

ARK ACTON ACADEMY PRESENTS:

ARK ACTON ARTICLES

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Ark Acton Unmasks?

As COVID kills less and less, our Prime Minister has decided to change the mask rule, but what do Ark Acton students think?

Written By: Cieran

As COVID-19 slows but surely kills less and less, and as more people get their vaccine, our Prime Minister, Boris Johnson has decided to change the mask policy. This includes making it not mandatory to wear a mask when at a supermarket, in a restaurant, or in school.



While the other policies are set to go into effect on July 19th, Ark Acton had decided to make masks optional. Because of this, I went and interviewed a few Ark Acton students and see what they thought.

Our first source, anonymously nicknamed "Penny Wise", had this to say. "Masks should be mandatory as even if it's been over a year since COVID came, we still need to be careful. We already have cases of the Indian variant coming here so what if some dumb kid licks a pole or something and gets us back to online school? You see what I mean? I'd say we play it safe for now, so we end up winning in the long run."

Another source had this to say. "Masks shouldn't be mandatory as they are incredibly annoying, if you think about it, why are we the ones wearing the masks when the teachers can catch COVID more easily than us?" One final source told me this. "We should keep masks as we can talk to our friends sitting next to us more easily. This may sound bad, but it actually helps us improve our social skills around others. I say keep it."

While all very compelling arguments, this article wasn't made to persuade you.

What do you think about masks? Leave or stay?

COMING UP:

School, stress, and tests

Written by Sebastian

We have all, in one way or the other, been stressed over tests.

It may be because of the unrealistic expectations of our families, the pressure put on us by the schools,

The techniques used to educate

or the need to conform to the mass of people who study day and night to get the best results.

This may not apply to the younger students, but it will likely to those who are completing their GCSEs.

We still eagerly and anxiously

await to see how hard the test is, what questions on it are and how our performance goes.



Photograph by Fatima and Jasmine

-The ingenuity of the Nintendo Switch calculator app

-A review on "Shrek"

- LGBTQ A look at history

In honor of Pride Month, we've decided to look back on the history of the LGBTQ community, be warned though, it isn't very nice

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The education system, in its pursuit for every student to have optimal grades, is so overwhelming to so many pupils that sometimes it does more harm than good.

younger alumni are varied and fun for them, as they are utilized by teachers who have specialized in pedagogy. The students' performances are still outstanding,

Many other factors such as toxic parents and

According to The Guardian, more than 5% of adolescents have attempted suicide by the age of 17 and around 1 in 4 have admitted to self-harm in the past year.

I have vowed in this article to do my best and show both sides of an argument; the good and the bad, so let's start talking about what school does well.

Lastly, granting pupils the ability to speak up about what they don't like about their school and have a say through the school council was also a good choice as it lets students make use of their right to democracy and free speech. No authority is beyond criticism and schools know that well (most of them do, at least)

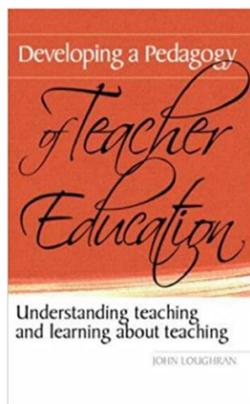
Sometimes school seems to get in the way of education.

We can see this in the declining mental health of the younger generations and how anxiety in their school days has led to anxiety in adulthood as well as regret for all the time spent revising and not enjoying what could have been happy juvenile days.

When looking at statistical, empirical (practical) data, schools which employ this philosophy are not even the most successful: according to worldtop20.org the 2021 best education system was Finland!

Children of 13-16 years of age are not compelled to memorize much and do not sit national examination.

Pedagogy is, essentially, the science of teaching.



This may come as a little bit of a shock. What may not come as a surprise, given all this previous information, is that Finland is the happiest country in the world.

Cite worldpopulationreview.com.

However, school is not the only thing shaping young adults' mental health. In fact, so many schools are bringing awareness to mental disorders and mental illnesses such as depression and doing their best to help students cope with the struggles our generation faces.

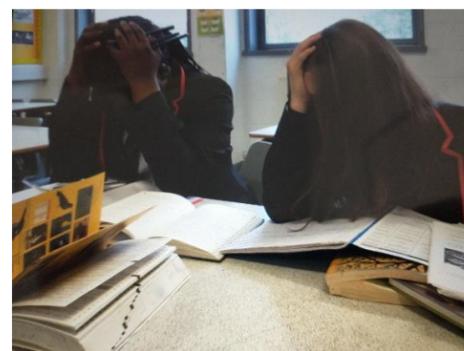
I am in no way saying that this is solely the education system's fault. But I wholeheartedly believe that changing our test and grading system to prioritize creativity, visual mediums and things that relate to us on a personal level would work wonders and relieve the pressure on national examinations (GCSEs and A-Levels).

Helping the millions of children currently enrolled in secondary school.

I have asked a few students and the consensus seems to be that big end of year exams and the waiting to see your results, or even phrases such as 'don't worry about your grade' are quite stressful and do no good.

Firstly, grades are sometimes helpful to see how hard a student can work towards their goal.

Generally, someone who got a perfect score on their quiz might have worked harder than someone who got half marks, granted this is not always the case. Working hard is good, but when this negatively affects your health, you should always stop and take a break. You are the most important thing there is, and no grade is worth more than your wellbeing. This said, try to not give up on your goals and do what you love. Another thing schools have done well is focusing less on grades during the pandemic. Covid-19 has been really weighing on many people as, for some people, it resulted in the deaths of those they loved, or impeded them to visit those they cared about. So, schools decided to put more effort on making students understand concepts and consolidating previous knowledge, which is really good as a starting point for future improvement.



Photograph by Fatima and Jasmine

Finally, while not completely at fault for young people's declining mental health, the education system puts too much stress and anxiety on the youth and values memorization over creativity, which in the long run doesn't benefit anyone.

If there is a good place for schools to start improving, that would be grades, (or fixing the toilets. Seriously, they suck.) Schools seem to be getting in the way of education, and no such paradox is as bad in my opinion.

Written by Sebastian

COMING UP:

-The ingenuity of the Nintendo Switch calculator app

- LGBTQ A look at history

-A review on "Shrek"

THE SWITCH SETBACK

Get ready for the switch's brand-new addition to its store. It's not a game, and it's there on most other devices for free... This new extension to the legendary lineup of switch games such as Legend of Zelda BOTW and Mario kart 8 deluxe is... **THE CALCULATOR!!!**

Yep, Nintendo's new app is the calculator. A bit disappointing after the new Splatoon 3 and Pokémon remakes were announced to be released in 2022. The reason why Nintendo® have decided to add the calculator, which you can through your phone for free, completely baffles me.

If this wasn't already a controversial thing to do as it is, the calculator app isn't free, it costs 8 British pounds! You can buy a physical calculator with the same functions for less than that!

The Nintendo store has been falling apart recently and this desperate plea for money puts it in the spotlight,

Written by: Demians



LGBTQs: The History and Hatred

Written By: Cieran

Despite it seeming like LGBTQ history has only come into importance since around the 90's, it has in fact been around for a lot longer than you think.

As far back as 9,600 BCE, there were phallic cave paintings of male figures having what is interpreted to be homosexual intercourse.

Around 1533, due to the passing of The Buggery Act, homosexual relationships were outlawed. However, The Sexual Offences Act of 1967 (an Act of Parliament in the United Kingdom) legalized homosexual

acts in England and Wales, on the condition that they were consensual, in private.

In Nazi Germany, between 1933 to 1945 around 50,000 men were imprisoned for being homosexual with most dying in concentration camps.

The first transgender woman in Britain to undergo surgery was an ex-WW2 fighter pilot, Roberta Cowell, who got a vaginoplasty on 15 May 1951 and officially changed her name from Robert to Roberta 2 days later.

Sadly, she died on 11 October 2011.

In 1892, the term, "bisexual" referring to sexual orientation was coined by Charles Gilbert Chaddock.

Prior to this it referred to reproductive hermaphrodites.

The late but great rock musician, David Bowie declared himself bisexual in 1972 during an interview.

Sadly, some people still frown upon, and feel prejudice today.

There are historically far fewer mentions of lesbianism than male homosexuality, due to many historical writings and records focusing primarily on men.

While the punishment for male homosexuality was punishable by death there wasn't a written down rule for lesbians. However, this does not mean lesbianism has escaped cruelty. Horrifically, in Africa, there have been cases of lesbians being raped by heterosexual men as a form of punishment for "abnormal" behavior.



Photograph by Jana

While these are all examples from history it is important to remember that prejudice exists. Even now there is still

abundant amounts of hate.

It was discussed to ban the LGBTQ flag in America and in 2019, there was a bombing at an LGBT parade in Poland. Truly, it is a tragedy that these people who just want to be happy get all of this hate upon them for no valid reason.

Even if there has been more love to the LGBTQ community as of late, hopefully, in the future, we can live in a world where everyone can accept these individuals for who they are.



Why Shrek is a cinematic masterpiece

Written By: Sebastian

Let me start by saying Shrek is a weird movie. It's a parody of fables, which at the time of its release was daring since the world of animation was infested with Disney classics other studios trying to copy or Disney classics. But Shrek, it was different.

If I had to describe this movie's theme in one word, it would be identity.

It was a revolution. It was the first movie ever to win an Oscar for best animated feature and it was not afraid to be bold with its writing and appeal to adults. Its sarcasm was on point, its pacing and story as engaging as an animated movie can be and the score was an absolute slapstick.

So, the movie is pretty good, but who cares? It's not like there is anything more to it. It's a movie for kids! If that is what you think, then you are sadly wrong. There is a very strong message underlying this movie, and I want to analyse it in detail.

If you are only here for a short, surface level review, here it is: the movie is amazing. Witty, well-paced, great story, an endless source of memes. It's a 9.5/10 so go watch it. Now that we got this out of the way, what is the message of the movie?

Let's build up to it. Shrek is an ogre, and in the first installment of the Shrek franchise, ogres are feared by every man of the land. They are known to be grotesque and mercilessly kill those they face and use their carcass in extravagant ways.

And this, in some way, applies to Shrek too: although he doesn't viciously murder anybody, he acts like he will when in the presence of others. But that's not him. That's what society expects him to be, and it is the only thing he has ever known. He isolates himself for this reason, he doesn't think anyone would look past his hideous appearance. But then Donkey came along: the hero we didn't know we needed. He is the first one to not be afraid of Shrek or judge based solely on his looks. When Shrek realizes this, he is confused.



Shrek, it was different. It was a revolution. It was the first movie ever to win an Oscar for best animated feature.

He has never been appreciated for his sense of humour, or his artistic qualities, or just existing in general. And so, he tries to push Donkey away as he doesn't know what bonding with someone else feels like, someone you can relate to; as donkey and Shrek are somewhat similar: both outcasts, treated as worthless by everyone around them.

Shrek goes through a journey of isolation and acting just like everyone expects him to open up to the possibility that someone cares about him and forming a bond with them, to having someone you love and relate to in your life. This journey does not lack obstacles, just like real life.

As the film goes on, Shrek starts to reveal his more indulgent side and starts to care about Donkey, as shown by his various rescues of the talking animal and the tales of old ogres he shares with him. This is very relatable to lonely people who have just found new companionship and start to show their feelings more and more as time goes by. Shrek is also relatable as many have the feeling that they have no value and can never be loved. But eventually, just like Shrek found Fiona, everyone finds someone they can love. It doesn't have to be a romantic relationship, but just someone you care about, someone you can talk to about anything. In one of the movie's many plot points, Shrek wrongfully believes that Fiona, the princess he rescued, thinks he is a beast no one can ever love. Due to his societal expectations of how people will treat him, Shrek doesn't have much of a hard time believing this. In the end, he finds out that Fiona is an ogre too.

He has finally found someone like him, someone who truly loves and understands him.

If I had to describe this movie's theme in one word, it would be identity. Shrek goes through a journey of isolation and acting just like everyone expects him to open up to the possibility that someone cares about him and forming a bond with them, to having someone you love and relate to in your life.

This journey does not lack obstacles, just like real life, and just like many times in real life Shrek finally finds himself: not what society thinks he is, not what he thought he was, what he wants to be and what he is.

While there may be people who judge you based on untrue stereotypes, while you may not, as of yet, know someone you can relate to and that can understand you, do not let that change you for the worse.

Be yourself, let others make you a better person, let them care about you and love you. But never let them define who you are and what you should behave like. And this is what is at the core of Shrek: finding someone special, someone who is just like you; but even more importantly finding yourself.

And that is why Shrek, in my opinion, is a cinematic masterpiece.

Interested in joining the school newspaper?

Year 7 Graphics Wednesday Lunch time 12:15 – 12:45

Year 8 Graphics Wednesday After school 3:30 - 4:30

Or email mbishop@arkacton.org

Poster
by
Demians

