and fencing.

Cheironomy is a set of scenic gestures in the theatre of ancient Greece. Our instructors taught us how to physically represent the words using gestures and different body poses. Even though we've been trying to create our gestures as well, we mostly focused on the ones which already exist and used them in conjunction with the lines of dramatic text.

Pyrricha is a war dance, also having its roots in ancient Greece. Over three days we were learning and perfected the whole choreography of the dance. Fencing is a combat sport that features sword fighting and we were taught the basics of it.

As we were at the theatre workshops, we were directly working not only with drama but also music - not only analysing the lines but singing! Divided into two groups, we were developing our voice skills through vocal warm-ups to then move to singing Ukrainian and Greek songs and learning about the ancient chorus.

Those voice exercises were fantastic and useful for interpreting texts. We even tried to match the rhythm of a song played, while we were reciting. At the end of our 3-day stay, we saw two outstanding live performances of the Gardzienice Theatre Company, in which we could observe and appreciate many elements of our physical and vocal training in action.

# Our Trip To Giby

by Kamila Kobylarczyk, PDP 1

On 29th of May, pDP classes started their annual school trip. This year we stayed at Giby, a small village located in the Podlaskie Voivodeship.

Our group departed from Krakow at 6am and arrived at our accommodation at about 4pm. On the same day we visited a Monument to the victims of the Augustów Roundup, a beautiful Gieret Lake, and later on, we went back to the hotel.

The next day our group visited Hitler's quarters, the Wolf's Lair where we saw bunkers, an exhibition and so much more after the visit all of us stopped off in Mikołajki – a small city located in Mazurskie Voivodeship where we saw a fountain with the image of the King of Vendaces. Later on we cruised along the Śniardwy Lake during which we saw seagulls which were a fun addition to our voyage.

On the third day, our merry band departed from Giby early in the morning to see as much as possible in Vilnius – our next destination. In this astonishing historical city we saw monuments, churches and more. Among others we visited the Gate of Dawn, Vilnius University, The Market Square, St. Anne's Church and Adam Mickiewicz's House. Our group ended our trip to Vilnius by eating dinner,

and after this all of us went back to our hotel.

On the first of June our group went to see a monastery in Sejny – a small town. We climbed to the top of the clock tower and saw a breathtaking view of Wigry Lake and a National Park which we visited later on. After this we arrived at Augustów where we saw the monument of King Augustus and then we toured the Main Square. On the same day we took part in an amazing cruise from Augustów to Studzieniczna during which we sailed through the locks of the Augustów Canal.

On the last day of our trip, our group left the hotel for the last time and we headed towards Krakow. En-route, the bus stopped in Suwałki and we visited an intriguing museum in the family house of Maria Konopnicka. The exhibition was appealing and full of fun Easter eggs and surprises. After the visit we went straight to Krakow and we arrived there at 9:30.

The school trip was 5 days long, but we went to about 7 different towns from which one was outside of Poland. Our group of intrepid travellers saw many monuments and interesting places. The journey was unforgettable and amazing. We didn't even have time to be bored!



# CLUBS, WORKSHOPS AND PROJECTS

## Celebrating the 70th Anniversary of the UNESCO Associated Schools Project Network

by Joanna Bajda, teacher of English

The UNESCO Associated Schools Network (ASPnet) is one of the oldest and largest global school networks. Over the course of 70 years, it has grown to encompass approximately 12 000 Members in 182 countries. In 2023, the UNESCO Associated Schools Project Network (ASPnet) is celebrating its 70th anniversary. The network aims to support the development of education open to the values promoted by UNESCO, innovative teaching methods, and collaboration. Our school is an active member of the UNESCO Associated Schools Project Network. This year's anniversary provides a unique opportunity to summarize ASPnet's activities, exchange experiences among member schools, and reflect on the future directions of collaboration among Polish schools within the network.

### REFLECTIONS ON ASPNET'S ACHIEVEMENTS

Over the years, the schools belonging to the Polish ASPnet have demonstrated great enthusiasm and commitment to the activities of the UNESCO network, achieving notable success. However, due to various constraints, including the COVID-19 pandemic, the coordinators of Polish member schools have been



unable to engage in direct exchanges of experiences and best practices. This made the conference in Warsaw all the more important, as it provided a valuable opportunity for personal meetings and direct interactions among school coordinators and Headteachers.

### THE CONFERENCE IN WARSAW ON MAY 25-26, 2023

The invited representatives from schools, especially school coordinators, participated in the conference held in Warsaw on May 25-26, organized by the Polish National Commission for UNESCO in cooperation with the Ministry of Education and Science. The conference took place at the National Center for Education Development, located at Aleje Ujazdowskie 28. Our school was represented by Joanna Bajda. Following the proceedings, participants had the opportunity to visit the National Museum of Warsaw.

The conference featured esteemed speakers who shared their insights and expertise on various topics related to UNESCO's mission and the role of the ASPnet network:

Dr. Alicja Jagielska-Burduk – Moderator, Secretary-General of the Polish National Commission for UNESCO

Prof. Dr. hab. Michał Kleiber – Chairman of the Polish National Commission for UNESCO

Dr. Tomasz Rzymkowski – Deputy Minister at the Ministry of Education and Science

Małgorzata Herbich – National Coordinator of the Polish UNESCO Associated Schools Project Network



Dr. hab. Katarzyna Zalasieńska – Director of the National Heritage Institute (NID)

Dr. Anna Batorczak – University Center for Environmental Studies and Sustainable Development, University of Warsaw

The NASK Science Development Office led by Karolina Kulicka

### KEY TOPICS AND DISCUSSIONS

During the conference, a series of lectures and discussions will revolve around key UNESCO program-related issues, such as sustainable development, artificial intelligence, and cultural heritage education. These topics hold significant relevance in shaping the future of education and the role of schools in promoting UNESCO's goals and values.

### INSPIRING COLLABORATION AND GROWTH

Personal meetings between school coordinators, facilitating the exchange of experiences and best practices, are essential for the continued development of educational activities carried out by schools. The opportunity to connect directly with peers from Polish member schools, after several years of limitations imposed by various circumstances, including the COVID-19 pandemic, is crucial, necessary, and inspiring.



# The Design Thinking Project: A Journey Towards Innovation and Impact

by Maciej Osmański and Lea Romanek IB 1

In recent months, our group of students has embarked on a transformative journey through the Design Thinking Project, under the guidance of Ms. Urszula Drzewiecka. This collaborative initiative has provided us with a unique opportunity to explore the design thinking process, a widely utilised method in major corporations for generating innovative solutions and ideas. The primary objective of our project was to design a venture that would benefit a specific community by identifying their needs and developing a prototype solution through iterative feedback loops. In this article, we will delve into the details of our experience, starting from our initial exploration of design thinking to ultimately winning the contest organised by UEK and the GAP foundation. Throughout this process, we have grown creatively, engaged in service actions, and grappled with ethical considerations, which have significantly impacted our perspectives on decision-making and responsible innovation.

When we began the Design Thinking Project, we were not familiar with the intricacies of this approach. However, over the course of several weeks, we delved into the fundamentals of design thinking; we formulated multiple ideas aimed at assisting university students in their transition into early adulthood and picked out the most adequate one. To ensure our idea resonated with our target group, we conducted a series of interviews with students from the University of Economics in Krakow. These interviews provided us with valuable insights into their values, needs, desires, and aspirations. Armed with a comprehensive understanding of our target group, we engaged in a brainstorming session to work on our concept. After careful consideration, we arrived at our final project idea, an application for collaborative borrowing and purchasing of household items, ensuring it effectively addressed the identified needs of our target group.

With a clear vision of our project, we moved on to the prototyping phase. Our objective was to create a tangible representation of our solution that would effectively showcase its potential. Working collaboratively, we designed and refined the prototype, incorporating feedback from our team and potential users. Through an iterative process of testing and refining, we made significant improvements, ensuring that our solution aligned with the identified needs of our target group.

Simultaneously, we documented our design thinking journey, capturing the rationale behind our choices and the evolution of our project. This documentation served as a valuable reference for our team and became a crucial tool for presenting our project to the organisers of the initiative. In a comprehensive closing video, we explained the journey from the initial stages of ideation to the final prototype. This video effectively communicated our design thinking process, highlighting the insights gained, the challenges faced, and the iterative nature of our approach.

The culmination of our Design Thinking Project arrived when our group received an invitation to the "Przyszłość Edukacji" conference held on 07/12/2022. Among numerous competing projects, ours emerged victorious in the categories of originality and social responsibility, which validated the merit of our project. Our group singled out two representatives who prepared speeches to showcase our work and inspire others during the conference. The additional effort and time invested in preparing for this opportunity proved to be a fulfilling conclusion to our project.

Throughout our Design Thinking Project, we encountered various ethical challenges, particularly in relation to Learning Outcome 7 — dealing with the ethics of choices and actions. As we designed features for

our proposed platform, we grappled with issues surrounding platform structure, security, and the balance of responsibility between the platform owners and the users themselves. These challenges forced us to reflect deeply on the potential consequences of our decisions and actions, ensuring that our solution upheld ethical standards and prioritised the well-being of all stakeholders involved.

The experience broadened our perspective on responsible innovation, empowering us to approach future endeavours with a heightened awareness of the ethical implications. We learned the importance of considering diverse perspectives, fostering inclusivity, and promoting sustainability. The Design Thinking Project not only equipped us with valuable skills in ideation, prototyping, and project management but also instilled in us a sense of ethical responsibility as we navigate complex challenges in our personal, academic, and professional lives.

Participating in the Design Thinking Project has been a transformative experience for our group of students. From our initial exploration of the design thinking process to emerging as winners in a prestigious contest, the journey has been filled with growth, learning, and personal development. Our understanding of design thinking principles, creative problem-solving, and project execution has expanded significantly. Additionally, the project allowed us to engage in service actions, collaborate effectively, and navigate complex ethical considerations. These newfound skills and insights will undoubtedly shape our future undertakings, enabling us to approach challenges with a more comprehensive and conscientious mindset. We express our deepest gratitude to Ms. Urszula Drzewiecka and our dedicated team members for their invaluable support, as this experience would not have been possible without her guidance and their collaboration.



# SKY IS THE LIMIT

## Antoni Żywczak, Doctor of Physical Sciences, Science Teacher in PALO

At PALO, two teams have succeeded in a competition organized by the CanSat of the European Space Agency. Two successful teams are OSAteam and CANcerteam.

Let's start with OSAteam., which won the European Championship in the CanSat 2020/2021 competition. The team consisted of: Aleksy Grymek, Stanisław Michalik, Miłosz Słowiński, Piotr Wyźliński.



The OSAteam at the Polish Championships

The probe had two science missions. One of them was to study the impact of overloads on the properties of aerogels – a substance with which there are great hopes for the construction of new generation spacecraft and the creation of modern technologies related to space. The second extremely important mission was to study the chemical composition of the atmosphere, in our case, for the sake of the Earth, these were greenhouse gases, such as: CH<sub>4</sub> and CO<sub>2</sub> and standard O<sub>2</sub> and N<sub>2</sub> along with the altitude profile. Our idea can be used in the study of planets or moons. In a given atmosphere, satellites with a size of about 330 ml take samples at certain heights. Then the rover collects probes and analyzes the collected



Figure 2. Research probe designed by OSAteam

samples in any respect, e.g. chemical composition or presence of biological pollutants, etc.

The most exciting challenge at the European finals was the adaptation of the research probe to the conditions on Mars, which was done perfectly.

The jury, arguing for the victory, emphasized:

*„You have achieved outstanding performances in all categories and fields. You have a great understanding of the scientific and engineering aspects. You have excellent system engineering approach including elements of risk management. You resolved all the challenges with adaptation of the rotating mechanism, and have been able to capture your audience's attention and interest”*

The team wants to revolutionize the future exploration of other planets. Their idea includes a multi-phase method of collecting and analyzing atmospheric samples that significantly reduces the cost of research missions. The project can help you find a habitable planet or explore planets that could be habitable!

Their success filled them with an internship opportunity right after graduation. Budimex has signed a cooperation agreement with OSAteam, which includes annual financing and a 2-month internship in Budimex's "innovation office". The competition winners are to support the company's research and development projects, but as part of the internship they will also implement their projects and prototypes.

With the support of Budimex, students will create concepts and prototypes of innovative solutions and recognize the market of new technologies. As part of the internship, a business case and solutions concepts will be developed that will receive financial support from the company. Thus, young scientists will gain a partner for their innovative projects, and Budimex can use their knowledge and experience, for example, when looking for solutions to monitor and reduce CO<sub>2</sub> in the construction industry.

In the 2022/2023 school year, the CANcerteam team was launched: Michał Ptak, Krzysztof Mierzowski, Konstanty Kudła, Konrad Biały, Kacper Czekaj.

In the case of CANcerteam, these were measurements of ionizing radiation and an analysis of the content



Figure 3. The team with the statuette of the European Champion





CANcerteam team

of volatile organic compounds in the atmosphere. As the team members say in the project description:

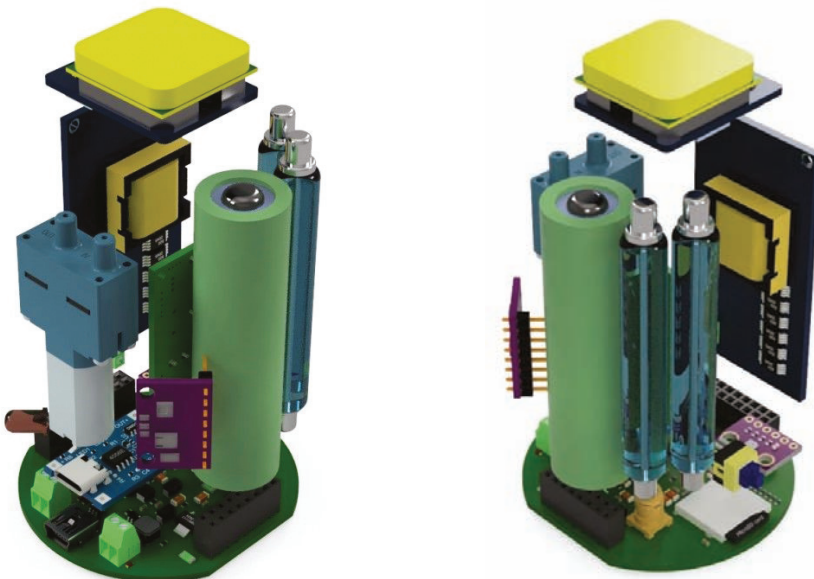
In the era of increasing air pollution, especially in urban areas, we hear more and more about the impact of pollution on human health. We decided to create a device that, with a small financial outlay, can assess the risk associated with living in the study area. It is determined based on the measurement of ionizing radiation and the analysis of the content of volatile organic compounds in the atmosphere. In addition, our probe collects air samples, which will then be tested for the presence of hydrocarbons and their derivatives.

We measure ionizing radiation, more specifically beta and gamma radiation, using a Geiger tube connected to the system of our design. To check the functionality of our system, we tested it at the Institute of Nuclear Physics in Krakow with a positive result. We decided to install such a system in our probe because ionizing radiation is carcinogenic.

We are currently working on building the so-called muon detector. It is a system that, using at least two Geiger counters placed one above the other, can detect the occurrence of a muon, i.e. an elementary particle formed due to a multi-stage decay of cosmic rays. Such a detector works on a simple principle. A muon is a high-energy particle. Near the earth's surface, they have an energy three orders of magnitude greater than that of beta radiation. For this reason, the muon generates a pulse on both Geiger counters simultaneously, which beta or gamma radiation would not be able to do.

We intend to measure the content of hydrocarbons in the atmosphere, such as methane, by taking air samples during the flight and subjecting them to laboratory analysis using the GC/MS method. Thanks to this method, we can measure the concentration of carbon dioxide in addition to hydrocarbons. This will make it possible to determine the amount and characteristics of greenhouse gases in the air.

In 2022/2023, we won a distinction. We also plan to fight for the highest trophies in the next year.



CANcerteam probe

# “Zwolnieni z Teorii” Competition

by Maksymilian Dyduch, IB1

Inspired by previous projects completed by our students, Wiktoria Biegańska and I decided to take part in the “Zwolnieni z Teorii” competition. Zwolnieni z Teorii is a countrywide contest in which teams join forces to create the best social initiative. The main idea is to spread awareness of the project. It can have a leading theme, which you can pick yourself. We decided to incorporate our hobbies into our project, therefore, all of our ideas revolved around drawing. It is a great opportunity to not only show your attention to others, but also fulfil your CAS Service hours. You will be also awarded with a completion diploma, as well as optional group management diplomas which are appreciated in applications for universities and work.

We initially decided to go with an “ecology” theme and wanted to spread awareness about it with our peers. Some of our first ideas were to create

a Pokémon GO-like game with our own “eco” characters through which users could “evolve” by taking part in cleaning the environment and other eco-friendly initiatives. However, as it usually is with group projects, our own ideas “evolved”. We settled on a more “active” leading theme, which would be workshops, specifically ones for young children, as we had already created adorable mascots which we called “EkoBestie”, through which it would be a perfect way to communicate knowledge to kids. The contest required us to reach out to companies and work with people we would not have ever worked with. Our project managed to be included in the BNP Paribas Zwolnieni z Teorii mentorship programme, and our mentor assisted us to perfect our ideas and set the plan into action.

Of course, not everything went according to plan, and many of the

firms and foundations which we reached out to were not interested in taking part in the project. Nevertheless, we managed to bring things together and have fully interactive workshops with our own staple “merchandise” such as stickers, which led us to the finale of Zwolnieni z Teorii. Throughout this process we had contacted multiple kindergartens to visit and present our workshops. It is most important for children to learn in an interactive way. Moreover, we organized three learning games which involved recycling and water saving, all “lead” by our mascots. They were presented in a competitive form and the children were rewarded for their enthusiasm, to strengthen their desire to discover and take part in the project. Finally, as a means of making our project accessible to all, we created an Instagram account where we distributed eco quizzes and reports on our workshops.

We wish that EkoBestie could become an even bigger initiative, as our first year had shown to be successful with over 300 people who have benefited, and we learned a lot during the process of the project.

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## ENGLISH THEATRE CLUB

by Pola Miernowska and Helena Sydor, PDP2

As some of you may know, in our school, there's an English Theatre Club. It is run by Ms Tatiana Judycka but we as students make it come to life. There are 5 of us: Hela, Pola, Amelia, Hania, and Michalina. The idea of the Theatre Club may sound easy, and what we do there may seem obvious to others, but it's actually not. In this text, you will find more details and get to know the insides of our Club from the perspective of two participants, Pola and Hela.

**Where and when is the Club taking place?**

Our main meetings take place on Wednesdays on Batorego Street in classroom 211, and sometimes on Karmelicka Street in the School Auditorium. We work for about two hours. When preparing a big project we meet up to 4 times a week, including Saturdays :)

**What are we doing at our meetings?**

Besides working with a script, we have a colourful pallet of exercises, from speech exercises to motion and

breathing. Everyone brings something new to the Club, for example, Amelia shows us how to do proper stretching. Hania teaches us good movements based on her past figure skating experience. Hela introduces musical aspects into our performances, Pola shares her editing skills (also playing the role of director's assistant), and Michalina shares her past theatre club techniques and experiences.

**What is our favourite aspect of the Club?**

We love everyone's energy and our common passion for art. A crucial part that keeps us going is the great support we get from Ms Tatiana.

*- Well done, girls! I'm really impressed!! We will work out the details and negotiate more ideas. But the most important thing is that you are able to work alone. Great job !-*

Theatre is all about the body and the mind, hence the exercises that are taught help us do the best we can using all of our potential until the end of every class.

On top of that, we have collaborations with IB Theatre and Visual Arts students! These collaborative creative endeavours, such as working on scenography together, allow us to make friends with even more people from our school. We also gain a lot of knowledge from them about these subjects and expand our understanding of ensemble work within the theatre.

**What have we learned since the first meeting?**

We work not only on remembering our lines but also on creating our own script from scratch. For most of the year, we have been working on the adaptation of *The Lesson* by Eugène Ionesco, the process which taught us how to direct, write and edit scripts, and most importantly, to work as a group. The thing that really surprised us, was the number of aspects and little details we needed to consider and take care of before putting on an actual play.

**Who is this Club for?**

Even though the Club is in English, we are open to all students from VIII PALO (as long as the language barrier does not affect our work). We accept students with little or no theatre experience and would be more than happy to welcome new ambitious and passionate people into our Club from September 2023.



## CZYTNIK – BOOKS AND CONFABULATIONS

by Mateusz Niżnik, PDP 1

Are you a person who likes to read books every day?

Congratulations – you are in the small 30 per cent of our population. And, unfortunately, this number is constantly decreasing as more and more people stop reading books. Sadly, this affects their language skills and overall knowledge. This is exactly why *Czytnik* was created by our Humanities teachers.

And it works a bit like this:

Every month, a “small-in-numbers-but-great-in-the-variety-of-experiences” group of dedicated readers gathers for one hour to discuss books and texts no one has ever thought of. During our gatherings, we mix and try every existent literary genre. From natural therapy horrors like our Polish “*Empuzjon*” of Olga Tokarczuk and scientific fantasy like the French bestseller “*The Anomaly*” by Hervé Le Tellier, all the way to the terrifying depths and mysteries of Japanese embedded narratives such as “*Grobowa cisza, żałobny zgielk*”, written by Yōko Ogawa.

As you can see these books come from different cultures, countries and times. That is because we all want to get the most out of each gathering and appreciate a variety of perspectives. This makes for a more fruitful, thought-provoking and engaging experience. Our books are always carefully chosen at the beginning of each meeting by our club members. This means that if you ever wanted to choose your favourite book for discussion you just need to make a brief suggestion.

That being said *Czytnik* has no merciless requirements, what you will need is to sacrifice some time to read one book a month. It should not sound that hard when you compare it to five hours a day dedicated to social media. Even so, rest assured, the experience and knowledge you acquire in only one hour will be priceless.

I used to hate reading books and thought it was a waste of time. Now, I not only find it extremely enjoyable, but also attend these meetings to uncover latent subplots.

Since two heads are always better than one, if you think *Czytnik* is for you, join us at the next meeting in our PALO school.

## POTTERY CLUB

by Leo Puszczynski, IB2

This year, like any other our school created many opportunities for its students to develop their skills or learn new ones while participating in many after-class clubs. Some were created by ambitious students themselves, and some by the teachers. Most of them are connected to creativity, activity, or service, combining fun and productivity by making the CAS experience more fruitful for IB students.

This year; however, a new club created for this purpose was organized by our CAS coordinator – Ms. Twardowska. This opportunity to add some hours to IB learners CAS experiences – which was very much needed by most students’ – sparked an interest in the topic. The club was a pottery club that would take place in the IB house after classes. In the first few weeks, interest in the weekly events became so great, there was



a need to create two groups so that all the willing students could attend the club. Many students even from outside of IB house decided to participate and sign up, creating an even bigger need to have more than one group. I had the pleasure of signing up for one of the groups and attending the pottery “master class” by Ms. Twardowska. At first, I was not planning for it to become my CAS hours, especially since my ‘Creative Talents’ were not doing too bad, however, once I attended one of the meetings it was hard not to become a regular member.

In the pottery club, we learn basic pottery techniques, how to manage the clay we use, and how to handle different tools that are made to help in this craft. Besides these new elements, we can pick our favourite techniques and practice them on our own, as the tools we use are always available to students and placed next to all our creations that are waiting to be fired in the kiln.

Besides sharpening or learning manual skills from scratch, the club allowed us to integrate with other students from different classes. Throughout this creative process we had a lot of time to talk and get to know each other. This club breaks the ice between different students and helps to create a better environment in our school. So that our IB house can become an IB home – we already sleep in it during breaks, so I think it has earned this title.

## CINEMA CLUB

by Marcel Palarczyk, IIC

Movie addicts are among us! Once a month, on Monday, our school turns into a movie theater. The greatest film classics appear on screen, and viewers have the opportunity to participate in an engaging discussion after the screening (or even during it).

Maybe you didn’t know, but PALO has a film club run by Mrs. Bożena Barańska. In our circle we watch and discuss the greatest works of world cinema. Together we choose the titles, we delve into the movie, and then we discuss live the theme of the film, the acting, the plot, the narrative, and the language of the film’s script. We learn a lot, and there is no better learning than having fun.

So far we have seen: *Twelve Angry Men*, a courtroom drama film directed by Sidney Lumet, *The Pianist*, a war biographical drama movie produced and

directed by Roman Polanski, *Sugar Man*, a documentary film, *Spring, Summer, Fall, Winter and Spring*, a South Korean drama film directed by Kim Ki-duk about a Buddhist monastery, and *One Flew Over the Cuckoo’s Nest*, an American psychological drama film directed by Miloš Forman, based on the 1962 novel of the same name by Ken Kesey.

- \* If you like cinema.
- \* If you are interested in good movies.
- \* If you want to talk about films and broaden your knowledge with philosophical, historical, social or literary background (also in the face of the upcoming high school diploma) – we welcome you.
- \* If you are looking for a cool group where you can expand your film knowledge – join us. It will be a good and joyful (and sometimes reflective) school afternoon. Enrollment is accepted by Mrs. Bożena Barańska. We cordially invite you.

# International Baccalaureate Programme at a Glance

## International Baccalaureate – an Example of Holistic Education

by Joanna Pillans, English B teacher

The International Baccalaureate (IB) is often cited as an example of a holistic education system. The IB program aims to develop well-rounded individuals who are intellectually curious, emotionally balanced, and socially responsible. Here are some key points that highlight how the IB promotes holistic education, along with relevant sources for further reading:

1. **Comprehensive Curriculum:** The IB program offers a comprehensive curriculum that goes beyond academic subjects. It emphasizes the development of the whole student, focusing on intellectual, emotional, social, and physical growth. In addition to core subjects like mathematics, science, and languages, students engage in creative arts, physical education, and community service. Moreover, the breadth of subjects promotes a well-rounded education and ensures that students have exposure to diverse areas of knowledge. Thus they can choose such subjects like Psychology, Business Studies, Economics, Visual Arts, Theatre which are absent from Polish curriculum.<sup>1</sup>
2. **Approaches to Teaching and Learning:** The IB program places a strong emphasis on developing critical thinking, research and problem solving skills, as well as independent learning. It encourages students to be active participants in their education and promotes inquiry-based learning. Through various approaches to learning, such as collaborative projects, presentations, and reflective journals, students develop a comprehensive understanding of the subjects they study. These methods also contribute to the holistic development of students' cognitive, social, and emotional abilities.<sup>2,3</sup>
3. **Learner Profile:** At the heart of the IB program is the Learner Profile, which identifies ten attributes that IB students should strive to develop. These attributes include being inquirers, thinkers, communicators, and caring individuals. The Learner Profile encourages students to become well-rounded individuals who are knowledgeable, open-minded, and principled. This holistic framework aims to foster students' personal growth, ethical awareness, and social responsibility.<sup>4</sup>
4. **International Mindedness:** The IB program promotes intercultural understanding and global awareness. It

encourages students to appreciate different cultures, perspectives, and languages. Through the study of various global issues and engaging with students from different backgrounds, students develop a broader world-view and become more empathetic and tolerant and prepared to navigate an increasingly interconnected world.<sup>5</sup>

5. **Assessment and Reflection:** The IB program utilizes a variety of assessment methods that go beyond traditional exams. It includes coursework, oral presentations, extended essays, and other forms of evaluation that encourage critical thinking and reflection. This approach allows students to demonstrate their understanding and skills in different ways and fosters a deeper understanding of the subject matter.
6. **Research and Extended Essay:** In the Diploma Programme (DP), students undertake an independent research project known as the Extended Essay. This enables students to explore a topic of their choice in depth, developing critical research and writing skills, while also promoting self-directed learning and intellectual growth.<sup>6</sup>
7. **Creativity, Activity, Service (CAS):** The IB program emphasizes the importance of community service and taking action to make a positive change in the world. The CAS component also encourages students to engage in creative pursuits and physical activities<sup>7</sup>. According to a large global study CAS assists students in getting better at "taking on new challenges", "learning to persevere", "developing better interpersonal skills" and becoming more "communicative", "willing to accept new challenges" and "collaborative"<sup>8</sup>.

Overall, the International Baccalaureate program embodies a holistic approach to education by encompassing a broad and balanced curriculum, promoting the development of skills and attributes, emphasizing student agency and engagement, and fostering an understanding of global issues. It aims to nurture well-rounded individuals who are academically strong, socially responsible, and equipped to contribute meaningfully to society. Moreover, the focus on skills development prepares students for lifelong learning and equips them with the tools they need to thrive in a rapidly changing world.

1 <https://www.ibo.org/programmes/diploma-programme/curriculum/>

2 <https://www.ibo.org/benefits/the-ib-teaching-style/>

3 <http://www.kccis-ib.com/uploads/1/2/1/3/121376976/approaches-to-teaching-learning-dp-en.pdf>

4 <https://www.ibo.org/benefits/learner-profile/>

5 <https://blogs.ibo.org/2020/07/29/ib-international-mindedness/>

6 <https://www.ibo.org/programmes/diploma-programme/curriculum/extended-essay/what-is-the-extended-essay/>

7 <https://www.ibo.org/programmes/diploma-programme/curriculum/creativity-activity-and-service/>

8 Hayden, M, Hemmens, A, McIntosh, S, Sandoval-Hernández, A and Thompson, J. 2017. The impact of creativity, action, service (CAS) on students and communities. Bethesda, MD, USA. International Baccalaureate Organization



# International Baccalaureate in Key Figures

The International Baccalaureate (IB) is a highly regarded educational program that offers a rigorous curriculum for students aged 3 to 19. The IB offers four main programs:

- Primary Years Programme (PYP) for students aged 3 to 12.
- Middle Years Programme (MYP) for students aged 11 to 16.
- Diploma Programme (DP) for students aged 16 to 19.
- Career-related Programme (CP) for students aged 16 to 19.

Here are some key statistics related to the International Baccalaureate:

- The IB offers four educational programmes to more than 1.95 million students aged 3 to 19 across the globe.
- There are over 7,900 programmes being offered worldwide, across over 5,600 schools in 159 countries<sup>1</sup>.
- The first IB school in Poland was authorised in 1993. It was III Liceum Ogólnokształcące w Gdyni.
- In Poland there are 13 PYP schools, 17 MYP schools and 58 DP schools<sup>2</sup>.
- Diploma Programme Candidates: The Diploma Programme (DP) is the most widely recognized program offered by the IB. In the 2022 examination sessions, there were over 170,000 DP candidates worldwide<sup>3</sup>.

The IB is widely recognized and respected by universities around the world. Many universities offer specific admissions policies and credit recognition for IB diploma holders.

IB World Schools are authorized by the International Baccalaureate Organization (IBO) and commit to meeting the high standards set by the IBO and implementing its educational philosophy.

1 <https://www.ibo.org/about-the-ib/facts-and-figures/>  
2 <https://www.ibo.org/country/PL/>  
3 <https://www.ibo.org/globalassets/new-structure/about-the-ib/pdfs/final-statistical-bulletin-dp-cp-may-2022.pdf>

## WHAT IS TOK?

by Michał Kamiński, IB1

The IB programme is renowned mainly for two things: the variety of subjects it offers to its students, (especially when compared to those offered by public institutions) and the 6 subject groups structure that allows students to choose only those subjects that they actually want to study.

What is often overlooked is the presence of a seventh subject – mandatory for all students:

### “THEORY OF KNOWLEDGE”

The question of “what TOK is” might seem very simple at first – yet it can be approached from three different perspectives.

#### TOK CONCEPTUALLY:

Theory of Knowledge – TOK for short – is not exactly a subject. It is more of a course – that starts in DP1 and ends during the first semester of DP2. As part of the IB programme, all students must undertake the course. TOK is assessed differently than other subjects, as the majority of the grade students receive from TOK (67%) will be based on a **final “exhibition”** which is in fact a **1600-word essay**. The topics of the essay have to be linked with an **‘area of knowledge’** (e.g. arts, history, mathematics, natural sciences etc.) and must take the form of a question that the student tries to answer in reference to a tangible object of their choosing. A tangible object can be anything – be it a quote, a book, a movie – a coat hanger or a picture of a sandwich you ate last week – as long as you can link your object to your area of knowledge – it’s fine.

#### TOK according to the teacher:

When talking about the nature of a subject, fundamentally, it would be hard to omit the teacher’s opinion of the course. In our school, TOK is taught by Mr. Łukasz Zych who also conducts Oxford debate classes and leads the school debate club.

When asked “How would you define TOK?” Mr. Zych responded with the following:

“Ok so I’ve met recently a very biased opinion that TOK is kind of a ‘discounted philosophy’ – which is obviously a joke – but actually some people confuse TOK with philosophy because – of course – it has some elements of epistemology – so ‘theory of knowledge’ – but TOK is rather about how we know and what different sources of knowledge we have and how we can combine them with our own experiences as “knowers” because all human beings are “knowers”. So, I think that’s the simplest definition just to join the dots between different subjects, just to understand why we study and in what ways we can gain some knowledge, what its values and limitations are.”

#### TOK according to students:

Although the ‘theory’ of TOK is important, there’s also a more practical side to the course that becomes much clearer from the perspective of the students. As such:

Some students treat TOK as an opportunity to discuss topics and express their opinions about them that they wouldn’t anywhere else. If you feel like your life lacks philosophical discourse because no one is interested in it – then TOK is a class definitely for you. There is no shortage of either discussions or listeners as Mr. Zych is always eager to hear out what the students have to say. Great credit has to be given to Mr. Zych as he is well experienced with TOK and conducts the lessons more in the form of a discussion or a brainstorming session rather than a conventional lesson.

Then, there is a group of students who think that “TOK is a waste of time” and “a lesson they couldn’t care less about”. While for some TOK is a great opportunity to express opinions and participate in discussions – to others who don’t care about the exchange of ideas such an opportunity will be indeed a waste of time. If you associate yourself with the second group – then TOK is not a class for you (but you still have to attend it 😊)

# WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE

by Michał Kamiński, IB 1

The question of what it means to be part of the IB community may appear to be simple at first, however, there's much more to it than first meets the eye. Firstly, there's the matter of defining what technically speaking constitutes the community – or any community at all. Then, there's the dilemma I had when first trying to answer the titular question by myself – how can I say what the IB community is if it's made up of many different people, all with their respective views on the matter?

I came to the conclusion, if I wanted to write an objective article about the topic – free of the author's possible personal bias – I'd first have to find out what the IB community actually is – and what better place is there to do that if not in the IB community itself. For the purpose of my article, I have interviewed four people, all of whom, allow the reader to have a glimpse at what the IB community might be; besides small corrections and translations the interviews have not been changed much, as I wanted to show them in their entirety rather than paraphrase them. The question asked in each case was the same: "What does it mean to be part of the IB community". For the sake of clarity – the participants of the interview have been denoted accordingly: **M** – interviewer, **I** – interviewee.

[2 December 2022, 13:48]

Student from DP 1

**M:** [Question]

**I:** Well, in my opinion...

[Another student walks into the room (**AN**)]

**AN:** Have you seen the coffee machine?

**AN:** It's in the kitchen

**M:** Why?

**AN:** I don't know, I think the school council has organised it.

**M:** And who figured out logistics?

**AN:** Well, Michael probably.

**I:** Wow.

**M:** He's doing something. (2x)

The IB community – however you define it – is definitely loud – mainly due to the fact that our school is very small, so the interview I recorded during the break was interrupted many times. From one end of the corridor that makes up the entirety of our school to the other there exists a void which the IB community floods during every break, also flowing into every class and other possible place of refuge for those who futilely seek privacy and silence in our school. In the middle of this void which is filled to the brim during the breaks there is a place of special importance to our community – the kitchen and its adjacent sofa "lounge". It's defined by the ever-present queues to the microwave, empty tanks from the water dispenser and the three blue sofas providing comfort and relaxation to the lucky few who managed to get to them in time – and since recently – the aforementioned coffee machine stands triumphantly in the kitchen and it is a testament to the school council's competence and the fulfilment of its promises made during the election (the council also bought the less prideful vending machine, located between the women's toilets and the staffroom offering mainly overpriced peanuts and tiny bags of popcorn). The kitchen area is a part of the IB community as much as the IB community is a part of it the entire school day. Not as important – but still of relevance – is our IB school council – currently led by Michael Nutley and his cabinet, elected in this year's elections alongside his cabinet. It has existed only for one year – and ever since its creation it has given our students the possibility to implement some change – in terms of mainly (if not solely) technical aspects such as said coffee and vending machines.

**M:** Ok, returning to the question – what does it mean to be part of the IB community?

**I:** The IB community – oh god – to me it's just kind of the environment where I have existed for the last 2.5

years – it's like a normal school but it's smaller – like one-fifth the size of a normal public school.

**M:** Yes, but what is the IB community for you personally?

**I:** Well, first of all what I really like about this community compared to the one of my primary school for example is that people are much more accepting of individuality – so well you can see a lot of different styles and nationalities even – well we have quite a mix here ...

**M:** So, it's a place of great variety and tolerance you'd say?

**I:** I would say yes – for the most part – it's like part of what IB students should be but it does not always work out as it should, because there are some sub-communities in our community that are less inclusive than the others.

**M:** For example?

**I:** Well, oh, okay – as in any school you have groups that form.

[*Our teacher walks into the room*]

Teacher: Good afternoon

**M:** Hello, we're recording our interview here.

Teacher: Oh, I see. Carry on.

**M:** So, you were talking about how not all sub-communities in our school are inclusive and tolerant – not to point fingers obviously but could you give an example?

**I:** Oh well, I wouldn't say there are any that are openly discriminative...

Teacher: Discriminatory, I guess.

**I:** This is exactly why I wanted to do this in the other room [...] What was I saying?

**M:** Discriminatory...?

**I:** Ah yes – well as in any group you have a hierarchy and obviously there will be some more quote unquote "popular individuals" that will attract people into their social circles and some people will be left out – it doesn't only concern factors we mentioned such as – different styles, nationalities or maybe sexuality – though I think it often does. But still, you can't create an ideal utopia where everyone accepts each other and, in this context, I think that still – IB is closest to doing so.

■



# PART OF THE IB COMMUNITY?

Shortly after the first interview I wanted to interview the teacher mentioned in it, who tasked me with writing this essay in the first place – as teachers are part of the IB community as well. My great opportunity at an interview went as follows:

**I:** [Question]

Teacher: Well, the IB community it, it is ugh...

*Oh, come on don't interview me now, I'm tired – [it's] the last lesson on Friday for goodness' sake.*

■

[5<sup>th</sup> December 2022, 13:41]

DP1 student

**M:** [Question]

**I:** If you go to the school or if you're part of the programme then you're part of the IB community.

**M:** But *what* is the community?

**I:** I don't know I don't think there really is a community, but I guess it's the people who do the IB course.

**M:** Do you think it's a community different from one in a public school?

**I:** Probably, but every community is different in every school and yeah it's gonna be different because well because people here should know English – not all of them do – and they should be more open minded – I don't know if they actually are and – and yeah and the differences like that and in our case – rich kids – that's pretty much it and public schools don't have [this many (?)] rich people and for us its sort of the norm.

**M:** So, you wouldn't say the IB community is special in anyway?

**I:** I mean it is special but – I wouldn't say in a good way, in a better [way].

**M:** For example?

**I:** Yeah we do a lot of bad things and we're rich kids and we're all like that and our mentality is built on that and also, I think we probably think we're better than others and yeah those are the negative aspects.

■

As I said previously – the teachers are part of the IB community – just as much as the students in my opinion – although in a different way; they are more involved in the creation of the community per se rather than participation in it. Now – the judgement of the competence of the teachers in our school is a matter of opinion. I am of the firm belief that the level of education in our school is very high. The IB education system – the programme itself – is very demanding – for both, the teachers and the students. It shapes our community tremendously – it is renowned for how difficult, time-consuming and stress-causing it is, and this is evident in how much coffee the students drink, how little they sleep (or at least claim to), in the concerningly large amount of *dark jokes related to school and the sense of existence* and the surprising – and also slightly worrying – easiness with which IB students (often) talk about attending psychotherapy.

[6<sup>th</sup> December 2022 11:31]

DP2 student

**M:** [Question]

**I:** Frankly... because of the fact that IB is a programme focused on the development of an individual, and it concentrates on independent learning and writing – I don't feel part of the community at all frankly. Also, our school has such philosophy and approach that it concentrates on an individual development of each student rather than a community of our school, so I don't have any feelings about the 'IB community' because to me its non-existent

■

[6<sup>th</sup> December 2022 12:25]

DP2 student

**M:** [Question]

**I:** *W IB community generalnie mam wrażenie, że na początku się tak mówi* – (In the IB community I generally have this feeling, that at the beginning it is said)

**M:** *Po angielsku najlepiej* (In English preferably)

**I:** Everybody tells us it's supposed to be group work, and everybody is helping each other out and [...] in DP1 it seems that nobody cares how you're doing, but then, when you go to DP2, suddenly everybody wants to help you and send you their notes and everybody wants everybody to pass and it's really cool because not everybody is able to pass on their own.

■

## WHAT IS THE IB COMMUNITY?

It is many things. It is a place, where school life goes on – the kitchen area where the majority of the community goes at every break – but also, the classes where the rest of the students choose to stay. Some will say, the IB community is a place of tolerance and acceptance (with the usual encumbrances of hierarchy and sub-divisions present in every community), others that it is a place where solidarity shines, where one can always count on help from their fellow students in a common cause, that is, getting through the IB programme. Some on the other hand, will say that there is no such thing as an "IB community". To such people, it is either just a normal community, but with more flaws pertaining to a private school or it's not a community at all – just a group of people in a school which favours individualism. No matter which of these perspectives one shares, there's some truth to them all – and of course – one's attitude will play a large role in the way they perceive the school – and our IB community.

Nevertheless, it goes to show that it is impossible to clearly define what it means to be part of the IB community. Simply put – to different people it means totally different things. And, I think, the only real way one can find out what it means to be part of the IB community – is to be part of it.

# WHAT IS CAS AND HOW TO TACKLE THIS DIFFICULT TASK OF SELF-MANAGEMENT?

by Leo Puszczynski, IB2

What is CAS? The question that every IB student asks at some point in their life. Whether it is before their journey starts or when it begins, or even at the end of it – but at that point, you should probably know that you're in trouble. So what is it really? What is this mysterious entity that controls at least three hours of our week as IB students? Well, I'll try to explain it... but I cannot guarantee that I will manage.

First of all, CAS is an acronym for three components, it consists of:

- **C** – Creativity,
- **A** – Activity,
- **S** – Service.

To complete CAS every student needs to spend at least one hour respectively on an additional activity connected to something creative,


physical activity, and providing a free service, for instance charity work.

Besides shortening our sleep schedule, these three hours are made so that students can expand their horizons and learn how to not only manage their time, but also plan all of those activities. Every student is required to plan their activities individually and take care of their documentation on their own. The documentation and progress are later checked by the CAS coordinator and hopefully approved. The way you show your development and fulfilment of one's activities varies depending on what you decide to do, for example, if a student decides that as their creative activity, they want to practice their skills and attend the drawing classes, they can submit photos of their artworks as evidence.

CAS activities are expected to be systematically practised and

documented by students, from the beginning of their first meeting with the CAS coordinator – when their ideas are approved – till the end of the next 18 months of their education. Depending on your personal taste in how you would like to spend your holidays, you can also engage in CAS activities during those months, so that later in the last months of the DP2 you can finish your CAS sooner and focus on your exams.





## E-TUTORING REFUGEES

**CAS SERVICE OPPORTUNITY**

If you have a problem with choosing service for your CAS work, and want to pick something that won't occupy that much of your free time (but also engage you emotionally) – consider tutoring refugees.

For a whole school year in DP2 I taught English to Ukrainian refugees through an organisation called *Let's Shake Hands*. The only thing you have to do is to download their app, fill out the necessary information about yourself, and wait for students to sign up for your classes.

In my opinion, the most time-consuming aspect of this form of service is finding appropriate resources for classes. After doing that, everything else is just a piece of cake. People that sign up are in need of knowledge and your assistance, so you don't have to worry about their lack of interest in your classes; especially if it's English you teach, since a lot of refugees have to switch from Ukrainian to English in order to communicate in different countries they immigrated to.

I taught two girls – Nastya and Slaviana. Working with them did not feel like conducting a mandatory class, but rather like a chill conversation. I learned a lot about their lives, their current situation (which made me sob a little), hobbies, and dreams. They practiced their English while talking with me about anything – we watched videos and TED talks, talked about life, did various exercises on reading and speaking. This whole experience only took an hour of my time per week, but taught me a lot about different perspectives of everyday life. *If you are still looking for service experiences, give it a try! :)*



## OPEN EYES ECONOMY SUMMIT - CAS SERVICE

Open Eyes Economy Summit is a summit held every year combining ideas around economy of values. I was attending the summit online last year, along with fellow Economics and Business Management students. This year I became involved as a volunteer on place at the ICE Congress Center in Kraków. There are many volunteer groups which specialize in different tasks, all working towards the summit going as smoothly as possible. I was assigned as the Director's assistant in one of the conference rooms. As a Director's assistant I created "tickers" containing all the information about the speaker, which were displayed when the speaker appeared on screen. I was also video connecting with remote speakers 30min before their speech to make sure their internet connection, camera quality etc. are properly working. I would definitely recommend this volunteer group if you like to 'feel involved and see the results of your work. Overall, it was a very interesting experience to be involved in such an important event in Kraków. Especially, being involved as a volunteer can help us get to know how such an event is organized and how complex it is. We even had a tour of the whole ICE Congress Center the day before the summit when there were no people inside, only workers setting up the conference rooms.



# “Demonstrate engagement with issues of global significance. Show an understanding of the global problems, make responsible decisions and take appropriate action in response to the issue either locally, nationally or internationally”.

by Annika Sadowski, IB2

Volunteering at a train station and why I am taking a gap year I refuse to sit here and bore you with the information that volunteering with refugees gave me some sort of fulfillment, that it made me a better person, or perhaps that you should consider it. To bore you with the classic inspirational stories of volunteering would make no sense and would simply be, to put it nicely, a waste of time. So was it worth it? If it was why?... Yes. It was worth it. It was worth it because it gave me answers. For the past 4 years I have received the same question from friends, family, and teachers: “Annika, what are your plans for the future? What do you plan to do for University”. Therefore, for the past 4 years I would give the same response, that I wanted to go to Holland and there I planned to

study psychology, history, or maybe even law. Now, did I really want to do this? I am certain that a part of me did and still does, however, I was not convinced for 100%. By October of 2022 the time had come to begin the application process and I in turn would walk around with the anxiety of getting predicted grades, getting the money, and talking about applications with my mom. Yet, still people would tell me “just apply, you will be happy if you do, you do not have to go, but at least you will have options”. Now, for some people this might work, it is good to have options, I won't deny that. However, for me it was a constant loop of the same anxiety. By January of 2023 I still had not applied and the documents with predicted grades were laying on my desk scowling at me as I placed books on top of them, hid them away in my closet, and then in a box with my school stuff. Now. Let's go back to February of 2022. With the full scale invasion of Ukraine the opportunity to volunteer with Ukrainian refugees. I did volunteer work until late July. I loved it. (except for the time I contracted RotaVirus after cleaning up a child's puke). When I wasn't at school I was at the train station. I can't describe exactly why I loved it, I just loved it. Maybe it did take away from my time dedicated to studies, but actually my overall grades


did improve surprisingly. There is something about having to organize your time and be disciplined that means even if I studied less I studied more efficiently. Now, jumping back to University applications. When time came to finally decide what university to apply to I kept thinking back to volunteering. I kept thinking about how much I enjoyed my time volunteering while I was dreading having to open UCAS and Studielink. I realized I didn't want to go to university just yet, I wanted to travel and volunteer. There are many programmes which pay for you to travel and volunteer in communities; whether that be building homes or organizing soup kitchens. Knowing that I love traveling and volunteering, I saw an opportunity and I intend to take it after writing my exams. I know that service in CAS can be one of the more difficult aspects to organize and find time for, but in the end for me (and for you perhaps) it was worth it. For each individual it is a unique experience that you will either enjoy or despise (and if you despise it I honestly do not blame you). Overall, I think if you apply yourself just a little to your CAS activities and experiences you might just find that it answers questions you have about the past, present and future.

**CAS FINAL REFLECTION**


## DEVELOP YOUR FULL CREATIVE POTENTIAL

I started working creatively about half a year before the IB programme. At first, I wasn't aware of my creative and artistic abilities, yet CAS has helped me with the consistency of my development, which led me to planning on pursuing art as a future career. Although IB is a demanding programme, it is important to remember about outside-of-school activities important to us


### MY DEVELOPMENT




At first, I decided to concentrate on the basics of academic drawings, such as anatomy, perspective and technical abilities. The initial stage was not as demanding creatively, yet gave me a base allowing me to create more demanding works afterwards.



After perfecting my technical skills, I started working with colour. I still used academic drawing techniques as a medium, yet the colour used in the works was a main factor of the drawings. I also started getting familiar with other methods such as painting. This process took place in DP1



During summer, when unwinding after DP1 and relaxing before the most demanding and hardest year of my life that was yet to come I started experimenting with other media of artistic expressions, such as photography or collage-making, which I combined with zine-making



In DP2, after deciding on pursuing art academically, I dropped the academic drawing course and joined a graphic design/ design course. I've experimented with different design techniques, such as bookmaking, fashion-design, screenprinting, installations and gained theoretical knowledge on typography and brand book making


## Problems with global engagement in CAS?

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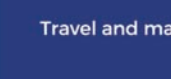




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SCAN TO GET STARTED



# DP2 Visual Arts Exhibition

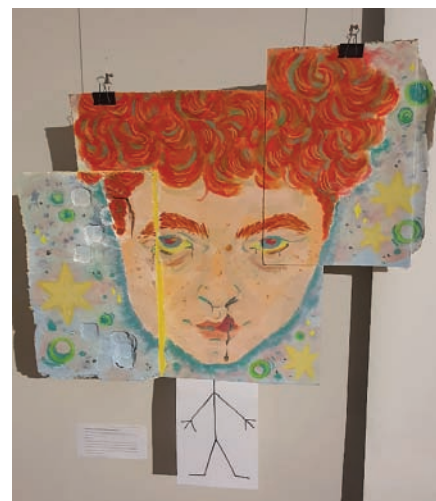
by Leo Puszczynski, IB2

Every year, the students of our school have the opportunity to visit the Visual Arts exhibition of the senior year – the DP2 class – which is part of the examination of this subject in the IB course. This year, our school was especially fortunate, as one of the students was able to provide a space for the works to be exhibited at his family's gallery, Dystans Gallery in Św. Krzyża street. This was quite a contrasting experience, both for the viewers, and the students who exhibited their work, as it was the first time the exposition had

happened in such a professional setting.

The grand opening of the exhibition happened on the 14th of February, right after a few hours of planning and preparation done by the DP2 students. When all of the guests gathered in the gallery, the Visual Arts teacher – Ms. Martyna Majsterek, started the event with a short speech. The speech summed up the general idea of the exhibition, which was to present the works of the students, created over 2 years of the Visual Arts program. Each of the students, explained their exhibition themes, so that the visitors could be provided with some insight into the topic of the artworks. The event was a pretty impressive, as most of the school's teachers, and some students, together with the school's headmasters', all showed-up to see our senior art students' work.

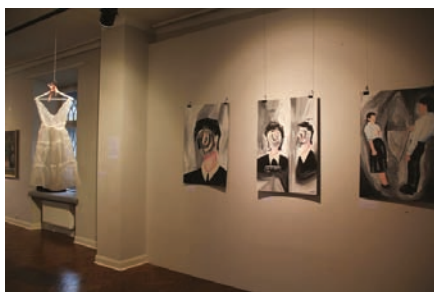
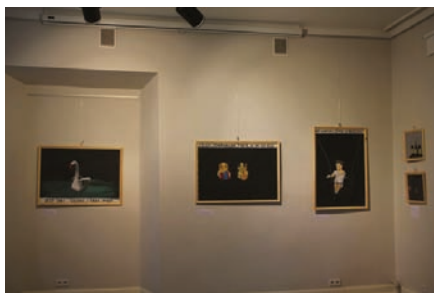
The four separate exhibitions – each one contained the works of one DP2 Visual Arts student and presented very different outlooks on the world that surrounds us. The first theme, contained in the entrance room of the gallery and was an exploration of utilitarian objects of our everyday life and our relationship with them. Going further into the exhibition space the viewers could see the next collection of works that was focused on the topic of romanticism and love in different forms. The last part



of the room was divided into the works of two students. The left side of the room was revolved around a journey that is forming a trans identity with a focus on sharing some personal experiences. On the right side of the room, the exhibition was portrayed an appreciation of Polish culture and the exploration of its nuances in everyday life.

After a few hours of viewing the works and when the exhibition was slowly coming to an end one the school's headmasters congratulated all of the exhibited young artists, this concluded the opening day of the exhibition.

Throughout the next day, the exhibition was open to other students from the school, and they had the opportunity to visit the gallery during school hours with their homeroom teachers. This gave inspiration to the Visual Arts students of DP1 who were in the process of creating their own first Visual Arts exhibition, it also provided prospective PDP art students information about the subject.





# IB THEATRE

**We encouraged PDP students interested in choosing theatre course in IB to ask us (IB students taking the theatre course) some questions:**

**What surprised you the most about the theatre course?**

**Franciszek**

Honestly, quite a lot of things and it's hard to distinguish one. Firstly, I like the way the course is structured. I knew the basics of IB theatre before the beginning of DP1, but after starting it I was quite happy with how it is balanced. It involves thinking from various perspectives of certain theatre roles, such as: a director, a playwright and a technician. Secondly, I did not expect the amount of writing we are required to do. When you think about school theatre you always imagine performing. Nevertheless, this course is not only practical, besides doing the show you have to show your working in a report where you explain your intentions, analyse how they worked and reflect. Plus, you write a production proposal, which is a wholly written assessment (you present ideas for staging of one published play). Thirdly, you first learn practical things theoretically and this includes watching theatre a lot. Additionally, the school has been buying us tickets to different live performances and we also watched many recorded shows in the classroom. If you like watching theatre, then this course is definitely for you. What's more, we even managed to go to Gardzienice for a 3 day long theatre workshop and to see the shows of actors from the company- and the school covered a substantial part of the finances.

**Did you have any problems or disagreements with the other student while working together?**

**Jakub**

Of course, during any creative process, some disagreements can appear. However, because there's only two of us, there were not a lot of disagreements during the creation of our play "Alix in Wonderland". We rather try to combine our ideas discuss them and use them to create something even better

**Have you ever thought of dropping out of the course? If yes, why?**

**Franciszek**

No, this has never crossed my mind. However, nothing is perfect. The course is hard, it requires a lot of work and time, the IB examiners are also quite harsh. It is hard to hit all the points in the requirements and as it is a group 6 subject, it's impossible to be objective when assessing students. Moreover, there are obstacles which are hard to overcome in our school. We don't have a real stage, lights or scenography while at the same time we have to learn and use the technical sides of theatre. Rehearsing in a classroom certainly

limits our possibilities, wanting to expand into a bigger space. Thankfully, the teacher definitely knows what she's doing, but at times things get a bit disorganised, after all we're the guinea pigs of theatre in our school. During the school year my involvement in the work has become very important to me. Sometimes I feel like my performance lacks certain feedback which may balance out the positive and negative aspects of it. Once I receive more heavily loaded criticism it stays with me for a while and I feel like pointing out my strengths and improvements may counteract this feeling.

**What was your biggest challenge during your first year of theatre course?**

**Jakub**

As every IB subject, theater requires a lot of writing and that writing needs to be consistent. Also a lot of different assignments make it confusing which assessment should I focus the most on.

Was there any surprising thing you found out about yourself thanks to the course?

**Franciszek**

Yes, especially one. Personally, I don't feel like an actor, so I wasn't very happy with the perspective of playing in every show I worked on. However, in the process of trying different techniques and improvisation, certain things unlocked in me. I learned to modulate my voice and I discovered many things about my body. I started using gestures and more body movement. Although I still don't perceive myself as a performer, I feel much more comfortable on stage after a year of studying theatre.

**Was the theatre subject a choice planned from the beginning or did you change your plans? If yes, why did you change your mind and finally picked the subject?**

**Jakub**

I heard about the theater course while already being at school, but as soon as I heard about it, I got interested. I'd been interested with acting and theater before so I thought to be a good fit for me.

**If you had a chance, would you pick the subject again?**

**Franciszek**

Yes, I would as it helped me evolve as an artist. Not necessarily aiming at the future but the course provided me with space to improve and develop.

# CREATIVE WRITING

Creative writing plays a valuable role in teaching students foreign languages and literature. Through writing stories, poems, diaries, letters, news reports, different endings of the books students read as part of their assignment, they can actively engage with vocabulary, grammar, and syntax, strengthening their linguistic abilities. Moreover, creative writing allows students to express their thoughts, ideas, and emotions in a foreign language and encourages to develop a unique voice and become more proficient in conveying ideas effectively. Through creative writing, students develop critical thinking skills

as they analyse and evaluate literary elements, such as plot, themes, character development, and symbolism. They can experiment with different narrative techniques, explore literary genres, and understand how authors construct meaning. This enhances their ability to interpret and appreciate literature. In addition, creative writing provides an opportunity for students to express their creativity, imagination, and personal experiences. Last but not least it boosts motivation to learn. This section contains a selection of written assignments by PDP2 produced as part of their English classes. Enjoy :)

## A Page from Iran's Diary

(based on the novel "Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep" by Philip K. Dick)

by Julianna Borzęcka, PDP 2

Dear Diary,

Today's the day I give up. I can't stand not having the ability to control my own feelings. It's like I don't exist anymore. Like, I don't even have my own thoughts. But, I do. I do have my own thoughts and feelings and this sheet of paper is the only thing that can listen. That's why I will pour out my frustrations on this little, pathetic piece of paper. Although, this pathetic piece of paper is better than my husband who is supposed to listen to me. He is the person who's supposed to understand me. But he doesn't. Today's morning was proof of that.

When I woke up, not exactly wanting to leave the bed, the first thing I heard was Rick commenting on my behaviour. After I had told him that I didn't specifically want to get up and start the day, he and his "how I love my work of a murderer" attitude started showing up. He was full of motivation and determination because of the mood he dialled himself into, I suppose. He then told me to dial myself into different kinds of emotions and desires (of course every one of them was good and happy) using the great and only Penfield mood organ. The thing is, that's the reason why we lose humanity. It's sad how communication is such a struggle these days. I remember when everything between two people was real. When

one was talking the other one was listening and later they swapped positions. Words, feelings and gestures had power. Now, we are surrounded by artificiality. It's hard to tell what is real and what is not. I feel really alone in this world. When I told Rick, being depressed once in a while is important, he almost laughed at me. He probably thinks I'm crazy at this point. And, I can't even blame him because the whole world is mesmerised by the technological inventions we seem to constantly develop. I'm just wondering whether they really make our lives easier.

Let's take the example of the Penfield mood organ. It was supposed to be an invention that clears the world of bad feelings. Allows people to just dial themselves into a specific mood by entering some numbers. And yes, of course, it does this, but it's not that simple in my opinion. In this way, we have renounced ourselves from staying in touch with the real world. We lost the complicated feelings that made us human. Complications are part of life, part of the world and it's not natural to just remove them.

Maybe a lot of people would feel like I'm mental but I find a lot of sense in my understanding of this concept. I feel that we have to keep the bad feelings as well while travelling through life. I'm sure, if a person has never been introduced to the Penfield mood organ and heard what I'm trying to say they would be shocked. Why would you



want to feel bad, feel pain, when you don't have to sense it anymore? But, I think that being able to feel pain makes us human, as it allows one to show empathy to others. Being happy, being sad, feeling angry, knowing the full range of emotions and loving every single one of them because being a human is truly beautiful and why would we renounce it? I don't want to become numb by feeling only the good emotions humankind has to offer. I don't want to become another artificial soul in this universe, I want to be able to feel everything that there is to be felt. About this, I will not be writing here anytime soon, as I have decided to schedule myself a time full of agony and pain. It's my way to regain control over my mind. A sort of mental reset. However, it sounds very paradoxical, because you can't really control your mind when you entrust it to a machine, but it makes sense in my head. And now I've remembered that I have to write a note to my husband and tell him to not disturb me in my own time, drowning in my own feelings. Maybe I'll inspire him to do the same. And, maybe he'll also try to regain the most important part of being a human; feeling emotions.



# The Unpublished Ending of Boxer and Mr. Jones

(based on the novel "Animal Farm" by George Orwell)

by Maja Klecha, PDP2B

Boxer stood still in the back of the van. He felt unusually calm, while struggling to keep his composure with every breath taken in immense pain. He didn't want to be remembered as the sick impotent comrade unable to keep himself strong. He wasn't particularly unnerved by the accident, he felt he had done everything in his power to build the windmill and did his utmost to follow the concept of animalism introduced by old Major. He knew he was being taken away to the veterinary surgeon in Wellington to be taken care of properly. Maybe this accident was a sort of reward for his work, devotion and inspiring the other comrades on the farm. 'Damn it' he thought, maybe the accident was a sign that retirement was coming to him.

The road was dusty, he could not see where he was headed. The van kept on shuddering, its old tires struggling on the uneven road. Suddenly he heard the brakes and the van stopped. When the doors opened he finally realized why the other comrades yelled as he was being taken away. He stared intently at the man standing before him, the twisted smile, he could always recognize. Right in front of the old horse there he was, Mr. Jones, the only person he truly despised. Although his hair was shorter and he had more wrinkles he looked like the exact same person. At once the initial shock was replaced with the need for violence. Boxer's body started to shake while he desperately tried to regain control. But he was too weak to put up a fight.

Mr. Jones forced the horse out of the van and into a barn situated nearby. In it Boxer immediately noticed Molly, and other animals that had fallen on hard luck. In a far corner of the barn Boxer turned away from the other animals and started to weep. All the pain and emotions suddenly hit him; unable to keep steady he crumbled to his feet. 'I hope I die now' was his only thought as he lay on the ground, staring blindly ahead. On one side he felt indifferent; on the other, the frustration of losing all he hoped to achieve in his lifetime made him intensely miserable.

After a week Mr. Jones decided to take matters into his own hands. He walked into the barn, settled against the wall and started a monologue; he explained how being twice banished from his own farm and, as a result, the laughingstock of the community, forced him to sober up and reflect. He concluded that the animals' demands had been valid. To make amends for how he had mistreated them, he decided to buy the old farm and take in any old, hurt animal and give them a peaceful life. 'Listen now' Mr. Jones concluded. 'You all turned this into a vicious circle. Crazy animals trying to change the rules. You wasted your entire life for ideals of those pigs. Your life was no different from what would have happened if I had kept the farm the way it was. They just gave you false hope you had the power to change something. All lies. No one has such power.' Boxer stood in silence, Mr. Jones left.

The concept of animalism led to the exploitation of animals by animals, causing constant pain and a tragic reality for nearly all on the farm' Molly said. That was the only sentence he had heard come out of her mouth for the entire week. Now Boxer only wanted to learn the remaining 22 letters of the alphabet.

## The purpose:

This creative writing piece would be added between Chapters 9 and 10. The theme of 'Animal Farm' is an allegory of human society, classes, and how the desire for power drives our behaviour. Boxer as a complex character is the epitome of the stereotypical working class. He is not an intelligent being, however I do consider him to be a tragic character. I wanted this piece to show how his willful ignorance is a trait that completely takes over his actions. He is who he is. No matter whether old Mr. Jones was in charge or the devious pigs or the kinder Mr. Jones of my piece, Boxer is always the passive, submissive one that believes those in charge mean well and as long as he works hard he will be rewarded and in the end all will be well. That it his nature. And one's nature usually does not change. The last sentence perfectly summarizes Boxer- even after the tragic statement made by Molly, he keeps on being blissfully ignorant, keeping to his nature and its philosophy. In the end it also illustrates how easy it is for those in charge to take control and take absolute power because people prefer to believe what they have always believed – that is, they prefer to stay willfully ignorant – rather than taking a hard look at reality around them.

This lack of reflection and result change, simply means that things are bound to repeat, endlessly. For some it is the easier way out to never actually consider or contemplate on the tragic reality. For Boxer, this means focusing on learning the 22 remaining letters of the alphabet. This has nothing to do with his intelligence, everything to do with his nature. It completes his character perfectly, tying all his actions to be complete and pointless.



# MEGAN'S DAILY RANTS

(based on the novel "Neverwhere" by Neil Gaiman)

by Zofia Wawro

03.04.2023

Hi guys!

Sorry for the absence, but you won't believe what happened to me! I travelled to another dimension. No really, I did. And I know how you guys are, so don't go straight to the comments to call me insane – just hear me out.

It all happened last Monday when I went for a walk around London. I was walking along the Thames when I saw this weird-looking canal that definitely wasn't there before. Now, I'm usually not the person to go urban exploring (which seems to have gained popularity lately, I'll definitely dedicate a separate post to that topic) but something about that day seemed a bit off, so maybe I felt more courageous than usual. The second I stepped into the canal, I felt like something bad was about to happen. Of course, I was right. I tripped and fell, to which the canal, that seemed perfectly stable just a second ago, started crumbling under me. Honestly, I've never been so frightened in my entire life. I fell through the hole that formed in the ground, and my life flashed before my eyes, when suddenly I landed on something surprisingly soft. That's when the unimaginable happened.

I found myself on the roof of what seemed to be a stand. But not just a normal stand, a stand selling goblins. I'm being dead serious guys, the bloody stand was selling goblins.

Call me insane, but I know what I saw. Once I looked around, I noticed that this wasn't a solitary stand. No, there was a whole sea of them. I landed in what looked like an endless market that didn't resemble anything I'd ever seen in London before. Anyways, I tried to get off that roof as discreetly as I could, but I managed to, once again, land on my bum. When I looked up, there was nothing on the ceiling that even remotely resembled a hole, so I was trapped in this weird goblin-selling bazaar.

When I got up, I noticed that the market was full of people. They were dressed very oddly – it almost looked like they were wearing costumes. Now, I'm no fashion expert, but I'd say their clothes were weird and scrappy. Both the people and the place I landed in seemed very outlandish and straight out of a movie. No one even reacted to me falling from the sky; they were all busy haggling with the vendors for a better price, buying oriental-looking items from the stands, and making a ton of noise. I didn't manage to make even two steps before I bumped into a guy covered in bird feathers. I wish I was kidding. The funniest thing about the situation was that after he finally turned around to look at me, he stared at me as if I was the one who looked like a victim of a bird flock attack.

He introduced himself as Old Bailey and asked me if I'm from there.

I asked him what he meant by 'here' – as far as I knew, I was in London. That is when he explained to me that I'm not in the London I think I am in – I accidentally entered London Below. My first thought was that I must have hit my head really hard on the way down because nothing around me made any sense. London Below? As far as I was concerned, there was one London.

This is the part when you guys probably are like 'What is this crazy lady talking about?', and honestly I would think that too. But what I saw felt too real to be just a hallucination. He told me that it would be best if I got out of London Below, as it is a dangerous place for people like me. To be fair, he was right – when he was leading me to something he called a doorway, I managed to once again bump into someone. Or two someones.

One of them was tall, and the other was short, but they both had an unsettling aura around them. The taller one grabbed me by the arm and said something along the lines of "We should hunt her down, shouldn't we Mr. Croup?". I am not lying when I tell you I almost fainted. Anyway, Old Bailey yelled at them and told them to "Go back to the sewers where they belong" and led me to a regular-looking door.

Once I stepped through it, I found myself back in my flat. The second I turned around to thank that weird, old man for helping me, the door disappeared with a snap, and I was left all alone. For a second I thought that it really must have been a dream, or an elaborate joke, but when I looked at the floor, a single pigeon feather was laying there. I took a picture, to make sure it was real – if you want I can post it.

Well, if you didn't think I was insane based on my previous posts, you definitely think I am now. However, I really had to get this off my chest, and you guys are as always here to listen.

See you tomorrow, Megan





# OUR ACHIEVEMENTS

## OUR OLYMPIAD CHAMPIONS

### YEAR 1999

KATARZYNA HORAČEK – finalist of the 22<sup>nd</sup> edition of Olympiad of the German Language

### YEAR 2004

SABINA IMBURSKA – laureate of the 14<sup>th</sup> Olympiad of Catholic Theology

ŁUKASZ WALTER – laureate of the 8<sup>th</sup> Olympiad of Knowledge of the European Union

ŁUKASZ WALTER – finalist of the 8<sup>th</sup> Olympiad of Knowledge of the European Union

### YEAR 2005

SABINA IMBURSKA – finalist of the 35<sup>th</sup> Olympiad of the Polish Language

ŁUKASZ WALTER – laureate of the national Olympiad of Knowledge of the European Union

ŁUKASZ WALTER – finalist of the 9<sup>th</sup> Olympiad of Knowledge of the European Union

### YEAR 2006

JOANNA SUROWIEC – finalist of the 37<sup>th</sup> Olympiad of the Russian Language

DANIEL ZATORSKI – finalist of the 30<sup>th</sup> Olympiad of the English Language

### YEAR 2008

ANNA ŚMIAŁEK – finalist of the 31<sup>st</sup> Olympiad of the French Language

### YEAR 2009

JANINA ROCHOŃ – laureate of the 32<sup>nd</sup> Olympiad of the German Language

### YEAR 2011

ANTONI STANEK – finalist of the 35<sup>th</sup> Olympiad of the English Language

### YEAR 2012

WERONIKA KIEBZAK – laureate of the 35<sup>th</sup> Olympiad of the French Language

ANTONI STANEK – finalist of the 36<sup>th</sup> Olympiad of the English Language

### YEAR 2014

MAJA PIECZKA – finalist of the 37<sup>th</sup> Olympiad of the French Language

MIYUKI TATSUMI – finalist of the 38<sup>th</sup> Olympiad of the English Language

### YEAR 2015

MAJA PIECZKA – finalist of the 38<sup>th</sup> Olympiad of the English Language

MARTA TOPÓR – finalist of the 33<sup>rd</sup> Olympiad of the Latin Language

### YEAR 2016

MARTA TOPÓR – laureate of the 34<sup>rd</sup> Olympiad of the Latin Language

### YEAR 2017

KATARZYNA FRĄCZEK – finalist of the 41<sup>st</sup> Olympiad of the English Language

ILIA SMYRNOW – laureate of the 38<sup>th</sup> Olympiad of the Russian Language

### YEAR 2018

DOROTA BOJARSKA – finalist of the 42<sup>nd</sup> Olympiad of Art

KATERYNA FURINA – finalist of the 49<sup>th</sup> Olympiad of the Russian Language

PAEWŁ GRACZAK – finalist of the 48<sup>th</sup> Olympiad of the Polish Language

SEBASTIAN MACIAŚ – finalist of the 20<sup>th</sup> Olympiad of Knowledge of Law

SEBASTIAN MACIAŚ – finalist of the national Olympiad of the State and Law

YEVA RYBINA – laureate of the 49<sup>th</sup> Olympiad of the Russian Language

### YEAR 2019

ŁUCJA CZORT – finalist of the Olympiad of Mathematics Linguistics

SEBASTIAN MACIAŚ – finalist of the national Olympiad of the State and Law

### YEAR 2020

JULIANNA PIJAJ – finalist of the 24<sup>th</sup> Olympiad of Knowledge about Nutrition and Food

JAN GILIS-JANUSZEWSKI – finalist of the Subject Olympiad "The Fate of a Soldier and the History of the Polish Weapon 1887–1922"

ALEKSANDRA DROZD – finalist of the Olympiad for a Diamond Student Book of AGH

KINGA BUKOWCZYK – laureate of the Olympiad "Exempt from Theory" (Ecology and Nature)

### YEAR 2021

EMILIA KOWALSKA – finalist of the 51<sup>st</sup> Olympiad of Literature and Polish Language

IGOR POPIELA and TYMOTEUSZ BIEDROŃ – laureate of the Olympiad of Knowledge about Chemistry UJ

MACIEJ ŁUBNIEWSKI – finalist of the Olympiad of the Knowledge about Africa

### YEAR 2022

TYMOTEUSZ BIEDROŃ – laureate, Miłosz Słowiński – finalist of the Statistics Olympiad

TYMOTEUSZ BIEDROŃ and STANISŁAW MICHALIK – laureates, Michał Ptak finalist of the 15<sup>th</sup> Olimpiad for a Diamond Student Book of AGH.

TYMOTEUSZ BIEDROŃ – laureate of the Olympiad of Knowledge about Chemistry UJ

### YEAR 2023

HELENA BRZOZOWSKA – finalist of the 53<sup>rd</sup> Olympiad of Literature and Polish Language

JAKUB FORMALIK – finalist of the Olympiad of Environment Protection and Sustainable Development Chemistry, finalist of the 16<sup>th</sup> Olympiad for a Diamond Student Book of AGH (chemistry)

OLAF LEBITKO – laureate of the 16<sup>th</sup> Olympiad for a Diamond Student Book of AGH (mathematics)

MICHAŁ PTAK – laureate of the 16<sup>th</sup> Olympiad for a Diamond Student Book of AGH (mathematics)

ANNA RYŁO – laureate of the 16<sup>th</sup> Olympiad for a Diamond Student Book of AGH (mathematics)

LENA TEKIELI – laureate of the 16<sup>th</sup> Olympiad for a Diamond Student Book of AGH (mathematics)

# Achievements Do Make a Difference

by Anna Miegoń, Teacher and Post-Secondary Education Counsellor at VIII PALO

Every school community loves student achievements as they make students, their families, and teachers proud. I am thrilled to share the achievements of some of our current pre-IBDP students.

Whether personal or educational, our students' achievements demonstrate a breadth of skills and abilities. Teachers find that in our rigorous school environment, where each student is taught to reach their highest potential, an achievement is not only a measure of student growth, but also an assurance of progress. As such, achievements make student resumes, CVs, and personal statements shine; they are key factors that profoundly impact their future education and careers.

Learning about students' achievements can also be inspirational. Simply reading about the achievements of others, learning how they developed new skills and abilities, or practising the skill of writing about achievements itself, inspires the contributing students to focus on the satisfaction of reaching their goals. However, writing about achievements in a paragraph

format, as a list, or in a summative statement is never an easy task, even though it is a core skill that every student needs before stepping into higher education and the professional world.

In my Academic Writing classes, I asked pre-IBDP students to describe in one paragraph an achievement of their choice that has made a difference in their lives, and could be of a personal or academic nature. They were encouraged to explain the knowledge and skills they had gained, and selected paragraphs were chosen for publication in this newsletter. Accordingly, I am delighted that each student's passionate engagement was quintessential to their achievements.

Congratulations to all our talented students; your achievements are inspirational. Our school community is indeed proud.

## ACHIEVEMENTS IN CHEMISTRY

**Emilia Mazurkiewicz, PDP**

My greatest achievement thus far was winning the provincial and nationwide Chemistry competitions in the school year 2020-2021 when I was a primary school student. The win gave me numerous benefits. I did not have any difficulties with secondary school enrolment – I entered the school I wanted, but I also could have entered almost any school in the Małopolska region and beyond. Moreover, those competitions enabled me to receive

a student grant. With that grant, I bought new school supplies and financed an online workshop offered to students interested in systematizing and broadening their knowledge in the area of chemistry at matriculation exam level. Furthermore, I met teachers and university instructors who later inspired me to develop my knowledge in the area of chemistry. Thanks to this network of contacts, I received an invitation in 2022 from the Faculty of Chemistry at Jagiellonian University to undertake a mini-research project in a research team environment. Winning the competitions was also beneficial as I developed analytical and time management skills, among others. The knowledge and experience I gained helped me finish primary school with an excellent score. Additionally, I do not have any problems with the completion of the current high-school level Chemistry class, and my competitiveness has increased immeasurably. There are a number of examples of this progress. During the 9th grade, in the previous school year 2021-2022, I entered the final round of the Chemistry Olympiad organized by Jagiellonian University as the youngest participant. Also, during the current school year, I entered the second stage of the Olympiad of Environmental Protection and Chemistry of

Sustainable Development organized by Jagiellonian University, as well as reached the finals of the same competition as in the previous year. Taking part in Olympiads has been a momentous experience. It has allowed me to develop my knowledge and a range of research skills. It has also prepared me for life-changing career exams and increased my chances of attending a world-class university in Poland and abroad.

## MODEL UNITED NATIONS SUCCESS

**Szymon Zarzycki, PDP**

Among my academic achievements, being recognized as the best junior delegate of the Model United Nations (MUN) Junior Conference hosted in 2020 by the First Middle School of Kifisia (MSK) in Athens, Greece, is the most outstanding one. The aim of MUN is to educate students in global affairs by offering a simulation of United Nations conferences, in which students, acting as country delegates, discuss globally-significant topics. When my primary school established a MUN club, I immediately joined. After a year of in-school debating, and attending two national and one international MUN conferences, including in Gdańsk and Szczecin (2019), and in London (2020), I was selected



Photo taken after writing the final of the Chemistry Olympiad organized by Jagiellonian University, March 2022.





Cracow Oxford Debates Championship Quarterfinals, January 26, 2023

as a MSKMUN representative for our school team. At the conference, I was assigned to represent China in the Economic and Social Council. Following a day of debating on the topic of the increasing dependence of countries on fossil fuels, I, along with two other competitors, advanced to the finals. The thesis for the closing debate was: "How Brexit affected relations in the EU." Finalists were given a day to prepare, which involved composing an official position paper on the thesis from the standpoint of the represented country, as well as conducting in-depth research on the subject. The task was to propose a resolution to the problem. Delegates presented their position papers along with resolutions and addressed questions from both opponents and judges. The work was evaluated based on its relevance, integrity, and connection to the discussions from the previous day. After a competitive debate, I was ecstatic to receive the best delegates award as a fourteen-year-old participant, with my opponents being seventeen and eighteen years old. This educational experience allowed me to enrich my knowledge about the topics that were the focus of the discussions, and I developed my skills in the art of debating and in research, such as the capacity to draw conclusions from investigation. Winning the competition also laid the groundwork for my future success in Oxford debates as evidenced by my achievements in the Cracow championship quarterfinals in both 2021 and 2022, and my progress to the third stage in the national

championships in 2022. Furthermore, the experience profoundly increased my social awareness, confidence, and understanding of global issues.

## SOLAR WEATHER FORECAST

### Jan Jeruzalem, PDP

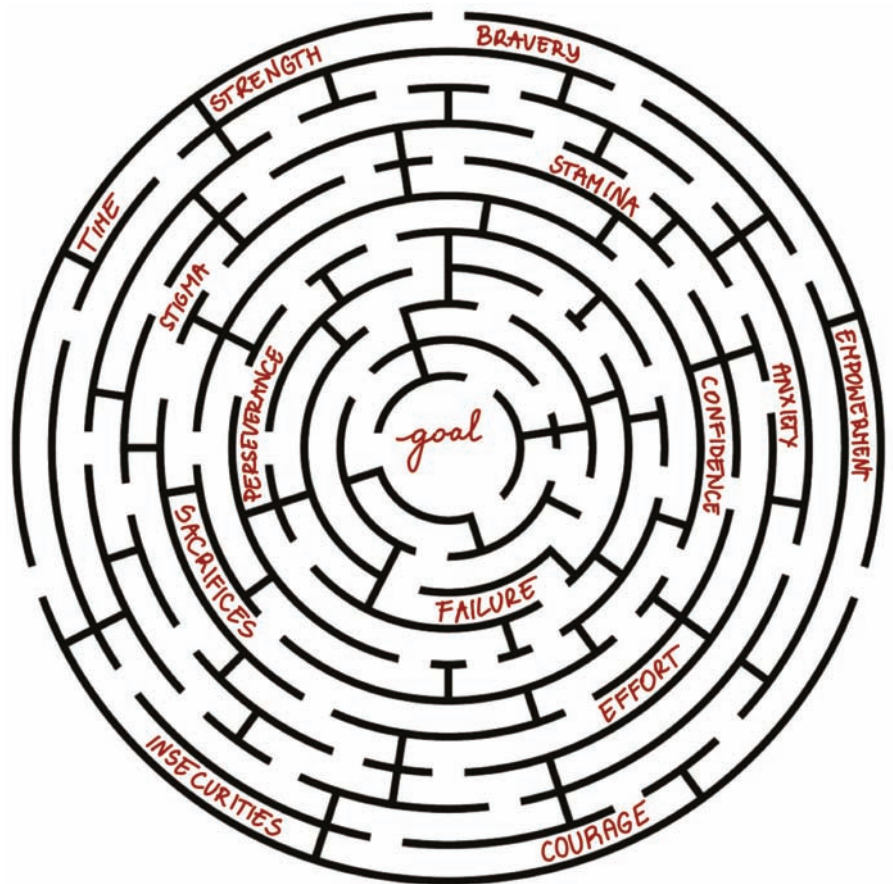
In 2022, I took part in an astronomy project, the purpose of which was to find trends in solar weather. It was part of an extracurricular astronomy course organised by the Dr. Henryk Jordan Youth Center in Cracow under the aegis of Jagiellonian University. As solar weather is a complex subject, affected by multitude of factors, prediction of it is impossible without sophisticated tools and technology, which is why we chose to concentrate on one particular facet of it – the change in the number of sunspots. Sunspots are temporary spots on the surface of the Sun that appear darker than their surroundings. They are areas of lowered surface temperature caused by concentrations of magnetic flux. Two times a day for six months, we calculated the amount and

change in the number of sunspots. We used publicly available pictures of the magnetosphere of the Sun. Ultimately, our observation yielded results when we established an accurate prediction for the next month. On a personal level, these research results have made me proud of this particular achievement. The success attests to my investigative skills, inquisitive nature, and personal diligence.

## AN ENDURING JOURNEY OF LEARNING POLISH

### Julia DeVault, PDP

When I look back at my life in Poland, a significant achievement must include my attainment of foreign language proficiency. One of my most outstanding academic achievements is learning Polish. When I moved to Poland, I understood that I would need to learn the language. However, I did not know that personal growth is needed to achieve this particular goal. In the beginning, learning Polish turned out to be a constant struggle. I was often concerned with my



### A Journey to a Goal

The journey to achieve a goal makes us encounter incentives and obstacles. Sometimes we end up learning how to better apply ourselves, feel more confident, and be more courageous. At other times we struggle and fail. This process can be encapsulated by the feelings of running through a confusing maze.

pronunciation, accent, and limited vocabulary, among other issues. This experience resulted in me feeling awkward and incompetent. Yet, with the encouragement of my parents, language mentors, and friends, I eventually managed to overcome the anxiety that surrounds the process of learning a new language. This new confidence led me to pass my Polish class exams and complete all compulsory assignments. However, while I used to believe that success was comprised of better grades and an improved Polish skill set, now I know it was my efforts and a change in my mindset that contributed to my achievement. Crucially, the challenge turned out to be a benefit. Thanks to learning Polish, my integration and contribution to our school community life are maximized. I am also more confident when I undertake new goals, and I apply a positive perspective when I encounter obstacles. Learning a new language is an enduring journey, and appreciating the opportunities and facing the obstacles of this process has made a difference in my life.

### LEARNING FOUR FOREIGN LANGUAGES IN TWO YEARS

**Marta Matura, PDP2**

One of my academic achievements is learning four foreign languages during the final two years of my primary school program. The languages are English, French,

Spanish, and Latin. This achievement makes me uniquely gifted because learning this number of languages is a challenge not many students choose to undertake at this age. My overarching reason for reaching such a goal is knowing that the skills I developed, such as critical reading and communication, are transferable. There are many professions that require the knowledge of different languages, and thus my language competency will have an impact on my career when I apply for jobs in the future. The knowledge of the languages will help me in my academic studies as well as when I travel abroad. Furthermore, the knowledge is invaluable as it makes it easier to connect with people. Learning these languages also improved my ability to stay focused on tasks and gave me perseverance when it comes to studying. In brief, being a polyglot is a modern passport that is highly respectable and beneficial in a time of globalisation.

### SCHOOL EXCHANGE AS AN OPPORTUNITY TO IMPROVE FOREIGN LANGUAGE AND COMMUNICATION SKILLS

**Szymon Szopa, PDP2**

A quick refinement of language and communication skills is crucial for meaningful interactions with people in new social contexts. My recent achievement—an improvement of my

foreign language and communication competence on a school exchange to Germany—is a testimony to this claim. The event, organized by VIII PALO, lasted from September 23 to October 1, 2022, and the destination was Gymnasium Johanneum in Lüneburg, a historic town in the north of the country. The exchange turned out to have a range of educational benefits, one of them being an improvement of my foreign language skills. Numerous conversations with native speakers broadened my vocabulary and developed my grammatical knowledge, as well as my listening skills. After a few days, I could easily communicate in German. I also learned from this experience that knowledge of a foreign language requires a communication competence, which I understand as an ability to select a communicative strategy allowing for an effective and appropriate transfer of information in a given situation. Before my arrival, I had never visited the country. I did not know what social rules I should follow nor the mentality of the German native speakers. When I arrived, I had to live with an unknown host family and adapt to a new social environment. A quick integration into the family was an excellent lesson in such adaptation. In the beginning, I felt overwhelmed by the challenging situation, but with time, conversations started to become meaningful. Through our daily interactions, I learned how to achieve communication goals in effective and appropriate ways. It cannot be left unmentioned that the openness and kindness of my host family had a substantial influence on my achievement. In sum, I am glad to have experienced such an amazing opportunity. Thanks to it, I have improved my language and communication skills, and I know the experience will bolster my personal development in the future.

### AN ACHIEVEMENT THAT HAS MADE A DIFFERENCE: THROUGH SWEAT TO SELF-DISCIPLINE

**Hanna Czernecka, PDP2**

One of my personal achievements is being a figure skater. I started figure skating in 2013 when I was



A panorama of Lüneburg, September 2022





Winner for the first place in the competition in Oświęcim, 2015



One of my first competitions, 2014

seven years old and my vocation in the sport lasted six years until 2019. I participated in regionals, visiting different parts of Poland, in sport camps during holidays and weekends, and in a considerable number of workouts. I spent much time on the ice-skating rink, but I also worked on my physical strength off-ice. I took ballet, modern jazz, running, and gym classes. Eventually, I was trained by five Polish coaches with various experiences and skating techniques. The most interesting and unusual technique involved holding my hair pulled back into a ponytail and pulling it up to help me learn a figure skating jump known as the Axel. This practice was painful, indeed, but it quickened my learning and supported me in jumping higher and more confidently. The technique I enjoyed most was using a jump harness. It gave me a feeling of stability and more time in the air. From amongst preliminary, pre-juvenile, juvenile, intermediate, novice, junior, and senior levels, thanks to my commitment and hard work, I achieved an intermediate level. This achievement was demanding as it involved a lot of sweat, tears, and doubts. However, it also brought numerous benefits. I acquired valuable skills, such as self-discipline, stress management, and persistence. My experiences helped me meet different people and visit interesting places all over Poland. Most importantly, I learned that losing also means gaining, and that every win and every fault offers lessons, showing what one should focus on to progress. Although my career as a figure skater was linked to many sacrifices because my free time meant exercising, I would not change a thing knowing how it enriched my life.

## MY PASSION FOR DANCE

### Wiktoria Gere, PDP2

My passion for dance began when I was a pre-schooler. At first, from the age of four, my mother signed me up for training in a ballet school. I was there for five years and, after graduating, I received a certificate of completion of a second degree. Parallel to ballet classes, I attended ballroom dance classes. Ballroom dance is a set of partner dances, in which one partner is designated the lead and the other to follow. My ballroom dance journey allowed me to attend championships in various countries, such as Slovakia, Czech Republic, and Germany. I then finished my adventure with ballroom dance at the age of thirteen. These experiences taught me humility, discipline, and perseverance in achieving my goals. Subsequently, for the next seven years, I focused on contemporary and modern-jazz dances, which became my favourite styles. I had workouts four times a week and competitions during weekends. Because of the possibilities to experiment with and interpret various choreographies, I improved my creative thinking. I was passionate about expressing emotions in ways that words alone cannot convey. My most important achievement took place in 2019: I became a finalist in the famous Dance World Cup. This international competition is an all-genre championship for children and young adults, featuring unique dance styles and the best dancers from different nations. Each year, there are more than 120,000 participants from approximately sixty countries competing at the country qualifiers and World Finals. The 2019 event took place in Portugal. To compete

there, I had to pass qualifications in Poland, which I won in March of 2019. Thanks to winning the Polish championship, I automatically qualified for the finals in the world rank. In Portugal, I performed a choreography that allowed me to qualify among the top ten competitors overall in the world. This was the most wonderful day of my life. I am deeply indebted to my trainer for the opportunity to participate in the event. I am also appreciative to my various trainers and family as my dance training has allowed me not only to develop dance-specific competencies, such as flexibility, posture, and strength, but also transferable skills, including critical thinking and public performance. These skills are essential to my long-term professional objectives in dance and other disciplines.



"Show-dance" choreography performed during the qualifications for the Dance World Cup 2019 Finals, Cracow, March 2019

# KRAKÓW THE CULTURAL

## THE MAGICAL CITY OF KRAKÓW

by Aleksandra Sendrowicz, PDP1

Kraków is known for being a gorgeous, magical, and mysterious city. Millions of people come to this city every year to experience its uniqueness and go sightseeing. In this former capital of Poland, modern buildings are built next to places from legends, and a splendid castle dominates the whole city. It is an amazing city full of streets with charming cafes, delicious restaurants, and museums that are worth visiting. I will give you a few reasons why you should visit Kraków.

Many beautiful places are hard to reach, but in Kraków it is different. Well-developed public transportation enables efficient and quick access to any place. This allows you to visit more attractions. Speaking of which, this city has plenty of them. From scenic parks, through attractions for children, to interesting museums. When you visit Kraków, it is worth seeing the Wawel Castle surrounded by legends, first of all because it hides the centuries-old history of this magical city. Although the entrance to the museum is paid, you can enter Wawel for free and feel as if you went back in time. From Wawel, there is a breathtaking view of the city, and whenever I am there, I think that various important historical figures used to look from the same spot and take delight in the stunning panorama.

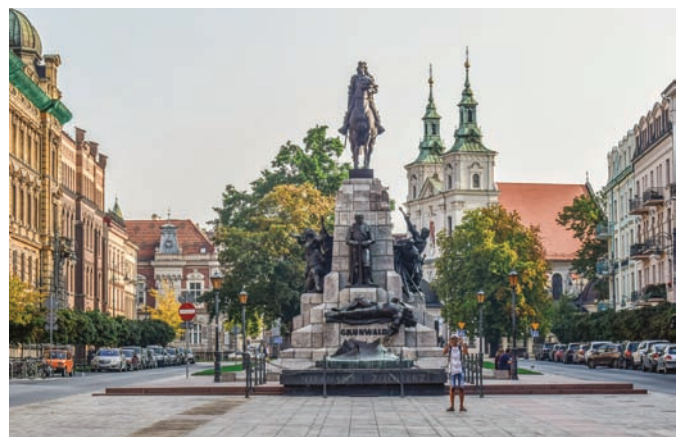
Another very important place in Kraków is the Main Square. This is a place that has always been an important part of Kraków. Once a market square, it is now one of the most recognizable places in the city. There are plenty of unusual festivals and interesting fairs. Even

if nothing special is happening there, you can feel the history that this place has retained.

Kraków is an ideal city for art lovers because it is full of museums, theaters, and festivals. Is one of the most popular cultural places in Kraków. A great building full of rooms with amazing paintings that you can watch for hours. There are some permanent exhibitions, and also temporary ones, only open for a certain amount of time. Theater lovers will also find something for themselves here. The Bagatela Theater and the Słowacki Theater are just two of many. After a day of sightseeing, it is nice to sit down somewhere and have something to eat and drink. The city center is full of charming restaurants and cafés where you can relax after a busy day.

This city is also known for its high number of universities. The most popular are the Jagiellonian University and AGH. The Jagiellonian University is one of the oldest academies in the world and has a very interesting history. It was founded in 1364 by King Casimir the Great and later, when it began to fall into decline after the king's death, it was reactivated by Jadwiga. Queen of Poland who donated all of her jewellery to support the academy. The university has a long list of notable alumni, including famous scientists, politicians, writers, and intellectuals. Some of the prominent figures include astronomer Nicolaus Copernicus, poet and Nobel laureate Czesław Miłosz, and former Polish President Lech Wałęsa.

Kraków is a really unique place that you should definitely visit someday. Everyone can find something that will interest them and make them want to come back here.





# HEART OF POLAND

## KRAKÓW AND ITS SURROUNDINGS

by Mia D'Souza, PDP1

Krakow is a city rich in history, culture, and tradition, making it a must-visit destination for anyone planning a trip to Europe. Whether you are interested in historical monuments or just want to experience the beauty of Europe, Krakow has something for everyone. The city is also home to many museums, galleries, and theatres, as well as a vibrant nightlife scene. It is easily walkable, making it convenient to explore on foot.

**Wawel Castle** is one of the most visited tourist attractions in Krakow. Built in the 14th century, the castle has been a symbol of Poland's national identity and independence for centuries. The castle is located on a hill, providing stunning views of the city. Visitors can explore the castle's many rooms and halls, which are decorated with beautiful artwork and furniture. The castle also houses a museum, where visitors can learn about the history of Poland and the castle itself.

**The Main Market Square** is the heart of Krakow's Old Town. The square is one of the largest medieval squares in Europe and is surrounded by historic buildings, including the Cloth Hall and St. Mary's Basilica. Visitors can take a stroll around the square and enjoy the bustling atmosphere. The square is also home to many outdoor cafes and restaurants, making it a great place to relax and enjoy a meal or a drink.

**The Oskar Schindler's Factory** is a museum dedicated to the history of Krakow during World War II. The factory was owned by Oskar Schindler, who saved the lives of over 1,000 Jews during the war. Visitors can explore the

museum's many exhibits, which include photographs, documents, and artifacts from the war. The museum provides a glimpse into the lives of the people of Krakow during one of the darkest periods in history. Nearby Kraków, visitors can also visit the Auschwitz concentration camp, which is a powerful and sobering reminder of the atrocities committed during World War II.

**The Wieliczka Salt Mine** is a UNESCO World Heritage Site and one of the most unique tourist attractions near Krakow. The mine has been in operation since the 13th century and consists of a labyrinth of tunnels and chambers. Visitors can take a guided tour of the mine and learn about the history of salt mining in Poland. The mine is also home to many sculptures and artwork made entirely out of salt.

Overall, Krakow offers something for everyone. With so many tourist attractions to choose from, visitors are sure to have an unforgettable experience in this vibrant city. Krakow is a destination that should not be missed.



# CRACOW'S MAIN SQUARE'S MAGIC

by Blanca Wolfinger, PDP1

It is a late afternoon weekend and you want to spend time with your friends. Or your distant family have paid you a visit and you want to give them a tour of the city. Where to start? What is fun enough or interesting enough to show them.

Well you could start with the Main Square. It is a magical place that was built in 1257 and still stands strong. It is the biggest mediaeval market square in Europe. There are many interesting things about it and today we are going to talk about them.

## ST. MARY'S CHURCH

Let us start with St. Mary's Church. Theoretically, it is located on the St. Mary's square but most of the citizens think it is on the Main Square. There is a fascinating legend connected to its two towers. During the reign of Bashful Boleslaw, it was decided to build two towers to the main body of the church. Two brothers took on the task and started putting up the towers. When the younger brother noticed that his work was taking too long and his sibling was faster, he came up with a plan. He stabbed his brother with a knife. After realising

what he had just done he jumped off of his tower. Now, the legendary knife is kept in the Cloth Hall on the main square.

## CLOTH HALL

The Cloth Hall used to be the starting point for Krakow's trade and tradespeople. It is now a department of the National Museum dedicated to 19th-century paintings and sculptures. Another branch of the Historical Museum of the City of Cracow is located in the underground around the Cloth Hall, with an entrance located inside. The Cloth Hall is located in the heart of the Main Square, making it an ideal location for selling souvenirs, jewellery, and handicrafts. There are also a few restaurants and cafes on the main floor.

## ADAM MICKIEWICZ'S SCULPTURE

Adam Mickiewicz's sculpture can be found in Cracow's Main Market Square. It is located near the Cloth Hall and St. Mary's Church. On the 100th anniversary of Mickiewicz's birth, September 16, 1898, the

monument was unveiled. Cyprian Godebski, a well-known Polish sculptor, created it. The sculpture represents Polish people's affection for Adam Mickiewicz. It honours his contributions to Polish literature as well as his role as a national symbol. Adam Mickiewicz's sculpture often serves as a focal point during national holidays, cultural events, and public meetings. It acts as a backdrop for multiple events and celebrations held in Krakow's Main Market Square.

## SAINT ADALBERT'S CHURCH

Saint Adalbert's Church is one of Cracow's oldest churches, dating back to the 10th century. The interior of the church is stunning, with outstanding stained glass windows, paintings, and religious sculptures. Saint Adalbert's Church has witnessed a lot of historical events over the years. Throughout its history, it was a centre of Catholic dedication and during the 16th century the church played an important role during the Polish Reformation. Regular religious services, like masses and other Catholic sacraments, still take place at the church.



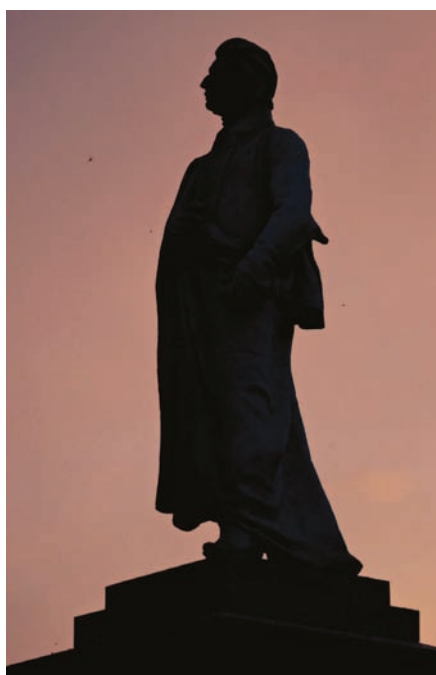


## BUGLE CALL

Every day, every full hour, you can hear the famous bugle call played on a trumpet from the higher tower of the St. Mary's Church. Its origin story is another well-known legend. Many years back, the trumpeter guarding the city spotted Tatar hordes and started playing the bugle call to wake up the citizens. After they listened to the non-stop melody, the people understood that the city was in danger, and they grabbed their weapons, and fought the oncoming invader. The enemy spotted the bugler and shot him in the middle of his bugle call. Now, every time you hear the melody it stops on the same note.

## THE MAGIC

The Main Square has a lot of history, but then again, it's also a significant part of the city during the modern era. It is a place where everyone can find something for themselves. Little children can listen to fascinating stories about Cracow's heroes, princesses and kings. Teenagers can meet up with friends for shopping, dinner and a nice night out. Adults can get some coffee and relax, and rest from their responsibilities. Elderly people can take a strut around the Old Town and enjoy the views. One thing connecting all of these people is the history and magic hidden in the nooks and crannies of the Main Square.



# JAMA MICHALIKA CAFE

by Malwina Wilczek, PDP1 C

There is a special place, listed on World Heritage Sites, to be discovered in the old town of the majestic Cracow. It is a unique and popular café with a stunning history dating back to 1895, making it one of the oldest cafes in the whole country. It is located at Floriańska Street on the royal route between the Florianska Gate and the Wawel Castle in Cracow, the capital city of the Lesser Poland region. Initially, there was a Lviv confectionery, which was turned into the famous Green Balloon Cabaret, and, soon afterwards, into a Krakow nativity scene with a puppet theatre. Distinguished poets, writers and scientists often enjoyed staying there and used its unique atmosphere to create their art. There is an anecdote that sometimes they paid with their work and that is why their art and caricatures still adorn the walls of the cafe. This cafe had many ups and downs. It survived two world wars as well as numerous ownership changes. It is still operating and managed to keep the spirit of Young Poland which was a modernist period in Polish literature and visual arts.

Confectioner Jan Apolinary Michalik came to Cracow from Lviv in 1895 to found a confectionery in Krakow, advertising Warsaw pastries and sweets. When his shop succeeded, he founded a "confectionery factory" which quickly became a meeting place for extraordinary artists. There are records that such personalities as Karol Frycz, Stanisław Wyspiański or Tadeusz Boy Țeleński spent time there. The restaurant had no windows, therefore, it was nicknamed "Jama Michalika", which translates as "cave" or "burrow".

The cafe began to teem with life, which is why in 1904 the literary cabaret "Zielony Balonik" – in English "The Green Balloon" – started their activity there. The artists let their imagination run wild, and in 1906 they decided to organise a puppet theatre,

otherwise known as a Cracow nativity play. The performances were centred around local problems, current affairs and people from the artistic and literary circles.

Thanks to the popularity of the gastronomic establishment, the owner Michalik decided to expand it in 1910, but the impending crisis and the war left their mark on the cafe, and instead of developing, the restaurant began to decline. The carefree times of the "Green Balloon" were gone forever. More and more noble guests began to stay there including Józef Piłsudski. In 1918 the owner decided to sell it. In the 1920s, the cafe steadily became less popular, and in 1935 it went bankrupt. Jama Michalika survived World War II, but its glory years were long behind it. After several years of renovations and an attempt to recreate the former state of the premises, the cafe reopened in 1958. Then, the artistic and literary cabaret "Jama Michalika", reviving the tradition of "Zielony Balonik", operated there, but it began to decline at the beginning of the 1990s. The new owner slowly restored the popularity of Michalik's „cave” by focusing on the aspects that led to the popularity and renown of the name. He brought back artistic performances, cabaret and poetry evenings.

To conclude, it is essential to know that Jama Michalika is a unique place with an extraordinary history. Currently, it attracts tourists and residents of Cracow alike. If you are in the capital city of Lesser Poland, you should visit this famous place, especially for its various cultural performances and organised cabarets. The restaurant offers many delicacies of old Polish cuisine and traditional desserts – cheesecake and chocolate cake are very popular. It is worth visiting because of its special atmosphere of Bohemian spirit, interiors filled with artworks and rich history.



fot. Andrzej Barabasz, wikimedia.org

# KRAKOW'S LEGENDS

by Kamila Kobylarczyk, PDP1

Krakow is considered to be one of the most magical cities in Poland, some may even say – in the world, but what makes it so special? It is a place where history and fantasy combine to create an astonishing atmosphere. While walking through the city, you may notice how every monument, every building has a story to tell. These stories are Krakow's legends in which you can observe the connection between the history of the city and the mystical accompaniment that makes each place you visit so much more unique. Although everything in these legends is believed to have happened in the past, you can still see how it relates to the present. Prepare to enter this magical world while reading some of the most interesting legends of Krakow.

## Wawel Dragon

The first story is related to the Wawel Castle – a Renaissance royal residence located next to the Vistula River. This



legend remains among the most known and loved in Krakow – it is about a dragon that used to live in a cave under Wawel Hill. The beast terrorized the citizens, but unfortunately, no knight was able to kill it. People started to lose hope, but, luckily, a clever cobbler named Skuba came up with a plan. He killed a lamb and stuffed it with sulfur. The beast ate it and became so thirsty that it drank from the Vistula River until it burst. The moral of this tale is that cleverness and resourcefulness can be more important than brute strength. Now you can see a sculpture of the terrifying dragon which occasionally roars and breathes fire near the Wawel Castle.

## Nawojka

Another less popular legend is connected to the Jagiellonian University (at the time Krakow Academy). It is about a brave young girl with a drive to learn, named Nawojka. This character is called the first Polish female student. The legend says that she studied in Krakow Academy as a boy named Jakub. Every day she dressed up as a man because at this time it was illegal for girls to receive higher education. Unfortunately, on the day of her graduation, she was exposed. Nawojka became a symbol of determination, and hope for women who wanted to pursue education. In the modern day, Jagiellonian University is not only accepting many female students, but it is also committed to providing equal opportunities to students of all genders.

## Twardowski

The last legend is about a sorcerer and a Cracovian nobleman called Twardowski. He healed and rejuvenated people, he was even thought to summon the spirit of the queen – the wife of Sigismund II Augustus. To get all this knowledge and power, he sold his soul to the devil. When they were signing the contract he added a paragraph which said that the devil could only collect his soul in Rome. The pact was later signed and Twardowski thought that he outsmarted the monster. The nobleman stayed away from Italy, and was sure that his soul would never be collected. Unfortunately, the sorcerer once found himself in a pub called "Rome" and when the devil appeared, Twardowski jumped on his rooster and hopped to the moon. He is still there and he misses Krakow every single day.

Krakow's legends are more than just magical tales. They are a part of its culture, history, and spirit. As you wander through the streets of this city, you can feel the magic of the legends around you. Whether you are taking a tour of the Wawel Castle, visiting the Old Town, or simply taking a walk, you are sure to be enchanted by the city's charm and mystery. So why not take a trip around Krakow? You might just find a bit of magic in your own life along the way.



# EVENTS IN KRAKOW

by **Nadia Szczudło, PDP1**

Krakow hosts a variety of parades, festivals and holidays every year to commemorate different events in history and to maintain local traditions. All these events are loved by the local community and can even be considered part of the identity of the people of Krakow. Below I have listed some of the events, which are in my opinion the most interesting.

The first traditional event worth mentioning is Rękawka which is celebrated at the Krakus Mound after the first spring full moon. Rękawka is a Slavic spring festival, a pagan rite where worshippers honour and commune with the dead. The theory behind the origin of the name of this holiday is linked to the legend of the mound that was raised by the people of Krakow, after the death of the legendary King Krakus, the founder of Krakow. It is stated that the earth for the mound was carried in sleeves, hence the name of the holiday (rękaw in Polish = a sleeve). Originally, coins and food such as traditional Cracovian bagels were thrown to the dead spirits from the Krakus Mound. People were also throw and rolled eggs, which were a symbol of new life. All these goodies were often caught by the poor waiting at the bottom of the mound. Today, on the day of this holiday you can travel back in time and see how the Slavs used to live, you can get acquainted with their traditions and admire the re-enactment of battles.

Another traditional event is Emaus, named after the biblical village ('Emmaus' in English) to which the resurrected Christ travelled. Emaus is an indulgence held on Easter Monday at the Norbertine convent in Salwator district. Residents of Krakow used to celebrate Emaus by participating in indulgence fairs after the church service and by going for a stroll in the area. Nowadays, during the Emaus you can see carousels for children, fairs with toys and sweets, such as traditional heart-shaped gingerbread. You might also see wooden figurines of Jewish players and Jews studying the Torah. Another characteristic element of Krakow's Emaus are small pretzels threaded together to form a wreath. Unique at this fair is the "tree

of life" which has its roots in Slavic pagan rituals. Spring was believed to be a time for souls of the dead to return and take the form of birds. The "tree of life" symbolises the power of life and today there is a competition for the most beautiful tree.

As for some fun modern celebrations the Great Dragons Parade ought to be mentioned here. It is an event that was launched in 2000 by the Grotoska Puppet, Mask and Actor Theatre. The Great Dragon Parade is a two-day event, which attracts children and adults with a passion for dragons. It is organised in May or June. The parade begins with the Great Open Air Show which takes place on the Vistula River, where you can see huge flying dragons that will take your breath away. Theatre actors hold these dragons on heavy metal ropes, and often or not, they need a lot of strength to move them. The dragons are filled with helium and are up to 25 metres long and several metres wide. Apart from these phenomenal colourful dragons, you can also see fireworks, smoke and lasers and listen to beautiful music. On the second day, the Great Dragons Parade sets off from Grodzka Street to the Main Square, where children hold up dragons made by themselves and compete with each other to see who has the prettiest one.

Certainly, there are many more examples of events, because Krakow is a city of diversity. One event that is really enjoyable is the Pierogi Festival, where besides trying the traditional pierogi with mushrooms or cabbage, you may also eat pierogi stuffed with, for example, beetroot or chocolate. The Jewish Cultural Festival is also an important event which propagates Jewish culture. Numerous workshops take place in the Kazimierz district and some fantastic concerts are held in the area's synagogues.

The festivals and events listed above are just a few examples of how important it is for the city to have a good time and to maintain traditions, both those of the Slavic period and those connected to the Christian religion.

## Kraków Hosting the 3<sup>rd</sup> European Games

Jan Godulski, PDP1

In June 2019 Kraków was selected as the host of the 3rd European Games and at the time of writing of this article we are still waiting in excitement for what this event will uncover. After almost four years, our city is finally ready to host the games. Of course, Kraków hosted many international sporting events in the past, however, this event, which qualifies for the 2024 Paris Summer Olympics, is undeniably the most exhilarating in recent years.

This contest will feature athletes from 48 European countries from across the continent. There will be 29 sports represented, which makes up 253 total fierce competitions marked on the schedule. In Kraków, spectators will have an opportunity to watch matches in such disciplines as 3x3 basketball, table tennis, slalom kayak, sprint kayak, archery, fencing, modern pentathlon, teqball, padel and kickboxing. The competitions will also take place in 11 different host cities across the Lesser Poland region, with Kraków being the main venue. The opening and closing ceremonies will be held at the newly-refurbished-for-this-occasion Wisła Stadium near Błonia. Despite the fact that the opening ceremony is only around a month away, we can already see the effects that the games have had on the city. For instance, the government funding for this project includes investing in upgrading roads, making sidewalks more accessible or modernising tram tracks. The potential that this event gives to Kraków is enormous.

Although the selection process for a host was a long haul and it certainly did not lack controversies, I still think that Kraków with its vibrant atmosphere, both mediaeval and modern architecture, and rich cultural heritage will prove to be the best option for this year's European Games. Of course, no athletes from either Russia or Belarus were invited because of the ongoing Russian invasion of Ukraine. This, however, remains a bone of contention as, essentially, the International Olympic Committee still allows Russians and Belarusians to compete - they just need to enter as individual and neutral athletes. This decision is not supported by many, and it is poorly justified (i.e. that it does not fulfil the purpose of sport competition and would not make a difference in the war either way).

Every single event or sports competition will always have flaws and evoke controversies, but it is more important to focus on the bright side and have fun watching the history of sports unfold in our city.

# KAZIMIERZ – JEWISH DISTRICT IN KRAKÓW

by Aleksandra Sękowska, PDP 1

Although the whole of Krakow is exciting, one of its districts catches the attention of many tourists when they visit this city. And this is Kazimierz. It is a district full of charming streets, cafes, restaurants, attractions, and museums all worth visiting.

Kazimierz was founded in 1335 by King Casimir the Great, in whose honour it was named. During this period, Kraków was much smaller. And, at first, Kazimierz was a city, later it became a district of Kraków. In the fifteenth century, Jews were resettled in Kazimierz and the district was separated from the rest of the town by a wall. Numerous synagogues were built, seven of which still exist, also, Jewish schools and academies were established. For a long time, it was one of the most significant Jewish cultural hubs of Europe.

Today, Kazimierz's charm and its attractions draw many tourists. But then again, it was not always like this. For many years, this district was associated with mostly demolished buildings not worth seeing. This was the result of the destruction of Kraków's Jewish community during the Second World War when the

Jews were first ordered by the Nazi to move to Podgórze ghetto, their possessions were confiscated and later most were killed during the liquidation of the ghetto or in concentration camps. Only 10 percent of Jews from Kazimierz survived the Holocaust, a considerable number of them with the assistance of Oskar Schindler. Sadly, after the World War II, during the 11 August 1945 Kraków Pogrom many Jews were assaulted by a Polish mob.

It was only after the fall of communism in Poland that Kazimierz began to develop again. To which, among others, the Festival of Jewish Culture, was celebrated for the first time in 1988. After this, the first cafes, pubs, and other premises suddenly appeared in Kazimierz, the number of which is now close to 300. While walking around Kazimierz, it is enjoyable to sit and relax in one of these cafes or restaurants.

Many places are worth visiting in Kazimierz, but I will mention the most important ones. A place closely related to the beginnings of this district of Krakow is the church Corpus Christi, built on the order of

King Casimir the Great. The church is beautifully decorated and has a large golden altar. From the outside, it resembles St Mary's Church located on Kraków's Market Square. This church is a Catholic church, and Kazimierz is a Jewish district, so, of course, you cannot miss the district's synagogues. Although in the past there were about 90 of them, now only seven remain. However, only the Remuh Synagogue and the Tempel Synagogue hold services.

On the other hand, if someone would like to learn about the history of Krakow's Jews, it is worth visiting the Old Synagogue, which currently houses a museum dedicated to Kraków's Jews. A visit to Kazimierz's, Ulica Święty Wawrzyńca, offers a different experience as it allows the visitor to experience the Krakow Technology Trail, also, the Museum of Municipal Engineering is located along this street .

Kazimierz is undoubtedly a beautiful place with a fascinating history, and no matter how many times I have been to the district, each return is a delight and I've enjoyed its remarkable charm.





# Vibrant Neighbourhood of Our High School VIII PALO

by Paulina Kotyras, PDP1

Thanks to our school being in the city centre, there are a lot of places you can go to meet your friends, eat or just spend time in. It can be very useful for students while preparing for school projects with their peers. Personally, I found it useful while preparing the presentation for 'Sejmik' with people who happen to live far away from me. We didn't have to arrange meetings and travel to each other's places, instead, we met in a cafe.

On Karmelicka street, where our school is located, we can notice a few shops and cafes. An obvious eye-catcher is the ridiculous number of Żabkas, which is a big chain of small supermarket-like shops across Poland. While it is handy to have cheap convenience shops close by, there are also many local restaurants to choose from in the area.

For example, the Kumpir & Burger stand is situated almost directly next to our school. Many students choose to eat there during the breaks, as it offers a small discount for our school. They have both classic burgers with various toppings and kumpirs, which are mashed potatoes with cream and many other toppings you can choose from. Kumpir is quite uncommon in

our city, there are not many other places where you can get it.

Another choice of a place to eat could be a restaurant-bar Turlaj Klopsa, which, despite its name, offers only vegan food. Their meals are gluten-free and healthy, which can be a great alternative to burgers or other fast food. The owners also care for the environment and make sure their meals are packed in an eco-friendly way.

If you were searching for some name-brand cafes, many of these are also around our school. Not directly on Karmelicka street, but a short walk (or tram ride) away from it there is a Starbucks, which is a company you almost definitely have heard about.

Other than cafes and restaurants, some shops sell items that might be generally useful for school. There is a stationery shop nearby the Batorego tram stop, and you can find almost anything here. The place itself is maze-like, with shelves filled with items that range from art supplies to children's toys to room decor.

Another of the shops is the haberdashery in a building almost

directly behind the Batorego tram stop. You can find a variety of yarns, embroidery threads, and many more things you can need for an art project. Personally, I enjoy fibre arts like crochet, and it is very convenient to have a shop with materials I might need.

Not directly on Karmelicka, but on a street next to it, there is also a public library. The street is called Rajska, and from our school, it is about a 6-minute walk. It is one of the biggest libraries in our city, so if you need a book, they will most likely have it. Additionally, the library accommodates the needs of disabled people, for example, ramps for wheelchair users or a section with books written in the Braille alphabet.

Even if you do not feel like spending money, our city offers a multitude of beautiful sights and historical landmarks. You can just take a walk and explore Kraków and the many attractions it has to offer. Other than the shops and cafes mentioned here, there are many more places you might want to visit. Kraków is a big city, and our school is situated almost in the heart of it, so the possibilities are almost endless.

## Under the Spider Tenement House Near Our School

1889 design by Teodor Talowski, 35 Karmelicka street

**Teodor Talowski** was a prominent Polish architect who lived from 1868 to 1941. He is known for his contributions to the architectural landscape of Kraków and his involvement in the preservation and restoration of historical buildings. His architectural style was affected by various influences: Art Nouveau, Modernism. He often incorporated elements of historical architecture into his designs, creating a harmonious blend of the past and the present. He was dubbed the **Polish Gaudi**.



Wikipedia, fot. Zygmunt Put



