



STUDENT GAZETTE

2024 - 25



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PRINCIPAL'S MESSAGE

It gives me great pleasure to introduce this edition of the American Academy Gazette, a celebration of a year marked by growth, creativity, resilience, and achievement. As Principal, I am privileged to witness the transformation of our students, not only as learners, but as compassionate, critical thinkers and emerging leaders.

Education today demands more than academic success. It calls for vision, adaptability, and empathy. This year, we renewed our commitment to nurturing these attributes in our students. Whether through classroom projects, science fairs, debates, athletic events, or acts of service, our students have demonstrated remarkable initiative and character.

One of the highlights this year has been the increased emphasis on innovation and student voice. We've seen learners take ownership of their educational journeys, from proposing new ideas for school initiatives to leading clubs, campaigns, and community outreach. These actions reaffirm what we believe: education is not confined to textbooks and exams — it is about equipping young people with the mindset and courage to shape their world.

This year, we also expanded our cross-curricular learning approach and introduced new opportunities for collaborative learning, which allowed students to apply their knowledge in real-world contexts. This not only deepens understanding but cultivates essential skills such as teamwork, problem-solving, and independent inquiry skills that are critical in our increasingly interconnected global society.

As we prepare our students for life beyond school, we are ever mindful of the values we instill. Integrity, perseverance, empathy, and a lifelong love of learning are at the heart of all we do. Our teachers have played a central role in modelling these values. Their passion for teaching and commitment to every student's progress continues to inspire.

To the graduating class of 2025, this moment marks the end of one chapter and the beginning of many more. You leave us equipped not only with knowledge but with a sense of purpose and belonging. Go forward with confidence, knowing that you carry within you the hopes of a brighter future — not just for yourselves, but for the communities and the world you will serve.

PRINCIPAL'S MESSAGE

As a school, we never stand still. We are constantly evolving, responding to the needs of our students and the world they inhabit. This means integrating new technologies, updating our teaching methods, and creating spaces — both physical and emotional — where every learner feels safe, seen, and supported.

This year has been rich with learning and accomplishment, and I am incredibly grateful to everyone who made it possible: our dedicated faculty, our support staff, our proactive management, and above all, our students who bring energy and purpose to everything they do. I also extend special thanks to the team behind this Gazette for their hard work in capturing and curating the spirit of our school.

I encourage all our students to take time over the summer to recharge, explore, and reflect. Read widely. Ask questions. Try something new. Most importantly, return with a renewed sense of curiosity and purpose. This academic year has flown by, filled with countless activities and memorable moments — far too many to capture fully within the pages of this edition. However, this Gazette offers a glimpse into the energy, enthusiasm, and excellence that define our school community.

In closing, I extend my sincere gratitude to our dedicated teachers, our management team, and the invaluable administrative as well as support staff who work tirelessly behind the scenes. Special thanks again to the editorial team responsible for compiling this publication, as well as the students and staff who contributed their creativity and insights. I trust you will enjoy reading this edition as much as we enjoyed putting it together.

Wishing you and your families a joyful, safe, and restful summer break. I look forward to welcoming you back in September for another inspiring chapter in our shared educational journey.

Jodi Rigas
Principal

HEAD BOY

My journey at the American Academy has been nothing short of transformative. From the first day I walked into the building, I was met with challenges and opportunities that have shaped me into the person I am today. The school has been a place of learning for me; it was also a home, where I discovered my strengths, developed resilience, and grew into a more confident individual. The guidance of my highly-experienced teachers and the support of my peers have made this experience truly unforgettable.

Being appointed Head Boy has been, by far, the greatest honour of my school life. This role has taught me the true essence of genuine leadership - one that is built on responsibility, teamwork and selflessness. Representing the Student Council, working alongside an incredible team, and striving to make a positive impact have been both challenging and rewarding. The experience has reinforced my belief that leadership is not about authority, but about inspiring others, making a difference, and leading by example.

As I look back on my time at AA, I am filled with gratitude. From the academic achievements and accomplishments throughout the past 7 years, to the excellent sports events and training under the coaches who helped me attain my sports goals, this place has been the foundation of all of my successful endeavours. Though my time here is coming to an end, I will be leaving with pride, knowing that I have been a part of something truly special, and knowing, too, that I have left a mark on this establishment's rich history.



NEOFYTOS THEODOROU

HEAD GIRL

The moment I first stepped through the gates of the American Academy school, I was just a quiet student with big dreams and a heart full of curiosity. I never imagined just how transformative this journey would be. Over the years, the Academy school-rooms became more than just classrooms - they became a space where I found my voice, discovered my passions, and slowly grew into someone I'm proud to be.

The most life-changing moment came when I was entrusted with the role of Head Girl. That single moment marked a turning point in my life - it gave me purpose and filled me with pride; it also gave me the confidence to lead with compassion and integrity. It taught me that leadership isn't about perfection, but about showing up for others, being present, and inspiring others through action. It was a privilege I will always hold close to my heart.

Another defining experience was the opportunity to attend a summer school in Newcastle, where my love for science was truly awakened. Surrounded by passionate learners and inspiring mentors, I felt more connected to my dreams than ever before. That passion led me towards another unforgettable milestone: securing an internship in London. There, I had the chance to apply everything I had learned in school into real-world challenges. From classroom-learned theories to hands-on problem solving, I realised just how well my school had prepared me, providing me with more than knowledge, but with critical thinking skills, confidence, and a strong work ethic as well.

None of this would have been possible without the unwavering support and dedication of my teachers and every member of staff. Thank you for believing in me, guiding me, and helping me become the person I am today. This journey has been filled with the experience of growth, lessons, laughter, and love. I am leaving with a heart full of gratitude, and memories - ones I will cherish forever.



YULIA
GEORGIOU

STUDENT ACCOMPLISHMENTS



IMMERSE EDUCATION ESSAY COMPETITION

We are very proud of, and wish to congratulate our students

Michael Aleinikov, Eleni Sgouridis and Despina Asimakopoulou

on their outstanding achievement in the **2024 Immerse Education Essay Competition**. Their dedication, critical thinking skills and hard work have earned them well-deserved recognition.

Taking on the challenge of this prestigious essay competition, our students have demonstrated excellence and a passion for learning.



JU-JITSU CHAMPIONSHIP MEDALS | Congratulations to our secondary school students who competed in the **Cyprus Ju-Jitsu Championship**. **Dauids Avtuhovs** won a gold medal, **Dmitry Davydov** a bronze medal in the U14 category, and **Fedor Medvedev** a gold medal in the U16 category. We are very proud of you, boys.

STUDENT ACCOMPLISHMENTS



2024 ROWING AWARD

Our warm congratulations to AA student **Tristan Michaelides**, this year's **Best Teenage Athlete in Cyprus in rowing**. Tristan attended the awards ceremony on February 3, during which the Cyprus Olympic Committee presented the award. Our school is very proud of him and we wish him much success in the future.

Tristan also won the title of **Best Junior Male Rower** for the 2024 season.

Our staff member, Ms. **Anthoulla Nestoros**, Tristan's coach, accepted the award of **National Championship Rowing Team for 2024 season**.



On to **Ciera Fryett**'s two-week internship in Germany, at the **European Space Agency**. Ciera had a fabulous experience: she spent two weeks working alongside aerospace engineers and programmers, sending commands to satellites and learning how to build and program models of her own. Overall, the ESA experience familiarised her with the challenges and work opportunities within the space industry. Our school is proud of her and we congratulate her on her accomplishment.

STUDENT ACCOMPLISHMENTS



FASTEST ATHLETE

We are proud of **Tristan Michaelides**, the **Fastest U19 Athlete in Cyprus**.



WDSF DANCE AWARD

Congratulations to our class 2 students **Vasilisa Romanyuk**, **Daria Lopatin** and **Polina Markelova** on their achievement in the **2024 WDSF World Championships** held in Serbia. Their group secured 3rd place in the dance competition. We are very proud of them.

STUDENT ACCOMPLISHMENTS



We were delighted to witness our brilliant students receive **gold, silver and bronze awards** during the **Kangourou Competition** awards ceremony held on 9th May.

Your hard work, dedication, and love for learning truly shone through. Warm congratulations to all our winners — you've made us very proud!



STUDENT ACCOMPLISHMENTS



Artemios Kyriakou ranked 1st in Cyprus; he also made the top 7 percentile in the **International Youth Mathematics Challenge**. The competition had thousands of international entrants and consisted of 2 rounds of testing to make it to the finals. We are very proud of you, Artemios! Well done!

World Rowing Championships | Over the 22-23 February weekend, after an intense series of races, including a continental knockout round and a high-stakes semi-final, **Tristan Michaelides** came 2nd place in the World Rowing Indoor Championships in a U17 2000m singles event.

Tristan secured a silver medal. He also set a **new personal best of 6:21.9** which ranks him 36th in the world in the Open Men's Category, an outstanding feat for a U17 athlete. Only two other U17 rowers made it into the global top 50.

Just minutes after claiming his silver, Tristan joined his team-mates to compete in the U17 Sprint Relay. They won bronze, clocking an incredible 5:47.3, and missing silver by less than 2 seconds! We are very proud of Tristan and his team. Their dedication, discipline, and drive are truly inspirational.



EVENTS



Our highly-anticipated **House Event** and **Sports Day** took place in the spirit of fair competition and noble sportsmanship.

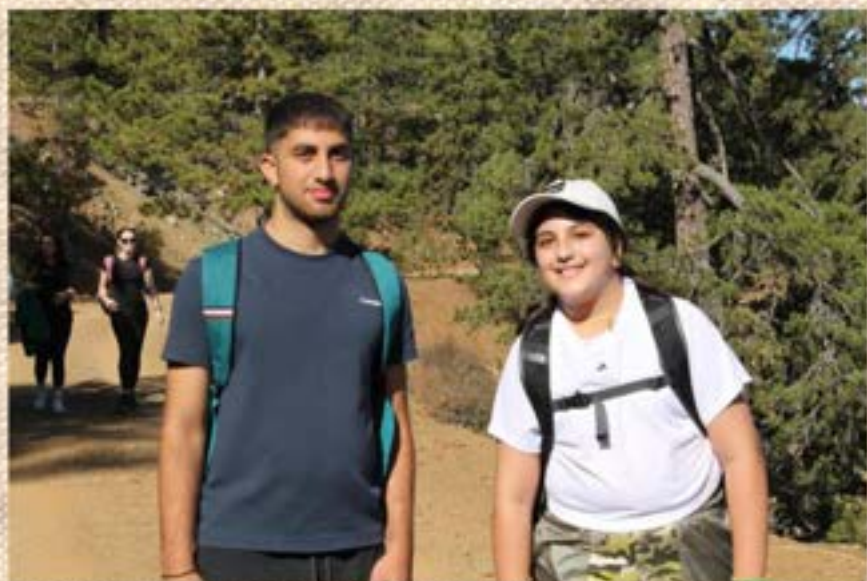
Our Sports Day events always bring excitement and energy to the school community. All students participated enthusiastically, showcasing their athletic skills, discipline and determination.

SPORTS EVENTS

Our Sports Day emphasises the values of teamwork and perseverance, making it a memorable and valuable experience for everyone involved.



EVENTS



One-day Troodos hike: a walk to remember | Our students enjoyed a full-day walk in the Troodos mountains. The hike not only gave them a chance to explore the outdoors but also strengthened their bonds with classmates and teachers. It was an unforgettable experience that left them feeling refreshed and inspired.



MOUNTAIN HIKE

EVENTS



OXI DAY

OXI Day parade | The event fostered a sense of belonging and love for the country, and encouraged students to reflect on their roles as responsible citizens.

PASYKAF

PASYKAF charity | It was heartwarming to see the generosity of everyone involved, and the collection exceeded our expectations. This event not only helped those in need but also taught us the importance of compassion, community service, and working together for a good cause.



EVENTS



We extend our heartfelt appreciation to all our students who took part in the **March 25th parade**.

You represented your school with pride and enthusiasm, and we are proud of you. Well done!



EVENTS

HALLOWEEN PARTY | spooky atmosphere and fright-ful fun

Our Halloween party was a fun and spooky event that everyone looked forward to. Laughter and music filled the air, making it a memorable celebration for all.



EVENTS



Our school organized a money collection drive to support a local charity, and to teach students about the importance of community service. Our charity drive brought in **a donation of 2000 Euro** to the **"One Dream, One Wish"** foundation.

This initiative not only raised a significant amount of money but also encouraged a spirit of generosity and teamwork among everyone involved.

Appreciation to all our students who contributed, and to those who actively participated in organising the event.

‘HOPE STARTS WITH A WISH’ CHARITY EVENT

EVENTS



Our frequent **bake sales** in the yard: always something to look forward to.

Celebrating the last day of school before Christmas: games, mouth-watering treats and exciting prize give-aways. The day was filled with fun, laughter and entertainment for everyone.



A huge thank-you to members of staff and all students who joined forces to make this day unforgettable. Your efforts truly brought the holiday spirit to life and set the tone for a joyful season ahead.



EVENTS

Festive spirit at AA

Congratulations to our students and the staff, and the Arts Department in particular, on organising our **Christmas Fair**.

Christmas Fair | The event featured some excellent singing and performance, delightful nibbles and treats, creative arts and crafts, and fun games.



EVENTS



Festive spirit | At Christmas, we tend to focus on acts of kindness and generosity. Our secondary school **students visited Iera Mitropolis Lemesou to deliver food and clothes to those in need.** They also spent time at local care homes for the elderly singing carols, sharing love, and bringing holiday spirit and sweets to brighten their Christmas.

Much appreciation to both students and teachers who participated, and our thanks for their contribution.



TRIPS



Our **mid-term break trip to Athens, Greece**, was an unforgettable adventure visiting stunning sights and, overall, an amazing experience. Our students explored the ancient heart of Athens, the Parthenon and the Acropolis Museum, the Syntagma Square, the University of Athens and Monastiraki. Visiting the Temple of Zeus and the first Olympic Stadium took students back in time to the ancient origins of the games. Their journey continued to Nafplio, the iconic Isthmus of Corinth, and the Epidaurus. The trip was a perfect blend of culture, history, and enjoyment.

The **trip to Milan** was an enjoyable experience. Our students visited Arco della Pace, Parco Sempione, the Duomo di Milano, the Novocento Museum and the Terrazzo. They also went to the Teatro alla Scala. They travelled on to Lake Como.



TRIPS



During our **March mid-semester break**, 43 of our secondary school students from classes 1 to 5 enjoyed a **three-day trip to Troodos**. The trip offered them a refreshing change of scenery, and outdoor activities. It was also a time for bonding, as they played games, and shared meals. The trip helped strengthen friendships and rest before returning to their studies with renewed energy and focus.

Tsiknopempti took classes 6 and 7 back to the Troodos mountains.



JUBILEE HOTEL

TRIPS



Our students and their teachers had a great time during **a trip to the village of Lefkara** organised for classes 3 and 4. Despite unseasonably cold weather, everyone warmed up in cosy village cafés, visited local shops, and enjoyed the scenery.



TSIKNOPEMPTI

DEBRECEN UNIVERSITY VISIT



University of Debrecen visit | Our grateful thanks to the team at the University of Debrecen, Hungary, for their hospitality. **Köszönöm Debrecen! Thank you, Debrecen!**

Our students were hosted by the Engineering, Computer Science, and Dentistry Departments. The university is renowned for their medical programme. It is also home to a teaching hospital, one of the largest and most modern healthcare facilities in Hungary, boasting state-of-the-art facilities and high-tech diagnostic equipment.

DEBRECEN HUNGARY

SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY PROGRAMME



Class 1C students took part in a **pilot session of our upcoming Social Responsibility Programme**, conducted in collaboration with the Brollywood Film Academy.

Our thanks to Dr Elena and Ms Kateryna, who conducted a presentation on two urgent challenges facing young people. Their presentation aimed at raising awareness as regards exposure to harmful online content as well as the dangers of vaping and the risks of addiction.

A series of further thought-provoking educational sessions are scheduled to follow.

Promoting social responsibility fosters a culture of respect and accountability, which benefits not only the students themselves but also the wider school community and society at large.



PHYSICAL EDUCATION



Our U14 **boys' basketball team** participated in the **local league**, playing two games. The boys scored one win and one loss, but the overall experience gained was truly inestimable.



Our secondary school **girls' basketball team** played against the **Katholiki High School**. They won 43-30, and qualified for the Limassol district semi-finals.

Congratulations to our students and to our PE coaches



Meanwhile, our U18 **football team** played against the **B Technical School** and won 2-1.

Well done, everyone!





Our **senior boys' basketball team** played against **B Technical School** senior team. Our boys won.

Our **junior boys' basketball team** played against **Foley's**. It was a close game, but we didn't win.

Well done, teams!

Physical education and competition play crucial roles in the holistic development of our students. Their importance extends beyond just physical fitness, encompassing their mental, emotional, and social growth as well.



SCIENCE



Class 7 science workshops

Class 7 students took an educational trip to Nicosia, and visited **CING (the Cyprus Institute of Neurology and Genetics)**.



OUR ECO - GARDEN



"Participating in our eco-garden project was an amazing experience. Planting greenery together with our teachers and other students on a warm, sunny day lit my sparkle for biology."

Sonia Devi 3B



- Our students launched an **eco-garden project** aimed at promoting sustainability and environmental awareness. Working together, they transformed an unused plot of land into a thriving garden. The project not only provided hands-on learning about ecology and organic farming but also fostered teamwork and responsibility.



ERASMUS VISIT

OUR GUESTS FROM ROMANIA



Our school had the pleasure of welcoming a group of students from Romania as part of the **Erasmus exchange program**. The visiting students participated in various activities designed to promote mutual understanding and friendship. They toured the school, attended a few classes to experience our education system, and shared stories about their culture, traditions, and daily lives. The visit created a vibrant atmosphere of connection.

"We met new friends from Romania. They gave us wonderful gifts. We spent time talking; they were interested in our eco-garden project."

Sonia Devi 3B

ADVENTURES IN SCIENCE



Immersed in science | Science club activities
...and a heart dissection experiment

Our science club is a community where students come together to explore their curiosity and passion for science. Through hands-on experiments and group projects, members gain a deeper understanding of scientific concepts beyond the classroom.



LANGUAGES

English is spoken around the world, making it **an essential tool for communication, travel, and career opportunities.** Meanwhile, French is not only the language of love and literature but also an official language in over 25 countries! Learning languages gives students a competitive edge in the future, whether they want to study abroad, work in international business, or simply enjoy traveling without language barriers.

Of course, mastering a language takes time, but every new word is a step towards success. So, whether you're practising English, French, or another language, keep going!

Languages are not just words; they're your passport to new worlds.

KLEA FRIXOU

Assistant Head of Languages Dept.



YOUR PASSPORT TO THE WORLD

LANGUAGES

Promoting the French language, cultural and linguistic diversity.

Supporting education and research.

Developing economic cooperation to ensure sustainable development.



LA FRANCOPHONIE

égalité, complémentarité, solidarité
equality, complementarity, solidarity

LANGUAGES



On 6th December, **The Royal Commonwealth Society** (Cyprus branch) honoured our **32 students who achieved gold, silver and bronze medals in the Queen's Commonwealth Essay Competition**. The awards ceremony took place at the University of Nicosia. Our students were congratulated by prominent academics and His Excellency, the British High Commissioner of Cyprus.

The essay competition received over 40000 entries in 2024, internationally. Our students' performance was truly outstanding. We are proud of their achievement.

The school hosted our annual **Book Fair**, an event that celebrated the joy of reading and brought the whole school community together.

BOOK FAIR





BOOK RECOMMENDATIONS

**2 books every student should read
to improve their study skills
(and one as an antidote to chaos)**

recommended by B. Anastassiades

There is no one single book that could change the way you learn and guarantee academic success. As a student, building strong study skills is, arguably, the best investment you can make in your education and, ultimately, in your future. Choosing the right books to read can help change how you manage time, retain information, and stay motivated.

These quotes - from short sayings to longer messages - extracted from the three recommended books can help get you motivated to tackle anything life throws at you.

Make It Stick: The Science of Successful Learning by Peter C. Brown, Henry L. Roediger and Mark A. McDaniel

"Learning is deeper and more durable when it's effortful. Learning that's easy is like writing in sand, here today and gone tomorrow."

"A group of fifth grade students are individually given a puzzle to solve. Some of the students who solve the puzzle are praised for being smart; other students who solve it are praised for having worked hard. The students are then invited to choose another puzzle: either one of similar difficulty or one that's harder but that they would learn from by making the effort to try solving. A majority of the students who are praised for their smarts pick the easier puzzle; 90 percent of the kids praised for effort pick the harder one."

"I've not failed. I've just found 10,000 ways that don't work."

"There are known knowns; there are things we know that we know. There are known unknowns; that is to say, there are things that we now know we don't know. But there are also unknown unknowns—there are things we do not know we don't know."

"We make the effort because the effort itself extends the boundaries of our abilities. What we do shapes who we become and what we're capable of doing. The more we do, the more we can do."

Deep Work: Rules for Focused Success in a Distracted World by Cal Newport

"Clarity about what matters provides clarity about what does not."

"Who you are, what you think, feel, and do, what you love - is the sum of what you focus on."

"What we choose to focus on and what we choose to ignore - plays a role in defining the quality of our life."

"To produce at your peak level you need to work for extended periods with full concentration on a single task free from distraction. Put another way, the type of work that optimizes your performance is deep work."

"When you work, work hard. When you're done, be done."

"To learn hard things quickly, you must focus intensely without distraction. To learn, in other words, is an act of deep work."

"Spend enough time in a state of frenetic shallowness and you permanently reduce your capacity to perform deep work."

12 Rules for Life: An Antidote to Chaos by Jordan B. Peterson

"Compare yourself to who you were yesterday, not to who someone else is today."

"Always place your becoming above your current being."

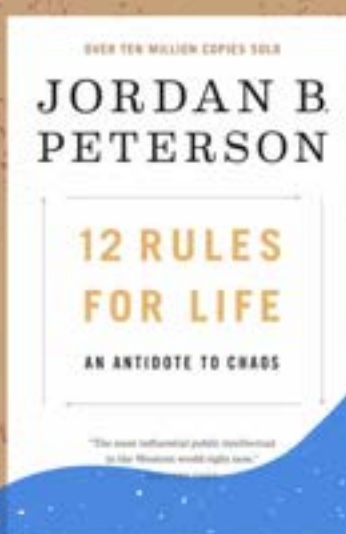
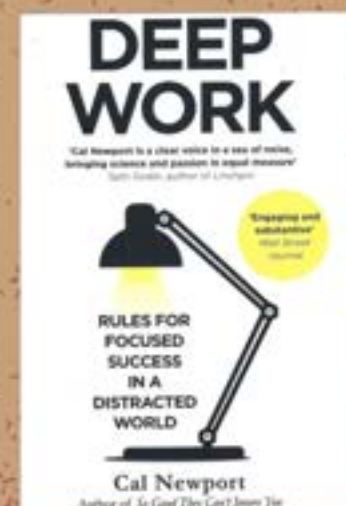
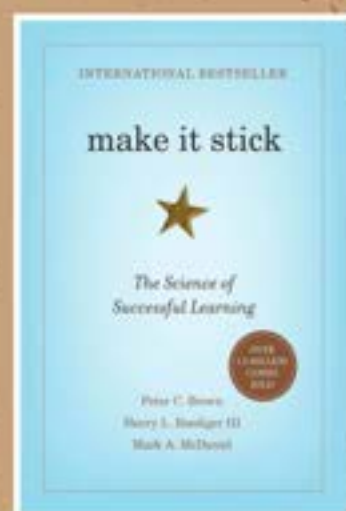
"Stop saying those things that make you weak and ashamed. Say only those things that make you strong. Do only those things that you could speak of with honour."

"It is my firm belief that the best way to fix the world ...is to fix yourself."

"You are by no means only what you already know. You are also all that which you could know, if you only would. Thus, you should never sacrifice what you could be for what you are. You should never give up the better that resides within for the security you already have - and certainly not when you have already caught a glimpse, an undeniable glimpse, of something beyond."

"In my kingdom," as the Red Queen tells Alice in Wonderland, "you have to run as fast as you can just to stay in the same place." No one standing still can triumph, no matter how well constituted."

"You must determine where you have been in your life, so that you can know where you are now. If you don't know where you are, precisely, then you could be anywhere. Anywhere is too many places to be, and some of those places are very bad. You must determine where you have been in your life, because otherwise you can't get to where you're going. You can't get from point A to point B unless you are already at point A, and if you're just "anywhere" the chances you are at point A are very small indeed. You must determine where you are going in your life, because you cannot get there unless you move in that direction. Random wandering will not move you forward. It will instead disappoint and frustrate you and make you anxious and unhappy and hard to get along with (and then resentful, and then vengeful, and then worse). Say what you mean, so that you can find out what you mean. Act out what you say, so you can find out what happens. Then pay attention. Note your errors. Articulate them. Strive to correct them. That is how you discover the meaning of your life. That will protect you from the tragedy of your life. How could it be otherwise? Confront the chaos of Being. Take aim against a sea of troubles. Specify your destination, and chart your course. Admit to what you want. Tell those around you who you are."



LANGUAGES



28th October Greek National Holiday | Celebrating this day helps us appreciate history and understand the sacrifices made for the country's independence. It is a time to be inspired to build a better future with courage and hope. Our appreciation to all participants for their behind-the-scenes hard work, and congratulations on an outstanding performance.



LANGUAGES



Maria Vaisero class 3

Cyprus National Day celebration | The Independence Day of Cyprus celebrates the independence of Cyprus from British rule in 1960.

To commemorate 1st April, Cyprus National Day, we have decided to consider the importance of independence, peace and freedom by creating posters.

THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE

MASLENITSA

How Maslenitsa is celebrated?

It is thought that the name Maslenitsa comes from the fact that, according to Russian Orthodox tradition, meat is already off-limits. Since the week, but dairy is not. Maslenitsa is well-known for its seven days of festivities and that dose of gluttony, as it's the last week that Orthodox Russians can eat dairy before Lent. Naturally, each day of the festival involves pancakes, butter and many delicious toppings, as Russians celebrate the arrival of spring with an abundance of food, drinks, skating and snow ball fights.



Russian Orthodox tradition says that the passing of winter. The house is "purified" by the traditional "burning of the straw" for the start of the spring. The festival is celebrated for seven days, ending on the last day of the week. The festival is celebrated for seven days, ending on the last day of the week. The festival is celebrated for seven days, ending on the last day of the week.

Russian Orthodox tradition says that the passing of winter. The house is "purified" by the traditional "burning of the straw" for the start of the spring. The festival is celebrated for seven days, ending on the last day of the week. The festival is celebrated for seven days, ending on the last day of the week.

But people enjoy the festival. The festival is celebrated for seven days, ending on the last day of the week. The festival is celebrated for seven days, ending on the last day of the week. The festival is celebrated for seven days, ending on the last day of the week.

Today, it is the last day of feasting. The festival is celebrated for seven days, ending on the last day of the week. The festival is celebrated for seven days, ending on the last day of the week. The festival is celebrated for seven days, ending on the last day of the week.

Students' work

Ms. Phoebe Keriniotou's students' class projects:

Class 2 students

Yiqiao Sun (Joye), Daria Rybka, Uliana Volkova and Alina Babaeva have produced excellent posters illustrating their countries' traditions and celebrations.

Dragon Boat Festival

Dragon Boat Festival

The Dragon Boat Festival, also known as Duanwu Festival, is a traditional Chinese holiday celebrated on the 5th day of the 5th month of the lunar calendar. It honors the memory of Qu Yuan, a patriotic poet from the Warring States period who drowned himself in protest against corruption. To prevent

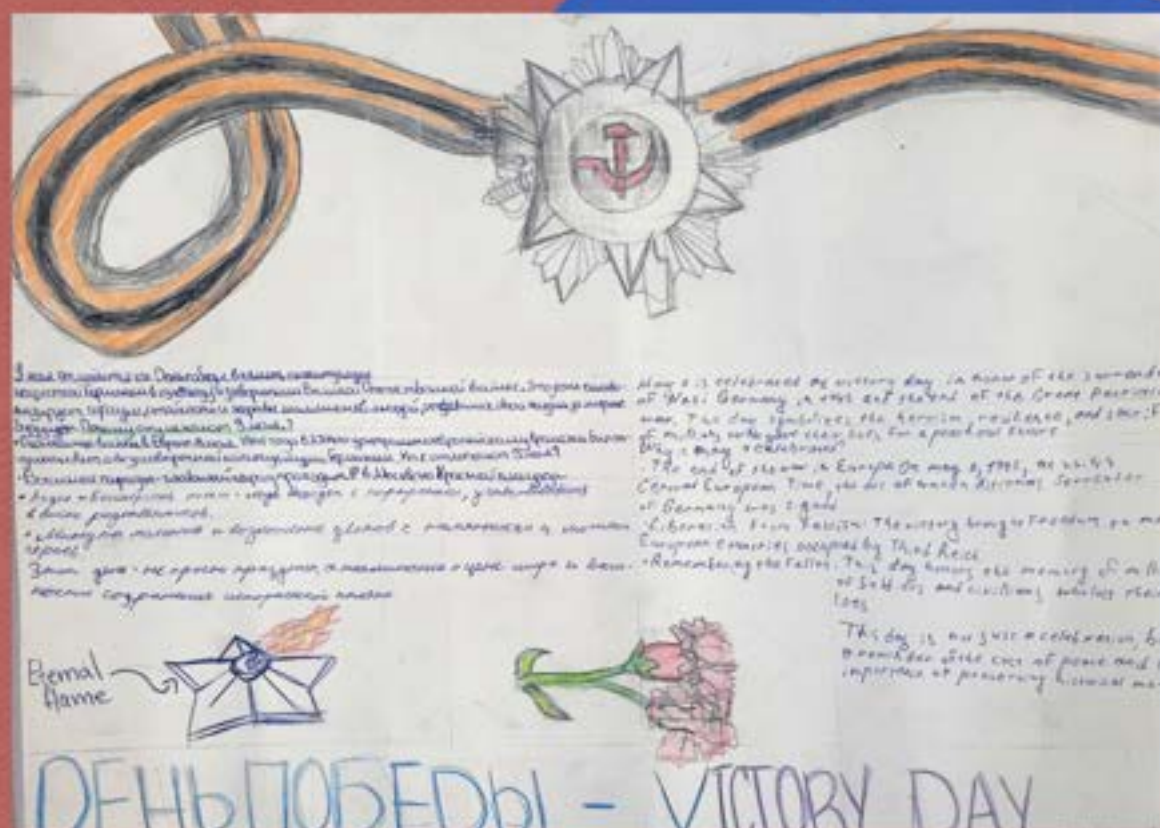
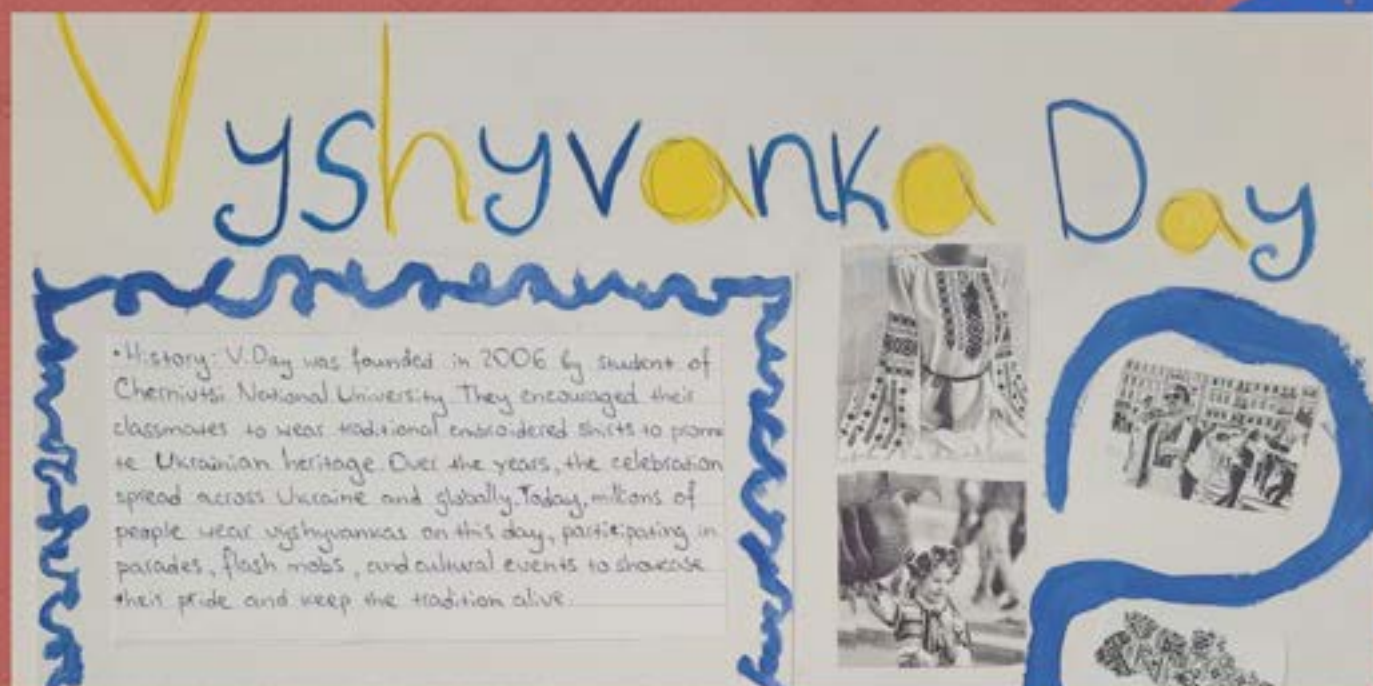
fish from eating his body, people threw rice dumplings into the river, a practice that evolved into today's zongzi.

Key Traditions:

1. Dragon Boat Races: Teams row elaborately decorated boats to the rhythm of drums, symbolizing the rescue attempt for Qu Yuan.
2. Eating Zongzi: Pyramid-shaped dumplings filled with glutinous rice, meats, or sweet beans.
3. Wearing Perfumed Sachets: Small pouches filled with aromatic herbs are worn for protection and good luck.

joye
2.0

THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE STUDENTS' PROJECTS: NATIONAL CELEBRATIONS



BUSINESS MATTERS



UCLAN Escape win | Our students have proven their excellence by winning the **Business Escape Challenge** competition held at the UCLAN University.

A special shoutout to Team 1 for securing 1st place, earning a €250 prize and a scholarship!

A warm thank-you to all our students for their hard work and for setting a great example. Congratulations on this remarkable achievement! Your hard work, dedication, and teamwork have truly paid off.

We are proud of you!



UCLAN ESCAPE CHALLENGE

BUSINESS & ICT



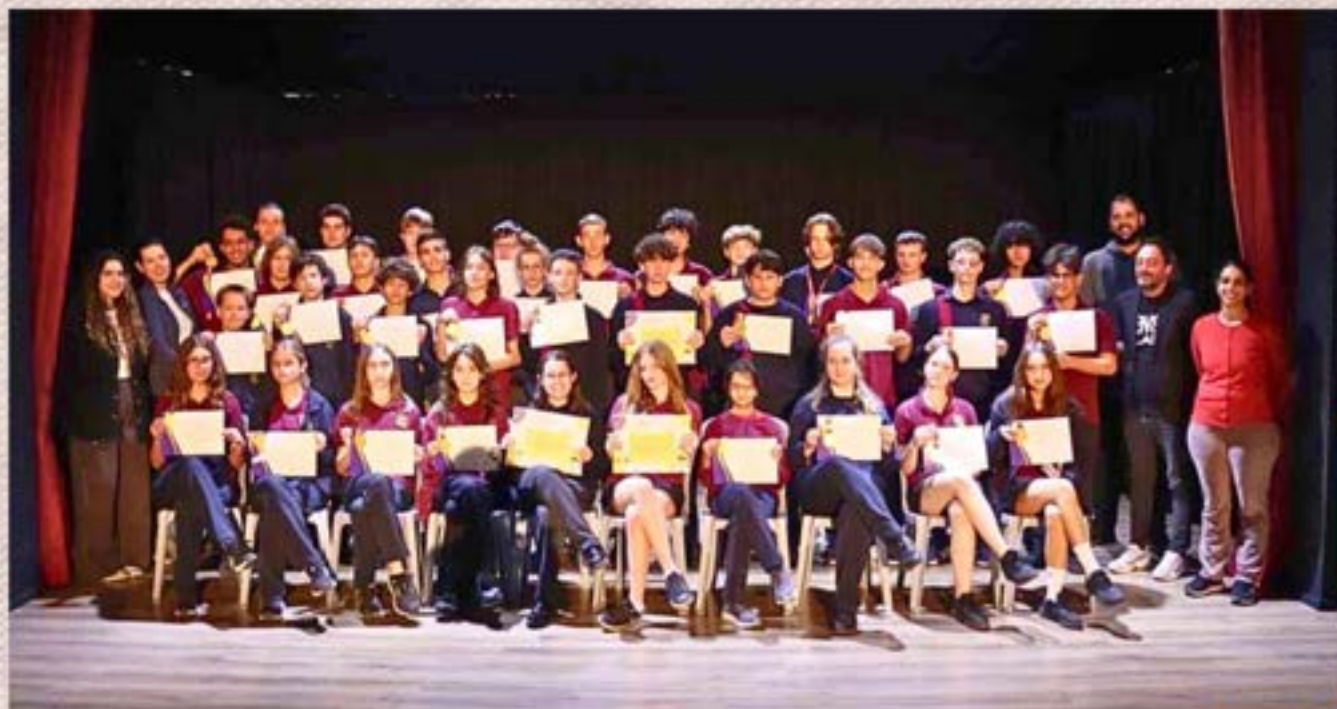
The **2024 Outstanding Pearson Learner Awards Ceremony 2024** took place in Nicosia. The Outstanding Learner Awards are awards that recognise top-performing international students worldwide who achieved the highest mark for all levels of Pearson exams.

Polina Prispeshkina was recognised for achieving the Highest Mark in Cyprus in International GCSE Business and **Vladimir Bazhenov** for the Highest Mark in Cyprus in International GCSE Information and Communication Technology.

We are very proud of you both, and congratulate you on your outstanding academic achievement.

HIGH ACHIEVERS AWARDS

MATHS

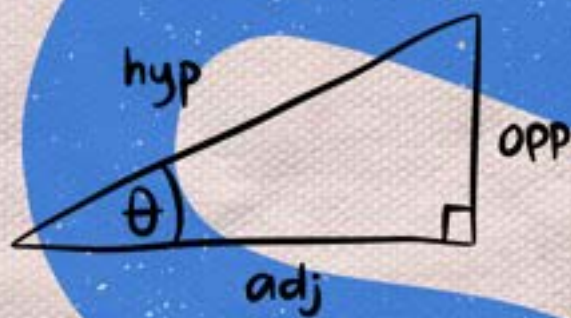


STUDENTS' ACHIEVEMENTS

In November 2024, 165 of our secondary school students took part in the **International Mathematics Challenge**, alongside thousands of participants from around the world.

Our students got **44 silver medals** (85-95 percentile), taking **the title of ELITIST**, and **6 gold medals** (95-100 percentile).

$$X = \frac{-b \pm \sqrt{b^2 - 4ac}}{2a}$$



$$\sin(\theta) = \frac{\text{opp}}{\text{hyp}}$$

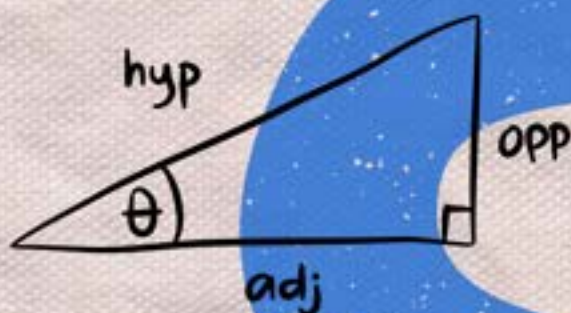
INTERNATIONAL MATHS CHALLENGE

MATHS

$$x = \frac{-b \pm \sqrt{b^2 - 4ac}}{2a}$$



Our students were hosted by the **School of Mathematics, Statistics and Physics at the Newcastle University**. They were given a tour of the university and participated in a number of tester sessions, followed by talks from academic staff. It was an outstanding educational experience.



$$\sin(\theta) = \frac{\text{opp}}{\text{hyp}}$$



HISTORY

The exhibition of student projects from history lessons showcased a diverse array of work that reflected both creativity and understanding of historical events. Students presented three-dimensional models and posters covering topics such as ancient civilizations and world wars. Each project demonstrated careful research and a personal connection to the subject matter. Visitors to the exhibition were impressed by the students' ability to bring the past to life through visual storytelling, making history not just a subject of study but a vivid and meaningful experience.



HISTORY

— CLASS 1 - FIRST PLACE —

Marie Hadjineofytou



— CLASS 1 - SECOND PLACE —

Liudmila Chernova



— CLASS 1 - THIRD PLACE —

Angeliki Frangou



"Every year we hold a Lower School **History Competition for classes 1-3**. This year, as each year, the winning projects were voted for by the students from classes 1-3, and many of our teachers."

A huge well-done to those who won. I would also like to thank all the students who took part and worked hard to make amazing projects."

Mr Andrew Beer, History teacher

HISTORY

CLASS 2 - FIRST
PLACE

Sofia Okonskaia



CLASS 2 - SECOND
PLACE

Ryan Gorji Pour



CLASS 2 - THIRD
PLACE

Bjorn Moberg



HISTORY

CLASS 3 - FIRST
PLACE

Solomíia Chychyrkina



CLASS 3 - SECOND
PLACE

Níkolás Sakkou



CLASS 3 - THIRD
PLACE

Leonídas Koullas



ARTS

PEACE POSTER COMPETITION

Peace-themed competition

For over 30 years, Lions Clubs around the world have been sponsoring a very special art contest for schools, asking participants to create **peace-themed posters**, and giving children globally the chance to express their vision of peace as well as inspire them through art and the practice of creativity.

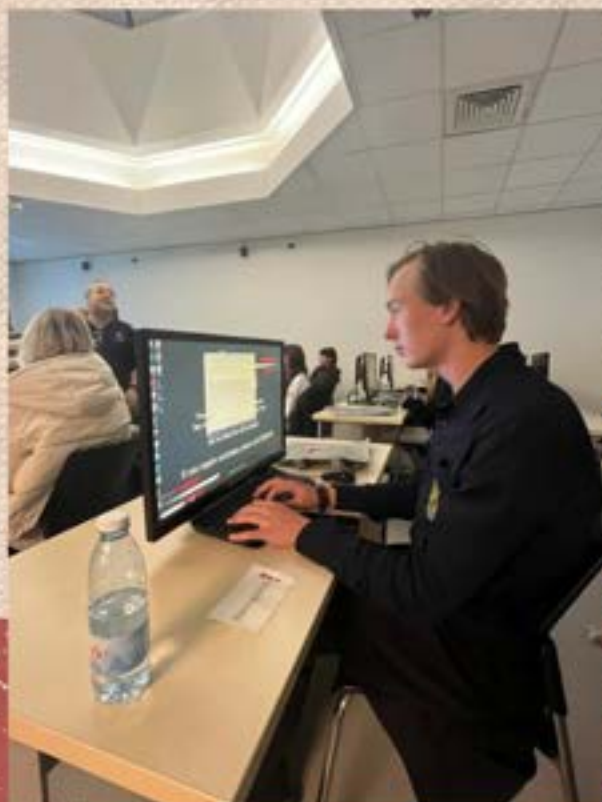
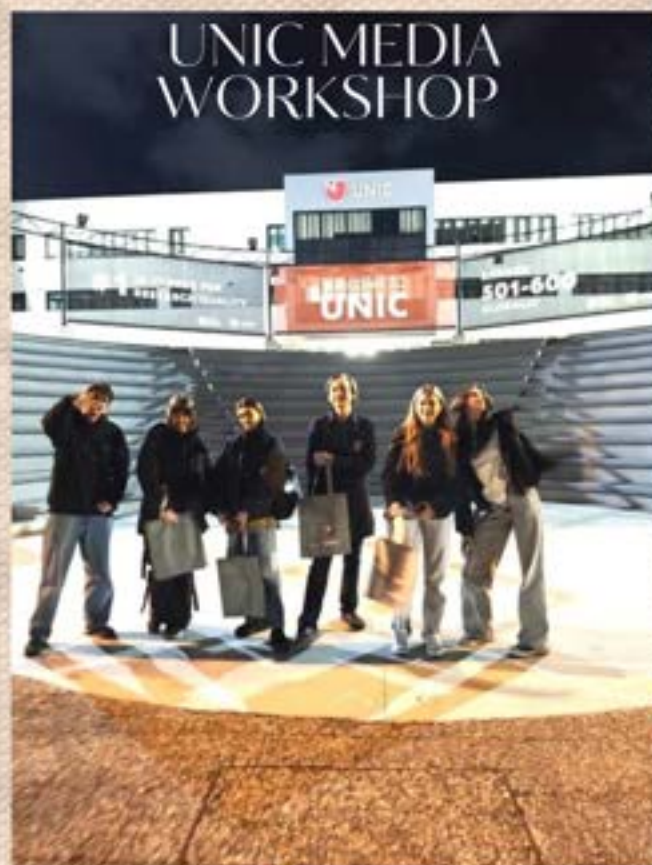
Congratulations to our talented secondary school students: **Maritina Leonidou** (3A) was awarded 1st place, **Rushda Anjum** (2A) 2nd place, and **Gavriel Panaoulas** (3A) 3rd place.



ARTS

UNIC media workshop | Our students from classes 6 and 7 took part in a **University of Nicosia podcast workshop**. It was an opportunity to experience the kind of work that takes place behind the scenes in creating professional video podcasts.

The UNIC workshop was a chance for them to bring their stories to life. This unique hands-on creative work experience has further enriched their learning journey.



ART CLASSES

Our school art classes play a vital role in fostering creativity and self-expression among students. These classes provide a space where they can explore various artistic techniques, such as drawing, painting, sculpting, and digital design. Through art, our students develop an appreciation for different cultures and perspectives. Art classes also encourage individuality and self-expression, helping students build confidence and a sense of accomplishment. Art classes enrich students' overall academic experience and support their personal development.

Art-in-the-making | class 2 Venetian mask making and class 7 A-level 3D design.



ARTS



Producing **cyanotypes** and other creative experiments in-the-making



PHOTOGRAPHY CLASSES

DRAMA CLASSES



Drama classes offer our students a creative and engaging way to develop confidence, communication skills, and teamwork. They also provide a break from more academic subjects, allowing students to explore their imagination and gain a deeper understanding of literature..

(left and below) The gold, silver and lead caskets for Bassanio to choose from, in Shakespeare's *The Merchant of Venice*:

"All that glitters is not gold."

(tips on understanding and acting Shakespeare from our Drama teacher, **Ms. Polly Chrysochou**)



CAREERS CORNER

In the realm of education, the greatest challenge often isn't the complexity of the subject matter, but rather, the approach to learning itself. Over two decades of being immersed in the academia, both as a lecturer and as the Head of the International Office, has enlightened me into a profound realisation: students frequently struggle not due to their lack of intellectual capacity but rather, a deficiency in study skills. The art of effective learning, it seems, is a skill seldom explicitly taught.

As an ardent advocate for **transformative education**, I've undertaken a personal crusade to revolutionise the learning landscape. My mission? To equip students with the tools to learn smarter, not harder.

My aim is to instill in the younger generation a fervent enthusiasm for education. To illuminate the path towards personal growth, character refinement, and self-actualization through continuous learning. Education isn't merely about acquiring knowledge; it's about sculpting a better version of oneself.

In my capacity as an Educational Mentor and Career Coach, I've delved deep into the labyrinthine corridors of the mind, unraveling the mysteries of memory retention and cognitive optimisation. Guiding students through the maze of career choices, I endeavour to illuminate the path towards self-discovery and fulfillment.

Unlocking the power of learning

CAREERS CORNER

Indeed, the decision concerning one's future vocation is a watershed moment, one that reverberates across every facet of life. It's a decision that warrants meticulous deliberation from the outset. I am offering my seasoned guidance and I am confident in steering students towards a future brimming with promise and purpose.

Effective studying isn't merely about logging hours with a textbook; it's about mastering the art of learning itself. Through a curated curriculum of seminars and workshops, students are empowered to:

- cultivate a positive attitude towards education and goal-setting
- harness the power of self-confidence and self-awareness
- cultivate discipline and mitigate distractions
- embrace diverse learning styles
- strategise study-time effectively, focusing on quality over quantity
- prepare adeptly for examinations and academic challenges

At American Academy Private School, we have forged a partnership dedicated to nurturing academic excellence. Through state-of-the-art career guidance assessments, we endeavour to unveil the latent potential within each student, charting a course towards professional fulfillment.

Our commitment extends beyond the confines of the classroom. Through internships and mentorship programs, we provide students with real-world insights and experiential learning opportunities, catalysing their metamorphosis into industry leaders of tomorrow.



CAREERS CORNER

I am proud to spotlight the following remarkable achievements of our students, whose dedication and diligence have borne fruit in the form of prestigious academic pursuits and coveted internship placements.

Yulia Georgiou has secured an internship at Autolus Therapeutics in London, a leading biopharmaceutical company.

Alexa Prokhorova has embarked on an internship journey with AVVA Pharmaceuticals, specialising in genetics.

Victoria Despina Antoniou and **Despina Isabella Asimakopoulou** have been selected for internship positions at Deloitte, a global leader in consulting and advisory services.

Sanad Thalji has secured an internship opportunity at Marine Care, contributing to environmental conservation efforts.

Myria Koulla has secured a dentistry-related position at Kalia Theodorou, specialising in periodontics and implantology.

Additionally, I am thrilled to announce the successful applications made by our graduates to esteemed universities worldwide - including, but not limited to institutions in the UK, USA, Canada, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Switzerland, France, Germany, Hungary, the Netherlands, Lithuania, Latvia, Spain, Cyprus and Dubai.

As we approach the end of another academic year, let us embark, together, on a journey of further discovery, where the pursuit of knowledge transcends boundaries and transforms lives.

YIOTA SKITINI NICOLAIDES

Careers Guidance Counsellor Educational Mentor and Careers Coach

CAREERS CORNER



Our university fair was a valuable event designed to help students explore higher education opportunities. It brought together representatives from various universities, offering students first-hand information about academic programs, admission requirements, scholarships, and career prospects. It provided a platform for students to ask questions, compare institutions, and gather resources to make informed decisions about their future.

CAREERS CORNER



UAGC PRESENTATION

We would like to express our gratitude to UAGC for their very **informative presentation about studying in Spain and Lithuania.**

The UAGC seminar proved invaluable to our students as they explore their future academic choices and opportunities.

At our school, we are committed to providing students with all the information they need to make informed decisions about their education. We strive to present them with opportunities from around the world and support them every step of the way.

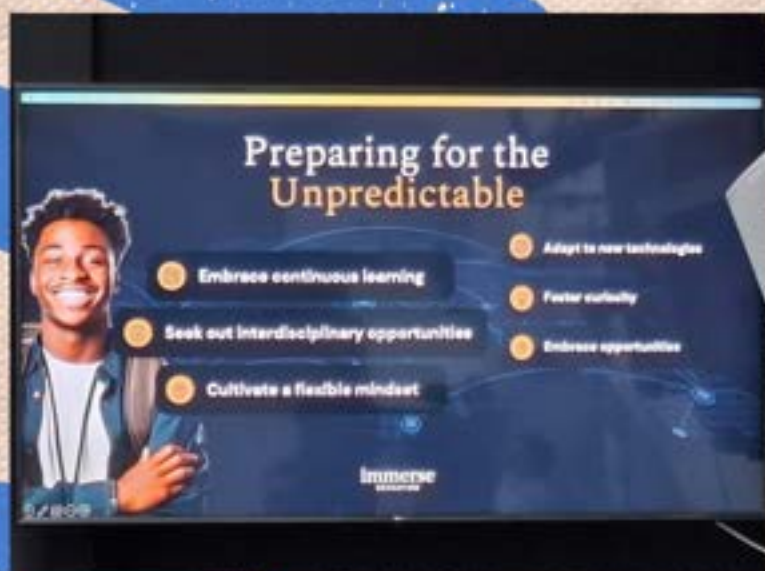


A thank-you to all parents and students from **classes 3 and 5** who attended the seminar.



UAGC CLASSES 3 AND 5 SEMINAR

CAREERS CORNER



What an amazing **UAGC workshop** for our classes 6 and 7 students at the American Academy.

We explored the future of jobs, and it was truly eye-opening. One of the key lessons we learned was that while technology may replace some roles, it actually opens up many more opportunities.

The future is full of potential, and our students are ready to embrace it!



CAREERS CORNER



UNIVERSITY VISITS

The time of the year has arrived when our **class 7 students** must make their informed decisions about their university studies.

To support them in this very important step, representatives from a number of universities visited our school to provide guidance and to make students' decision-making process easier.

Our **class 6 students** also took advantage of this opportunity to prepare for their applications next year.



BOARDING HOUSE



Our boarding house students visited the **Leventis Municipal Museum in Nicosia**, home to an extensive collection of artworks, archaeological artefacts, photographs, medieval pottery and engravings.



WELLBEING

'I made a prosperous voyage when I suffered a shipwreck'

LESSONS IN RESILIENCE FROM ZENO

Once a merchant, Zeno re-invented himself as an influential philosopher and the founder of the school of Stoicism.

Other great Stoics were Chrysippus, Musonios Rufus, Posidonius, Cicero, Marcus Aurelius, Seneca and Epictetus. The Stoic virtues that build resilience are wisdom, temperance, justice and courage. Zeno was a catalyst for the development of the 20th century psychotherapy.

**'νῦν εὐπλόηκα, ὅτε νεναυάγηκα'
Ζήνων, ὁ Κιτιεύς**

Discovering Socrates

Zeno was born into an affluent family, a son of a wealthy merchant in Cyprus. He received good education and enjoyed reading philosophy books which his father brought for him from his trips to Athens. The philosophy of Socrates was, therefore, not unknown to Zeno, and he was mesmerised by it.

In 312 B.C., 22-year old Zeno was wandering in the Athenian agora and ended up in a bookshop. There, he started reading a book about Socrates and asked the bookseller where he could find men like Socrates. 'Ah, there is one - follow him', said the bookseller, pointing outside. Outside the shop, Zeno saw Crates, a famous Cynic philosopher. Young Zeno became one of Crates' disciples. Zeno studied later under Stilpo; there were other influences on his philosophical path, including Aristotelian.

WELLBEING

The opportunity

One summer day, a ship carrying porphyra (a luxury natural dye) sank near the Piraeus port in Athens. Young Zeno was on the ship. With no rescue helicopters back then, or lifeguards who would swim out to save the drowning people, Zeno looked death in the eye, but somehow managed to swim to the shore and survived. The terrible realisation hit him that he had just lost everything in the shipwreck and that his successful trading business was thus over. He was now penniless; but he must have felt grateful for the gift of being alive - or else how can we explain his resilience in starting over again, from scratch, and a decision to follow an altogether different career path. That complete turnaround is well summed up in his famous quote: 'I made a prosperous voyage, when I suffered a shipwreck'.

The lesson

Life is full of uncertainties, unexpected challenges and unwanted tragedies, yet knowledge and the power of reason are important tools not only in overcoming life's adversities but also in enabling the flourishing that may result from them. No doubt he suffered and despaired following his near-death experience and his losing all of his possessions on the ship - and who wouldn't?. However, a rational examination of what his possible next steps might be, put things into a fresh psychological perspective for him.

MARIA KOTITSA



WELLBEING

Many students feel pressured, not only by the demands arising from their school obligations, but by life in general as well. They worry about their grades, their future and their friendships. They wonder if they are “good enough”, what others think of them, etc. They are unaware of how much stress they accumulate.

One important source of stress is feeling responsible for making their parents, and oftentimes even their teachers, proud. Students also often compare themselves with their classmates. However, no-one is “better” than anyone else. Each person works according to their own mind-map, each and every-one with their own unique ideas and capabilities. They have nothing to prove to anybody, not even to themselves. Such an approach imposes limitations upon students, preventing them from reaching their true potential. Some are even scared of their parents' reaction when it comes to a failed exam, and can thus act based on fear. This automatically stops them from achieving their true potential. I witness this happening quite often when students open up and talk about it. I always make sure they understand that they have done their best, and that the grade on their exam paper cannot determine their worth. Fear, for some students, may appear stealthily, even before they actually take an exam. They start thinking, “I am not going to pass anyway”, and that ‘this or that’ will happen. This kind of thinking is based on fear. And this is what I am working on with some of the students attending my sessions, trying to make them understand the difference between acting based on fear, and based on confidence. We all form different ideas about things around us; the important thing is to turn our ideas into something that works for us, and which is not rooted in fear.

Failure and success are both part of life, and I want students to understand that. Have you ever questioned your own purpose in life? What do you really want to do in your life, assuming you remove external influences? This is where the key is, and removing external influences is not easy, especially when it relates to one's own future.

RAFY PROCOPIOU

STUDY SKILLS



AI: the ultimate study-buddy or the easy way out?

As the world evolves, new opportunities appear on the horizon. One of these is the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in our everyday lives. From smartphones to smartwatches, AI has become an everyday companion. AI already plays a significant role in our environment, whether we are aware of it or not. It's everywhere, from essay-writing tools to algorithms that suggest the next TV show to binge-watch. However, how you use AI can determine whether it becomes your greatest ally or your biggest crutch.

AI tools are transforming education. Sites like Duolingo, for instance, may help you learn a new language by monitoring your progress and providing the ideal amount of difficulty. Virtual tutors may help you grasp difficult ideas by breaking down difficult maths problems or scientific theories step-by-step. Writing tools such as Grammarly can help you refine your writing and make your thoughts more apparent. In a similar vein, sophisticated AI programs like ChatGPT and Gemini can respond to your enquiries, clarify difficult ideas, or even generate suggestions for essays or other tasks. These resources offer immediate assistance and customise your learning process.

The important thing to remember is that these resources are meant to supplement your knowledge, not to take the place of your own work. You lose out on developing the most important abilities if you only use ChatGPT or Gemini to generate responses without really studying the subject. AI can also assist you in maintaining organisation. You may manage deadlines, assignments, extracurricular activities, and use exam reminders with tools like Google Calendar, Notion, and other. It's like having your own personal assistant. They don't necessarily save you extra hours, but they do let you concentrate on what matters. Setting reasonable objectives for yourself and using them thoughtfully are therefore crucial.

STUDY SKILLS

Even if AI presents numerous advantages, there are also disadvantages. How it affects our rights and our privacy is among the primary worries. Data is gathered and stored by several AI systems in order to enhance their offerings. While it is frequently innocuous, it's still wise to use reliable resources and exercise caution when disclosing personal information online. The danger of over-reliance is an additional disadvantage. You're losing out on the deeper learning process that comes from working through problems if you let a chatbot compose your entire essay or answer a maths problem for you. Furthermore, careless AI use might jeopardise academic credibility. With the use of AI technologies, cheating could appear simpler, but it impedes your development and the confidence that other people have in you. Your own accomplishments and efforts are the true source of the reward.

How do you find the ideal balance then? When applied carefully, AI is a great tool. Instead of looking for shortcuts, use it to develop abilities. Ask questions, get help when you need it, and interact closely with the content, both from actual people and from bots. You are part of a generation growing up with AI at your fingertips, and that's both exciting and a big responsibility. Use it to empower yourself, but don't forget the values of hard work, creativity, and connection that truly make learning meaningful. AI might be the future, but the most important element in your actual success will always be you.

ELENA AVERKIOU



WELLBEING

BUILDING RESILIENCE: how to get back on your feet after failing

People often see failure as a setback, but it's one of the best ways to learn in life. It's important to learn how to get back on your feet after failing when in high school, where there are a lot of difficulties and high standards to meet. Resilience, the ability to recover from difficulties, is not something we're born with; it's a trait that can be developed with practice and the right mindset.

Why resilience matters

There will be ups and downs in your life, and you will fail sometimes. People who are resilient don't try to avoid failing; instead, they learn from it and use it as a chance to get better. Being resilient helps you deal with things like getting bad grades on tests, not making the team, or dealing with a fight with a friend. It also helps you change, get stronger, and move on with confidence.

Reframing failure

The first step in building resilience is changing how you perceive failure. Instead of viewing it as a reflection of your worth, see it as valuable feedback. Every mistake or setback contains lessons about what worked, what didn't, and how you can approach things differently next time. Remember, even the most successful people in the world have faced failures on their life-journey.

Tips for building resilience

1. **Adopt a growth mindset** - A growth mindset is the belief that abilities and intelligence can be developed through effort and learning. When you fail, don't dwell on what went wrong. Instead, think about what you can learn from it. This way of thinking makes you more persistent and more interested.
2. **Set realistic goals** - Setting unrealistic goals can cause worry and sadness that aren't necessary. Split your big goals into smaller ones that you can reach, and enjoy the little wins along the way. Every little win boosts confidence and makes you stronger.
3. **Build a support system** - Surround yourself with friends, family, and teachers who will be there for you and offer support and guidance. Talking about your problems and asking for help can help you process setbacks and find solutions.

WELLBEING

4. **Practise self-compassion.** Be kind to yourself when things don't go as planned. Self-criticism makes you feel worse and more stressed, while self-compassion helps you recover and re-focus.
5. **Develop problem-solving skills.** Being resilient isn't just about dealing with losses; it's also about finding ways to fix problems. When you're faced with a problem, step back, look at it, and come up with ways to solve it. Problem-solving is something that you can do without thinking about it. Remember, be open to alternative solutions.
6. **Stay optimistic.** Being optimistic doesn't mean ignoring problems - it means having faith that you can get through them. Pay attention to what you can change, and look for chances to grow in every loss.

The benefits of resilience

Being resilient not only helps you get back on your feet after failing, but it also gets you ready for new tasks. People who are resilient are better at adapting, feeling strong, and keeping their emotions in check. They know how to deal with worry better and will be more successful in the long run in both their personal and work lives.

Failure isn't the end; it's a way to get better and reach your goals. You can turn setbacks into chances, learn from them, and come out better after each struggle if you work on your resilience.

Remember that being resilient doesn't mean you never fall; it means you always get back up. No matter what life throws at you, you can get through it and do well if you have the right attitude and the right tools.

ELENA AVERKIOU

WELLBEING

Learning how to cope with academic stress

When you enter high school, it's the beginning of a new chapter full with possibilities, learning, and growth. But with so many due dates, tests, and extracurricular activities coming up at once, it may also cause a great deal of stress. Though it's normal to feel some level of stress in some contexts, unmanaged stress may quickly become overwhelming.

Learning how to cope with academic stress is a crucial skill that will not only help students succeed in school but also prepare them for future challenges.

What is stress? When faced with difficult or taxing circumstances, the body's natural reaction is to experience stress. In order to help you adjust or take action, it sets off a chain reaction of bodily, emotional, and mental reactions. You can really benefit from a little stress, since it can help you concentrate and get things done better. On the other hand, stress can have a negative effect on your health when it becomes excessive or persistent, causing you to feel anxious, irritable, or exhausted. Recognizing and managing stress is essential for maintaining a healthy balance in life.

What is academic stress? The pressure that students experience in their attempts to do well in school is known as academic stress. There are several potential causes of this stress, including excessive workload and impending tests, as well as the expectations either students themselves and/or parents and/or educators have.

Recognising the signs of academic stress

Stress can manifest itself in various ways, and recognising the signs is essential for managing it effectively. Common signs include difficulty concentrating or remembering information, the feelings of irritability, anxiety, or sadness, as well as changes in sleep patterns such as insomnia or over-sleeping. Physical symptoms like headaches, stomach-aches, or fatigue are also common indicators, along with behavioural changes such as procrastination or avoidance of assignments and responsibilities. If these signs persist, it's essential to take action to manage stress effectively.

WELLBEING

Strategies for managing academic stress:

1. Practise time management

One of the main causes of academic stress is the feeling that there's too much to do and not enough time. However, organising your tasks effectively can make your workload feel far more manageable. For instance, using techniques like the Pomodoro Technique, which involves working within focused intervals - e.g. 40 minutes of work followed by a 15-minute break - helps maintain concentration and prevents burnout. Additionally, using a planner or a digital app to schedule assignments and study sessions ensures you stay on track. Breaking large tasks into smaller, achievable chunks and setting specific goals for each session - such as reviewing one chapter or completing a project section - can transform daunting tasks into manageable steps.

2. Prioritise self-care

Maintaining balance and decreasing stress requires physical and emotional health. Ensuring you get enough sleep - ideally, 7-9 hours per night - is crucial as sleep supports memory, focus, and overall mental clarity. Regular exercise is another powerful stress reliever, as it helps release hormones like endorphins that promote relaxation and boost mood. Eating balanced meals and staying hydrated are also important for energy and physical function. Prioritising these practices can boost your resilience and be better equipped to handle daily challenges.

3. Learn stress-reduction techniques

Incorporating relaxation practices into your daily routine can help you stay calm and focused. Practise deep-breathing exercises, which help regulate your body's stress response, try mindfulness, meditation, and yoga to clear your mind and improve concentration. Writing a journal can also help you process your thoughts and emotions.

4. Avoid procrastination and set realistic expectations

Procrastination often leads to last-minute panic and added stress. Eliminate distractions during study time, such as your phone or social media. Remember, nobody is perfect, and it's okay to make mistakes. Instead of trying to achieve perfection, just do your best. Get in the habit of praising yourself for even the smallest accomplishments.

WELLBEING

5. Seek support when needed

You don't have to face stress alone. Talk to a trusted parent, a teacher, or a school counsellor about your feelings. Sharing your problems might ease the strain and provide guidance.

No matter how prepared you are, stress will always be a part of your life. Your success in high school, college, and beyond will depend on your ability to develop the skills to cope with it today. Don't let academic stress get the best of you.

You may transform stress into a learning opportunity by learning to manage your time well, prioritising your own health, and reaching out for help when you need it.

Remember, it's okay to ask for help, take breaks, and adjust your goals when necessary. Life is like riding a bicycle: learning how to balance responsibilities and your wellbeing is one of the most valuable lessons you learn to carry you forward.

ELENA AVERKIOU



WELLBEING

Resilience and contentment through focusing on what we can control: maybe we can learn something from Buddhism? Following are excerpts from **Talia Christodoulidou's** (class 6) research piece.

Editorial disclaimer: the text, though true to the submitted original, has been considerably downsized and slightly altered (corrected) to comply with our format and to meet our standards.

Buddhism as self-help

Buddhism was founded in the Indian sub-continent around the fifth century BC and it is based on the teachings of Siddhartha Gautama, the Buddha, the Enlightened/Awakened one.

Buddha, before becoming Buddha, was Siddhartha Gautama. He was just like everyone else. His journey to becoming Buddha wasn't easy. Siddhartha was determined to find a solution to all human suffering. He reinvented himself on the path he chose.

"Although my father and stepmother were grieving with tears on their faces, I cut off my hair; I put on the yellow robes and went forth from home into homelessness. I had been wounded by the enjoyment of the world, and I had come out longing to obtain peace."

Through meditation, Siddhartha came to a conclusion that it was the preoccupation with ourselves and the distorted view of the world that comes with it that cause suffering.

"My body slowly became extremely emaciated. My limbs became like the jointed segments of vine, or bamboo stems. My spine stood out like a string of beads. My ribs jutted out like the jutting rafters of an old abandoned building. The gleam of my eyes appeared to be sunk deep in my eye sockets, like the gleam of water deep in a well. My scalp shriveled and withered like a green, bitter gourd. Shriveled and withered in the heat and wind."

Gautama ultimately understood that the true path to enlightenment lies somewhere in between the two extremes. He sat under a fig tree and stayed there until he found a full understanding of the path to enlightenment. He stayed there until he became the Awakened One. 'The Buddha' means the Awakened One.

The Eightfold Path is a guidebook to nirvana that Buddha came up with, pointing out the eight things a person should focus on in order to achieve enlightenment. They are commonly broken down into three categories. Morality consists of: the right speech, the right action, and the right livelihood. Meditation consists of his revised meditation practices, which were also three: the right effort, the right mindfulness, and the right concentration. And, lastly, wisdom is made up of the right understanding and the right resolve.



Enlightenment is an efficient way to live a contented life: there is no greed, nothing to chase after, no ignorance to sulk over, and no hatred. Everything is temporary. Buddhism has become much like a self-help religion: there is no God, our fate is 100% under our own control. Buddhism is about making changes, reflecting on and locating the sources of misfortunes and finding ways to overcome them.

A crucial detail in Buddhism is mindfulness, which is basically about being self-aware. It focuses on carefully monitoring every thought you have, locating the good and the bad thoughts: decrease ones which are useless and only keep those beneficial to you.

Desire is one of the main factors of dissatisfaction. The reasons are simple: attachment, aversion or ignorance. People tend to get attached to things, naïvely assuming that getting a thing they desire will immediately bring them satisfaction. Aversion happens when a person over-magnifies a situation and the ensuing feelings, fixating on what causes them dissatisfaction. At the same time, one is quick to forget all about it as soon as the situation is over. Aversion has to do with expectations. We set ourselves up for dissatisfaction with the expectations we create, and selfishly assume others share them.

According to Buddha, suffering can be ended by eliminating desire which stems from selfishness. Selfishness creates a delusion that we exist separate from everyone else. Buddha believed in karma and reincarnation. He viewed the society as an eternal inter-connected structure. All things, including humans, are an ever-changing, impermanent part of an eternal process: suffering is simply people not realising the truth behind it.

I believe that Buddhism could be beneficial for students. Buddhism aims to eliminate ignorance, greed and hatred. All three of those things may be hard to overcome. There is much we can do to improve our behaviour, be respectful towards one another and the teachers. Some consistently make racist comments, bully others and yet see nothing wrong with their behaviour. They do not deem themselves problematic. I think the school would benefit from using form-time to allow students to reflect and meditate. It could help students establish a sort of routine and maybe, eventually, find the light, realise their wrongs and improve themselves. Students who struggle could find the core of their suffering and figure out how to eliminate it. It would benefit students to learn how to live a fulfilling life, how to identify their truths.

I believe that families can also benefit from the teachings of Buddhism. It could bring harmony. Given that thoughts and considerations are carefully monitored, more could be done, family members could cooperate with one another much better. There would be more mutual understanding, no tension and hatred.

Buddhism may not appeal to everyone. Yet Buddhism gives a good example of how to become a better person and how to manage oneself.

CREATIVE EXPRESSION

The Art of Tattooing

Creative expression is an important part of human lives. That is how people have come up with useful inventions and new ideas. How can you express yourself? There are infinite opportunities to do that, as long as you find the creativity within you. In my opinion, to succeed in such a thing, one must always make sure one knows how to listen to others' ideas and how to express one's own. It should also be something you love, something that you would always choose over spending a lazy day in bed.

Body Art

I love the idea of positioning myself as the character in my own-created game, and the idea of decorating and accessorising the way one looks. One way to mix illustration and body modification is with the use of the ink and the tattooist's needle.

Looking back in tattoo history

First tools used for tattooing were Bronze Age chisels found circa 1450 B.C. Excavations and old illustrations show women with tattoos mainly on their thighs, and men with tattooed shoulders. Tattoos were primarily symbols of one's background. Since that time people have developed many ways in which to perform more complex art pieces on skin. Many cultures owned their own tattooing style.

My journey to ink

When I began tattooing, I was focused on perfecting the quality, rather than studying the styles. I have been through lots of practice, starting off with tattooing on fake skin, then inking up lots of people I knew, for free. I enjoyed both the process and the results, including finding out my mistakes.

CREATIVE EXPRESSION

Tattooing: the process

A tattoo machine of any kind must have: a protrusion which controls how far the needle goes into the skin; the hole for different needles, since they are switched based on overuse or the desired size; and the voltage control, which affects the 'fade' of the strokes, whether it is for lining or shading. The artist may control the machine manually, with a pedal or a button, or automatically. The ink cap is filled at most to the half, and it is being dipped into with the needle. The artist must make sure that the spot is clean and shaved. If used, the stencil has to be dry and applied evenly. Stencils nowadays are made with ink paper and a stencil printer. However, some may prefer the traditional way of making the stencil pattern with an engraving ink-pen on the paper. The act of applying the tattoo involves scarring and inking of the skin. The needle is doing as many as 200 jabs per second. When the piece is done, one must make sure to prevent infection by maintaining good hygiene. Keep it moisturised and avoid touching to ensure that the spot is well-healed within 2-4 weeks.

Antonia Akinfieva (class 6A)



CREATIVE EXPRESSION

STORY ZONE

Do you enjoy reading stories? Here, in the **Story Zone**, we showcase samples of the work of our talented AA students, demonstrating their passion for creative writing. In this section, read **a selection of short stories and personal narratives written by our students for our students.**

The samples below are all true to the submitted original, and reproduced with only very minimal editorial alterations.

Story Zone: Island life 1

The sun rises slowly over the horizon, turning the sky bright orange and pink. Every sound is part of the morning, this is how the island comes alive with each new day: waves gently wash against the shore as if whispering secrets to the sand, and the seagulls call out, reminding of the wider world beyond the sea.

I walk along the beach with my feet sinking into the warm yellow sand. Each grain feels like it holds a story of storms that passed by and peaceful afternoons spent fishing in the clear blue sea. I pass by the old fishing boats, their colours faded but their memories still present. The salty breeze is refreshing, both familiar and comforting.

In the village, laughter fills the air as local children are chasing each other, their voices mixing with the smell of fresh bread from the bakery. I see elders sitting on the benches, telling stories about our ancestors who first came to this beautiful island from across the ocean. Their stories make us feel closer to each other and to this place, reminding us that our lives here are interconnected.

As evening comes, the sky darkens and fills with stars shining above like an invitation to dream. I sit down on the sand and watch as the waves wash on the shore. I notice little lights that shine across them, a reminder of how much beauty there is hidden in such nice moments.

Time feels different here, on the island; it feels slow and days appear to be timeless. I feel I'm connected to this place in a deep way. My heart resonates with the sounds of laughter and the music of the ocean. It's a special sense of belonging and I feel really lucky to be part of it. Every day on this island brings me still closer; the waves, the wind and local stories all work together to make me feel at home. Life here is simple and there's something beautiful in every moment.

Valeria Skalinskaia (class 3)

CREATIVE EXPRESSION

STORY ZONE

Story Zone: Island life 2

Many people dream of leaving everything behind and living the "island life": enjoying beautiful, sunny weather all year long, crystal blue lagoons, lush green jungles, and sunsets watched on the sandy beach... Yes, there are many advantages to living on an island, but there are also some disadvantages.

Island life is often thought of being a relaxed way of life. Living on an island is enjoying fresh sea-food, visiting fresh food markets and spending time with friends. Island outdoor activities are amazing: there are gorgeous spots for snorkelling and diving, skydiving, kitesurfing and paddling.

Living on an island offers a mix of difficulties and joys for its residents. One big upside of island life is the closely-knit community. With fewer people, and being away from the mainland, islanders build strong connections to support one another. This sense of community helps keep local traditions and customs alive and are important parts of island culture.

However, island life can come with some challenges. Being far from the mainland can make it harder to get the kind of food and services that you may like, you also have to get used to local traditions. Travel may be complicated, relying on small ferries or planes. Health care and education can also be of lower quality.

Many islands depend on tourism and prices may steeply rise due to tourism, making everything more expensive. Nature is a big part of island life. Floods, heavy rainfall, and water rising due to climate change, all require communities to be strong and flexible as they must adapt to challenges and protect their homes.

In short, while living on an island might seem ideal, living on one comes with its challenges and hazards, which require hard work. Those who can, and are willing to accept them, will form a very deep affinity for island life and local nature.

Giovanni Michael Fadda (class 3)

CREATIVE EXPRESSION

STORY ZONE

Story Zone: Island life 3

Island life in Cyprus is something completely new and previously unknown for me. Before moving to Cyprus, I had never been to the island. In the beginning, it seemed to me that life here would be no different from life on the continent - but it isn't so.

First of all, I was surprised by the climate, with its hot dry summers, and mild humid winters. I also soon got to really like local traditional dishes such as musaka, and the hallumi cheese, with its characteristic pleasant taste and texture.

Cyprus is nestled in the waters of the Mediterranean Sea. The most popular beaches are on the Southern and Eastern coasts, in the cities of Larnaca, Limassol and Ayia Napa. The sea waters here are clean and have a nice turquoise-blue hue. Thanks to the warm climate, the swimming season in Cyprus lasts from April to November, which is a cool bonus for tourists from all over the world.

Yet I am more attracted not to the beaches or the sea, but the mountains. The mountains fascinate me and deeply affect my subconscious. Troodos is the largest mountain range in Cyprus, striking in its grandeur and landscape. The highest point is Mount Olympus, which I have not yet visited, but really want to. Recently, I went hiking with my family, up in the Troodos mountains. We saw and enjoyed the incredible scenery of the Kalidonia waterfall. The waterfall, even if not large, has crystal clear water and is located inside an incredibly beautiful forest. You walk through dense vegetation and find rare species of trees; pines, cypresses and cedars surrounding the foot-paths. I visited the famous Kykkos Monastery located in the Troodos area, and I liked its architecture and the incredibly luxurious frescoes inside. Whenever I am inside this monastery, my soul fills with peace and power.

There are many ancient villages in Cyprus, each with its own history and unique characteristics. I have already visited Lefkara and Omodos. Each of these villages interested me in its own way. Lefkara is famous for its traditional crafted lace known as *lefkaritika* and handmade silver jewellery. Omodos is famous of its winemaking, being surrounded by traditional Cypriot vineyards, and the ancient Church of the Holy Cross.

I have not spent much time on the island of Cyprus yet, but I am delighted with what I have seen so far. I am going to visit a lot more of interesting places. I recommend visiting this wonderful island.

Solomiia Chychyrkina (class 3)

CREATIVE EXPRESSION

STORY ZONE

Story Zone: The Raven

The clouds slowly turned and looped around the ginger sunset sun. And the sun itself spun in the golden hour like hot tea stirred in a snow-white mug. My ears tingled from the frost, and when I exhaled, clouds of steam were leaving my mouth, mixing with the frosty air outside. Snowflakes swirled in the air, crashing into each other and crumbled as snow-dust. Glancing at them was making my mind and body feel cold and empty. The snow was crunching loudly under my feet, and it felt as if I was stomping on... someone's bones.

I flinched, a flapping sound draw my attention. When I turned around, I saw a dark-feathered bird. It was dark-indigo, like ink. The creature landed awkwardly and loudly on the roof of the arbour. The bird then slid down the smooth arbour roof, pulling along a trailful of snow, and finally fell to the ground.

At first glance, it was an ordinary raven with ruffled, but clean shiny plumage. The feathers reflected light like steel blades.

Ravens quite passionately love glitter.

Unexpectedly, the bird turned to me, his eyes sparkling. And - *did it wink?* *It couldn't be* - surely it was only what I imagined.

The raven's feathers caught the sun-rays and turned dark sapphire. It was magnificent.

I looked at it with some vague fear, like a small child looking at the blade of a sharp knife, not fully understanding the danger.

It felt as if the bird had been thrown from its own paradise, down to the ground. It gave me a look - so peculiar, almost mocking me, and taunting for never knowing what it's like to fly. A moment later, the bird's wings lifted the snow-dust below as, with extraordinary ease and grace, it soared into the sky. I could hardly compete with it, and its freedom and ease. (*Maybe that's what angels look like?..*)

Maria Novokhatniaia (class 4)



CREATIVE EXPRESSION

STORY ZONE

My very first school memory

I remember coming to the American Academy school for the first time in 2015. I couldn't speak a word of English when I first arrived, but the teachers were understanding and let me learn at my own pace without feeling pressured.

Mr. Peel was one instructor in particular who made a lasting impression. His commitment was unparalleled as were my third-year Maths teacher, my sixth-year class teacher, and the Principal. I was able to overcome my linguistic difficulties thanks to their encouragement and kindness, which made difficult things seem achievable. I also recall my Arts instructor, Miss Niki, who helped me discover my creative potential. She urged us to freely express ourselves during a mask-making project, and that encounter sparked my love for anything artistic, and it has remained with me ever since.

Located in Limassol, Cyprus, American Academy soon became a second home. Learning became enjoyable in the lovely campus, surrounded by the kind, close-knit community we formed. My seven years of elementary school were a journey I will always cherish - I will always remember Mr. Peel's leadership, Miss Niki's nurturing nature, and the friendly environment of the school. I was not only educated there - I was also motivated to develop.

Sasha Smorodin (class 4)

CREATIVE EXPRESSION

STORY ZONE

The Pilgrim

Dusk was thickening and it was drizzling with rain. Light mist was floating over the ground, sheltering the pilgrim in his progress through the woods. The man's face was hidden inside a deep hood. Something was shaking and jingling softly in his bag, a distraction. On his back, under his long thick cloak, was a sword, weighty and cold.

The man came to the edge of the thick forest. Far ahead, on a hill, a majestic castle loomed in the moonlight, looking as if it had appeared out of a fairy tale. There were so many clouds that the castle towers seemed to be floating above and among them. That was where this pilgrim was heading.

His trek was hard and the road led through briars and thickets across that dense lifeless forest. Having reached the forest edge, he stood there now, in silence...

Maria Novokhatniaia (class 4)



CREATIVE EXPRESSION

STUDENTS' OPINION PIECES

World Issues: students' opinion pieces

Commenting on world news and debating social issues doesn't have to be dull. Our students were asked to research the topics they are interested in, and they put a fresh spin on some current issues, including thoughts and opinions from their unique perspective.

Let us look at how the media manipulate the society. The media have a powerful impact on our beliefs and decisions. While it helps us to stay informed, the media can also be used to shape opinions and spread misinformation.

To begin with, one way of such manipulation is biased reporting. News outlets often present information in a way that supports a particular political or social agenda. This makes people believe one side of the story without having seen the whole picture. For example, during the Iraq War most of the media outlets were focused on the idea of bringing "freedom and democracy", hiding civilian casualties and destruction.

Furthermore, the media use emotional manipulation employing strong-impact images, dramatic headlines and emotional stories to grab attention. Fear, anger or sympathy are being used to influence public opinion and people's behaviour. For instance, during World War 2, German propaganda presented the Reich's enemies as antagonists who were preparing to attack, spreading xenophobia.

Finally, advertising uses another form of manipulation. Companies use clever marketing strategies to make us purchase products we don't need. They create a sense of urgency or social pressure making people feel they must buy something to fit in. For instance, cigarettes advertised in mid-20th century were presented as 'cool' and not unhealthy.

All in all, to avoid being manipulated, we should think critically, fact-check information and consider multiple sources before forming our opinions.

Diana Iuzvovich (class 5)

CREATIVE EXPRESSION

STUDENTS' OPINION PIECES

How social media harms children. I have chosen this topic because it is highly relevant in today's world. While social media has its benefits, it also comes with significant downsides, especially for young children. 93% of all users on social media sites are young people, the majority of whom are people younger than 18 years old. This means that any misleading information in social media is most likely going to be seen by young innocent minds.

One major negative effect of social media on youngsters is cyber-bullying. Cyber bullying can develop severe emotional distress, which can lead to low self-esteem and depression. By the same token, social media is filled with non-age-appropriate content. Exposing youth to such content can negatively affect their mental and emotional health, leading to insomnia and behavioural disorders.

How can we protect children and teenagers from being harmed if they happen to be faced with such situations? In most cases, parents can educate their children from a young age on how to correctly use the Internet and social media. The Internet helps children develop digital literacy and competence. Yet in cases of online abuse such as cyber bullying, blocking is the most effective action against it. Victims of cyber-bullying should immediately inform their parents or guardians. If we want to keep young people safe, we must work together to make social media a safe environment.

Anastasia Aizkalne (class 5)



CREATIVE EXPRESSION

STUDENTS' OPINION PIECES

Let's talk about ageism and how to tackle it. Ageism is a form of discrimination, prejudice, or stereotyping based on a person's age. It is commonly directed towards older adults in employment, healthcare, and when it comes to social attitudes.

There are plenty of examples of ageism in daily life, but we might ignore them due to lack of awareness. First and the most dangerous example of ageism is healthcare bias. In fact, doctors often tend to dismiss older patients' symptoms as 'just aging', instead of investigating the actual issue. Moreover, elderly people frequently face driving restrictions based on the assumption that they do not drive safely, even forcing them to stop driving without assessing their actual ability. Last but not least, is workplace discrimination. Older adults quite often face a refusal to hire or promote them because they are 'too old' for particular jobs, or cannot adapt to new technology.

These are the main examples of ageism; unfortunately, there are more. To solve this issue, Finland, for example, made the National Program on Ageing Workers, encouraging employers to support older employees instead of forcing them to retire early. Another effective example of anti-ageism policies would be again Finland, with the country's financial investment programs for companies encouraging them to hire older employees. In healthcare, Sweden provides universal healthcare that ensures older adults get quality medical treatment without discrimination.

We should create a more inclusive society without prejudice against older - or younger - people and their abilities. Awareness and education should be raised.

Ksenia Milashevskaja (class 5)

CREATIVE EXPRESSION

STUDENTS' OPINION PIECES

Let us look at how social media affects the way people think about politics. Nowadays, most people get their news from social media rather than newspapers or TV. While this makes information more accessible, it also means people are exposed to different opinions, arguments, and even misinformation. A single viral post can change the way someone thinks about a political issue, even if the information isn't completely true. This can be dangerous because not everyone fact-checks what they read.

Another way social media influences politics is through algorithms. Online platforms show us content that matches our interests, which can create something called an 'echo chamber'. This means we only see opinions that we already agree with, making it harder to consider different perspectives. As a result, people can become more divided, and political discussions can turn into arguments instead of productive debates.

At the same time, social media can also be a powerful tool for raising political awareness. It gives people a voice, allowing them to share their opinions, support causes, and even participate in movements that bring about real change. However, it's important to be careful and think critically about what we see online. Not everything is as it seems, and it's always a good idea to check multiple sources before accepting, believing in, or sharing political information.

In conclusion, social media has a huge influence on politics, both positive and negative. It can educate people, but it can also mislead them. The best we can do is stay informed, think critically, and be open to different viewpoints.

Maxim Molokovskii (class 5)

CREATIVE EXPRESSION

STUDENTS' OPINION PIECES

Let's consider greenwashing and its impact. Firstly, what is greenwashing? You've probably bought a product at least once - a washing powder or probably a food item - and seen it labelled as 'eco', 'nature-friendly' or 'a green product'. There is a chance that the product was truly made sustainably, but its manufacturers were probably simply lying to you.

So what's the problem with greenwashing? It leads to reduced customers' confidence in everything 'eco-friendly' they see. For example, Ikea used wood which was illegally extracted in a reserve area protecting the habitat of endangered animals. When it was revealed, many users reacted on social media saying that they would no longer buy anything 'eco-friendly'. This shows how greenwashing can reduce trust in products manufactured in a way that *truly* cares about the environment. Moreover, according to a study commissioned by the European Union, about one-third of consumers are ready to pay up to 25% more for more sustainable products. Now imagine paying 25% more just for their appealing packaging!

How can you personally influence the situation and confront greenwashing? Firstly, products that are truly made to minimize the carbon footprint are appropriately labelled providing information about raw materials used, emissions caused, renewable energy used, recycling methods and other aspects of production, so checking labelling can be a kind of guarantee. We must remember that words such as 'green' or 'eco/nature-friendly' have no legal significance and must not be used as marketing tricks to mislead consumers.

Varvara Semashko (class 5)

CREATIVE EXPRESSION

STORY ZONE

The Island

The sound of the seagulls,
Filling the air
Clashing with the music of the waves of the sea,

The leaves of the trees,
Guided left and right by the wind
The sun glistening,
Warming the sand.

The islanders talking amongst themselves,
Feeding their animals,
Watering their plants.

Out in the distance,
The crystal sea.
A boat comes towards me,
A boat filled with intruders.

Horrible-looking intruders,
Eyes filled with rage.
Faces covered with dirt,
Hands covered with blood.

They invade my people,
My land,
Myself.

They ruined my beauty,
My forests,
My beaches,
My people's houses.

They lit fires,
Stole from us,
Killed us.

The birds stopped singing, dead.
The animals stopped grazing, dead.
The harvests burnt, dead.
DEAD.

Blinded by rage,
A thirst for justice.

Attack, attack, attack.
Our screams deafened the gods.
I can feel the warm blood
running down my chest.
The metallic taste in my mouth.

Some of us survived.
We tried to, at least.
We fought the fires.
Survived the attack.

They could harm us no longer.
Neither beat us,
Nor fight us.

We built ourselves up.
They planted trees back on me.
They cared for me.
They cured me.

They saved me --
The Island.

Giannos Xystras (class 5)

CREATIVE EXPRESSION

STORY ZONE

[untitled]

Sarah slept, her eyes locked on the ceiling. Outdoors, the storm continued to brew, rain pounding against the window panes; but there was something that roused her. A sound.

Knock. Knock. Slow. Tentative.

She got up, breathing in staccato. *Who comes to my doorstep at midnight?* The clock next to her read in red: 12:03 AM.

A more insistent knock, once more.

A chill ran down her spine. Her phone battery was dead, the electricity had previously gone out, and she was alone. She got out of bed, each step deliberate, silent. She stood at the door, staring through the peephole. Nothing. Blackness.

Her stomach tied in knots. Maybe the storm had been messing with her head. Maybe -- Knock. Knock. Directly behind her.

She spun around, staring. The sound had come from inside the house. The hall lay before her, swallowed by darkness. She felt the weight of something watching. Waiting. Then - the floor creaked. Sarah's body froze in place. That wasn't her. Another's sound.

With pounding heart, she ran towards the kitchen, shivering hands outstretched to grab a knife. The stillness was oppressive. A whisper crept along the shadows.

"Sarah." Her blood chilled.

The bedroom door creaked open. She took a slow, shuddering breath, forcing herself to move. The front door. If she could just --

Something brushed the back of her neck. She whirled, slashing blindly with the knife, only to meet empty air. The lights flickered once. Twice. Then they surged back on. The room was empty. The door was still locked.

And on the fogged-up window, a single word was written on the inside:

"Soon."

Stephanos Zosimov (Class 5)

PHILOSOPHICALLY SPEAKING ...

Philosophy provides training in critical and constructive thinking, and builds skills that are valuable in your academic pursuits as well as in life in general. Thinking critically and clearly is what makes one successful in one's endeavours in an increasingly complex world. We invite you to gain some insights from our students who have been honing their philosophical thinking skills under our teacher, **Mr. Antreas Agathokleous**.

Editorial disclaimer: the texts, though true to the submitted original, have been downsized and slightly altered (corrected) to comply with our format and to meet our standards.

'The unexamined life is not worth living.'

What's the point of life if we never discover who we really are? What are we really like? The importance of self-reflection and self-understanding was fundamental to Socrates' teaching. The root of all evil for him was ignorance. How can you know your identity if you never look for it by yourself? How can you understand and accept yourself if you're always trying to please other people and pretend to be someone you're not?

Socrates famously said, "The unexamined life is not worth living." This reflects his belief that one's worth is based not on what one looks like or how the society perceives one, but on the depth of one's soul, one's pursuit of knowledge, and one's moral integrity. This quote captures the essence of his philosophy. Socrates saw self-examination as the pathway towards true understanding, an essential part of knowing who we truly are and how we relate to the world around us. Moreover, self-examination was to him not just an exercise that challenges one to think intellectually and deeply about oneself, it was a moral necessity. This idea ties into his belief that no one does wrong willingly. He famously argued that every immoral act is due to ignorance, claiming that, "No one is voluntarily wicked." In other words, people only commit wrongdoings because they are unaware of what is truly good. He believed that if one truly understands what is good, one would naturally act accordingly. Furthermore, he thought that all wrongdoing stems from a lack of wisdom and knowledge and stated that "there is only one good - knowledge, and one evil - ignorance."

Despina Asimakopoulou (Class 6)



PHILOSOPHICALLY SPEAKING ...

How does anyone leave Plato's cave?

Plato was a student of Socrates' and continued his teacher's pursuit of knowledge. We often talk about knowledge and its merits, but we often fail to focus on the cost of getting it. What is the worth of the pursuit of knowledge? Would you remain ignorant if it made you popular? Would you be willing to risk being mocked because your pursuit of knowledge has made others judge you? We must be courageous and relentless in educating and enlightening ourselves. For Plato, knowledge was the ultimate worth. We hope it is for the reader, too.

The most important and most popular idea Plato came up with was probably his allegory of the cave. The allegory of the cave explains his theory in a practical manner. What then is meant by the allegory of the cave? Basically, the humanity is kept in a cave, bound together; people have never left it and live in the dark all their lives. All they can see is the wall of the cave in front of them and the shadows cast by the real world. Due to the fact the 'prisoners' had never seen the actual objects, they wholeheartedly believe that the shadows are real. What they see are merely the shadows of the perfect forms in the realm of the real ones. In his story, Plato talks about one 'prisoner' who gets freed and is forced to leave the cave, and who sees the Truth. When the freed 'prisoner' leaves the cave, he is blinded by the sunlight which basically represents here Enlightenment, the Truth. After living in the real world for some time, he decides to return to the cave to tell others about his Truth. However, he is met with disbelief. Nobody else wants to leave the cave. The 'prisoners' refuse to believe that all they ever knew is a lie, and so they are left with their lies.

The meaning behind Plato's metaphor could be that all people should strive for knowledge and that those who don't want to know, essentially decide to remain in the dark, watching mere shadows on the wall their whole life. Even now, refusing to educate oneself when you believe you know 'everything', will only make you miss the deeper Truth, the deeper knowledge of things. Why would anyone stop educating oneself when one only knows a small part of the Truth?

Ulyana Trifonova (class 6)



PHILOSOPHICALLY SPEAKING ...

Kierkegaard's leap of faith

The Danish philosopher wants us to wonder how many times we feel anxious because we hesitate, overthink and suffer as a result. In such moments, one needs to take a 'leap of faith'.

This action, seemingly beyond the limits of common sense, is based on something that cannot be measured, assessed, or placed into familiar categories. By making such a leap, a person seems to break all bonds and surrenders himself to higher principles, accepting his fate with the hope of finding salvation, or at least consolation, in what seems absolutely incomprehensible. Thus, one's 'leap of faith' becomes not just an act of despair, but a deeply personal act of faith that is as incomprehensible as it is all-pervasive.

Kierkegaard writes, "I am able to understand that strength and energy and freedom of spirit are necessary in order to carry out the endless movement of self-denial; I am equally able to understand that this can be done. But the next step astonishes me, my head is spinning; now, after the movement of self-denial has been accomplished, to obtain everything by the power of the absurd, to obtain the complete and unconditional fulfillment of desire - the understanding of this goes beyond human powers, it is a miracle."

In his work "Fear and Trembling" Kierkegaard analyses the story of Abraham, who was ready to sacrifice his son Isaac. He calls this event 'a religious absurdity', wherein faith triumphs over rational doubts and ethical norms. For Kierkegaard, genuine faith requires courage and deep personal conviction to perform the act of faith.

Taisia Rymyantseva (class 7)



PHILOSOPHICALLY SPEAKING ...

Epicurus

Epicurus gets misrepresented as a philosopher who wants people to just chill and have fun all the time. He's not that. He does focus on what brings pleasure and happiness in life, but he wants us to be aware of the good and the bad pleasures in life. Some will destroy us, other will develop us into better people. Think of it like this: what brings us happiness, what is fun, is not always good. The highest good is that which brings happiness but is also good for us in the long run. It's the secret to a stable and fulfilling life.

Epicurus believed that pleasure should focus more on mental stillness (*ataraxia*) and the absence of physical pain, rather than hedonistic indulgence. He also argued that simple, natural pleasures, such as good company, learning, and moderation with regards to food and drink, all lead to happiness.

Excess and luxury often result in dissatisfaction or harm. Epicurus advised against overindulging in food or wealth, saying that desires for unnecessary luxuries can lead to anxiety and dependence.

Epicurus also talked about the difference between natural and vain desires. Natural desires are food, water and shelter; these can be easily satisfied and are essential to one's well-being. By comparison, vain desires such as fame, power and excessive wealth are unquenchable and distract people from attaining true peace of mind.

Alkinoos Papadopoulos (Class 6)



STUDENT VOICES

A very good school can be described using a variety of positive adjectives, such as excellent, inspiring, inclusive, supportive, safe. **We are very lucky to have very many happy students here at AA, and they come from diverse cultural backgrounds. Here is what some of them have to say:**

The students, the teachers and the staff are one big family and we all support, love, respect and cherish one another.

Stephanos Photiou (Class 1)

The best thing about AA is how nice everyone is and the teachers are open-minded.

Maria Vaisero (Class 3)

The best thing about AA is the opportunity to learn with children from completely different parts of the world and develop our English language skills studying in that language.

Milana Shakaeva (Class 3)

The best thing are the teachers. They are very kind and know how to do their job.

Marie Hadjineofytou (Class 1)

What I like most is our teachers' attitude towards us, the students. They explain the material and they are always willing to clarify things as many times as needed. They are eager to help each student.

Liza Tsaregorodtseva (Class 3)

The atmosphere is welcoming, and there's always a sense of excitement in the air. Whether it's catching up with friends in the courtyard, attending an interesting lesson, or laughing over a shared joke, every day is filled with memories in the making. AA is a place where students don't just learn - they explore, create, and shine. From sports tournaments and talent shows to student clubs and charity events, there's always something happening. Whether you're an artist, an athlete, a musician, or someone still figuring things out, this school offers a space for you to grow and express yourself. One of the best parts of being a student here is the sense of community. The friendships formed here last a lifetime, and the experiences shape us into the people we are meant to become. From working together on class projects to cheering for our teams at sports events, every moment adds to the unique spirit of the school. There's a place for everyone, whether you love to study, socialise, or get involved in extracurricular activities.

Maxim Molokovskii (Class 5)

STUDENT VOICES

Beyond academic and social life, our school also instills important values. Kindness, respect, and perseverance are at the heart of everything we do. Whether it's through volunteer projects, leadership opportunities, or daily interactions, students at AA learn the importance of making a positive impact on the world around them.

Maxim Molokovskii (Class 5)

The best thing about AA is how everyone is so friendly. My favourite school memory was having Ms Afroditi as a teacher.

Alexis Tsigarides (Class 3)

Lessons are not boring. I make new friends.

Evgeny Kamysenko (Class 3)

I love this school. I have met great people.

Alen Alekian (Class 3)

I have met great people here.

Yeva Barabash (Class 3)

This school has it all: a biology lab, a well-equipped gym, a theatre, an ICT room and amazing teachers.

Bjorn Moberg (Class 2)

What's best about this school are the teachers.

Georgyi Vrykov (Class 2)

The best thing are the amazing teachers. My favourite memory is going to Milan with my school friends and eating carbonara.

Maya (Class 4)

I like everything at AA.

William Kunze Lin (Class 5)

The advice to future students of AA: stay curious, work hard and don't procrastinate.

Hamza (Class 3)

At AA, I like socialising with friends and meeting new people.

Maya Levi (Class 5)

I love our school trips and I like the people I have met here.

Alisa Alova (Class 3)

I like the canteen. It has great food.

Divit Bharadwaj (Class 2)

Editorial disclaimer: the above short opinion statements, though true to the submitted original, have been slightly altered (corrected, or downsized) to comply with our format and to meet our standards.

TEACHERS SPEAK

Throughout your educational journey, it's likely that you'll look for sources of motivation. These uplifting quotes from our AA teachers are a great place to turn to.

"Mistakes show that you are learning."

Sarah Wilkinson

"In maths, mistakes are not setbacks - the are steps on the journey to understanding. Keep growing, keep exploring."

Christiana Panteli

"Stay flexible - every class and student is different."

Stella Charalambous

"Failure is not losing the battle. Failure sets you up for future success."

Helen Alves

"Speak your mind and always be honest."

Nick Stefanou

"When life gives you mold, make penicillin."

Loukia Markou

"Chase knowledge, not grades."

Rafy Procopiou

TEACHERS SPEAK

"Education can, and often does, cost a lot of money. Ignorance could be even more costly, in other than monetary ways. Or, put more elegantly, 'If you think education is expensive, try ignorance.'"

B. Anastassiades

"Even though something may seem impossible, you have the power to make it possible."

Panayiota Anaxagorou

"Knowledge is important, but what you do with it is far more valuable."

Stavri Tsamourlidou

"Where there is a will there is a way. Follow your dreams."

Yiota Skitini



PARENTS SPEAK

"Thank you, everyone at American Academy, for not only educating our children but also inspiring them, challenging them, and occasionally 'wearing them out' (in the best way). We're grateful to the teachers, staff, and the larger community who made those past few years so meaningful. You've not only helped shape a student, but a confident young person ready for what's next!

**Maria and Andrew
Coudounaris**

"My child is very happy at AA. Staff are very kind and friendly, ready to offer advice and support whenever she needs it. Cheerful, smiling staff greet us in the mornings and afternoons and someone is always there to deal with queries quickly and efficiently. The AA school has a "family" feeling about it which embraces students and parents with care and attention."

Koulla Constantinou

"We've had a very positive experience at the school, as parents. Parent - teacher meetings and events involving us, adults, gave me a chance to talk to all of the teachers and find out more about the school and the teaching system. The school staff always make sure to pay attention to everyone. We feel included. Our child was able to gain a better understanding of what she wants to do in the future, and she got a lot of help figuring out what suits her best."

Mr & Mrs Opanasiuk

PARENTS SPEAK

"Graduating from the American Academy school was one of the most meaningful milestones in my life. And it wasn't just a school for me; it was a home away from home. The teachers were not only educators, but mentors and supporters. All students felt like a family. In every hallway, classroom and in every school event, I found a sense of belonging. The school shaped not only my academic path, but also the person I have become.

Years later, as a parent, I find myself sitting in the audience, watching my daughter walk across the same stage I once did. It's hard to describe the emotions that come with this experience: pride, nostalgia, even a touch of disbelief. She is completing the same journey I once did. In her, I see the continuation of a legacy. I remember walking through those same doors full of dreams - and now I see her doing the same with confidence, ready for the world.

There is something very special about seeing your child graduate from the same school that once felt like your own second home. It's not just a celebration of her achievements, but also witnessing that the school has remained that same nurturing and inspiring place across generations.

The American Academy school will always be a part of who we are - first for me, and now for her. It is a beautiful full-circle experience."

Elina Petrou



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