

Newsletter
December 2014

The Aga Khan Academy, Hyderabad.
Senior School



From the Head of Academy's desk:

Let me start by wishing you all a very happy holiday. I hope you will have time to spend as a family and to celebrate the joys that family life brings. Thank you also for the welcome you have given me over the last four months. It has been a very busy and interesting time, I have enjoyed becoming part of the community and I am looking forward to the next few years with keen anticipation. I am particularly looking forward to continuing the process of getting to know you as individuals next term.



This term has been a very busy one, full of activity, achievement and development. I have enjoyed observing and taking part and planning the future over the last few months. I am filled with wonder at the opportunities this school and His Highness' vision have given me and all members of the community.

One of the fundamental values and objectives of the Academy is 'Leadership'. It is an area that we will continue to focus on in the future. But it is wonderful to recognise how many students and staff are picking up the challenge of leadership and by doing so adding to what we are as a school and community. Some examples are: Model United Nations, Student Councils; and teachers delivering IB workshops and outreach training; The Tempest; Social Service; Community Service and the active leadership of so many staff in the ongoing development of the school.

We, staff students and parents are all engaged in an extraordinary adventure to create an extraordinary school! What better endeavor can there be!

Have a great holiday.

Dr. Geoffrey Fisher.



From the Principal's desk:

Dear Parents,

We are about to complete a busy and very successful term and I would like to congratulate students and staff alike on their efforts throughout Term 1. All students underwent the examination experience in the first week of December, and whilst these remain but one form of the many assessments used, there is no question that writing examinations well is an important and valuable skill to have for future endeavours. The Term Report Card will clearly reveal student performance and attainment. Where this is found to be somewhat disappointing I recommend that parents (and teachers) have a serious discussion with the student about that under-performance. All of our students are academically able but it does seem to be the case that a few are not pushing themselves to achieve at their potential. This attitude needs to change and in some cases academic targets will be identified to help ensure significant improvement is achieved.

Language Support and Learning Support are being supplied to those students in need thanks to additional staffing. The Leadership Team has been pleased with the significant progress already made. Some specific educational needs have been identified and IEPs (Individualised Education Programmes) will be drafted and actioned, with teacher training and support given. I'd take this opportunity to congratulate Ms Faridah & Ms Wendy (Learning Support) and also in the Language areas: Ms Gaura; Ms Silvia & Ms Marianne. Improving Language skills and overcoming learning challenges is bound to improve student understanding and performance.

Outside the classroom there have been many enriching experiences for our students this term and these will be reported in some detail in the pages to follow. Model United Nations, Football tournaments, the Robotry Workshop and competition and "The Tempest" performance are four recent examples and I am confident that our cultural, sporting and service opportunities will continue to grow and expand the horizons of our students, your children. We want them to be the best they can be and this in a holistic sense- mind, body and spirit.

Leadership training is also central to the academy's mission and vision and the following positions will not only enrich the academy's culture with student investment but also provide important opportunities for responsibility and leadership to our students. Congratulations to all these new office holders.



Student Council Presidents:

Simya Surani and Rahul Gupta (Grade 12)

Student Council Representatives:

Fiza Ladha and Rehaan Kemani (Grade 7)

Zubiya Baig and Aarish Lakhani (Grade 8)

Sumaiya Nathani and Ziyah Budhwani (Grade 9)

Shreya Virani and Mubeen Padaniya (Grade 10)

Kushboo Ladhani and Rohan Reddy (Grade 11)

House Captains:

Aarushi Dutt and Afreed Bhaidani (House of Nizams)

Ishrat Pirani and Lokesh Channini (Pandya House)

Misbaah Ladha and Sufyaan Dayani (Maurya House)

Aklima Minsariya and Amaan Surani (Kakatiya House)

Ray Zinsli,

Senior School Principal



Diploma Programme:

This term was action filled as academic momentum took a steep upward surge. I am now registering grade 12 students for their final examinations meanwhile students are focused towards fulfilling the Diploma Core requirements of CAS, TOK and the Extended Essay, as well as each subject's internal assessments. Grade 11 & 12 students appeared for their Mid-term examinations from November 26th through December 5th. The grade 12 mock examinations will commence on the 16th of February.

It is an opportune time to consider the physical and mental wellbeing of students and therefore we advise the parents to ensure that their wards make wise use of the winter break so that they return rested and recharged ready to start the new term.

Neeraja Nibhanupudi,

Diploma Programme Coordinator



Middle Years Programme:

Creating Authentic Assessment of Understanding in the MYP

December is the time for assessments, examination, tension and anticipation! But like all IB schools with a vision for lifelong learning we at the academy believe in ‘Assessment for Learning’. Tony Wagner, co-director of the Change Leadership Group at Harvard Graduate School of Education, said at the IB America’s Conference (2012) “There’s no competitive advantage today in knowing more than the person next to you. The world no longer cares how much our graduates know...What the world cares about is not what our students know but what they can do with what they know”.

Assessment in the Middle Years Programme focuses on gauging the child’s ability to analyse a problem, come up with workable solutions and apply the knowledge and skill in new, unknown settings. We evaluate the ability to think clearly, analyse arguments looking at multiple perspectives. In creating summative assessment tasks, we take into account the concepts and the global context of inquiry. To make the assessment tasks authentic we focus on creating analogues of problems students may encounter in real life. Assessment is ongoing and varied, comprising of formative and summative.

The December Report focuses on the ongoing learning from the beginning of the academic year up to December. The criterion- related report will enable the student and the teacher to evaluate the student’s understanding holistically. The benefits of criterion related assessment are enormous. They foster self-assessment and improvement. They are assessment of understanding that demonstrate the student’s conceptual understanding, knowledge and skills.

The assessment criterion in the new Middle Years Programme is as follows:

Achievement levels - Each criterion is divided into various achievement levels (numerical values) that appear in bands, and each band contains general, qualitative value statements called level descriptors. The levels 1 and 2 appear as the first band, levels 3 and 4 as the second band, and so on. Level 0 is available for work that is not described by the band descriptor for levels 1 and 2. All criteria have four bands and a maximum of eight achievement levels. All MYP subject groups have four assessment criteria divided into four bands, each of which represents two levels of achievement. MYP criteria are equally weighted. [Reference: Principles of MYP assessment MYP: From principles into practice]



	CRITERION A	CRITERION B	CRITERION C	CRITERION D
MAXIMUM LEVEL OF ACHIEVEMENT:	8	8	8	8
Language and literature	Analysing	Organising	Producing text	Using language
Language acquisition	Comprehending spoken and visual text	Comprehending written and visual text	Communicating	Using language
Individuals and societies	Knowing and understanding	Investigating	Communicating	Thinking critically
Sciences	Knowing and understanding	Inquiring and designing	Processing and evaluating	Reflecting on the impacts of science
Mathematics	Knowing and understanding	Investigating patterns	Communicating	Applying mathematics in real-world contexts
Arts	Knowing and understanding	Developing skills	Thinking creatively	Responding
Physical and health education	Knowing and understanding	Planning for performance	Applying and performing	Reflecting and improving performance
Design	Inquiring and analyzing	Developing ideas	Creating the solution	Evaluating
MYP projects	Investigating	Planning	Taking action	Reflecting

Koel Ray

Middle Years Programme Coordinator



Design:

The term started off on a very exciting note for the technocrats of AKAH with the ROBOTRYST workshop that was held on from the 31st Oct to 1st Nov 2014. About 111 students from six different schools participated and have taken with them the rich experience of designing a working model of a robot and participating in a zonal level competition of the ROBOTRYST-2015. Three out of five winning groups came from AKAH!



One of the participant quoted “At the beginning it was quite tough for me to understand the uses of the components given to us but as we started connecting the parts we were able to comprehend the idea of components and diodes in the robot...”

We were shown different kinds of robots but the climax of the workshop was the competition wherein students had to construct a ‘Black Body Follower robot’ with only one sensor. All the groups got onto the task at hand and were trying their best to get the most efficient design. At one point of time the workshop looked like a room full of thinkers and inquirers showcasing live examples of the IB learners. Nevertheless, the workshop wasn’t about winning, but about applying robotic skills in a creative manner. The motive of the workshop was to promote the Robotics Education among the youths and to teach practical and theoretical aspect of Robotics. These kinds of workshops can cultivate robotics interest among today’s youth and how powerful and exciting the Robotics can be, along with letting them think about Robotics as a career option following the workshop, grade 9 students have ventured into robotics unit using LEGO Mind storms. They took pride in the robots they designed and created.

Grade 7 students have been exploring image editing skills using GIMP whereas those of grade 8s have had the opportunity to create an animation as a tool to test their skills of persuasion.

In the final MYP years, grade 10 students are getting to understand more technical aspects of using sophisticated software like MS Access in an effort to appreciate the ‘Integrated Development Environment’ (IDE). They created a sample database system for the AKA,H library with necessary user interface and reports.

Vani Vishwanath,

Head of Information and Communication Technology



IB Diploma Core: Theory of knowledge

Knowledge has to be improved, challenged, and increased constantly, or it vanishes.

-Peter Drucker

Grade 12 students are done with their Final TOK presentations and now are working on their final essay submissions, which are due the first week of January.

After being introduced to the TOK world, grade 11 students are slowly gaining a firm understanding. The classes now vibrate with a lot of interesting discussions and energy. The students are also learning to structure their thoughts and arguments on paper.

Ujjwala Bhatt,

TOK Coordinator

Hindi:

Once sincere efforts are made to achieve an objective then the time to achieve the desired outcomes knocks at the door. This term was packed with a huge number of tasks enough for two academic terms! Grade 7 and grade 8 worked on different writing skills; especially upon diary writing and story writing. The movies 'Mary Kom' in grade 7 and 'English Vinglish' were used for the units. Grade 9 and grade



10 units focused on short stories and poetry which were used for the Individual Oral Presentation.

Grade 12 students worked on their written task and practice papers for the May exams. Similarly grade 11 finished their reading of part-4 text, they will perform their formal Individual Oral Presentation based on the text in January 2015.

Dr. Karuna Arya,

Head of Hindi Department



Arts:

Theatre-

‘Justice will be done’. Prospero’s powerful dialogue set the stage for William Shakespeare’s, ‘The Tempest’ at the Aga Khan Academy, Hyderabad.

The Aga Khan Academy, Theatre Club and Choir performed, Ruth Kenward’s and Nick Perrins children’s musical of William Shakespeare’s Tempest last weekend. The cast and crew of the play were students from Grade 7/8 and 9 of the Residential Programme and the choir included Middle years and Diploma year’s students.

The student residences, Golconda House 2 was turned into a ‘Globe Theatre’ with the audience, seated or standing while watching the play at different levels. This is the first time that the Academy students have performed Shakespeare and five performances in four days were quite demanding for the actors and the choir. The last show on Saturday had a full house and brilliant performances by all the actors. Notable performances were by Moiz Rajwani who was Prospero, the two Ariel’s, Airah Sarbatwala and Anusha Oza, the jester, Ayan Surani and Caliban- Rutvik Surani.

Aaron Jacob,

Dean of students & Theatre Facilitator

Visual Arts-

Students of Grade 12 worked on a time bound art activity, where they had to create an artwork on Peshawar school killings. They worked on arts-based approach that challenges them to address various relevant topics while enabling a deeper understanding of the issue. The creation of artwork served as a personal act of meaning-making for students.



Science:

The Department of Science has been very busy with Midterm Examinations in this quarter. The Middle Year students have been very excited with the Next Chapter and are finding it more challenging. Students also felt that the Next Chapter helped them to develop their critical thinking ability. The MYP has a concept of Integrated Science which means all three disciplines are taught as one. Many students felt that if they could be taught by the subject (discipline) specialist then it would be nice as they would learn concepts better. Keeping this in mind the Department has engaged three specialists (Physics, Chemistry and Biology) to teach their respective discipline. Students have been experiencing the real world through the lenses of laboratory as they observe demonstrations and perform experiments in various areas of science. The Department has also procured sophisticated equipment to enhance the learning process. The two new lab rooms are also being prepared for next academic session. The Diploma students have been occupied with completion of their Internal Assessments in this quarter.

Sudipta Kumar Roy,

Head of Science



Humanities:

This first term has been a very rich time for our MYP Humanities students. It has involved various inquiry based learning activities and literacy strategies which culminated in criterion based exams held in early December.

In grade 7, Humanities' students have been learning about geographical landforms, including plate tectonics, the composition of soil and rock formations. They have been exploring some important geographical features of Planet Earth in order to better understand how the local community of Hyderabad is shaped by these features; the emphasis has been on locating themselves in place, space and time. In collaboration with the science department, students have also been exploring the framework of sustainability issues and eco-systems by engaging in hands on data collection activities and soil experiments.

In grade 8, students started the term with a unit in which they explored how politics, including governance, and economic systems are interconnected. In their second unit, students have been studying the evolution of the educational system in India, from ancient times through the influence of the British system and culminating in an examination of the nature of the present day educational system in India. At the same time, students have been exploring the historical evolution of written communication, beginning with cave paintings and hieroglyphics, moving up to the invention of the printing press and how the printed word has shaped communication; currently, they are examining important issues associated with contemporary communication forms, including the use of media and copyright or intellectual property issues.

In grade 9, students started the term learning about significant political revolutions in their core curriculum, while undertaking an exciting new "Big History" project. In their second unit, students have been learning about the Holocaust during World War Two and the role of international organizations in educating people about and stopping genocide as a fundamental human rights issue.

Finally, the grade 10 students started the term by studying the intersection of Human Rights issues and violations simultaneously with the field of Ethics. Presently, grade 10 has been exploring themes central to religion and politics, examining questions such as: what role, if any, should religion play in a state's political system? What are the theoretical advantages and manifestations of theocracies? What are the



theoretical advantages of a secular state, or a separation of church and state? Con-currently, in a unit centered on the theme of peace and conflict, students have been comparing and contrasting the causes and effects of World War One and World War Two. Some of our unit questions include: can conflict be resolved peacefully and without war? If so, what role can international peacekeeping organizations play in preventing the occurrence of war, including another global war?

As you can see, it has been an enriching term for our Humanities students. We are looking forward to another dynamic term ahead.

Annamarie Craig,

Head of Humanities

Physical Education:

The Second Aga Khan Academy Inter School Football League Cum Knock Out Tournament Was held at AKA,H campus from the 20th to 22nd November 2014. The tournament was held in two age categories under-12 and under-16. Thirteen teams from various schools participated in this tournament. Our under-16 team made it to the finals and brought the Jain International School to a tie breaker wherein they lost by 5-3.



Ravi Kumar

Head of physical Education,



French

‘Le véritable voyage ne consiste pas à chercher de nouveaux paysages mais d’avoir de nouveaux yeux’
– Marcel Proust.

While on a mission to explore the French speaking world, the French students enhanced their linguistic skills through its culture.

The grade 11 *ab initio* students explored the French speaking world through famous people and places. This journey opened their minds to the fact that French is not only spoken in France but in over 30 countries, and it is an official language in 29 countries. This also made students think about the scope and application of language beyond academia; that it leads to the opening of many doors for higher studies, business and employment.

The grade 12 *ab initio* students took a culinary journey and left the French classes with hungry stomachs as they explored French gastronomy. Throughout this theme, the students informed themselves about the art of fine dining, famous recipes, and healthy diet through the vocabulary, idiomatic expression and grammar relevant to this theme.

The grade 11 French B SL students explored the theme of social relationships through the sub-themes of friendship, conflicts and conflict resolutions. They revised some of their basic concepts while expanding their linguistic skills with the addition of new vocabulary and idiomatic expressions.

The grade 12 B SL students went on a mission to save the planet, examined the causes behind global warming and strategies to solve the big environmental issues.

All in all, the main highlight in all the French classes has been learning through music specifically songs to make students comfortable with French phonetics, pronunciations and basic sentence structures and phrases.

Ujjwala Bhatt,

French Facilitator



AKAHMUN 2014 – an overview

AKAHMUN 2014 was bigger and promised higher standards than its inaugural edition. What began with less than a 100 delegates in 2013, turned into a massive conference, with close to 200 delegates, 38 organizing team members, with an 81 conference experience and several other teachers on board. At this year's conference, delegates discussed the issues of global importance both historic and contemporary. While the Security Council contemplated the future course of action to combat terrorism, the Allied and Axis cabinets worked against each other to redefine history, during one of the most crucial periods – World War 2. The larger committees, ECOSOC and DISEC, dealt with pressing issues, such as the Millennium Development Goals and Civil Wars. Yet another special committee, the Press Corps, played the crucial role of the eyes and the ears of the conference. Through live updates, articles, cartoons and press interventions such as media uprisings and sting operations, the Press Corps formed the backbone of the conference and added a dimension of reality.



AKAHMUN 2014 also saw some new and unexpected additions, like the Joint Crisis Committees and morning crisis. While all the committees were faced with constant crisis, the entire basis for the JCC was crises.

The second novel aspect of AKAHMUN 2014 was the morning crisis. At 5 am on the morning of the 15th, 20 odd members of the organising team were up and ready to evacuate the Sleepy and exhausted, the committee rooms and of debate. Initially a little the pace and by 6 am, the delegates charged up.

With this year's bar set AKAHMUN 2015 has rather high standards to meet. AKAHMUN 2014 definitely surpassed all expectations and saw some generally timid students speak up and articulately express their opinion which is essentially the purpose of a Model United Nations.



the organising team were up and students from the dormitories. students dragged themselves to the geared up for an unexpected session lost, the delegates soon picked up discussions were in full swing and

higher than that of the previous year,

Rajesh Kayiprath,
MUN Coordinator



ENGLISH –

The greatest thing in this world is not so much where we stand as in what direction we are moving. .

J.W.von Goethe, German writer and statesman.

In the English Department, we strongly believe in the above quotation and it guides the way we work with our students in the Senior Academy. It underpins the English support programme introduced last term and we are pleased to see that our plan to ensure that every student moves forward in English is slowly taking shape. A number of students for whom English is an additional language are gradually beginning to show greater confidence when speaking, reading and writing English. In order to help all students develop as effective users of English and achieve their full potential, we have decided to monitor the development of student literacy more closely and to this effect the Academy is implementing a whole-school literacy programme where the English Department will be working with all other disciplines to promote good literacy skills which are the underlying foundation for developing a broad set of study skills, encouraging self-directed learning and engaging students in meaningful independent work across the curriculum.

It has been a busy term for all the grades. Grades 7, 8 and 9 have all been studying novels, revising their knowledge of plot and structure, narrative point of view and characterisation. Each grade level has had the opportunity to learn about different cultures and/or different time periods. Grade 7 have been reading Adeline Yen Mah's autobiography *Chinese Cinderella*, which explores the topic of family relationships and the themes of rejection and loneliness through the eyes of a teenage girl. Grade 7K also read extracts from a book entitled ***Boys Who Rocked the World***, and you can read how they intend to rock the world at the end of this article. Grade 8 students have been following a 9 year old boy growing up during World War II in Germany and examining issues such as complacency, indoctrination and the timelessness of war and genocide. The novel studied by Grade 9 students, *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Nighttime*, has enabled them to explore the theme of social disability through the medium of a mystery novel. Grade 10 students have been introduced to the world of nature through the poetry of Robert Frost. This unit has also enabled students to review different poetic forms and stylistic devices and ultimately write their own poems for a Poetry Slam that will be held in January.



As internal assessment deadlines approach, DP1 and DP2 students continue to work at a brisk pace, analysing the language of political speeches and issues related to language and gender in DP1 and different examples of postcolonial literature in DP2. We have also been lucky enough to be able to watch two Shakespearian plays this term - our own school production of *The Tempest* and an interesting adaptation of Shakespeare's *The Merchant of Venice* by the International School, Hyderabad.

Marie Anne Rismann,

Head of English Department

Grade 7K Rocks the World

Grade 7K English have been reading some extracts from a very good book titled: ***Boys Who Rocked the World***, by Michelle Roehm McCann, Beyond Words Publishing, 2012. There is also a ***Girls Who Rocked the World***, which we are trying to get a copy of. The book tells the stories of some famous people such as; Mark Zuckerberg, Bob Dylan, Albert Einstein and how their childhoods helped to shape the people they became. In 7K English this term we have been studying poetry and literature on the theme of childhood. At the end of each extract from ***Boys Who Rocked the World***, there is a section called; How will **YOU** rock the world, where children from around the globe talk about how they are going to rock the world. The grade 7K class would like to share with you how they are going to rock the world.

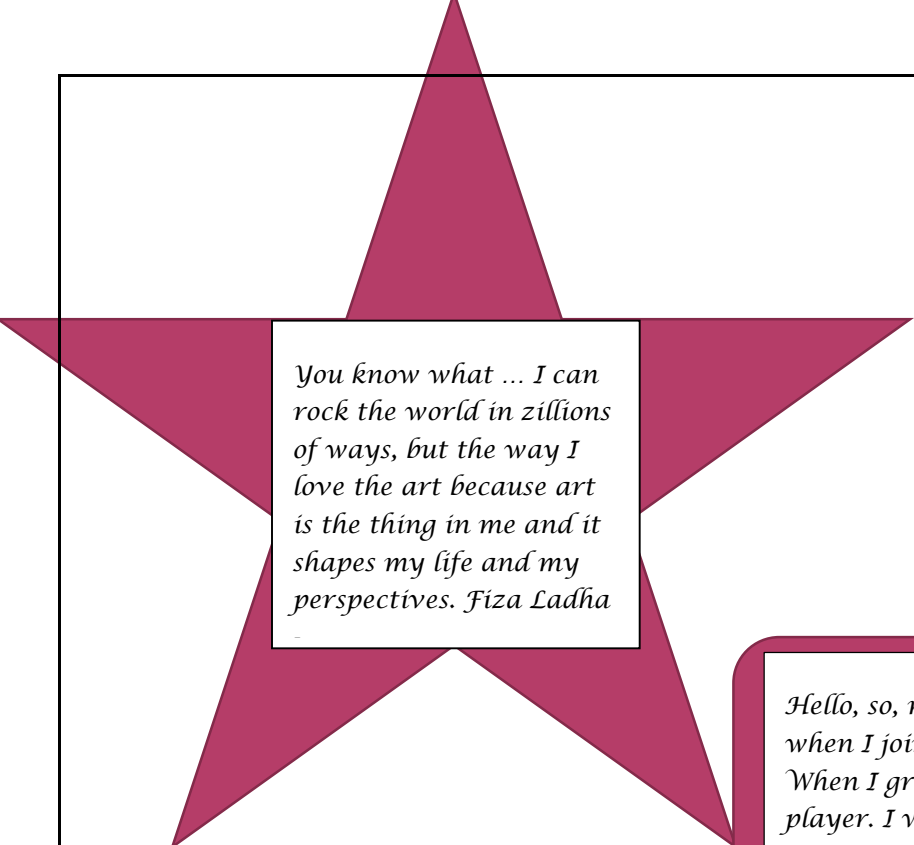
Ms. Wendy Elliott

My dream is to become a singer. I like pop and Hip-Hop music. I go to private lessons and also it is my hobby to sing. I want to sing to the world and express my feelings. I want to show the world that even I can become a singer. - Saipriya Chalike 12

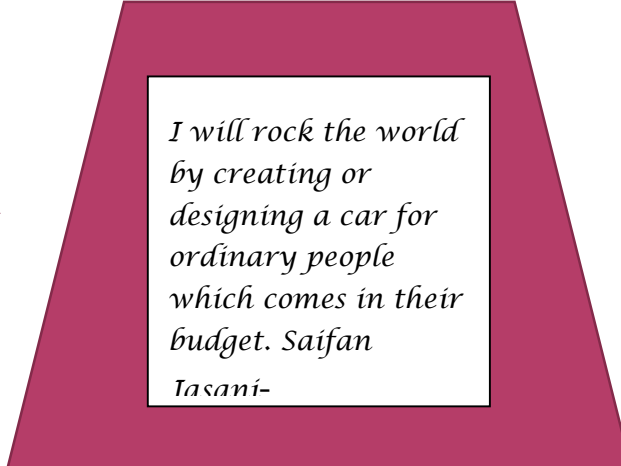
My dream is to design and make a holographic portable device which reminds you and prepares the things you need to do. I will make it available to everyone. I think I will make it when I am 18 or 20 years old and I have started designing the device. -Aman Virani 12

My dream is to do something that nobody has done. I am planning to do something in the field of biology and look for different types of minerals or discover a new element. And for my own passion I will be doing some music. Aarzo0-12

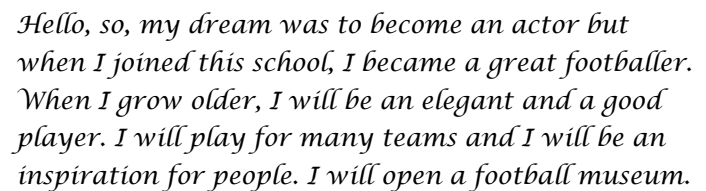




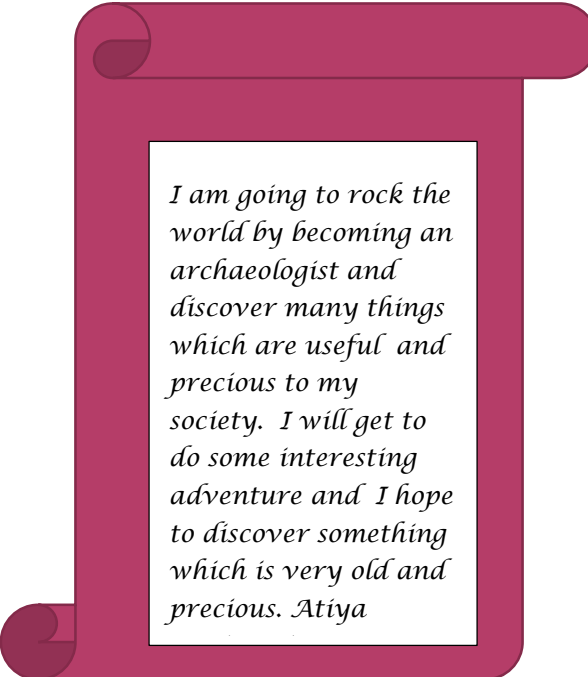
You know what ... I can rock the world in zillions of ways, but the way I love the art because art is the thing in me and it shapes my life and my perspectives. Fiza Ladha



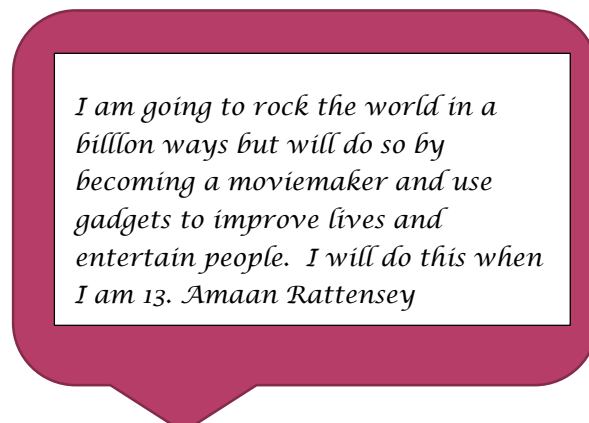
I will rock the world by creating or designing a car for ordinary people which comes in their budget. Saifan Tasani-



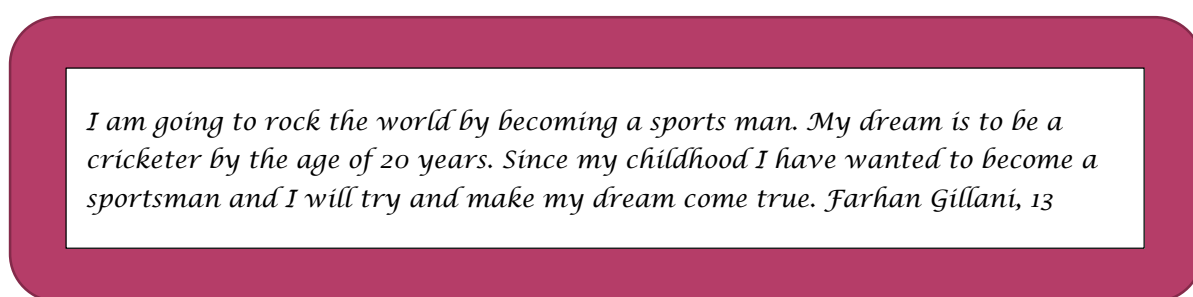
Hello, so, my dream was to become an actor but when I joined this school, I became a great footballer. When I grow older, I will be an elegant and a good player. I will play for many teams and I will be an inspiration for people. I will open a football museum.



I am going to rock the world by becoming an archaeologist and discover many things which are useful and precious to my society. I will get to do some interesting adventure and I hope to discover something which is very old and precious. Atiya



I am going to rock the world in a billion ways but will do so by becoming a moviemaker and use gadgets to improve lives and entertain people. I will do this when I am 13. Amaan Rattensey



I am going to rock the world by becoming a sports man. My dream is to be a cricketer by the age of 20 years. Since my childhood I have wanted to become a sportsman and I will try and make my dream come true. Farhan Gillani, 13



My aim is to become an architect and build the tallest eco - friendly building in the world. I would like to continue my dad's business in architecture (real estate) and change people's attitude towards the environment and how you can be sustainable. Rehaan Khimani,

I want to rock the world with my dance. I am a classical dancer. I want to choreograph a dance and dedicate it to the social problems of the world. Tanva,

I want to rock the world by creating such movies which inspire people and help them shape the future. I would also want to score such goals which increases the rate of football in the world. Vignesh,

I want to rock the world by becoming the CEO of Facebook, and taking it to a whole new level. Things like sending movies or videos in Facebook, and maybe creating a video chat program that can add up to a hundred people. Ayan,

I want to rock the world by being a physicist and a mechanical engineer. I am going to make a thing like a tricycle. And as a physicist I am going to know more about the earth and the planets and also about the past. Ilivan Gowrani,

I would like to rock the world by first getting a degree in the Indian dance known as "Bharatnatyam", where I can then learn to teach other people and earn money and go to SCAD University then I will take photographs using social activism and open campaigns and use my poetry skills. Aashraya Dutt,

I am going to rock the world by being a Scientist and chemist. I like labs and experiments and psychology. Ishan,

I want to rock the world by finding a type of fuel that is ecofriendly, renewable, practical and available to all. This will reduce a lot of global warming problems in the world. Insha Worliwalla

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