



Council For The Indian School  
Certificate Examinations

The Albert Barrow Memorial  
All India Inter School

# CREATIVE WRITING COMPETITION 2012

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# CHANGE

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**Albert Barrow**  
1918-1990





# Foreword



The world around us is changing at lightning speed, often without giving us time to catch our breath. The need of the times is to develop skills to adapt to the changes that we see all around us. In the sphere of education especially, there has been a sea change in various areas. Educators feel the need for new techniques of teaching, new approaches and new attitudes to meet the needs of our young students.

The Council for the Indian School Certificate Examinations is well aware of these new trends in society and in education. As a result, the theme for the Albert Barrow Memorial All India Inter School Creative Writing Competition 2012 is 'Change'. We wished to tap into the minds of our young students and find out their views on the changes that they are seeing all around us. The various entries that we have received in both the categories reveal that these young minds are sensitive to these changes. They are aware that change comes at a price and that all kinds of change are not necessarily beneficial to society. They have expressed their views in very lucid language, clearly and forcefully. We have also been impressed by the high level of creativity that the writings in this volume reveal. Choosing the best out of all the entries which have reached us was a difficult task. I hope you will enjoy reading these efforts of our young students as much as we have enjoyed compiling them for you.

I take this opportunity to congratulate and express my deep gratitude to all Principals and Teachers of our affiliated schools for the encouragement and nurturing that they have extended to their students to make this endeavour possible. To all those who participated in the competition, I would like to extend my good wishes and the hope that their creative efforts do not stop at this competition only. May all of you reach your chosen goals and be ready for the big changes that life has in store for you. I would also like to thank all those in the Council office who worked tirelessly to make this volume possible.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Gerry Arathoon'.

(Gerry Arathoon)

Chief Executive & Secretary

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**CHANGE IS GOOD**

**1**  
**CATEGORY**





**SHUBHAM KABU**

Class - XII  
St. Mary's School, Pune, Maharashtra

### St. Mary's School, Pune, Maharashtra

St. Mary's School was established in 1866, by the Sisters of the Community of St. Mary's the Virgin, an order established in England.

The school prepares the students for the ICSE & ISC Examinations. While academics are an important part of the curriculum, our mission has been to provide a well-rounded educational experience that will prepare students to face the challenges of the world.

The motto of our school is "I SERVE" and we endeavor to help our children in achieving their true potential not merely in intellectual understanding but also in aesthetic sensitivity & moral decisiveness, so that they can lead productive & responsible lives.



## CHANGE IS LIKE A RUNAWAY TRAIN SPEEDING ITS WAY INTO OUR LIVES

Change is like a runaway train,  
It rushes in and out of your world.  
One fine day you are a woman,  
When just some time back, you were a girl.  
One day you are counting crayons,  
The next, you are counting money.  
One day you are having baby food,  
The next, you are sipping coffee.  
One day you are learning differentiation,  
And how you wish it were the tables of five!  
Change comes into our lives without our knowing it,  
Stealthily, quietly without our being aware.

Yet, at times, change is rather unwelcome  
Into our stable, stagnant lives.  
We are so set in our daily routine,  
We have no time to think of doing things differently.  
We are so used to the old ways,  
It is hard to let anything new in.  
Take school for instance.  
It is extremely hard to leave.  
You have been there for so long,  
It is impossible to break free.  
You are familiar with the people there.  
You recognize each by face.  
It is almost like your second home,  
Then how can you leave that place?  
But the clocks won't wait.  
And neither will college admissions.  
You have to move on to something new,  
Never mind if it is daunting and unknown.  
Later you find that the change was not as  
you imagined it would be,  
You only have to keep an open mind.

Changes are mostly for the good,  
Though they may seem hard at the start.  
But you soon realize that it is fun to change.  
It is fun to try a new art.  
It helps you find new strengths,  
That you never thought you had.  
It helps you become stronger,  
To face whatever the future may hold.  
However, change may not always be too good.  
It really depends upon your choice.  
Some changes build you up better than before,  
While others shatter you and ruin your life.  
There's a fine line between right and wrong,  
That's what most of us fail to understand.  
There's a fine line between having a better tomorrow,  
And not having a tomorrow at all.

One has to be aware about the fact,  
That all one's actions have some consequences.  
One has to understand that any kind of change  
Has some risks attached.  
What we often forget is weigh the consequences,  
With the actions into which we blindly rush.  
Dazzled by glamour and glitz,  
We often take the wrong stand.  
Anxious parents and well – wishers can only stand by and  
wring their hands,  
As we rush thoughtlessly towards our doom.  
Thinking that the change that we are embracing,  
Is what we actually need and should accept.  
Not waiting to ponder and listen  
To that inner voice,  
Which always tells us what is right.

Let me narrate a story about change and its aftermath,  
It will show you how change has its share of  
light and dark moments.  
Two little boys lived down my lane,  
Two, with high ambitions of making it big.  
Hardworking parents, a stable background,  
All of life's gifts were theirs to hold and have.  
Yet, they wanted more, something bigger and better  
Something that would dazzle and impress.

So they decided to change their lot in life.  
Each chose his own particular way.  
One studied and burnt the midnight oil.  
Till he grew thin and pale. Yet he persevered.  
Determined to change and for the better.  
There wasn't an avenue that he didn't explore,  
Searching for the way to the top.  
The pinnacle was not within his grasp,  
But this was not because of lack of effort.

Of that there was more than enough to expend.  
The plateau that he reached did not match the heights that he  
had dreamt of.  
The change was not as drastic as he had wished.  
However, frustration did not affect him,  
As he had given it the best that he could.  
He was content with his lot,  
Accepting that this the most that change could do for him. At  
least, he had a peaceful and happy heart,  
And he had not lost all that was dear to him.

The other, wanted the pinnacle too.  
But he did not want to give what it takes.  
For each change he would ask why  
And remain obdurate in his stand.  
Life however has its own way of making us do  
What it wants of us.

So, slowly imperceptively, he began to change  
Sometimes without his quite knowing it.  
Each step forward meant a change, an adjustment, however small.

For you cannot stand at one place and go anywhere at all. You  
have to move ahead with the times,  
And give the world what it demands of you.  
Everything comes at a price.  
And often the price is change.  
This is what he had to learn.  
By the time he had approached his goal,  
He was no longer the same person as when he had begun.  
Some of it was for the better,  
But some of course what not what he had wanted at all.  
Change came into his life evoking mixed feelings.  
He could not say whether he was happy or sad.  
Often he found himself looking into the mirror,  
Not recognizing whom he saw there,  
Though flashes of his old self kept peeping out.  
He would wonder whether this was what  
he had reached for,  
When he had dreamt of reaching the stars.

Change as we all learn in time,  
Will not always be totally good or bad.  
But we have to be willing to try.  
You might achieve a better tomorrow.  
That to yourself you can't deny.  
Every winter that takes the summer heat away,  
Also takes away the greenery from the trees.  
Leaving them bleak and bare,  
But with the promise of another season of bloom.  
Every good change that you incorporate into your life,  
May make you lose out on something else too.  
But nothing in life is promised.  
Nothing in life is secure.  
Neither is anything known,  
As we set out on the adventure called change.  
You just have to trust that everything will be fine  
As you set out into the journey into the unknown.

It's refreshing to try something new.  
It's nice to have a change.  
Sometimes life tends to get a little bit mundane.  
That's the time we know we have to change.  
As Khalil Gibran said,  
"Let no sunrise find us where sunset left us."  
We should progress ahead every day,  
Or we will find that we have been left far behind.  
Bound by the same old chains,  
Doing the same rounds, boredom personified.

Like the night sky gives way to light,  
So must we, to change.  
It might not work out too well,  
But then tomorrow is another day.  
So don't hesitate too much and too long,  
And boldly take that first step towards change.  
Or you may just find yourself left behind with the old  
Because change is after all a runaway train.



**TUSHAR ANAND**

Class - XII

St. Thomas School, Ranchi, Jharkhand

### St. Thomas School, Ranchi, Jharkhand

St. Thomas School is a private unaided minority school run by the Mar Thoma Church founded in 1973. The school provides everything that is necessary for academic excellence and character formation. The school has consistently done well in academics and is ranked among the top five schools in Jharkhand for academic performance. The school motto this year is "Total Quality People" moulding children intellectually, physically, emotionally and spiritually. The school has a student strength of 3703 students from KG I to Class XII. The school provides ample facilities for arts, culture and sports.



## WINDS OF CHANGE

The auditorium was huge and dark, with the dais brightly illuminated. It was the 12th of March, 2012 and my school was the venue for the Renaissance All India Inter – School Extempore Competition. The competition was a very prestigious one, and as the host, I stepped up to the podium to announce the next speaker.

"Our next speaker from Emerald Girls' High School is Sanskriti Jha," I declared confidently, my vision temporarily blinded by the bright lights. A short fair girl, about seventeen years of age, rose slowly from the participant's dock at the left hand side of the stage and walked gracefully to the podium. She looked oddly uncomfortable as she stood beside me. A young volunteer came up from the right side of the stage and handed me a slip of paper. Glancing at it, I announced, "Our speaker will be speaking on, 'Development of India has increased the economic disparity between the rich and the poor.'"

As I stepped down, I reflected that this would be a tough proposition for the speaker. Hadn't development brought with it a host of opportunities which helped to bridge the divide? Meanwhile Sanskriti had closed her eyes onstage and become still. Her fingers beat a little tattoo upon her thigh as she frowned slightly, her face pensive. Fifty five seconds later, she stepped up to the microphone, adjusted it slightly and began to speak.

"Good evening ladies and gentlemen," she began in a soft compelling voice. Her eyes grew brighter with every second that she spoke and her hands move in rhythm with her words. Her speech expertly and movingly contrasted the lifestyle of various sections of society." An average economically backward person gets up before dawn, walks miles just to get water for her family and carries it home. This is the benefit of sixty years of Independence, modernization, economic progress." She went on in her forceful voice, "A financially challenged woman fends off starvation by recycling scraps of metal and plastic, earning less than fifty rupees a day." "The people who live in soaring high-rises, seeing the world through the tinted windows of their chauffeur driven Audis, cannot even begin to comprehend the lifestyle and compulsions of those who are economically backward. The amenities which the rich take for granted are rare luxuries for the economically challenged, only dreamt about, never experienced. Considered to be the dregs of society, their fate challenges them every day. The signs of development that we see all around us, do not even reach them. They have no access to a proper education, decent meals, clothes, medicine and so on. The glittering malls, airports, racetracks, five –star hotels are the stuff of which fairy tales are made of. A vast section of our society still goes to sleep on the hard pavement. The malls on that pavement spill out crowds every night who think nothing of spending thousands on a single night of entertainment. This is the true picture of the extraordinary lop-sided development that we feel proud about."



Sanskriti stepped away from the microphone and resumed her seat amidst thunderous applause, applause that did not seem to affect her at all. I moved on to announce the next speaker.

The clock struck five and the programme ended. The lights came on in the auditorium, a sign for everyone to leave. As I scanned the hall before leaving myself, I saw Sanskriti sitting alone on the bench. Playing the role of a good host, I went to her.

"Hey," I said in a soft gentle voice.

She seemed to wake from a trance and undid her linked fingers. She looked at me with her deep dark eyes and said, "Hi."

"Won't you be going home?" I asked.

"Yes." She replied simply and walked slowly towards the exit.

I followed her into the courtyard." So, you will be going home alone will you?" I asked." Will someone pick you up or do you have your own transport?"

She smiled, as if mocking me for asking such an elementary question." No I....."

"I can drop you off," I offered. "You see, we also provide a free car service for our guests," I joked.

I led her to the school gates where my car was waiting for me – a perk of hailing from a rich business family- something that I had always taken for granted.

I opened the rear door of the Mercedes and ushered her in, joking, "See not all of us can have chauffeur driven Audis. Some of us have to make do with a Mercedes.!"

She smiled and got in.

"So, I really liked your speech, "I told her.

"Thanks," she replied looking out of the window..

"So, where to?" I asked her, her destination.

"Dharavi," she said instantly, without thinking.

Dharavi was one of the biggest slums in Mumbai and as I stared at this girl who looked back at me defiantly in her neat impeccable uniform, something seemed quite off. I made no comment and we reached our destination in about forty-five minutes. The car had to be parked quite some distance away and I decided to walk her to her home.

"Home, sweet home," she announced brightly, opening the door to a single storied house with an asbestos roof. Asking me to wait, she went into the other room in the house to change. The room itself was not big. In one corner, two mattresses were laid out. It was obvious that they served as beds for the inhabitants of the house. Cooking utensils and a pot of water were arranged in one corner. An unusual feature of the room was the stack of old books all arranged with great care on an old tin trunk.

Presently Sanskriti came out, having changed her clothes. Her uniform was in her hands. Smoothening them, she placed them

neatly under the mattress." No electric ironing. So iron clothes the Dharavi way. Cool isn't it? She asked. I smiled weakly.

She went to the pot of water and dipped a glass into it. There was very little water in the pot and the glass seemed to scrape the bottom. "Sorry," she said. "I had to get up early today to go to the competition. There was no time to go to the communal tap to get water. Twenty families share one tap and it's quite an ordeal in the morning."

She walked me back down the narrow lane to my car. A group of children were playing cricket in the lane. She pointed to a child. "You see that kid over there? The one in the brown shirt?"

Mr. Brown shirt, in his role of a fielder was chasing the ball and coming towards us full-tilt." He lost his father when he was two. Today, he wants to be a doctor so that no one loses his father again."

"So that's his story, what's yours? I asked.

My father is a construction worker and ma is a housemaid. Seven mouths to feed is a hard task. I've been lucky. An NGO spotted my love for knowledge and has sponsored my education. Hence the fine clothes and fine education." Suddenly her soft face looked hard, determined." I will get out of this rut. I will succeed so that others like me can dream, can spread their wings and fly. I will bring about a change in their lives." Her eyes sparkled with her dreams. I stared at her wonderstruck. Never in my pampered existence had I been aware that there could be a life like this and yet there could be dreams like this.

As we parted, she pressed a small brass ring into my hand, saying simply, "Thank you."

As her slight graceful figure melted into the darkness, I realised that she had given me a lot to think about.

Another day, another competition. The topic: Challenges Today.

As I rose to speak, I said, "Good afternoon ladies and gentlemen. Today, I want to share something that I learnt a very short while ago. In this room here we have representatives of the future of our country – our youth. Our challenge – to bring about change, change that will eliminate the difference between the rich and the poor; change which will ensure equal opportunities for all; change that will eliminate starvation, homelessness, disease, gender inequality. Of what use is progress if only a select few enjoy its benefits. Society has to move forward as a whole. We the youth have to take the initiative. We have the power and the capability. Let us all take one small step to change the world and the small step will change into a giant leap for mankind. Thank you."

As I sat down to thunderous applause, the small brass ring gleamed gently in my tightly clenched fist.



**UPASA RAVI BORAH**

Class - XI

Sanskriti The Gurukul, Guwahati, Assam

### Sanskriti The Gurukul, Guwahati, Assam

A school with a difference in being just one of a kind in the city of Guwahati, Assam. It is the only day-boarding ICSE and ISC co-ed school which was founded in 2003. It believes in its motto '**Endless Possibilities**' and in its mission to live up to it. Sanskriti The Gurukul provides a platform to each and every child to tap his or her talents and to groom them into responsible and good individuals doing their best in whichever field they pursue. The school provides all facilities to students under the guidance of capable educators to nurture them towards excellence.



## BEYOND SCHOOL – THE CHANGES AND CHALLENGES AHEAD

### SCHOOL !!!

A place so serene, so calm, so close-to-my-heart, my temple of learning, my place of growing up, the place where I spent twelve years of my life, my second home.....

How can I leave this home, for a world beyond?

A big unknown world,

A world full of struggles,

With none to help, none to guide,

All on my own, for a journey so wide.

A tough journey where the road is unknown, uncertain

Where judgement is mine, decisions too,

Whether right or wrong only later will I know

When results starts showing and answers are out.

To tell the truth, I am partially scared of the life ahead.

To face the world all on my own.

My parents are always on my side, my teachers too.

Maybe I will get some more mentors along the journey as well.

But the ultimate decision will be mine to make.

Weighing the pros and the cons.

I have seen my brother's life after school,

Embarking on his journey all on his own.

He has got a life of his own

A life so very difficult from what it had been

a couple of years ago,

No connection with mom and dad,

except for the call at night.

Here, while in school,

Under the guidance of my loving teachers,

Who have seen me since I was two.

They know me throughout, in and out

But is this life going to end soon?

Like my childhood which is gone forever

When I used to babble and everyone would laugh

But now everything I say is weighed, taken seriously.

Here, with my mom and dad,

Under the cozy cocoon of their warmth and care,

I fear nothing, all my worries belong to Dad.

My decision has been taken, without me having to worry,

Will I be able to face the world alone

Without Mom, without Dad ?

Without anyone to take my worries and troubles.....

I doubt....

It's college after this, with lots and lots of studies,

Much much more than what I have now.

With thick voluminous books all around.

I'll have to fix my own routine, manage my own time all on my own.

But will I get teachers like my present ones  
Who are always ready to help me out,  
Give me a listening ear anytime, anywhere

Or will there be only lecturing professors  
Who will be least bothered whether  
I understand something or not...  
Will I get the help and support.  
The "moral" support and encouragement  
Which help me get rid of "exam fever":  
And keep me going...  
Or will my future educators only be  
More pressure and nightmares?

When I imagine myself working in a big company  
A corporate world, full of ideas and innovations  
Becoming a part of it;  
I feel glad, happy for sometime  
But then, when I read the paper, hear the news,  
Of all the people who have given up due to work load,  
Of all the "Depression" stories;  
I get scared, nervous....  
What if I will be working hard and  
Earning in millions one day and the next day,  
I would have nothing – no job, no home....  
Will I be able to get hold of myself and start anew?

What if I rise high, very high  
To the excellence leaving all the others behind,  
So high that  
When I look down from that height,  
I would not find anyone to hold onto,  
To look forward to, to trust,  
To lend a shoulder to cry on....  
What if I am left with no other option  
Other than to jump and give up?

I wish these GOLDEN DAYS would stay for time immemorial,  
Under the loving folds of my teachers  
Under the wings of my school,...  
But these days are numbered, as  
"Nothing Lasts Forever"

School was where it was fun always,  
Friends all around with joy everywhere  
No tensions, no worries, a care-free life,  
Beyond school, will be a life full of worries and tensions,  
All friends gone, replaced by co-mates.  
A cut-throat competition where survival is of the fittest.  
The best survives the others fall in the race.  
I have to be the best to stand out,  
Because no one cares about the crowd.  
Once out of school, I will not be bound to  
anything, anymore  
No hard-and-fast rules, no regulations.  
Some falter and fall in this freedom,

But I will have to get hold of myself,  
And march forward in the journey to fulfill my dreams.

Sometimes I think about the world beyond  
A world 'on my own', I wonder what would it be like....  
I have heard,  
This world is a dark, heinous place.  
It's a big bad world out there.  
All professional, all selfish, all deceptive.  
It's a cut-throat competition everywhere.  
But my Dad says,  
"It's up to you to decide,  
Whether the world is good or bad.  
Turn the bad into good, see the positive everywhere.

Make this place a place to live in.  
Spread the beauty, spread the joy.  
There will be difficulties, no doubt;  
But face each hurdle with struggle and courage  
Never back up, never give up,  
Try on till your last chance.  
Be on the right track, and never think low.  
I will always be on your side,  
But how can I be forever with you?  
Decisions are for you to make,  
Think right and be on the right path.  
Never think evil of others....  
Always be good to everyone,  
Even to your worst enemy and  
You will be turning a foe into a friend.  
Be humble, be gentle,  
Win the world with your love."  
I pray to the Lord,  
Help me to see the right path in my life ahead,  
Help me to differentiate the good and the evil,  
Help me to choose my options well.  
Give me wisdom, give me knowledge  
So that I can see the world through my own eyes.  
Help me so that I can make this world  
A better, happier place to live in.  
Help me to help those who need my help  
Help me so that, being on the right track,  
I can fulfill my dreams,  
I can fulfill my parents' wish.

My parents, who have done everything for me,  
Given me everything, all the joys  
Of the world, all the happiness,  
Working hard day and night just for me.  
Keep them happy, keep them safe.  
May I be able to fulfill their expectations,  
Their dreams, their hopes and their wishes,  
Which are formed for me.  
Lord, make me brave, give me courage,  
Make me strong enough;  
To face this world, to overcome every hurdle  
And to make this world a better place to live in.



**KEVIN RAMBHIA**

Class - XII

Hiranandani Foundation School  
Thane, Maharashtra

### Hiranandani Foundation School, Thane Maharashtra

Hiranandani Foundation School, Thane established in the year 1999, today boasts of being an accredited school, one of the few schools in the country to receive its accreditation from NABET. The school is growing into one of the finest co-educational ICSE schools in the country living up to its motto 'Mens Sana in Corpore Sano' Latin for 'A Sound Mind in a Sound Body'. The motto has become an integral part of every Hiraete.

The school lays a lot of impetus on honing every aspect of a child's personality, be it academics, sports or communication skills by providing an ambience that works towards nurturing the child into a happy and well equipped human being.



## AN OPEN LETTER FROM A GRANDPARENT TO HIS/HER GRANDCHILD

Dear Percy,

A week later I shall get up and say to my bedraggled self "Kevin, old man, it's your birthday today", and it will be the 88<sup>th</sup> time I say that, or perchance 87<sup>th</sup>; I'm, almost an old man now, pardon my memory (or the lack thereof). However, my less-than-impressive memory has always retained one incident in what you kids call high-definition – the day I first met you; the day you were born my grandson.

My son called me the previous night to tell me that your mother's water bag had broken and she was being rushed to the maternity home and I remember the unbounded joy with which I drove to the hospital at 3 a.m. Yes, my daughter was bringing life into the world!

However, this very statement sent my aforementioned joy into the inevitable downward spiral. What kind of world was my grandchild coming into? Was this what I wanted for him? A ruthless dog-eat-dog world where human kind was reaching the point of no-return?

You may wonder why I ramble on thus and rightly so. In the eighty-odd years of my existence, I have seen things the people of today haven't. I have seen my country up against the chainsaw that was servitude, I have experienced the feeling of liberation and independence, I have seen men slay each other in the name of country and religion and race; watched as men stared at their own insanity. I have watched the chuckle of a newborn and the light fading away from a dying man's eyes. I have seen change on both sides of the wheel, and I have made it through it all to stand (or hunch) where I am today, in a maternity ward, writing to my unborn grandchild.

I write to you not to intimate you about the life you are about to embark upon, but to tell you the things life will not tell you. Consider this to be an old man's advice, if you may (but never shall you refer to me as 'old' in the slightest), for this I wish to convey to you before my time is done (which, mind you, is a long long way off).

Many great men have said many great things about the philosophy of life. I tell you not how to live your life. I simply wish to get you ahead of the curve.

"From today begins your venture  
The Great unknown beckons you,  
To a journey beyond conjecture,  
Innocence be your virtue, your strength.  
In a world of mayhem; chaotic the future,

Wrong shall forever entice to entrap you,  
In a bottomless barrel where joys are few,  
Learn to stand up, face the scorcher,  
Or be scorched, speak not of the torture,  
For injustice is the norm, the parity unbecoming,  
Sees light in thy chamber of death and gore,  
Rise shall that light till evermore.

Men, they shall fight you and each other,  
Without discrimination of foe and brother,  
Set apart yourself in this cycle,  
Save you nor Peter nor Michael,  
Escape the rut, be the change, oh successor!  
Raise yourself above all that is petty,  
Fight the grain, be the fiercer  
Known to your world as its enforcer.

Learn to account for those around you,  
Live your life in your own virtue,  
Your mind, your tool, potent strong,  
Revolt against all wrong;  
In you, mine eyes can see,  
Flickering shadows of the young me.  
Times have changed from then to now  
Virtue and vileness line the fence,  
But you, oh unborn grandson of mine,  
Have meadows to roll in and peaks to climb.

Remember, forget not, the ones you adore,  
Your only hope in oceans of despair,  
Counting on yourself gets you far, in life  
What shall to the heights take you  
Is belief in the Lord and belief anew,

Learn to get up and learn to get by,  
Time's hollowness learn to identify,  
Wait for your turn at the glory promised  
Think not of all that is already achieved.

Forward your path from crib to the goal  
The past is the mirror of moments gone by  
Ahead shall you march on, on son of mine  
Let not success displace your sense of right  
Glance over it with a converging lens,  
Lose not heart nor cry over failure,  
He makes the outcome at the right tenure.

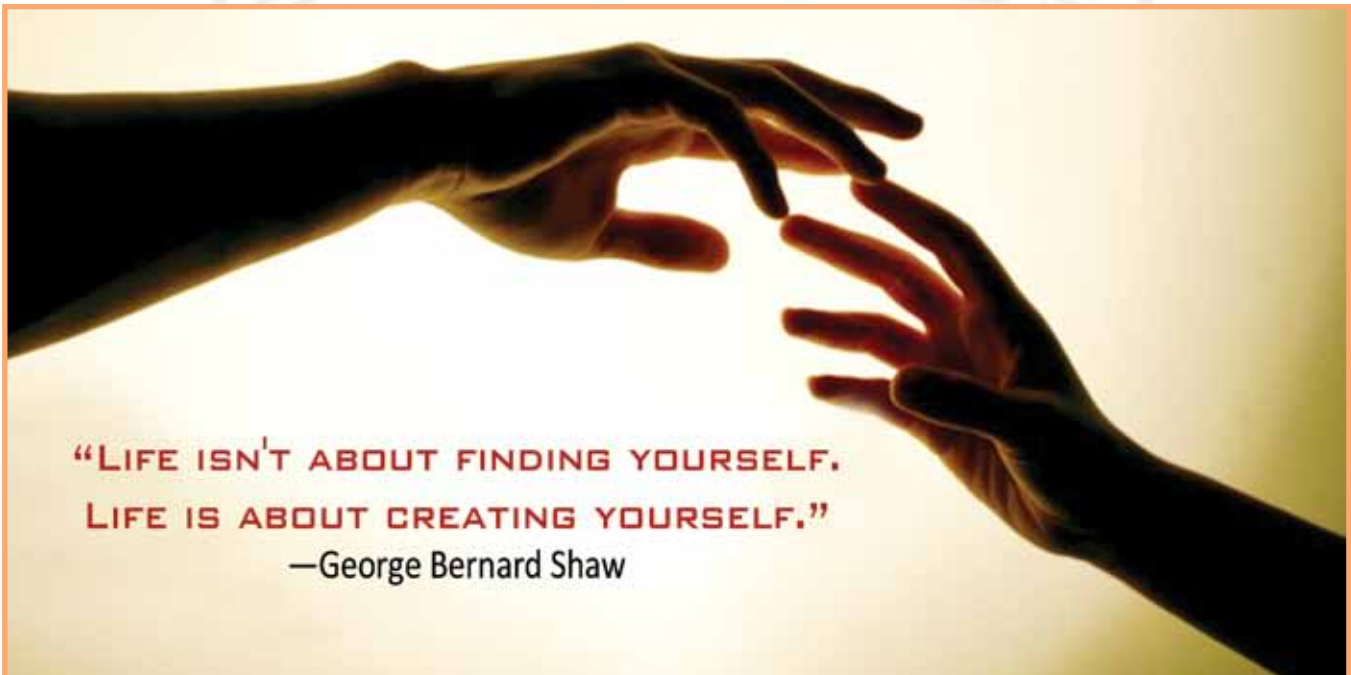
Puppets shall encircle you and,  
Pierce your bosom with merciless hand,  
Be wary, possess that skill of nature,  
Contend but deceive not your own preceptor,  
Life shall throw at you, stick and a scepter  
To reach the maximum of each give it your best

Live thus that you shall some virtues project,  
In which you shall be the subject,  
That is all I speak, whilst here I dream  
What I envision for you, unborn child of mine.

One day, when you read this (and if the Lord has taken me into custody) may you remember this as the day your not-so- old man may have reached his highest dream.

Yours lovingly,

Grand-dad





**SHILANJANI BHATTACHARYYA**

Class - XII

Calcutta Girls' High School  
Kolkata, West Bengal

### Calcutta Girls' High School, Kolkata West Bengal

Calcutta Girls' High School was founded in 1856 under the patronage of Lord Canning. It was supported by Evangelical denominations of the city. In 1877, the management of the school was handed over to Bishop J. M. Thoburn of the Methodist Episcopal Church.

Calcutta Girls' High School has over the years nurtured little children and seen them blossom into individuals full of love and compassion. The school is committed towards imparting holistic education in a congenial environment where every student's potential is nurtured and manifested.

The ideal of service is set before the pupils who are expected to give themselves unselfishly to their immediate duty. It is hoped that the pupils of Calcutta Girls' High School will leave the school with a strong conviction that, in the words of Gandhiji, "Happiness consists not in what you can get, but in what you can give."



## WINDS OF CHANGE

Behind red brick walls and iron gates,  
Through the orifices in the curtains of mist.....  
The inferno surfaces...  
Under the skulls of a non-chalant life,  
Resonating unchained melodies,  
That ushers in a resurrection.  
The music intensifies  
At a deep blue distance  
And the shores of the world are washed  
With the breathless winds,  
Soaring suavely, with the odyssey,  
Called "Change"  
"All that you touch  
You change.  
All that you change  
Changes you.  
The only lasting truth  
Is change  
God is change."

- Octavia E. Butler

Beneath the palette of the azure sky, our cosmos exudes an eternal voyage that evolves with time, distance and existence. It is the flames that flare brightly in the spheres of development and advancement. It is "the winds of change", which emerge as the ultimate reality which is all pervasive and overwhelming. It is the mighty surge of mists and trails that rekindles the dying ember and intensifies the flakes of ancient flames.

The wind, the pulse,  
The meandering ripples to be formed  
Of change, and variety  
To meander into a gleaming future,  
In which the posterity stands,  
Wide-eyed in wonder,  
Wrapped, and rapt,  
In the veil of amazement.

The ebbing waves let loose the winds of change which linger on, hovering and conquering every abyss of human consciousness in the cosmos.

"There is nothing permanent in life except change" - Heraclites.

Indeed, the very essence of change is deeply embossed in the crevices of our existence as it forms the very first step of our lives, our first rendezvous with the teeming multitudes of the world we live in. The winds of change are juxtaposed as a permanent constant with the essence of living. It emerges as an unfurling reality, an invincible entity that stands triumphant in every realm of our being. Change is the spice of life. It is this diverse variety that cradles an aura of life and love, striding on towards a rhapsody of versatility and creativity. The mighty



appendages of change gloss over the images of nature, ushering in the wisps of the reviving rain, that make the florid petal blush a deeper shade, exuding its grace and beauty. The winds of change sweep past the trajectory of the sun, making the same radiant flower, wither and dry, creating a void for a fresh lease of life. The winds of change incite the bud to spread its threshold to shower its fragrance on the beautiful petals surrounding it. The winds of change trace the entire journey of a child from the womb to the tomb surfacing the eternal truth of change being a common entity in our walk from the cradle to the grave. Thus, the winds of change heave ahead, interspersing each nook and cranny of the globe with its diverse facets of variety.

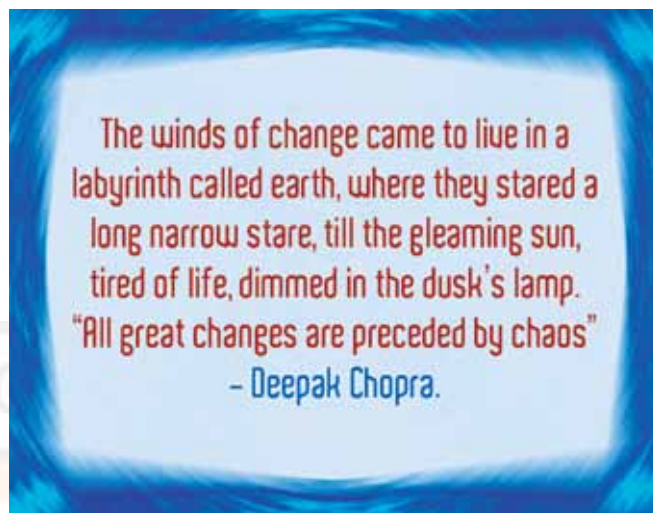
The winds of change came to live in a labyrinth called earth, where they stared a long narrow stare, till the gleaming sun, tired of life, dimmed in the dusk's lamp. "All great changes are preceded by chaos" - Deepak Chopra.

The chaos surfaced, submerged within the frost and the delirium of a dreaded drama, that held on to the oars of monotony, musing over limitations and the gory aftermath of colliding with the faceless multitude called "change", that ruthlessly promises to personify the future. As the annals of time sweep past, it intensifies the "winds of change" igniting them with the depth that echoes and pervades the waves of a reluctant sea and the stubborn pink petals strewn on the sky's face, lines, shapes and shades coalesced into an invincible entity called change which looked away from the yesteryears and ahead, into the gaping future armed with the restless, pulsating spirit called life. The globe of today has witnessed a sea of changes in various facets of its being.

"Sometimes good things fall apart so that better things can fall together" – Marilyn Monroe.

The winds of change have swept across the human society resulting in dynamic alterations both in "macro" as well as "micro" concepts. These, being in a state of constant flux have staged a transformation in the hues of society. While society seems to be drifting towards capitalism from a distant feudalism, the concept of a chauvinistic society is becoming nebulous, as the winds of change have brought about a booming empowerment in the women of our society. They are at the helm of many labour forces while in major parts of the world, women efficiently double up as a homemaker and also the carrier of the sceptre at the workplace. There have also been certain sea changes in the values and cultures of the present generation. A multitude of trends such as aping the West and devoting huge importance to the galaxy of gizmos and gadgets has definitely eroded many of their values and morals, resulting in a drift from virtue to vice. They seem to have been veiled with elements of superficiality and artificial indulgences.

Change has also tread in the arena of cinema. From the silent sweeps to the soaring speech, the winds of change have brought about colour from monotony and mirrored the reality



of the world we live in. As society tends to transform cinema has risen to heights which mirror and sometimes judge its course, sometimes even giving us a peep into the future.

The winds of change have evolved the game of cricket into the swift twenty overs matches of the Indian Premier League, while it has also caused a gleaming contrast in music which has emerged revamped, repacked and rejuvenated, aided by complex sound manipulation. From the first stereo records to the introduction of cassettes in 1964, the first ipod in 2001, the music of today has carved out a deeper place in our hearts, catalyzed by the winds of change. The winds of change have ushered in transitions in job opportunities, enhancing competition and stimulating corruption. The tints and tones of our world are resplendent with technologies and the world wide web which has catalyzed an epic change in our life styles.

In our daily lives, we are inundated with information from news media to advertising, which have encompassed new trends like online shopping sprees and development of business ventures on the world wide web. This age of knowledge will usher in an epoch of continuous change on an accelerating basis.

"We are the change we've been waiting for" – Barack Obama.

The prism of humanity voices an unflinching claim of emerging triumphs in the voyage of riding on the "winds of change". The days of the world, pigmented with the veils of splendour, converge into a reverberant roar of the tumultuous and invincible winds of change. It is a singular entity on the voyage of discovery, chasing, seeking and absorbing the absolute truth of life. It is a matter of perception, emulsified and strewn around on stray boulevards of the sea.... Light rides on you, the droplets slide by, we look away from the yesteryears smothered in dark oblivion and gleam majestically at the hope and the meandering optimism, that pervades the shadows of the nooks and crannies, sweeping on to glorious ascents. The winds of change, transcend and embrace reality, love and life, in this panoramic world of darkness.

**HANA MASOOD**

Class - XI

Jamnabai Narsee School, Mumbai  
Maharashtra**Jamnabai Narsee School, Mumbai, Maharashtra**

Jamnabai Narsee School has nearly four decades in the field of education and is today identified as an institution that is run on sound values, inculcating in its students a love for home and hearth while preparing them, to be global citizens, who can carve a niche for themselves wherever in the world they go.

Education is the process of actualizing our latent divinity. This traditional Indian philosophy followed in the school from the time of its inception translates itself into respect for the child and his appropriate needs. Education imparted in an environment of love, recognition of love, recognition of individual differences, and acceptance of the child's strengths and weaknesses as the materials to work with has been the verbalized and non verbalized dictum of the founder fathers of the institution.

**PEARLS OF WISDOM****AN OPEN LETTER FROM A  
GRANDPARENT TO HIS/HER  
GRANDCHILD****D**ear Ali,

They say that every generation revolts against its fathers and makes friends with its grandfathers. As I held you as a baby, I wondered about the innocence of childhood, and came to the conclusion that children, though misunderstood as the least wise of all generations, teach the most to everyone around them.

As a toddler, you often asked about the long, discoloured scar on my neck. I always avoided answering your innocent question as I feared that you would not understand. But now, as you are eighteen, the age of maturity, I will proudly tell you my tale, and the wonderful things that life has taught me.

I was born in Chittagong, which is now a part of Bangladesh, to a well educated and well reputed Muslim family. Your great-grandparents were loved by the entire community and were known for their warmth and hospitality. My father was a senior officer with the police and my mother ran an institute for the visually impaired. I grew up with three siblings, your great-aunts Saba, Khadija and your late great-uncle, Abdul Zafar. My brother and I served in the East India Company as the Chief Manager and General Manager of Chittagong respectively.

Now, assuming that you remember your history, there was a lot of turmoil in our country and at the time, we were treated like slaves in our own nation. When the great Mohammed Ali Jinnah visited Chittagoing, he recruited many a Muslim youth into his Muslim League, including my dear elder brother. I, on the other hand, refused to join, as some of my closest friends from the Company were Hindus. Ali, at this point in my life I was not only looked down upon by my family, who believed in social reform, but also by the entire Muslim community. According to me, faith is something that is subjective. There are no good or bad followers of a religion. There are just followers; believers. The Quoran is our guide, Ali, and in it lie the answers to everything. It says that one must live in peace and harmony with people of other faiths, and if one does not, one must not expect them to show us respect.

I met your grandmother when I was twenty-three, during my posting in Calcutta. It was what you would call, "love at first sight". She was an extremely eccentric, vivacious and beautiful young woman who, along with her mother, ran a women's shelter. She was only seventeen, but we got married soon after my tenure in Calcutta was over, about two years after we



You must be the change you wish to see in the world.  
– Mahatma Gandhi

met. About six months later, I was recruited as a General in the army. I was in charge of the finances, so there was no real field work. Still, I was required to spend weeks in Delhi, away from my beloved wife and parents. Being the youngest sibling, I had all the responsibility of being an emotional support to them. My brother disconnected from all of us and moved to Lucknow, where he was shot dead by the British forces at the age of thirty-nine. This year was not only important for me as I lost my only brother, but also for the country, for this was the year we attained independence.

Ali, India is a free country, but it still has not understood the true meaning of independence. Back in 1947, there was great rejoicing and lot of celebration, for we had shown the British what we really were, but social barriers still existed in our society; we were free from the invaders, not from ourselves.

We lived in Chittagong until the great war, the partition took place. Your grandmother was pregnant with our first child, and everything was going well until the war broke out. Houses were vandalized, people were beaten and ruthlessly killed and Muslims were pressurized into living in Pakistan. Our house was burned down, Ali, everything we owned and built from our own hard work was up in flames. My parents, who were old and ailing, succumbed to the smoke and dust around them. Everyone told me to go to Pakistan, but when I refused, they hit me with a hot iron rod, which left the scar on my neck. As you know, Bangladesh was East Pakistan at the time, so I was technically a Pakistani citizen, but when the war was in full swing in the late 1960s, your grandmother and I fled and sought shelter in Bombay. This was the worst time for us, Ali, as not only did we lose our house, our parents and eventually our baby, we lost ourselves. The next few years are a blur in my memory and I only recall grief. But as we were in Bombay, the city that has a million opportunities, we caught up with our lives and found happiness once more, in the eyes of a child, your father, who we decided to adopt as we were not ready to have another child. Yusuf was deprived of many things that we would

have provided him with if it were not for our age. He was strong about everything, Ali, a very mature boy who brought us out of shambles and was loved by everyone. He met your mother in college and married her while they were still in college, and they had you and your sister Zara soon after.

Ali, the scar on my neck is not something that needs to be feared. In fact, it is a privilege to have something that will remind me of my past in this old age. I wear the scar with pride as it is a symbol of my strength and perseverance.

Now I know you will learn a lot through your own experience in this adventure that we call life, and I can say with assurance that you will be a successful man. But before you start your journey, I want to give you a few pointers as the next twenty years are the longest years of your life, and at this age, you will be embracing a whole lot of change.

First of all, learn to trust. Accept that not everyone will believe in the things that you do and that everyone is different. Keep an open mind and welcome change with open arms and through every problem, every obstacle that you face in life, you must remain calm and collected. Never let go of your beliefs and never surrender your faith because of the influence of others. Be true to yourself and to everyone around you, and most of all, respect those who are respectable, for they are sure to reciprocate this respect.

Ali, living in history is like finding oneself in a shuttered mansion to which one has been brought blindfolded, trying to imagine what it might look like from the outside. I have no regrets, just lessons learned.

I hope you have a prosperous life ahead. Remember, I love you very much and my blessings will always be with you.

Your loving grandfather,

General Akbar Mir





**ANANYA SEN**

Class - XII

Bishop Cotton Girls' School  
Bangalore, Karnataka

## Bishop Cotton Girls' School, Bangalore Karnataka

The Bishop Cotton Girls' School began modestly with a few students as one co-educational school in a rented house at High Grounds in 1865. We have now expanded into separate schools for boys and girls with approximately 11000 students.

Through the decades, the school has kept faith in the dreams of the founding fathers.

We believe in a holistic education that reaches beyond the classroom. In academics, we give them world class education, taught by staff that are highly qualified, motivated and committed and aided by state-of-the-art teaching methods and equipment.

Academics and extra-curricular activities stand on par with each other, as both are required to develop into healthy individuals. While developing body and mind we do not forget the soul. We gently remind ourselves that without God's help we "Labour in vain".

We remain steadfast to the words of our school song "On straight On, On Cottonians On".



## CHANGE IS LIKE A RUNAWAY TRAIN SPEEDING ITS WAY INTO OUR LIFE

Meet Anastasia Parker, a novelist, a traveller and a woman who is twenty five years of age, with a weakness for Italian food. Right at the moment, she is standing on a beach in Long Island, one of the most beautiful States of the USA, allowing the ocean breeze to pass through her black waves of hair. She is armed with her usual mug of morning coffee, without which she cannot start her day. She is in a relaxed mood; she is at peace, throwing all of her life's troubles away, for there were many.

As a novelist, she was always meeting deadlines. Her desk back at home in New York was always strewn with papers, books, pens and on those papers, she would have scribbled something, perhaps a new idea. The sides of her desk would be stained with coffee stains which she never bothered to clean. Sleepless nights had resulted in dark circles under her eyes. Her closet was mostly filled with books rather than clothes. Even when she decided to take a break like this, she would always plan ahead systematically, wanting to go back to her untidy desk and just write – it was as if her body was addicted to the characters she brought to life on paper, like they were some sort of drug.

However, she loved her job and could not dream of any other life. Even in the restlessness of her soul, she had adapted to consistency and routine. She was quite content. Especially now, considering her little vacation to Long Island with her confidant and boyfriend, Lionel.

On heading back to their hotel, the receptionist addressed her, informing that she had a phone call while she was away, and that a number was left behind for her to call back. She failed to recognize the number and dialled it anyway, fearing an emergency.

It had been more than just an emergency. News came about her sister and brother-in-law's death due to a bomb blast in New York. This piece of information hit her like a ton of bricks, and she gripped the edge of the receptionist's desk for support. The hand holding the receiver shook, becoming sweaty, as she registered the words of the man at the other end. The blast had occurred at an area where the riot had taken place in the middle of Manhattan, and her sister and husband just had been at the wrong place at the wrong time.

Anastasia's head reeled, she cursed herself for never being close to her own sister. She also thought about how the main reason she had decided to take this vacation was to escape the riot – which had long been predicted.

That was when she realized that the man at the other end of the phone had still been talking “Ma’am, according to her will, we are supposed to give you the custody of her daughter”. There must have been a mistake. The first thing that crossed her mind as she reflected aloud was “Alex had a will?” Lionel proposed that they fly back to New York immediately.

The phrase “everything seemed to change so fast” was perhaps an understatement. One minute she had been vacationing in Long Island, and the next, she was raising her sister’s child.

Instead of first putting on her morning coffee, when the sun rose, she found herself boiling milk for Gen, and then running to her neighbours to ask for cereal because her carton, meant for one, was over. Her desk needed to be arranged, lest Gen’s curious hands disrupted her work. In the afternoons, instead of devoting herself to her writing, she had to make time for Gen. On school days, she would have to drive her and in the evening remember to pick her up. There were many occasions when she would remember too late and arrive at the school with her foot pressed hard on the accelerator, only to find Gen patiently waiting for her in an almost deserted school field. Little Gen seemed to adapt to this sudden change a lot faster and more smoothly than Anastasia herself.

Anastasia struggled with this, and fought hard to adapt everyday. It seemed strange to refer to books about children to understand Gen better, instead of reading her classics. Paying more attention to Gen’s behaviour and needs tired her out, though Gen was not a particularly boisterous child. However, children required attention regardless of how good they were. One night, Gen requested politely, “Ann, could you tell me a bedtime story?” Anastasia realized the trick of coming up with plots for a story, edited for a five year old every night – and this helped her write better. Before the year was out, she published a collection of children’s stories. The need for going back to her old life seemed to diminish.

Before she could meet her niece, Anastasia had been interviewed, searched, checked, questioned, and made to sign a pile of papers. These incidents were all a blur to her and nothing ever particularly sunk in until Gen, Alex’s five year old daughter had been brought before her.

Anastasia felt frozen to her chair, her gaze on her niece who looked back at her with eyes that surveyed a stranger. They were round, innocent eyes, which were perhaps scared at the thought of her mother never returning. Eyes that reminded her so much of Alex.

That was when Anastasia burst into tears, holding her niece tight. She didn’t know how she would be able to handle this responsibility. She was a writer, not a mother! She had no idea whether her home would be suitable for a five year old. Everything seemed to change so fast. This had to be some sort

of punishment for not being close enough to Alex, to always have their differences.

She had loved her sister, nevertheless, and she had accepted custody of the child to honour her memory.

However, she would still manage to forget about picking her up from school, or sometimes serve Gen coffee instead of milk. Gen would never complain, and sometimes Anastasia wished that she did, maybe it would help correct these mistakes.

One evening, she took Gen to the park and sat by the swings with a book, craving some time to herself. Gen played by the swings, as Anastasia lost herself in the world of Harper Lee’s “To Kill a Mockingbird”. It was after a while, when she was reflecting about Scout Finch the child narrator in the story, that she remembered Gen. Turning her attention to the swings, she gasped when there was no sign of her niece. She flew to her feet, frantically looking around, her heart caught in her throat.

Craving for her old life vanished – it did not even seem relevant at the moment. She could not bear to lose Gen, she could not bear to not read her stories at night, to not serve her Fruit Loops in the morning, to not answer her curious questions, to not have those wild, round eyes observe everything around expectantly, to not have the tiny patter of her feet follow her around the house.

Feverish with panic, she raced across the park, searching everywhere, asking a few mothers with their strollers if Gen was anywhere to be seen.

Sometimes, it is hard to adapt to change – it is something inevitable and involuntary, not to mention unexpected. But not all changes are bad. Even the most drastic ones, taking Anastasia’s story for example, can turn our lives around and for good.

Anastasia realized that now, her heart lifting when she heard a familiar voice cry out, “Ann”.

Turning around, Anastasia found Gen holding Lionel’s hand. Brightly, the little girl piped up, “I saw him outside and when to say hi!” Lionel beamed at her, with a twinkle in his eye which meant he understood that Anastasia had been worried.

Laughing, and on the verge of crying, Anastasia knelt down, beckoning Gen to come and give her a hug. With a huge smile, Gen broke free of the grip on Lionel’s hand and raced towards her Aunt, falling into her arms.

Meet Anastasia Parker, a novelist, and a traveller with an eye for Italian food, whose life was hit by change exactly like a runaway train – and for a woman who was so used to consistency, she adapted to that change out of love for her niece, because honestly, she could not dream of any other life.

**SUBHRATA SINHA**

Class - XII

Sacred Heart Convent School  
Jamshedpur, Jharkhand

### Sacred Heart Convent School, Jamshedpur Jharkhand

Sacred Heart Convent School, established by the Congregation of Apostolic Carmel Sisters, has been working for the glorious task of educating the girl child for 67 years now. We, at Sacred Heart focus on imbuing in the students, intellectual, social and moral values, so they may take on leadership roles, and prove to be responsible citizens of the country. An excellent infrastructure, a good faculty, and the noble vision of women's empowerment has made Sacred Heart Convent School one of the most renowned schools in Jamshedpur and the country today, and will definitely be a legacy for tomorrow.



## WINDS OF CHANGE

**"T**he winds may blow to freeze my breath  
The winds may blow to lead me to death,  
But I will stand high with my heart still strong,  
Till the winds of change come to blow along."

I put my pen aside and placed the small black diary in my pocket. I was not one of those persons you would expect to keep a diary, and that gave me a reason to be even more secretive about it. I never told anyone about my diary, not that I had many people to talk to. What I had just written in my diary had sounded good in my head when I had read it somewhere. I may have heard it somewhere too. I had no idea how I knew it, but somehow I was reminded of it, and though I could remember only half of the original I put in a few words of my own and decided to write it down.

I looked at my watch. It was a rustic looking watch, supposed to be silver in colour, but rusted at the edges. It could be sold at some antique shop if I lied about its age. The watch hardly ever worked, and I had to repair it often, but it was one of my most prized possessions. It was one of those things that had been with me before my life had changed. I pushed the thoughts out of my mind, and staring at my watch, saw that it was time to leave. I had been given a duty, and I had to complete it. It did not matter whether what I was about to do was right or wrong. I was about to do it anyway, as that was my job. I was about to kill someone. I had been paid to do so, and it was not my first time.

Winter or summer had never appealed to me. What excited me were the monsoons. Perhaps it felt like the rain would wash away all the wrong I had done, or maybe the winds just brought back memories. When I was eight, my mother was the only one in my life. My father had died a year back and I had no siblings. My mother would take on odd jobs to make ends meet. Although I was a boy, and my mother probably loved me for it, I knew I was a liability more than an asset. I was one of those boys who had grown up in the dirt, and would one day die in it, hidden forever from the eyes of the world. As I sat outside little shops or temples, begging, I would see rich people, happy, satisfied, and it angered me, knowing that I could never have all that they had. On one windy day, during the monsoons, two men came into my house, and killed my mother right before my eyes. They picked me up and took me with them, telling me that if I worked for them, I would soon be a rich boy. Tears rolled down my cheeks as the wind blew my hair over my eyes and the image of my mother blurred.

The men worked for some secret group of people. They were actually terrorists, but they never told me much about their work. For the next two years, they trained me. They trained me to kill. At the end of the two years, I could kill a man blind folded. I had tried to run away initially, but there was something that



You can't change  
the direction of the wind,  
but you can  
adjust  
the sails  
to reach your  
destination..



save him and bring him back, along with me, so that he could be trained the way I had been trained six years back. This was the first time I had been asked to save someone, and it was more difficult than killing someone. I was aware that if I saved the boy's life, he would end up like me, and the mere thought of it scared me. I had nothing when I entered this life, but this boy had. The boy had happiness, he had a family and most of all, had peace. The wind blew again, and I could see the boy giggling, as the bushes seemed

kept me there. They convinced me that my mother was happier now, and I chose to believe them. For the first time in my life, my life had purpose. I never knew the people I was asked to kill. I was either shown their photos or given their address, and the job had to be done. I was paid immensely, and I had all that I had hoped for in my earlier life. I was a sniper, and I was good at my work. I remember the first man I had to shoot. It had been difficult, but I had pushed my human feelings aside, and pulled the trigger. I preferred windy days, as it reminded me of the day I had walked into this life. There were times when I wanted to sit and cry out loud, but I was not allowed to do so as it would make me weak. When someone saw me, I would pretend that the wind had blown something into my eye.

Today I had been given the job of killing a family of four, and I was expected to make no mistakes. I walked outside, ready for my task, with no hesitation in my eyes. I stationed myself on a tall building in front of a house from which the family was to come out. I waited there, and a million thoughts crossed my mind, but I stayed focussed. Very soon, the family came out. The parents sat on the front porch, as their children played in the garden. As I was aiming at the father of the family, and was ready to pull the trigger, my eyes went to their little son. He was about nine, and looked carefree, and innocent. He reminded me of myself when I was eight. I had been given instructions to

to dance. It was now that I realized why I loved windy days so much. It was not because I had memories linked to it; it was because I wanted to be like the wind. The wind was free, and blew without barriers. The wind did not wait for the right time it just blew when it had to. But the wind had the power to change. If the wind was harsh and blew like a storm, it could also console one by blowing like the soft breeze. If I wanted to be like the wind, this was my time to do it this was my time to change. That was when I decided who I had to be, who I wanted to be. I placed the gun to my head and pulled the trigger.

I had always imagined it to be painful, but it was not. I felt peaceful, I felt serene. The wind blew as I fell to the ground, carrying me in its soft arms, and almost whispering in my ear, it told me I was free. The winds had taught me to change, to be what I had always wanted to be.

As my mind plunged into darkness, the last thing that flashed across my mind was my diary, and the last thing that I had written in it

"The winds may blow to freeze my breath  
The winds may blow to lead me to death,  
But I will stand high with my heart still strong,  
ill the winds of change ....."

**AYUSHI SAH**

Class - XII

St. Mary's Convent Inter College  
Allahabad, Uttar Pradesh

### St. Mary's Convent Inter College, Allahabad Uttar Pradesh

St. Mary's Convent Inter College is owned and managed by the sisters of the Congregation of Jesus founded by Venerable Mary Ward who firmly believed that "Women in time to come will do much". The school has been rendering selfless service to humanity for the past 146 years through education. Keeping in focus 'Education for social change' qualities of head and heart are instilled in the students. They are provided with an atmosphere to grow intellectually, emotionally, morally and spiritually. Believing that 'Service to humanity is service to God' they help the under privileged and exploited to live with dignity.

'SPE LABOR LEVIS' Hope Lightens Work is the motto that guides us in all our efforts.



## WINDS OF CHANGE

**V**ery delicately and gradually a larva transforms into a pupa. It then comes out of its shell and faces the fresh air and the moist ground for the first time. Its dual colour of red and black appears distinctly as it moves on the ground before entering its fourth stage of a cocoon. Finally, after a number of weeks, the tiny insect spreads out its colourful, vibrant wings and hovers leisurely over the splendid, bright flower, sucking nectar. Metamorphosis is ubiquitous in nature. Change is inevitable and must be accepted with grace for it is evident everywhere.

Since time immemorial, the world has been subjected to changes. The ice - age world, with the frozen plains and feral animals were gradually depleted. The dinosaurs that once reigned over the earth have now become extinct.

However, changes are more prevalent and drastic in the present era as compared to the past. The younger generation is fastidious, capricious and fickle – minded. The restless new generation constantly calls for a change in politics, technology, social lives, studies, as well as in the luxuries and amenities of life.

If we dive into the sands of time, we will realize that history is a witness of revolts and revolutions. The venerable freedom fighters of India demanded freedom, to break through the shackle of two centuries of British rule. Through their sustained and arduous struggles, India stepped out from the old to new, marking the end of an age of slavery and beginning of the free expression of the soul of our Nation.

Changes offer a new ray of hope. After the change of government in Afghanistan, from the Russians to the Talibans, the Afghans anticipated a brighter future. Sure, the Talibans crushed all of their hopes of a glorious existence but the optimistic spark that filled those citizens gave them the strength to bear the oppression and in time to protest against them.

Winds of changes are flowing tempestuously around the world. The technological industry is facing a drastic change. The survival of the fittest has taken the level of competition to an entirely different standard. New gadgets become obsolete in less than a fortnight.

What used to be an aristocratic feudal society in which customs and traditions were given paramount preference, has now transformed into an independent and scattered societal living with power, affluence and individual needs and requirements given importance. An individual acts as he thinks is correct, not necessarily as society sees fit.

Change has also brought with it a host of problems and issues

"The winds and the waves are always on the side of the ablest navigator. Only the most courageous sailors can bring about a ray of sunshine."

which need to be resolved. Old parents are no longer taken care of and are neglected, teachers are not considered as 'gurus' anymore. People have become more ostentatious, decisions are now taken on face value. The world is no longer a place to amble in and spend time leisurely. In this fast-paced world, time is a precious commodity with hardly a minute to spare.

Hackneyed as it may sound, but change indeed has effects like the two sides of a coin. A change in attitude for the better, a change that echoes the voices of the common masses, and a change that eases the lives of the people is undoubtedly happily welcomed.

Women's empowerment has drastically improved the condition of women. They are no longer confined to their homes or denied the benefits of education. In the present scenario, women are becoming more and more independent and fighting for their rights.

Life is like a tightrope where all of us are warily doing a daring balancing act. We must embrace it well. It is but natural to face vicissitudes till our very last breath. However, in this struggle for survival only those who can gauge when to leave the window open to let the wind of change enter, can be acknowledged to be prudent enough. Likewise, it is necessary to bolt all our doors and windows and put down our blinds to avoid the violent storms of changes that can prove to be catastrophic.

Although, the true test of friendship is in the times of miseries, the hardest examination of self-attitude is in the time of success. A change in friendship occurs during our struggles and failures when the fake friends are revealed, but an unwarranted change in our own attitude and character on

victory is the most dangerous pitfall.

The happiest people savour the moment, are adaptable, can blend with the wind, can adjust to the changes around and most importantly adopt changes cautiously. They have the capacity to change their outlook, to sweep away all the pessimism and grudges and forget their neighbour's fault, forget all the slander and unkind remarks they hear each day and thus increase their happiness.

The environment in which we live is modifying interminably, literally and figuratively. Figuratively, because it is dependent on our mental state but what calls for world attention is the literal change. The melting ice caps, the rise in the temperature of mercury, the degradation of land, the depletion of the rain forests, the increase in the amounts of barren land, is nature's own way of crying out against man's sweeping and unthinking changes in the world.

The question arises whether to adapt to the all-consuming fury of Nature or to implement alternate techniques for the betterment of the world. Considerably, the latter seems a better option as scientists dig deep to find alternate ways of protecting our Mother Nature.

Change is the only constant thing that never changes. Some have the misfortune of accepting it the harder way while others have the luck of welcoming it without any reluctance.

A peek into the lives of the successful leaders, actors and entrepreneurs of how their lives transformed from poverty into a luxurious and extravagant world, may be a feast to the heart of the commoners but it is in fact those eminent people who know the hours of walking in the scorching heat and dragging their feet they had to succumb to, in order to bring a change in their lives.

"The winds and the waves are always on the side of the ablest navigator. Only the most courageous sailors can bring about a ray of sunshine." A world-renowned heroic example is Nelson Mandela's struggle. He courageously fought against apartheid – discrimination between the whites and the blacks, in South Africa. He sought to bring about a change in the world order.

Life is a constant orchestration of growth through adversity and challenges. The moment we accept the growth principle of change, we accept the static principle of death.

Success and defeat are both imposters. They will never cease to exist. What matters is when and where we take a break from our lives and bring about a change, no matter how trivial it is. Even a whiff of change in our mundane lives can be rejuvenating. It can soothe us enough to accelerate in the derby of our lives, helping us to face the myriad responsibilities with more enthusiasm than ever before.



**NESTOR FERNANDES**

Class - XII

Smt. Lilavati Bai Podar High School  
Mumbai, Maharashtra

### Smt. Lilavati Bai Podar High School, Mumbai Maharashtra

This is a special year for Smt. Lilavati Bai Podar High School, as the silver jubilee year unfolds and the School is on the threshold of a new phase of growth, armed with wi-fi enablity and the ipad culture for our students. Our journey is an ongoing one, and as we strive, we tailor our aims, goals and methods to the global demands and challenges and develop students' values geared towards love of environment.

Our students' voices echo their well-formulated world views, their awareness of the community they belong, to grow as global leaders with wide vision.

We aim to be a caring school with high standards in learning and teaching and cultivate the 'whole person' education among students.



## CHANGE IS LIKE A RUNAWAY TRAIN SPEEDING ITS WAY INTO OUR LIVES

The sun's rays were barely visible over the horizon. The light smell of burning grass perfumed the air. My branches were a symphonious cacophony of chirrupings. There ahead of me lay the city with its million inhabitants. It had rained a little the previous night and now the droplets sparkled like brilliant gems.

Being a tree, I have seemingly infinite time to ruminate upon the intricacies of this world. After much contemplation I have been able to make only a single constant observation, what is new, is something else later. Today is the park festival, a day when people of the town gather together to celebrate the feast of the patron saint of the town. I particularly enjoy this day because of the fun and frolic that surrounds me. As the day progressed the people came in, dressed in their best attire, socializing with people in their neighborhood, I distinctly remember each and every one of the park festivals. When the children run around my rough bark, I look at their wine sipping parents who once did the same.

My imagination takes flight and I ponder about those grand parents who once participated in the revels, now in the autumn of their lives, when change has played its mischievous games and the period of surprises has come to an end.

As time flies, I watch the people as they exhibit a behaviour to make themselves acceptable to the general public. But all these years of observation, I have found that these norms are as fickle as anyone can imagine and who can tell when the tables turn. Thus people feel compelled to change their appearance every time. Thus they find themselves trapped in a web where change seems to be our hope as it will help us to keep up with the times. The change may be cosmetic but it is change nevertheless.

But change has not always been bad. Over the years people have become richer. Once lanky teenagers rode bicycles, now people drive around in expensive cars. This rush for wealth is rather amusing for it is not constant. One day we all shall have to let go. This I have seen reflected in their attitudes as well. Often at times I have noticed the same person strolling about joyfully for no reason in particular. However there are times when this light sense of upliftment is converted into a sense of despair. I wonder what could have occurred in a span of few days that has caused the person such anxiety. What could have changed so drastically in their lives?

My branches are wide and spreading. The bench under my

boughs is an attractive spot for any weary wanderer. This has given me the unique opportunity to eaves drop upon many conversations. But the primary purpose of my intrusion remains the same. The subject of the conversation and the intensity of emotion with which people converse differs so greatly that it could catch the attention of any patient listener.

So I listen intently to the multitude of worries of the human race. In fact it seems to take a full circle, from rising crime to falling economics to rising crime and atrocities once again. Humans seem greatly enamoured by the phenomenon of rising and falling. Once again there is a common thread that links all of these - change with the march of time, change is sought for, brought about or forced upon. Either way it always takes place. It is inevitable. Then there are the observers, who are a curious race of people. They always seem to be comparing the present with the "Olden days" which were the Utopic times. Strangely enough, their predecessors did the same.

I remember a particularly delightful child who once commented that change was the only thing constant in nature. I look at an empty nest on one of my branches. It was built by a sparrow couple. But once the hatchlings flew away they deserted my company forever. Birds come and birds go. Very soon another pair of birds shall come and build their nest on my branches. There is no point in mourning the loss of company for the void shall always be filled. After all who belongs to whom in this inconstant world?


I remember only a week ago the heat was blazing, almost scalding. The park benches wore a deserted look. But only a day

later the sky was thick with rain clouds and the gentle breeze was a welcome relief. But behind this sequence of events there is an underlying symbolism. Without the sweltering heat, there would be no rain. Similarly behind every change there is an agent. Without this agent there would be no progress. We would move one step forward and two steps back. The one above is the driver of the eventful train journey named change.

One of the most profound things I have heard on this subject is that one must be the change one wants to see. I have tried to embody this philosophy by giving more and expecting less. Sadly humans find it a little difficult to fathom and cultivate this virtue in them. However the underlying message behind change is hope. One hopes for change and with every change, whether for the good or for bad comes the glimmer of hope. In fact the beauty of hope reminds me of a verse I heard long ago.

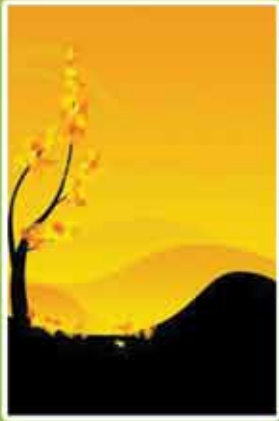
"This is my delight, thus to wait and watch at the wayside where shadow chases light and the rain comes in the wake of summer. Messenger with tidings from unknown skies, speed along the road. My heart is glad within and the breath of the passing breeze is so sweet. In the meanwhile, I sing along while the air is filling with the perfume of promise."

Alas ! One can look to the heaven and think that the Almighty has each one of us involved in the endless and ever changing journey of life.. He empties our frail vessel and refills it soon after his infinite gifts come in our small hands. Ages pass and still he pours and still there is plenty of room to fill. Change is the will of the omnipresent, omniscient one and it will be done.



"changing the face"  
can change nothing ..  
but  
"facing the change"  
can change everything..!

**CHANGE BEFORE  
YOU HAVE TO**



**CATEGORY**  
**2**



1<sup>st</sup> Rank



**SAMIRA JOANNE MATHAIS**

Class - X

St. Francis Xavier Girls' High School  
Bangalore, Karnataka

### **St. Francis Xavier Girls' High School, Bangalore Karnataka**

The school founded in the year 1889, by the Congregation of the Sisters of St. Joseph of Tarbes stresses the single goal of educating the School Community with and within the neighbourhood where every member, whether Teacher, Pupil, Parent, Principal or Worker contributes his/her share with 'Faith and Courage' to build an integrated India and a more united world.

St. Francis Xavier Girls' High School has witnessed the transformation of innumerable young exuberant girls into women of competence and character out into the world, moulded by Faith and Courage – women who society upholds and values.

The school has been known to strike the perfect balance between Academics, Sports, Co-curricular and Extra curricular Activities, reaping rich rewards in every field. Most important the children are ingrained with the right values to see them through life's many challenges.



## **OUT WITH THE OLD AND IN WITH THE NEW...**

### **THE WORLD NEEDS CHANGE NOW**

A man stands at the edge of a cliff, his face contorted with pain and humiliation, his heart an amalgam of despair and abandonment. The world around him is as troubled as he. The sky, overcast with dark, ominous clouds and strong, violent winds pounding against him, urging him on. One last sigh. The flicker of hope dies. He takes the plunge and is immediately consumed by black surging waters. Darkness.

The seeds of dissention were planted in him long ago, along with the seeds of hope, but the world nurtured the wrong sapling, fostered the wrong tree and coaxed the wrong fruits. The man met the inevitable end that fate decreed as soon as the sapling grew. His decision to take the plunge lay in the hands of fate.

The conflict that he experienced is what the world is enduring today. We hold on to the tethers of the past but campaign for the new. Culture and tradition are integral parts of our lives but so is the crusade for a modern aggregate of reforms.

Change is life. Then why are we so afraid to subject ourselves to the sea of change we need? Economies crash, societies collapse, nations solicit help while still trying to preserve a shred of dignity. What the world needs is change.

Across the world as one economy collapses it drags another down with it like a row of dominoes. We need stringent political reforms and rigorous economic policies. The time of stopgap measures is over. It is time to take substantial and efficacious steps in the right direction.

Society also needs a drastic makeover. Change is an important component of society that makes the social machinery run smoothly. It is inconceivable and unachievable for any village, town, city or nation to prosper and progress when there is a conglomeration of ambiguity at the grass roots level; when the people themselves cannot differentiate between what they want and what they need. The answer to their enigma is explicit. They need change but they want the familiar comfort of old customs and traditions. What they do not see is that in this modernization and fast-paced development, ancient customs and traditions are just anchors that root the ship in one place and paralyse progress in every aspect of life. Every time new and credible social norms are laid down, there is a chorus of groans and protests.

The border between fact and fiction is distinctly demarcated but our vision is blurred partly out of oblivion and partly out of fear. We

have to start differentiating and start making the right decisions. Change may be difficult in the beginning. The consequences along the way may be discouraging and disconcerting but the end justifies the resolution. Social change in our country, if implemented properly, would translate into a complete abolition of honour killings, dowry and discrimination on the basis of caste or creed and political corruption.

With proper legislation, strict implementation and enforcement, these black spots of violence and generic hatred that taint the image of India would be eradicated and India would be free from social evils. Every country straining under the burden of social depravity would be liberated if these revolutionary amendments are promulgated.

The attitude of every individual and the world at large must change. People must stop living for themselves, stop thinking of themselves. The words "I, me, myself" in the vocabulary of every human being should be replaced by "us, we, ourselves". Only when we work together, support each other and help one another will our world be subjected to the ameliorating it thirsts for.

Our world has come a long way from the Industrial Revolution when attitudes evolved with technology. However, at the turn of the twenty-first century, in terms of progress of economy and society the globe has come to a full stop. The hunger for change and development has been replaced by fear and hesitation. Our technology is racing ahead of us, the distance between us and

modern technology reaching light years. It is time we stopped clinging on to the familiar and the conventional and reach out and grasp the non-conventional. We need to change the full stop to a mere comma before the gap reaches a stage of infinity.

The most important aspect of change is to end our lust for war. From time immemorial, men have been at war with each other at every level. Competitiveness is in man's genes. It is immutable. But man was not made to fight; he was not born with a lust for blood, a hunger for war and an antagonistic spirit. The human race is the most dignified and altruistic race and we should resist the urge to give way to baser passions.

The expenditure on weapons of mass destruction could be reduced and used in developmental and humanitarian work. If we change our preoccupation with war, and direct the flow of money towards more beneficial schemes, the world will make advancement of magnitudinal proportions.

A man stands at the edge of a cliff, despair writ across his face, antagonistic passion in his heart. But he is hesitant. Should he take the plunge? A soft ray of light suddenly cuts across the horizon. The seeds of hope sprout in his soul. The creases in his forehead smoothen out and he straightens his shoulders and makes a resolution. A soft wind blows around him-the winds of change. Winds that urge him to step away from the precipice and the tumultuous waters below. His fate lies in his final decision-will he allow the winds of change to reach gale force?



We're blaming 'Society',  
yet we are society.  
So to make it a better place,  
we must change ourselves first.



**GUNJAN TRIPATHI**

Class - IX

Touch Wood School, Dehradun, Uttarakhand

### **Touch Wood School, Dehradun, Uttarakhand**

Situated in the idyllic Doon valley, Touch Wood is a leading centre of learning. The pursuit of excellence and spirit to achieve, have earned Touch Wood, a place of distinction. The school constantly evolves and reinvests itself, to prepare its pupils to become constructive participants in the creation of a progressive world order.

Touch Wood welcomes children to embark on a journey of discovery, exploration and self actualization. This journey prepares children for a life of purpose, which brings happiness and content.

No wonder the canvas of Touch Wood is emblazoned with colours of earnest endeavours and well deserved victories of the Woodians.



## **DREAMS---THE BIGGEST VEHICLE OF CHANGE**

Within the human heart,  
Lies the spirit to move the world,  
The courage to move mountains,  
And to be strong at every turn.  
Rise to the occasion,  
Always remember this,  
Who achieve great heights,  
Are the ones who dare to dream.

Dreams are the hopes that never leave your side even when the whole world begins to doubt you. They stand by you even when you are going to fall down. Success is something we dare and desire for. Rightly said, "Success belongs to those who dare to dream".

Make your dreams your passion and then you will wholeheartedly work to make your dreams a reality. The very substance of ambition is merely the shadow of dreams. Those who dare to go the distance are the only ones to find a way to their destiny.

It does not matter how many times you fall,  
What matters is how you face it.  
Face new challenges, get up and fight.  
Open a chapter, learn something new,  
Caught in a bind, try to solve it,  
Make a new plan, work hard for it.  
Discover a new idea, explore it,  
Start afresh, forget the past,  
Live in the present, plan for the future,  
Find a new hope, believe it,  
Come across a hurdle, overcome it,  
Dare to dream, achieve it!

Let your dreams kiss the core of your souls, and let your souls be submerged in the ocean of aspirations. Today man has conquered space and has reached the depths of the deepest oceans. He has excelled in all spheres of life. But how did this happen? It all happened because man learned to dream.

A dream is a seed,  
The seed of a tree,  
A tree full of life,  
And the things you can be.  
Your dreams are the windows,  
Through which you can see,  
A hint of your future,  
And the things you will be.  
Each night when you sleep,  
You're feeding the seed,  
The seed of a tree,  
Of who you will be.



If I'm a genuine victor, I am ready to face all the challenges, no matter what field, what occasion. This statement recalls to my mind a short story. Marching through Barcelona, "the French General, Napoleon Bonaparte and his army came across an enormous mountain- Tijuanaeriba which no one could have ever crossed alive. But he told his army that it wasn't that mountain and boosted his army to such an extent that they passed through the unconquerable mountain with every soldier alive. This proves that there is in fact nothing impossible to achieve. Rightly said by Napoleon Bonaparte, "The word impossible exists in the dictionary of fools".

Nothing succeeds like success. Success is ninety nine percent perspiration and one percent aspiration, signifying that there is no short cut to success. There are many instances where people have risen from extreme poverty to achieve great success by sheer dint of hard work.

Once, a very popular man said, "I have a dream; a dream where I see no discrimination between black and white. A dream of a blissful America". The man was Abraham Lincoln who freed American citizens from the tyranny of the rich.

"Perseverance is a great element of success. If you only knock long enough at the gate, you are sure to wake up somebody"- Henry W. Longfellow.

Besides perseverance, there is a need for a keen and sharp mind with a clear vision of what one wants to achieve in life. Only he who keeps his eyes fixed on the far horizon will find the right road. Your dreams act as a beacon that compels you to strive relentlessly in the pursuit of your goal.

In the clutches of circumstances  
Do not wince or cry aloud.  
Under the threatening of your fears,  
Trust yourself when no one does.

Life's battle isn't necessarily won by the strongest and the fastest but by him who dares to dream and thinks he can. The pioneers of aviation, the Wright brothers had their limbs broken but they did finally succeed in achieving their dream of taking to the skies.

Life is a rat race. In today's world of cutthroat competition, we have to fight it out to survive. There is a Chinese proverb, "Great souls dream to change but feeble ones have only wishes".

Take all that you've become,  
To be all that you can be,  
Soar above the clouds,  
And let your dreams set you free.

Change is the only thing that is constant in our lives and dreams are the pillars that lead to success; the pillars whose bricks lay the foundation of belief, faith, hope, confidence, courage, attitude, challenges and survival.

As rightly said by A.P.J. Abdul Kalam, "Dreams are not what we see when we're asleep at night, but dreams are what keep us awake at night".

We must chase our dreams with a velocity faster than that of light. Dream, believe and achieve- the secret key to success with dedication, devotion, perseverance and true hard work. Failures are our best teachers. They are the mirrors that show us our real face. Hritik Roshan is known as a highly acclaimed movie star who specializes in dancing. His movies are different, unique and inimitable! But for the first fifteen years of his life he could not even get up from bed owing to a spinal problem. However he dared to dream and is today one of the finest dancers in India.

If you can imagine it, you can achieve it,  
If you can dream it, you can become it.

The richest man in the world, the owner of the multinational software company 'Microsoft', Bill Gates, used to fall ill when he was young but he fought his weakness and conquered it.

Inside each of us is a hidden treasure waiting to be dug out of the layers of dust. Blow it away and you will get glistening gold. Our dreams will sooner or later bear fruit and we are bound to succeed.

One step at a time, and that too well- placed, will take you to the greatest heights. Dream—

One seed at a time, and the forest grows,  
One stone at a time and the palace rises,  
One drop at a time and the river flows,  
One word at a time and the great book is written.





**ELAINA PASANGA**

Class - X

Sacred Heart Girls' High School  
Bangalore, Karnataka

## Sacred Heart Girls' High School, Bangalore Karnataka

Sacred Heart Girls' High School was started in 1854 by the Sisters of the Good Shepherd, with a goal to foster a total and integrated development of each student in her uniqueness so that she becomes intellectually alert, emotionally balanced, spiritually rooted, conscious of a call to build up the human community and caring for ecological harmony, thus making our school the life – enhancing resource centre. Our motto is "AGE QUOD AGIS" i.e. "Do well all that you do", and we strive to do our best in all fields of life.



## FASCINATION THAT COMES WITH CHANGE

Change is defined as a difference or alteration in something, be it in the system, society or even one's behavioral change. From the invention of the light bulb to the launching of the first rocket, change has always bewitched us, change has always incited fascination. In other words change has always demanded our attention. Not so long ago, a certain Neil Armstrong landed on the moon. The world was gripped with amazement at their unimaginable feat. For years people sang praises and composed ballads proclaiming this never thought before feat, this remarkable achievement. But, a mere forty-three years later, the launch of a rocket in NASA has become just another passing event, not ever big enough to be headlines.

Moving further back, when Henry T. Ford invented the first economic car, people were astounded, left spellbound! The first common man car had hit the road! A change in the perception that only the rich could own a car was bought about. This change, too, like all other changes, fascinated the world! Was man content with the change? No! With each passing day, he aspired for more changes. Changes were the only constant. Today, we have a one lakh rupee car for the masses! Has contentment now come about with this change? Only time will tell! Forget the "white" areas of life, even in the so-called black and grey areas change has always demanded attention. Many years back in West Virginia, a mine exploded killing 300 men, out of which 200 of them were fathers. In order to honour those people a special day began to be celebrated all over the world, a day commonly known as Fathers Day. But in the 21st Century, that is inhabited by a generation of heartless people, we wonder if a commemoration was worth it for a mere 200 odd fathers who lost their lives in that explosion. This "behavioural change" continues to fascinate me in a cold sense of manner.

The change we see today is of an insensitive prospective. Have we lost our value for life? Has death become so commonplace that it feels odd if no suicide or murders are reported in the newspapers?

Is today's rocket any less fast or complex than Apollo –I? It is most likely more complex and 10 times faster than the Apollo. But why does it fail to capture our imagination?

Is today's car, noisier and less effective than Ford first car? Definitely not! It is faster, more effective, less noisy and more spacious than that "break through car". In other words, it is a class apart, yet, it fails to capture our imagination.

Yet it amazes none! Why? Einstein, Newton and Edison bought about a change that fascinated and a change that changed the way human kind lived. Yet the Trinity is forgotten now.



Things do not change, we change. The rocket has not got any slower nor has the car got any noisier. Bill Gates has not got bigger than Edison. Life has not become less important. We are all still God's unique and beautiful creation. But the fact that no metric impulse passes through us every time we hear something so "common place" is not because of the change but the feeling of change

It is the feeling "of change" that incites emotion, that incites excitement, that incites pain! Change is a mere adjustment or alteration. When we have finished adjusting with change, the change doesn't go away. It is the simulation within us towards change that alters and slowly fades away.

When Neil Armstrong first landed on the moon or when Edmund Hillary or Tensing Norway first climbed Mount Everest, it was a change for human beings. This change immediately simulated excitement within us. However, after the adjustment was completed within us, this stimulus too, failed to sustain.

When those 200 fathers died in the mine explosion, the entire West Virginia was gripped with pain. But as human beings slowly adjusted their systems towards this change again sadly, the pain of death to us became feeble and maybe one day, the pain will cease. Is this right? Is this what we really need?

Sadly, we are no one to answer. This mystery will always remain a question. People may live on Mars one day but they will never realize why initial excitement slowly fades. People may have robots which do everything for them one day, but they will never realize why the robots have suddenly become for them, just another machine? Maybe this is how we are created. Maybe this is how it was always meant to be. Or maybe we just evolved and our systems changed. I have no answers.

Change may be good or change may be bad. But as far as what is in your hand, don't let the stimulus die fast. Be it happiness or sadness, pain or joy, let the stimulus stay on as long as it is appropriate for otherwise we will always live wanting and finally die wanting! Change comes as change does. Yet don't wait for that change neglecting the present. It doesn't matter how fascinating the impending changes maybe, it just isn't worth it! This caring for change is just going to make you an unhappy individual. Sometimes that want for change can even destroy you. Be happy with what you have. Find joy and satisfaction in the smallest of things that exists "presently around you". When the change that is inevitable and fascination finally happen, embrace it and sustain the stimulus. The world isn't going to run away anywhere, keep the stimulus alive! Hakunamatata! It's a wonderful world.

By Changing Your Thinking,  
You change your beliefs;  
When you change your beliefs,  
You change your expectations;  
When you change your expectations,  
You change your attitude;  
When you change your attitude,  
You change your behavior;  
When you change your behavior,  
You change your performance;  
When you change your performance;  
You change your life!





**SAKET KANT**

Class - X

Ann Mary School, Dehradun, Uttarakhand

## Ann Mary School, Dehradun, Uttarakhand

Founded in 1985, in the lush green valley of Dehra Dun, Ann Mary School is synonymous with creative learning, Peace Education and value based concept of schooling. The school's motto – "Live, Learn and Play in Peace" forms the basis for the young to colour the canvas of their lives with peaceful hues. Programmes like the Ann Mary School Children's Forest or the student and teacher exchange with a partner school in Germany, Peace Action Days between the 6th and 9th of August (Hiroshima and Nagasaki bombings) offer students and staff opportunities to evolve and grow in the true spirit of selflessness and non violence.



## DREAMS – THE BIGGEST VEHICLE OF CHANGE

A swirling vortex of disjointed images flashes by with the speed of thought. Ethereal light suffuses this world of neutrons, this world of ... dreams.

It is said that man's greatest weapon is his brain. Close your eyes and the whole world bows at your feet. Kingdoms rise and fall in seconds. Centuries, eons go by in the blink of an eye (oh yeah, your eyes are closed, okay... in, um, one of your REM). What you cannot achieve with brawn, you can do with the brain, albeit in your mind.

Dreams are not only the video calls which start up in your brain when you hit the sack. Your dreams are everywhere around you. Imagine a little kid who wanders into a room and sees a lump of clay on the floor (now don't start wondering where the clay came from, I'm trying to make a point here). What does he think?

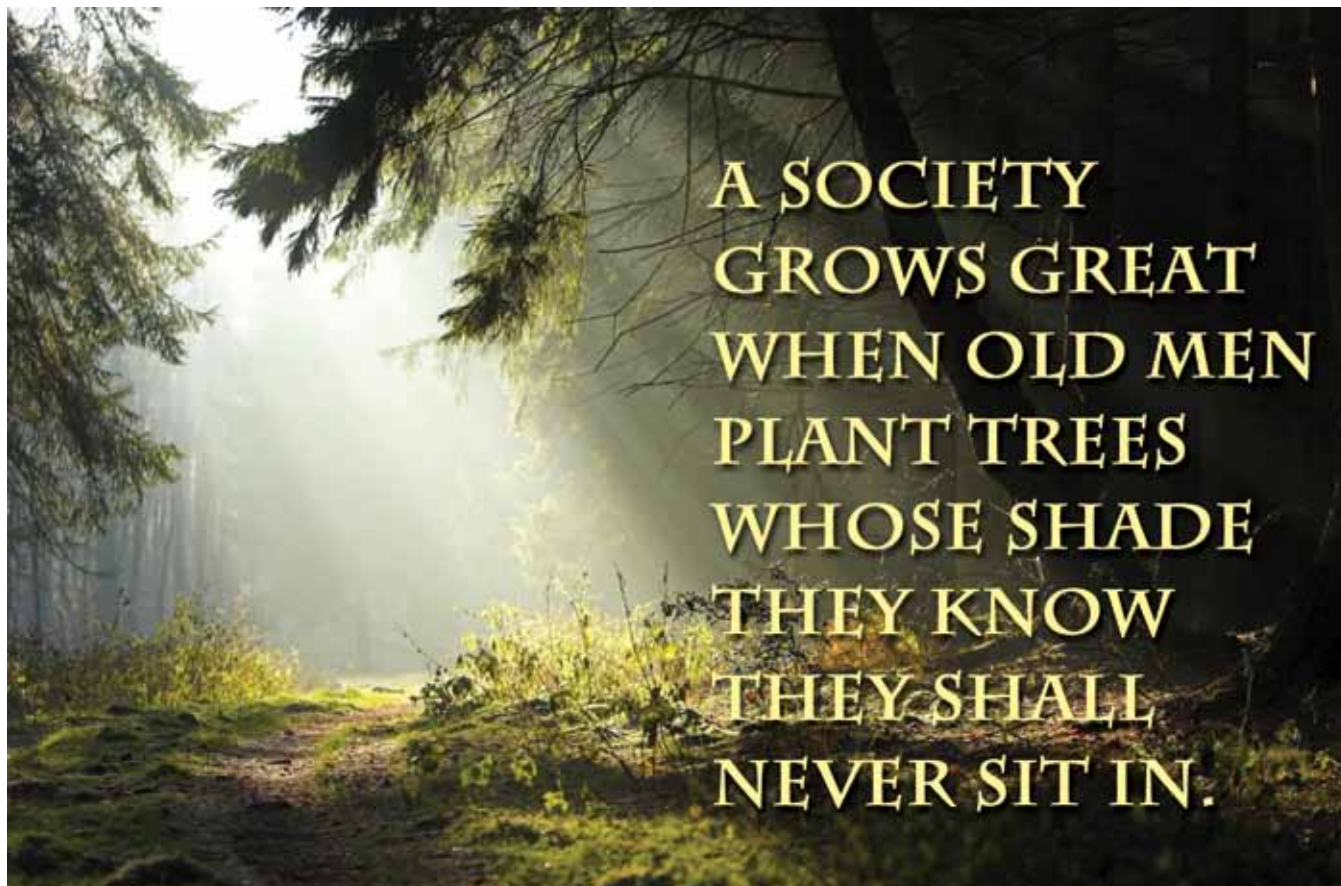
That's right, he imagines a square or circle or maybe, in case of a genius kid, a model of the solar system sitting in place of the crude lump. The child dreams of something bigger, better than what he sees.

Now materializing that dream is a totally different prospect. Some do it, some don't. But I won't bother you with losers in this snippet.

A man with curly side burns looked up at the ceiling of a dark room (not that he could see anything) wondering what it would be like if he could get a bit of light into that room without a window or a lamp. A spark ignited in the guy's brain. At night he dreams of a small glass object which ran on electricity with tungsten wire inside it offering resistance and producing light (for all I know, he was probably dreaming of his new bicycle). The guy was Thomas Alva Edison, a dream and an achiever.

A long time ago there was a day when the sun was out, a nice breeze was blowing and birds were chirping in the trees. A day perfect for a stroll in the park which is exactly what two brothers decided to do. They wandered about for a while till one of them looked up and saw some birds wheeling high above in the sky. He dreamed then, what it would be like to fly in the sky among the lofty clouds. Only his brother shared his dreams and the cynics of that age, like you and me, said that the two brothers were the nuttiest duo ever to have walked the earth. But they did it. The Wright Brothers built the first ever flying machine and it soared higher than any man alive. They saw a dream and fulfilled it.

In this age of spacecraft and nuclear reactors, we think, "well, this is it. We have finally reached the pinnacle of evolution". In nearly every century, people have thought the exact same



thought. But all it takes to change the world is just one man and his dream.

When a guy invents something (I know this sounds like generalizing, but it usually happens once every century), the guy next to him instantly (or after a decade...depends on his stupidity level) starts thinking about how to make that invention better still. Both of these guys' dream and envision something never thought of before. Dreams are not only the stepping stones of humanity, they are the very .....er.....pontoon on which our civilization floats.

....And hey! Here's my trump card. What's the greatest event in European history? I guess I'll have to take it easy on you. It's the Renaissance. Rings a bell? (Now don't start thinking about the Illuminati in the Da Vinci Code). The main reason that the revolution swept through Europe like a wildfire was that the people were forced to think for themselves. They were told to go beyond the teachings of the Church. In other words, they were encouraged to dream and think about everything. Wasn't every war of independence fought to realize dreams of freedom?

Almost all of your day dreams concerns the future (I bet you hadn't noticed that before). Image a guy working in an office. What does he do when he's bored and done with his work?

Yup, he leans back in his chair, closes his eyes and goes to sleep. No wait, rewind a bit...closes his eyes and starts day dreaming about his promotion. Now if that guy is a workaholic, he will definitely work towards fulfilling that dream of his. Office talk aside, I would like to say that without dreams man would lack imagination and without imagination, the will to do something extraordinary would be sadly extinct.

In fact, dreams are those fairy portals which you had hoped to find in your attic when you were a kid. Everyone dreams but only those people shine who dream of fulfilling their dreams... don't get it? Don't worry; these names will make everything crystal clear. Let's start with Alexander, Archimedes, Galileo, Nicholas Copernicus, Isaac Newton, Albert Einstein, The Wright Brothers, Thomas Alva Edison, Henry Ford, Kalpana Chawla, Charles Babbage, Steve Jobs; Bill Gates...the list never ends. Still don't get it? (Why am I the only one who gets stuck with the dolts). Well allow me. Each of these personalities nurtured a dream throughout their personal lives and most importantly sought to fulfill it.

These men and women changed the world and their dreams shaped it as we know it today. Even now, I guess, the future Einstein (real world changers) could be sitting in a pram wailing for his pacifier...



**ASTHA MISHRA**

Class - X

The Chintels School, Kanpur, Uttar Pradesh

### The Chintels School, Kanpur, Uttar Pradesh

The Chintels one of the premier schools in Kanpur, stands tall amid verdant green landscaped exteriors offering world class education in the city. The ambience comprising beautiful plants and vibrant flowers speaks volumes about the culture of the school – nurturing young minds to enable them to bloom in the competitive global settings.

At Chintels, we offer high impact, game-changing learning experience empowering students with character making, life building and man making skills. Our teaching methodology is holistic that lays great emphasis on the development of student's intelligence quotient, emotional quotient and spiritual quotient.



## DREAMS ---THE BIGGEST VEHICLE OF CHANGE

Nourishes a mortal the 'wishes' ye seem,  
Ripen thee in warmth and emerges a dream.  
Dreams I call stirs the fantasies,  
Manifest thee later, to live the ecstasies.

Achieved my forefathers to inspire posterity,  
so that I can rejoice in liberty.  
Dreams big mine incite the dormant spirit.  
Wishes' yarn I get my dreams to knit.

Dream big always my mother told  
While living in the moment bold.  
That if wanted I something should I,  
Reach for it and even take from the sky.

That would I be the best and the greatest  
Forgot she to mention all the toils it invests.  
Never did she tell me days would be there,  
When I would be emptied out alone before  
an horizon to stare.

To face a consequence and trembling within  
That would I ever have a day so close to giving in.  
You left a hard rock to hammer with wit,  
Mom, lie I now just for a while to pen down my spirit.  
Thoughts mine to bring a change in a while,  
Yes, they were the same you wanted me to compile.

"Flying high! Are you on a buzz? Can you feel it?  
The buzz of life." My Mom used to question a bit.  
Blank I was that time but quest I now for a while.

Sitting on the steps, looking across the lake with a smile,  
Wondering how life at times can seem great,  
But in that moment it took me just to burst fate.  
My life could change faster than a blink,  
Yes, I dream the same before I sink.

Could thoughts paint a picture, words dare not speak  
Let reverie build a castle we pine and seek.  
Then an architect and a mason mine, would I be.  
With a heart always gleeful and a mind composite and free.

Myself would draw a map to reach my dream land,  
Where could I fancy, a glance of the castle stand  
On top of a mountain, the castle and I would be,  
With everything thought righteous, from the top  
'neath I see.

Dream I still beyond the mountain and swim across the sea,  
Amongst the eagles fly and be all that I could be,  
Dream of giant flowers above the largest tree,



If you desire to move forward in life towards fulfilment, you should not, at any time complain about the obstacles.

To complain of difficulties is to betray weakness and lack of faith. Every obstacle is a golden opportunity for further progress.

Those who transfer obstacles into opportunities are true leaders. They make dreams come true.

Light all the paths of darkness to imagine things I would see.

The path of a dreamer has probabilities different, While passing -- at times energetic, at times spent. Comes a day when swivel dreams around a helm, And attacks eventually the threshold of mundane realm.

Dreams confront a host of birds gay, Where doves, partridges, hawks and hens all play. Chase we them, some come-- but one proves to be contrary Dreams some embrace us, while the others fly away. Spirit adventurous instill the dreams, Fierce and daring as pirates or so it seems.

The mind's eye watches colourful candies All flavours floating by, Chocolate bears and lions as from a choco-zoo Most kids buy.

Target to think of riding rainbow trains Flying up high in lollipop planes. Desires whatever into our hearts rain, Dreams slip by but the happiness remains.

Bad things may surround-we should always face them being brave, There is comfort we know to be alert with dreams we save. Let the villains be locked in tough iron boxes to remain, Beautiful angels be guards Save sweet thoughts inside the brain.

Hurdles may become the questions that cling to the dreams, As without being free, fitness among us ever seems? Questions our thoughts that rule over and are must,

Matter it not whether we will be able to adjust?

Helen Keller had a recurring dream That she described as a sensation, Her life was composed of Braille and vibration. No sound, no light, no faces, to change meaning of graces, All that left was to run --a new inception did begun.

Slavery instilled the dream of freedom, Gave rise to the spirit of ending the British kingdom. Had not achievement of dreams been his aim, Could he achieve recognition and fame?

His thoughts and firm attitude brought change about, His spirit of nationalism boldly from him did sprout. Designed to fight for sake of country, Subhash Bose Will always be immortal in the national memory.

Our vision is the promise of what we shall impart to prevail, Our ideal is the prophecy of what we shall at last unveil. Live the thoughts everyday, It's time to choose the way. Don't give up—just stay strong Find a path through the wrong.

Let us blink back the tears in the eyes Through a mantle of wet lashes. Let us begin to look at the world from a new perspective Where life's waters sparkle.

Let our dreams guide us to success, Like a carrot dangling before a horse, Action is required to realize the dreams A reality, to avoid any remorse.

Close your eyes and spread your wings, Make a wish and dream bountiful dreams. Don't ever say you will never fail Because life is short and waiting for the knell.

Just be still and take a look Before you know it, there is waiting a hook. Then once in the blink of an eye You'll soon realize it was all a lie. Up you look and there time is gone Why do days feel at an end even at dawn?

So the yarn needs skills supplied with endeavour, To provide you with well-knitted dreams in your favour. Consistent and progressive approach is required always, To give our dream a meaning to achieve its way.

Dreams if initiated properly will give a chariot concrete, Travelling on which attain the success' speed. The speed that surpasses every fancied range, That leads us surprisingly towards never expected but positive change.



**SUSHMITA SOM**

Class - X

Smt. Sulochana Devi Singhania School  
Thane, Maharashtra

### **Smt. Sulochana Devi Singhania School, Thane Maharashtra**

The school founded in 1968 has a reputation of providing a holistic bend of academic cultural sports and value based education to 6400 students. The school believes in its motto "offer equal opportunities to all so that they rise to their fullest potential"

A recipient of prestigious state National and International awards the school had ongoing International Exchange Programme with schools across Europe.

The school is equipped with a Child Development Learning Center for children with special needs and also runs a rehabilitation centre for social cause, which provides vocational training to the lesser privileged children.



## **AN INCIDENT WHICH CHANGED YOUR BELIEF IN SOMETHING IMPORTANT THE SUN RISES...THE SUN SETS**

The universe works in mysterious ways, far beyond the comprehensive power of us progressive humans. Even so, often the twists and turns in what we assume to be a perfectly ordinary cul-de-sac, serve to knock the wind out of our presumptuous selves.

It was a summer one is unlikely to forget-despite the rather routine start. Third standard was over, and school had closed for the vacations. Promises to behave had been made to our teachers, then promises to call each other had been duly reaffirmed and many hugs and choruses of 'happy vacations' later, we were off home.

I was really enthusiastic, but, upon asking my mother if we had any plans for the vacation, her reply had been non-committal--which on most occasions is equivalent to a 'no'. Disappointment shortly changed to acceptance and within no time, I made a list of novels I had always wished to read. Where is the joy in traveling in this blistering heat to crowded places, when my books could take me to wonderful places in another dimension altogether? No, I told myself, I would rather solve mysteries with the Five Find-Outers. and be the invisible eighth member of the Secret Seven.

Just a week after I had settled in comfortably with my Enid Blytons, my parents surprised us with the idea of a trip. This brought an end to my woolgathering as my parents promptly announced we were to visit Kashmir. My mind screamed, my subconscious howled and protested. Everyone was talking all at once, and it was clear they were all delighted. My mutinous expression must have shown, for my sister clonked me on the back of my head and told me to stop being a killjoy. I opened my mouth to retort but one sharp glance from my mother quelled further speech, Chastened, I decided to keep my opinions on the dangers of travelling to Kashmir to myself.

Time flew by faster than ever and soon we were ready to go. My ever sympathetic father agreed to sneak in one or two books inside his suitcase, well out of my mother's sight.

A fortnight later, we were in Srinagar. The journey had been uneventful so far-- no bombers blowing up places, no hijackings, no shootouts, and my fears had ebbed. Yes, perhaps, terrorists lurked in the depths of darkness, but in daylight I could no longer

deny the truth--Kashmir was sublime. I had let newspapers and news channels create an unholy fear of Kashmir in my impressionable mind, I thought, chiding myself.

The days rolled on as we visited magnificent gardens, crystalline white mosques and snow-capped mountains. My sister and I made two snowmen-Mr. Frost and Mr. Snow-White. Poor Mr. Frost was knocked over by a rowdy group on sledges. My sister sneakily dropped some snow inside my collar causing me to stumble into Mr. Snow-White, returning him to his pristine state. We stayed in a stately houseboat on Dal Lake and went boating and horse-riding. Soft snowflakes descended one evening, and everything looked magical. My heart sang as I looked out at the lush greenery and rosy children with baskets of apples waving to us as we passed by.

Alas, time flew by and the tour approached its end. It was time for souvenir shopping. For the people who had waited unwearingly, it was paradise. As soon as we got down from the bus, countless rows of cozy shops selling pashmina shawls, ponchos, saris, pherans, hats, carpets, and other memorabilia surrounded us. Although fun to look at, I only wanted to curl up in a cozy corner with my book. My beseeching looks were met with stern glances and soon I found myself trotting behind my mother as she assiduously searched the bazaar for silk saris. My sister was looking at ponchos while my father tried on comical hats at the next stall. Finding myself unfettered by adult supervision, I quietly slipped away to join a group of local children in their game. Sooner than I would wish, the shopping spree came to an end and we were all bundled off into the bus. It was noisy inside; people were in raptures over their purchases and bargains and were animatedly showing one another their purchases. Not five minutes had passed when a lady suddenly shrieked—she had forgotten to collect a bag. Since she already had three full bags of purchases, it was easy to have missed it. The guide clucked his tongue in disapproval at the inconvenience. Nevertheless, the bus turned back.

I was just nodding off when I heard a tremendous roar. Turning sideways, I watched in horror as Lal Chowk erupted in flames of red, yellow and orange before my eyes. Like a badly scripted film, the bus lurched sideways and came to a stop. So this is the end I thought. Everyone was screaming and shrieking in the bus. An old man was gasping and praying. The tyres of the bus had burst and we had to get off. My mother hugged me close so that I wouldn't look. The minute that I peeked out I regretted it. The road was covered in dust, destroyed. There were mutilated bodies strewn around and people trying to locate their lost ones.

A mother tried to infuse life into her unconscious son. An old man wept copiously over another body. I had never seen such grief. I turned once more to my mother and she held me close.

We were soon taken away from the scene. But the images plagued me; permanently etched in my mind. My new friends... quite possibly dead. I relived the horrors every second. I could not purge the 29th of May, 2006, from my memory. Terrorism had reared its ugly head and battered the place once more.

I was scared and terrified, but the tears would not fall. I held on to anger. I was angry at my parents for bringing me here, angry at the world, angry at God. How could He have permitted this? Was there no protector of innocents at all? Man was killing his own...was humanity a lost cause? Was there no goodness, no justice at all?

My father was worried--the networks were jammed and we had to reach our relatives, let them know we were safe. With some difficulty, the next day, we found a phone booth. I sat outside with my sister while my parents made the necessary calls. She sat huddled in her shawl, shaken and tired. I leaned against her. Glimpses of the trip traversed through my mind. I dismissed them as a mirage; a lie. A lone man sat in a corner, with a bag of fruit in his hand. He was looking at me rather intently and I was unnerved. I tried looking away, unsuccessfully. A few minutes later, he was still staring. I was frightened, but also incensed. Was he another terrorist in the making?

I was just going to ask him politely if there was any problem when he whispered hoarsely, "Sorry. Please, I am sorry." I looked at him peculiarly. He made a feeble gesture and then finally choked out, "You look like my little girl. God took her away yesterday--in the blast." His face was wet and the rivulets kept streaming, but he continued in his quaint Kashmiri accent, "She looked just like you...so alike..." He was crying in earnest now, his anguish was bottomless. My sister looked at him in sympathy.

I felt ashamed. I found myself crying--for this stranger whose heart was breaking for his lost child. He was a father, a human. In my miasma of resentment and mistrust, I had forgotten--there were mothers, brothers, fathers and daughters out there, grieving for an injustice done to their beloved. I sat beside him for some time while he tearfully showed me pictures of his little girl.

Through that man, who I believe had been sent from God, I learned that there are all sorts of beings in this world; wolves among sheep, soulless mortals masquerading as men. I had no power to control that fatal event, or save the lives that were lost. However, I realized it could have a little more faith and pray for all the souls who had been through that ordeal, all the people whose lives had changed forever. Science has taught us that our earth and planets are held in place by the sun's gravity, but it is the faith of good people which helps us to awake and see a bright new day of hopes and dreams.





**SUHAS B U**

Class - X

Carmel School, Bangalore, Karnataka

### Carmel School, Bangalore, Karnataka

Carmel School, Padmanabhanagar, is a leading educational institution of Bangalore South. The school has completed 25 glorious years of serving the cause of education.

In these 25 years the school has had the distinction of a consistent academic achievement with 100% results in the ICSE Examination. The institution gives equal importance to sports and literary activities. Over the years our students have made a name both at the State, National and International level in diverse competitions.

Excellent rapport between the school management and the staff and between the parents and staff are the high points of the institution. A large number of the staff have been with the institution since its inception.

The institution is in step with the latest technology in the field of education- well equipped science and computer laboratories and digital teaching systems in the classrooms.



## OUT WITH THE OLD AND IN WITH THE NEW

Out with the old and in with the new, the world needs change now. Mr. Gupta was having his house renovated. The dirty, rusty iron chairs were replaced by shimmering and comfy sofas. State of the Art automatic hydraulic gates came in place of squeaky old ones. The swampy and slippery bathroom which was infested with algae and billions of invisible deadly microbes was done away with; a shiny and well drained bathroom was constructed. The kitchen was equipped with modern appliances – the microwave, the dish washer, the slicer, the juicer, the induction stove and many more extremely comfortable bouncy beds adorned the bedrooms and their eco-friendly LED lamps replaced the tube lights, bulbs and CFLs. All this gave a brand new appearance to Mr. Gupta's house. Why did he have to do this? It had become boring to live in the same old uncomfortable place. Living in an under equipped house gave Mr. Gupta a sense of backwardness.

Our world is comparable to a house. If the world is a house, its countries are its rooms and the natural features are the interior designs. Similar to Mr. Gupta's house before renovating, our world has become boring and stereotypical. All the outdated customs, traditions, methods, machinery and systems, which have no real purpose and very low efficiency today, are being used just for the sake of following the methods inherited from our previous generations.

Consider our country – India. Many of us follow empty customs and perform useless rituals since we consider them religious. Innumerable conventions which are cruel, evil and suspicious are practiced. The illiterate is forced to accept them. Walking on red hot coal, sacrificing poor animals like goats and hens, child marriage and many more are believed to impress the Gods. But the ones who suffer are the poor ignorant people. Some priests or Godmen as they call them, trick the rich into believing that costly rites and "Yojnas" bring about the welfare of the people. In the whole business, these "Godsmen" make profit.

Female infanticide is also a great problem. Thinking about being unable to bear the cost of raising a girl child makes the parents take extreme decisions like infanticides. This actually is influenced by the system of dowry. Though the government has made laws to prevent these, none can stop them unless the people actively participate

And the greatest social evil is the caste system. This system, formed over 3000 years ago based on occupation, is irrelevant today. The people purportedly belonging to higher caste repress those of the lower caste. Are not all people the same? Are they

not humans? All the superstitions must be abandoned and scientific reasons should be taken up.

Then, we practice ineffective agricultural. Agriculture in India is not an occupation but is worshipped. Farmers don't accept new technologies for they believe that the sacred age-old traditions will be broken. This is sheer ignorance. We live in the 21st Century. Countries like Japan where scarce labour force is available, are racing ahead in the economic field. This is possible for them only because they happily utilize the latest techniques. Not only India but also many African and Asian countries and a few South American countries lag behind due to the same reason of not accepting change.

Next, in order to provide housing facilities, thousands of acres of forest land is being cleared worldwide. Deforestation and urbanization have an adverse effect on the ecosystem, leading to loss of habitat of animals and thereby the extinction of many species and endangerment of many more. It has been a convention of urbanizing a place radical, starting from the centre of the town. For instance, the original boundaries of Bangalore as laid down by Kempegowda, its Founder, are no longer the limits now but are somewhere in the interiors of the Garden City. Instead, vertically growth of the city should take place. Apartments must come up but people vaguely argue that there is loss of privacy in the apartments and that it is prestigious to own land on ground than to live "in air".

Next comes the transport issue. Many use petrol and diesel vehicles which cause a lot of pollution, to which we ourselves are the eventual victims. Why not spend a little more money

and buy an electric car, which is highly efficient and possesses better pollution control system? Or why not use public transport to reduce congestion as well as pollution? Here, we deny saying that public transport is not comfortable, but again, we must realize that we are the eventual victims.

Even in our lifestyle we are outdated. Consider the textile used for our clothing. There are many eco friendly fabrics like synthetic textiles and artificial silk. Yet we go for pure cotton and pure silk, the latter extracted by boiling the cocoon of the silk worm with the worm still inside it. Isn't it inhuman to kill for our wants? Does the silk worm have no right to live?

Our ancestors were small in numbers and had devised self sufficient methods for their lifestyle. Now the world holds seven billion lives and we definitely cannot afford to use old techniques. Outdated styles must be discarded and new ones must be adopted to suit our own lifestyles.

The universal solutions to all this is by spreading awareness. The people are ignorant and resort to inefficient means. This must be stopped. Out with the old and in with the new. The world indeed needs change now.

However, declaring the above is just not enough. We need to act and we need to act immediately. It is never too late, but it is also never too soon. Therefore, let us change the world. It is not as tough as it sounds. It is very easy if you follow the thought:

*"If you want to see a change in the world around you, then bring about a change in yourself. All said and done, let us drive the change we dream of"*

*People may hate you for being different and  
not living by society's standards,  
but deep down, they wish they had  
the courage to do the same.*



**K .L. JOHN**

Class - IX

Pallikoodam, Kottayam, Kerala

### Pallikoodam, Kottayam, Kerala

Developing self-confidence is the axiom of education in Pallikoodam. From Swimming to Dancing and Drama, from Sports to Music and Fine Arts, these are the different spheres that children participate in to reach this goal. Academics, too, plays an important part in helping the students to discover and understand the world around them and grow in their own special way.

With classes from the Nursery right up to Std XII, Pallikoodam provides a safe haven for children to develop into intelligent and socially-aware youngsters. Their creativity is encouraged, pursuit of knowledge enhanced, and their uniqueness as individuals is recognized.



## THEY SAY THAT FRIENDSHIP LASTS FOREVER

The little furry bundle found its way through my legs and stared at me with its big round eyes. With his pug nose he sniffed around my feet. He was the colour of polished wood like that of tables and chairs. His chest was white and his nose and ears were black. He was no higher than my knee and his tail no larger or longer than my big toe. As he sniffed around my feet, I, feeling ticklish, moved and he let out a bark - a very juvenile bark.

He had only been two months old when we got him. We expected him to wail through the night being separated from his mother for the first time. Though he walked into our home, he found a nice little corner and fell asleep right away. He was our family dog and more importantly my best friend. That night I stayed with him lightly, prodding him as he slept just to watch him move his little paws. I was only four at the time and was extremely fascinated at how hyperactive and energetic our dog was. We had decided to name him Kaiser. I found it difficult to pronounce and as I had just read Bambi, I wanted to name his Thumper, after Bambi's rabbit friend. Soon the name caught on and by his first birthday he was known to everyone in the family as Thumper. On his first birthday, my sister and I baked him a little cake with chocolate icing. This then became a yearly treat which he began to crave for. By this time he had become quite big. Although he was boisterous and rough while playing with my sister and me, he was quite sedate and well-behaved with my father.

My father trained him in the basic commands like - "sit", "lie down", "shake hands" and "don't eat off the ground". Thumper mistook "don't eat off the ground" for the better command "don't accept food from anyone but us". Even when my father's mother tried to feed him he refused to eat from her hand. This habit of his, refusing to eat food from others, helped me sleep better at night because I had a constant fear that he would eat from a stranger's hand and run the risk of being poisoned.

He grew up very fast and became calmer than he used to be. Every day when I came home from school he could tell the difference as to when I opened the gate and when someone else opened it. After having had my lunch I would let him into the house and he would sit by my side as I watched television. I would tell him what went on in school and he would practically listen because somewhere deep in the depths of his mind I knew he understood me.

If at all I had an argument with my parents or sister, I would go straight to Thumper. He would sit with me and as I told him about what had happened, he would place his paws on my knees. This gesture to me was the most comforting thing. It was simple but meant a lot to me.



When Thumper was five, my grandfather had begun to go for walks and would take Thumper long. Thumper was allowed to be without a leash. He would walk beside my Grandfather and only react to someone else if they came too close.

Thumper had an extremely keen sense of smell and completely despised the scent of alcohol. Once my father had a few friends over and each of them had a few drinks. When one of them asked if he could see Thumper, we brought him out. This man had seen Thumper on countless occasions. Every time on previous occasions Thumper had remained calm but this time he growled at the man. When my father went to see if something was wrong, he growled at my father as well. That was when we all became a bit frightened. Only after a few days did we understand that the reason for his growling was due to the smell of alcohol.

When Thumper was eight my mother had finally given into my pleadings and allowed him to sleep in my bed. This was because Thumpers legs had begun to fail him. It had begun as just a little slipping which we neglected because we thought the cause was the tiles on the floor. Then it became worse. He could barely lift his legs off the ground but would drag himself yill he was covered with multiple bruises and cuts. Fearing the worse, we took him to the vet. The doctor prescribed many medicines for him which had some effect. Slowly and gradually he regained

the strength in his legs. All was as it used to be.

A few years passed by and suddenly out of the blue, his legs gave way again. After that he couldn't walk at all. We had thought about mercy killing. My sister was away at the time and insisted that she be there when Thumper was put to sleep. A few months later she arrived and we all knew that the moment had come. I had decided upon a date for Thumper to be put down. The night before he was to die, my sister and I sat by him and cried. Each tear we wept contained a memory from which a crucial part was to be lost forever the next day. We slept by him that night and we sat by him the whole of the next morning. That morning my father's mother had come to see him. He actually ate from her hands and my Grandmother burst into tears. When the vet entered the house, we were all silent. He allowed us to say our final goodbyes and then in the blink of an eye the needle was inserted. I had lost a part of my life.

We wrapped him in a soft blanket and my Grandmother cut a few flowers to put on the grave. It began to rain when we walked to our backyard carrying the bundle between us. We slowly lowered him into the earth, covered the gaping hole and my Grandmother placed the flowers on a stone which we had kept as a marker. This was an incident that changed my belief. I now believe that friendship lasts forever.

*"Don't walk behind me; I may not lead.  
Don't walk in front of me; I may not follow.  
Just walk beside me and be my friend."*

*- Albert Camus*



**TUSHAR BARANWAL**

Class - X

Hutchings High School, Pune, Maharashtra

### Hutchings High School, Pune, Maharashtra

Hutchings High School was founded in 1879 A.D. by Ms. Emily Hutchings, under a small tree, which today has risen in stature and acclaim and is one of the renowned ICSE schools in Pune.

Hutchings propagates that Parents and Teachers are responsible for the growth and development of a child. Hutchings has always been supported by cooperative Parents and a dedicated Staff. Together they try to bring out the best in a child.

Our institution strongly believes that during the schooling years children discover their aptitudes, experiment with knowledge and imbibe values. We give our 3000 children the opportunity and encourage them to think creatively, critically and analytically and develop a mindset that practices self and lifelong learning.

Every child is a masterpiece of God's creation and is endowed with individual identity of merit. We at Hutchings are committed to find out these merits in our children and bring them to the surface. We encourage our children to work hard towards achieving their goals with confidence, consistency and concentration.



## CHANGES IN THE INDIAN FAMILY – MARIO AND THE COMPETITION

It was the 18th of June and the essay writing competition was to be held on that day. Mario got the topics:

- An incident that changed your belief about something.
- Changes in the Indian family.
- The fascination that comes with change.
- Out with the old, in with the new.

As soon as the topics were announced all the children rushed to the library and to the computer labs to get the best books and information from the internet. All except Mario. He was going to write about change in the Indian family. He decided he knew more than any library about the topic. He had lived in a joint family till he was ten.

After that, due to a rift in the family, he, his father and his mother had moved to Mumbai from Kolkata. He started thinking.

He remembered the days when he was a part of the joint family – very similar to the families of the past where he lived with his grandparents, great grandfather, maternal uncle, his father's brother and his wife, his cousin Nate, Peter and Anthony. He remembered when his father and mother were always busy either in their work (father in the shop and mother helping the others in the kitchen) or in talking with the elders. He was completely neglected by them. He remembered how one day, he had asked his mother to teach him the chapter "Factors and Multiples" which he had not understood and how his mother had told him to go to the neighbour's house since she was busy cooking for the whole family. Once, he was even accidentally left behind in his home while everybody had gone to Shimla for a holiday. He was forgotten by everybody and was left sleeping.

But now, his mother wakes him up at five in the morning and says – "Wake up, dear. We have to revise Linear Equations. Today is the math test". Now, the thought of being left behind makes him laugh. How can he be forgotten in the family of three? How contrasting! He thought.

Then he wondered whether he could have dreamt of going into one of the IIT's. Had he been with his uncles, aunts, grandparents, great grandfather and his cousins living under a single roof he would have been expected to go into the steel business. All other dreams you had, had to be trimmed for the sake of the steel business. It was a disadvantage, he thought. He remembered how Peter was not allowed to go into the AIIMS even when he had stood 33rd in the entrance examination. He was forced to join the family business.

But now Mario went to the coaching classes for the IIT's. His mother wanted him to be an IAS officer – no pressure though.



Be what you want to be, it is just my opinion, she says. This is a big change he thought. Before, in the joint family, my great grandfather was the boss thought Mario, but now there is no theory of the eldest male having all the powers. Male power has declined in his present family. His mother, who used to listen to his great grandfather every time, now could voice her opinion and do what she felt was right. In nuclear families (families in present times), the man of the house was comparatively less powerful. The missing power had gone to the wife.

Then he thought that in some aspects of life, the past family system scores over the present family system. When he thought more deeply about it, he felt like changing the line "where are the springs of yester years" to "where be the families of yester years".

Mario was a good speaker and had good social skills. He was good in making friends with anyone in just five minutes. He owed this to his previous family system, Mario thought. The presence of being with so many people had boosted his interpersonal skills. He recalled how the whole family used to go for outings and picnics and how they used to enjoy due to the fact that there were many members in the family.

Mario smiled when he remembered how he used to play with his cousins. He could never be bored in his previous family with so many people around. Parental authority over the children has been reduced in the joint family due to the presence of so many other relatives who defend the child when he is punished by his parents. In nuclear families, the child is under the eye of the parents all the time except when he goes to the school or to

play. Now parents can mould the child in their own way without interference from other people. Mario thought this could be justified by the fact that now his mother would keep a watch on him so that he did not fall into bad company and now when he does a mistake, he is scolded by her. Previously, whenever his mother would scold him, his uncle, grandfather or any other person would come to his rescue and save him. Before, when Mario wanted to go out and play he was not allowed to. Then he could escape and go since there were so many people that nobody missed him. But now, even stealing a cashew from the container was difficult as his mother could see what he was doing. Then he recalled the rift that had made his parents shift to Mumbai.

He remembered it was the 13th of December. His mother was making tea. She was pouring the tea into the cup when Anthony came and asked my mother for a biscuit. My mother asked him to wait. In the mean time, Anthony dropped his tea on his hand. His mother came running to the kitchen. She thought that Mario's mother had deliberately dropped tea on the child's hand to hurt him and then started the fight. Then his uncle deliberately started harming his father's business. Slowly the frequency of the fights started increasing. Finally they shifted to Mumbai where his grandfather had a plot of land. A shop was established by his father and he went into the medicine business.

Suddenly the bell rang. The hour given for preparation was over. Children started coming back from the library and the computer. Mario took out his pen, A4-size paper. As soon as the writing bell rung, he started writing, hoping to win.







**RUKAM MAHAWA**

Class - X

Sacred Heart Senior Secondary School  
Amritsar, Punjab

## Sacred Heart Senior Secondary School, Amritsar Punjab

Established in 1937, Sacred Heart Senior Secondary School Amritsar, is a unit of The 'Sisters of Charity of Jesus and Mary'. It is one of the oldest schools in Amritsar rendering quality education for the past 75 years, thereby translating into reality its mission to reveal that "God is Love".

Academically the school has been doing extremely well. Our school forms young women who are imbued with human and spiritual values and are confident and daring, having the potential to be contributing members of society.

Be it infrastructure, quality and commitment of the staff or performance of students both academically and co-curricular activities Sacred Heart School, Amritsar stands out.



## DREAMS---THE BIGGEST VEHICLE OF CHANGE

The cheers of the spectators thundered in my head and made the adrenaline rush more vigorously through my veins. In the hot mid-day sun, the drops of perspiration shone like diamonds on my forehead. In spite of the deafening roar I was focussed on my aim of making the basket. The basketball court burned like magma under my feet. It seemed as if time was playing games with me and was moving even more slowly to take a closer look at this crucial moment of my life. For the final time, I flexed my arm muscles and aimed for the basket. Without giving it a second thought, I threw the ball towards the basket. I watched it carefully as it flew through the air towards its goal. But, suddenly everything fell silent; the ball and the basket disappeared into thin air. The euphoric cries of the spectators were no more calling my name; only the silent breath of silence surrounded me now. Suddenly, I was engulfed in a deathly shroud of silence. Everything around me went black like the sky on a moonless night. I couldn't see anything. Darkness was omnipresent and this really gave me jitters. But like a silver lining in the clouds, I saw a bright flash of light in what seemed to be a never-ending darkness. I moved towards the light. The golden flash and brightness seemed to increase with every step that I took towards it. After walking an immeasurable distance, I caught sight of a magnificent trophy resting on a decorated platform. The golden radiance scattered by the trophy was so intense that it hurt my eyes. Before I could even catch hold of this golden bird, my eyes opened wide and I found myself stretched out on the bed.

"It was only a dream!" These were the first words that I uttered after getting up. I was still perplexed because the dream seemed so real, and I wasn't ready to believe that it wasn't so. It was hard for me to face the situation for the first few seconds. But eventually, after shaking off my drowsiness, my mind came back to the reality of the moment. Today, 26th September, 2011 was a big day in my life. It was the day of the school basketball finals. I was nervous and sure that our team stood no chance because our opponent was unbeatable. I tried not to worry much but failing miserably at the effort, I dressed up and went to school.

The atmosphere in school was surreal. Students were all perky and joyful but my team-mates were all down in the dumps with nervousness. How can one expect someone to be happy when they know that within a couple of hours they would be shamelessly defeated? The match was to start within an hour. I saw no hope of carrying that trophy home, but then I remembered Rudyard Kipling's memorable lines:

"If you can dream, and not make dreams your master,  
If you can think and not make thoughts your aim"

*If you want to make your dreams come true, the first thing you have to do is wake up.*

These lines burned in my mind like wild fire. I had dreamt this very morning of holding the golden trophy in my hand and I was determined to turn this dream into reality. I was not going to let my dream master me as now I was encouraged to master my dream by painting it onto the canvas of my life. After this short contemplation, I put every ounce of my being into a determination to win the trophy.

And believe it or not my dream changed into reality when I did finally hold aloft the golden trophy at the end of that crucial match. It felt so good to be there on the victory stand with my head held high and my dreams turned into a solid reality!

Who says dreams can't come true? Who says dreams can't bring about a change? They did bring a change in my life. My dream encouraged me to have the grit and courage to win the match against all odds. So I fully endorse the idea that dreams are the biggest vehicles of change. A dream is a wish, a hope, an aspiration. A dream is an unsprouted seed in our heart which is just waiting to come out and bloom. Dreams are the highways that carry all our desires, our unconscious aspirations and our hopes.

The birth of Jesus Christ started with a dream. It all began when the Angel Gabriel came into Mary's dream and told her that she would bear a son...the son of God. Thus began one of the most momentous and significant changes in the history of the world when the Lord Jesus placed his pure feet on this sinful earth to rid it of all evils. Doesn't this anecdote prove my point that dreams can bring about tremendous change?

Okay! Let's go back a few centuries earlier though this time gap does not change anything. Even then dreams were the seeds of change.

Ashoka--the great, nay, the greatest king in Indian history, is even today remembered for his commitment to non-violence and peace. But how come such a change occurred in Ashoka's mind? The answer brings us back again to the surreal world of dreams.

It is believed that Ashoka had a dream in which he pictured the world to be as peaceful as a monastery. This idea raged through his mind and ignited the spark in him to put his dream into reality. So the seed was watered well in the dream and it started to bear fruit in the real world. His dream, when put into action in the world, changed the face of the society. The facade of hate was removed and it was replaced with love.

This land of dreams takes us to the 2nd October, 1869 when the Father of the Nation, Mahatma Gandhi was born. Who doesn't know him and who doesn't remember the personal sacrifices he made for us? Mahatma Gandhi rightly quoted,

"Be the change that you want to see in the world."

He was right and he proved this by taking the initiative to change the world. But who put this idea in Gandhiji's mind? Who compelled Gandhi to idealise a peaceful nation? The obvious answer again is dreams. Gandhiji dreamt of a nation where all were tied together by strings of harmony and peace. He dreamed of establishing Ramrajya i.e. the Kingdom of Ram where only peace was omnipresent. Such dreams fuelled his ambitions and he put a strong foot forward to turn his dreams into reality for us. The thought which grew out of a dream, gave rise to a nationwide movement which changed the destiny of India. A dream changed the complete face of a nation, freeing it from the shackles of colonial rule and ushering in a democratic republic and sovereign nation.

If we dream of peace today, we will definitely achieve it, but for that we need to have faith in our dreams. If our dream is important, it burns like a fire until it is achieved. We should not defer our dreams because they can bring revolutionary changes if we allow them to step out from our dream world into this real world. You will never know when your dream will give rise to a change which can alter the face of the earth. So, spread your wings and soar high to bring alive your dreams and thus make a huge difference in this real world!



And that is how change happens.  
One gesture. One person.  
One moment at a time.

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