

Mulberry
Academy Shoreditch

LETTERS TO THE Future



An anthology of 'letters to the future' written by students at Mulberry Academy Shoreditch, reflecting on the last year and our hopes for the future. We hope our letters will act as a time capsule, helping future generations understand what life was like for young people during 2020-21.

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Year 7

Greta Kilgarriif

I'm writing this speech for the future, a murky, uncertain future. I'm writing this speech aged 12, it was only my birthday only yesterday. I don't know what age I am reading this out now; I don't know if I'll ever get the chance. My only hope that when I am reading this out is that all will be solved. The year is 2021 and all eyes have been on Covid-19 for the past year, but during the current emergency, we have forgotten the true emergency. This emergency is the state of our climate, something that threatens all life, not just the old, obese or those with underling health conditions. While I am writing this, I am writing in a red book called 'Climate and Environment'. I have put it in a red book because that is the stage we are currently at; we aren't at green or amber, we're red. Red: the colour of fire, of blood and of pain. When this is read out, I want it to be read out from a green book, but only if the climate is well. If not, I want the book to be black. Black: the colour of death. I know that this has been a short speech and hasn't used many of the skills we have been taught for speech writing, but I'm sure it's enough to get my point through. Our planet is dying and, by the time this is read out, it might already be dead.

Ebrahim Chowdhury

Dear future generations,

It has been a very hard time for me and of course many other people in the past year. It was when the coronavirus first came to England and spread like fire. There was this long lockdown, which lasted for half a year, imagine staying at home for half a year! For the first few months of the lockdown, we did online school. The teacher would set us work, but not livestreams like we have now.

I chose to go to school in most of the months, there was some other people too; it was not that fun. Normally you would play with your friends outside in the playground. It was a bit hard to learn because you could not be in pairs and share what you think.

The most challenging aspects of the past year was that you would need to stay very hygienic as you know, not many people knew how to wash their hands, including adults. There were many deaths, people were not familiar with this rule, cover your face, wash your hands and keep distance.

There were some people getting depression and some going too far and committing suicide.

What I learnt from the past year that everyone will have hardships at some point in their life, and the only way to stop that from happening is that we work together. I think it has not changed me a bit since you can get used to stuff very quickly.

Life might be very different in the future because the virus might get worse or calm down a bit. If we forgot this virus ever happened, it would be very disastrous because people were helping each other in this stressful time. If the virus gets worse, young people who barely experienced their lives will die and that would not be a good thing. Many people were losing jobs.

I hope for the future everyone remains calm and every bad thing ends. I will try hard to protect myself and others.

Stay safe, have fun and do not get worried.

Yours sincerely, **E**

Anisa Begum

Dear future generation,

I am writing to tell you about a big situation that was worldwide from my time.

In my time there was a virus called Covid 19 (coronavirus). This killed millions of people all over the world. I live in Britain and every day about 100 people died in Europe.

In December 2019- August 2020 the world was in lockdown. The lockdown lasted for half a year. It was a law to wear face masks and to stay indoors. After coming inside, you must wash your hands. If you were caught going outside, to someone else's house then you were fined. You had to pay £100. Also, you had to always stay a 2-metre distance outside. You have to stay in bubbles in schools. Bubbles are small groups, so you don't mix with other groups. If any of your family members are ill, you have to stay inside for 2 whole weeks.

Lockdown wasn't a fun experience. You couldn't see your friends face to face. You had to call your friends on the phone. Calling your friends wasn't fun because you couldn't play games with them. We couldn't go to school either because of lockdown. Important exams like A Levels GCSEs and SATs were cancelled. It was very boring because there wasn't much to do at home. During Lockdown the streets and roads were a lot quieter than ever before because no one was out.

When lockdown finally finished things were so different. You couldn't play with your friends from other year groups. You couldn't see most people faces because of the face masks. In secondary schools you couldn't do some of the things that you normally do. In science you can't do practicals, you have to do paperwork. In technology you can't do the usual activities that you normally do, and just like science it's just paperwork. You have to stay in the same classroom all the time. You have to use your own bubble's toilets.

After that Lockdown came another lockdown. We have to do online learning and the rules are the same as before. We have to do online learning this lockdown. I moved to secondary during lockdown. It's harder to do the learning because it's harder to ask for help when you need it. One thing I hate about online learning is you can't see your friends at break times. Another reason why online learning is hard because there are technical difficulties some of the time.

Luckily scientists have made a vaccine, but doctors are choosing who gets to use the vaccines first. People over the age of 60 are using the vaccine first.

During Covid 19, everyone has been thanking the NHS because they have been risking their lives to save society.

If anything like this happens in the future, follow the government's rules no matter how boring it seems. The government make rules for a good reason so you should follow them. You don't want to face something like this. If Covid 19 turns up again, follow these rules. It will help a lot.

Yours sincerely,

Anisa Begum

Alieu Sawaneh

Dear future generations,

I am writing to you in February 2021, reflecting on a year in which was quite a horrible year considering a virus outbreak, forest fires, protests and much more. This year I have had a pretty tough time with things like online school as it is really different. I felt stressed about this change. Teenagers were most likely also stressed as this transition was huge for people all over the world.

The biggest challenge has been online school. What has been hardest has been focusing in class. An unexpected silver lining has been that I have had a bit more free time after school for I do not have to walk to school everyday. I have changed as I now spend more time as home as I am in in lockdown.

I think society will eventually get used to all of these changes as we get used to being in a lockdown. I hope that you have an amazing year and no harm comes your way.

Yours faithfully,
Alieu Sawaneh

Year 8

Farhana Hossain

Hi,

I'm Farhana, the not-American American and I'm from the year of 2021, so by the time you are reading this, I am most likely dead or presumed dead. This letter has been written to you as historical evidence of the COVID-19 (Coronavirus Disease 2019); it is also a recount of my time during lockdown. Hopefully, when you're reading this, COVID-19 isn't as big of a threat as it was in 2020 or 2021.

From March 2020 to August 2020, the world had changed drastically. Society was falling apart. People were fighting over rolls of toilet paper and other basic, everyday necessities like that. Everyone was forced into quarantine; we were imprisoned in our own homes. I'm guessing that's why people say being under house arrest sucks. It was a sad time to be alive. Honestly, I don't know how we were able to withstand something like this, how we, as a society, didn't just completely shatter. Sure, I said it was falling apart, but I was more talking about the loss of communication and social interaction, not a civil war.

We lost a lot of people. I am not going to lie, it was tough. But it wasn't like the world had never seen anything like this before. For example, the Black Death, humanity had survived that, hadn't we?

During lockdown, like everyone else, I was bored out of my mind. I couldn't go outside without having to wear a surgical mask. My glasses would become foggy when I wore one. I don't think surgical masks were made for humans who had lungs, because you could barely breathe in those things, or was it just me? Plus, everyone was hoarding everything. Personally, I think we've become squirrel-like. You can't give high fives, hugs, or have any physical interaction with anyone. Not that I really mind, I don't do hugs or kisses. But I know a lot of other people do, with their family members and significant others, it's a form of communication for them. Sometimes, physical contact, such as hugs, are comforting during grief and we can't do that due to COVID-19 restrictions. :(

Sorry, I'm getting off track, sometimes I ramble on too much and repeat my point when it only needs to be said once. But what I'm trying to say is that even when things go to disastrously wrong, deal with it in the best way possible, nothing in life goes as planned. Chaos is what allows the world to go round, along with the occasional lie.

I think I've learnt quite a bit in the past couple months about sensitivity and sympathising with people. I'm not good at socializing or dealing with emotions but I'm trying. Dealing with people when they're at their lowest is always going to be difficult but by distracting them, we can help them get over the pain.

I know that COVID-19 will not get the best of us, I know we aren't losing. Humanity isn't going to lose because we have HOPE. At the end of the day, it's all we have against COVID-19. So, listen to me, right now in 2021, WE ARE NOT LOSING HOPE! We are not going to lose our determination, because we know we can win the war and we will be victorious because that's who we are.

I would also like to say "kudos" to the doctors and nurses globally for being the cavalry, for being the first line of defence against COVID-19. Thank you for being so noble, thank you so much. The field of Medicine is particularly hard and takes a lot of expertise and quick thinking. Don't let anyone tell you otherwise.

This is the end of my letter, so thank you. Thank you for reading this, whatever time period you might be from.

Respectfully and with guiltless pride,
Farhana

Maymuna Rahaman

Dear future generations,

I am writing to you in February 2021, reflecting on probably one of the most absurd years in history. In that year, I have experienced indescribable pain and sorrow, yet an unknown happiness always followed up. This year was the year with the highest death count, a newly found fatal disease, sudden closures of fully developed town and loss of jobs. The whole world was captivated in itself with no escape, fear encased us all. Teenagers such as myself had it hard on them as many were in the middle of unfinished exams and others were stuck at home with no more hope to ever see the world back to normal. Hospitals were often overcrowded, and sadly enough, this crisis still continues on today

The biggest challenge has been attending school on time every day in the mornings. Although we were at home the whole time and we no longer had to wake up as early every morning anymore, we still had to regularly attend classes on time. Another big challenge has been getting motivation to do things. For example, I had frequently lost the motivation to even just simply walk around the house because of how tired I was. I'm sure many other teenagers felt this way, and that many others had struggled in fear, stressing about the countless lives lost every second of every day.

Something that made me-well- hopeful, was how many had kept optimistic throughout these tough times. It wasn't exactly safe, but it was enough to make people laugh and look forward to seeing another day. When I said this year was absurd, I meant it. People tried to eat tide pods because they looked tasty, they dyed their hair for fun while we're having a mid-life crisis, and so on. Honestly, times like these made me worry about how sane everyone REALLY was.

I have changed in many ways to be honest. I have learnt that spending as much time as possible with your family is indeed very important, and that it is rewarding to give yourself a break no matter what situation

you're in. I have learnt to value everything I have, no matter how big or small, and to value life itself. With how dire this situation is, I'm certain that many, along with myself, have gotten closer to our religions and praying that these deadly days come to an end.

As for the future, my plans haven't changed much at all. I aspire to become a great doctor one day, and as for now, I am hoping to keep getting good grades to lead me to my dream. I also hope to travel the world and see its beauty, considering that there are so many places I've never even seen. Of course, I wish to carry out these plans after this crisis is over and the world returns to normal.

This year has truly been both a miracle and a curse, but I can't wait for this world pandemic to finally cease to exist, and I hope that's sooner than I think!

Yours sincerely,
Maymuna Rahaman

Takiya Islam

My life as a 12 year old in national lockdown.

Monday 1st February 2021

Dear reader,

I'm going to tell you about the one year that really affected me mentally. It was all starting off quite all right. I had positive vibes about this year. I wanted to be fully productive and wanted to change myself for the better. Things started to get worse as soon as we all went to lockdown. I first was happy because there was no school and I wanted to redecorate my whole room so I began doing my room up. Then when it came to a point where the coronavirus was spreading - I was so scared. I'm a really bad overthinker, I overthink all the time no matter if it is a good time or a bad time. I was scared about whether I would lose anyone this year and I was mostly thinking about my nan and my older cousin since he was diagnosed with cancer. As the time was flying I was getting really lonely and really upset but I always said to myself that everything was going to be okay. Through this time I was always positive about everything no matter what it was because when I think bad it really doesn't help me. I start crying or start shaking really badly.

June came and I received the most amazing news. My older cousin is getting married. I was so happy and was relieved because something good was happening in the family. Because my cousin was battling cancer for 4 years we wanted it to be the best time of his whole cancer journey. We were all really excited since it was the first wedding in the family. Everything was going amazing. At times he was in pain but we made sure he was having his medicine.

July came and we all went on a family trip to White Cliffs of Dover. All 45 cousins went, I have a really big family so we made sure everyone was part of it. We had to take 10 cars and it was really fun. And overall it was really fun and an amazing time to spend with my family and our new sister in law.

August was the worst month for me since it was mostly crying. My cousin had to go to the hospital because his condition was getting worse and worse. We were really scared as the doctors said he only had 2 weeks left but we didn't believe that, we kept praying and praying. And in the end, he lived for two more weeks. My cousin passed away. As soon as I heard, I couldn't accept the fact that he was gone. I honestly thought it was a dream. I didn't want it to be true. It was so traumatizing and it was the worst news ever.

The moral of this story is not everything will turn out ok. Some things happen for a reason and God is the only person who can help you. Sometimes you have to let go of people who you really love and that's for

the better. It will hurt you so much but at the end of the day those feelings will slowly fade and you will start feeling good about yourself. You will soon realize that everything happened for the good. And it happened for your benefit. No one has a perfect life so you will expect something big to happen even when you're old. There are kids out there that have no mum and dad and they are still moving on because they know that they aren't going to come back so there is no point in them wishing they would come back. That's why people move on for the better and pray for their loved ones. This took me a long time to understand why stuff like this happens. And it also took me a very long time to accept that people have to go for a reason. Never ever leave hope and faith. Having a positive mindset is always the key and even if you overthink. A negative mindset is never ever the right thing to do – it can slowly become a habit and no matter what you do all you can think is that something bad is going to happen and it doesn't feel good. For everyone it's different. For example, when I overthink and have a negative mindset my heart starts beating really fast and I start getting butterflies or even it would get very difficult for me to breathe. But I focus on the good things which also made me change the habit of overthinking and a negative mindset. Also something I definitely recommend is to always have someone to speak to no matter what the topic is. It could be a male, female. It could be someone really old or someone really young. But the best out of all of them is god. No matter what situation there is, always trust god. I'm a Muslim and me trusting my god and telling him all my problems changed everything. It changed the way I think and the way I act about these situations. If you want to let it all out, let it all out. There is no point in you keeping it in you for so long that it starts to make you feel so full and you don't want to talk about it. So make sure that if you want to cry out loud, cry out loud. Don't keep it in. remember you are loved. And everyone loves you.

"The advice I'd give to somebody that's silently struggling is, you don't have to live that way. You don't have to struggle in silence. You can be un-silent. You can live well with a mental health condition, as long as you open up to somebody about it, because it's really important you share your experience with people so that you can get the help that you need." - Demi Lovato

Takiya Islam

Aoyon Kundu

Dear future generations,

I am writing to you in January 2021, reflecting on a year in which COVID-19 a virus, was in the UK, the virus was everywhere.

This year I have done online school. I felt strange and scared. Teenagers were doing everything at home. They couldn't go to school.

The biggest challenge has been doing online school from home. The hardest part of online school has been staying at home. Because I just wanted to go to school and because is boring staying at home. Something which made me hopeful was school because it helped me to stay entertained.

This lockdown changed me. And I think that everything will change.

I hope that you are well. I plant to finish the GCSEs. I would like to live in a world that is normal, with technology, and nature.

Your sincerely,
Aoyon Kundu

Abdirahman Abokor

Dear future generations,

I am writing to you from The 7th of February 2021. We are currently in a lockdown and that is doing a number on teenagers' mental health. However, I enjoy this lockdown a lot as I get to spend time with those, I love but I have had my own struggles like online school, which is extremely hard for people across the UK. The hardest part of lockdown for me personally is not being able to see my family and friends as often as I would like to. I believe I have matured over the past year and learnt how to become a better person for myself and the environment.

I want the future to look bright for people of all races and beliefs and that people will not be discriminated against their opinions. I'd also like for everyone to be equal no matter what they think or look like.

To end this letter, I would like you to take this advice, have fun, live life and most importantly of all, be kind.

Yours sincerely,
Abdirahman Abokor

Jumara Begum

The unforgotten journey

Encapsulated in my head was the wonders of when this will all be over? 16th of March 2020, a day that everyone will remember. It left everyone with a multiple choice of emotions. It alternated everyone in many ways in a change of feelings to the way people look, from doing haircuts in the shop; to doing it at home. I mean everyone is going to change one day; but I think this is the largest change yet, a change that makes you feel like you're on your own but really everyone is by your side. You can call a day rough but when you think about what we're going through together you would instantly be able to visualize what really is a rough day, in fact not just a day but months. What we have been through together is something beyond our imagination; something you can't say imagine this happened because it is too unreal to visualize.

Fear it's what we all have inside of us. Something that we need to defeat together but is this something we can get over? Well, it will always be left behind for us, we will be able to say that we have been through a lot. A lot I say we have been through not being able to leave our house to losing loved ones. We have been through much more. It is so tragic that it's hard to put into words.

You might be thinking what I am going on about. Well, I am talking about how were suffering in a pandemic. A virus called Corona Virus (COVID-19) well where do I begin there is so much to say from schools shutting down, not being able to leave the house, not being able to meet friends and family and most of all losing loved ones. I can't express the way things are right now - we are in a devastating position as a whole and we need to get over this together.

Some people blamed China, but I must say that there is no reason for anyone to aim at China. It been scientifically proven it's a global pandemic, not China's pandemic.

As tragic as this was, many people did not have any beliefs on whether this was real or not. So, everyone continued to do everything as if nothing ever happened; or so they thought. Eventually some people became sick, and no one was there to comfort them. Day after day more people became sick; and the government had decided to officially shut down the schools and the non-essential shops. This was a very big decision that had to be taken seriously. One thing that I could not understand was the rush to the shops,

I mean the important essential shops were not going to close but one thing that almost everyone did was fight over toilet tissue I mean it's not the end of coming to the shops you can come back again. But really it wasn't as simple for some people to understand.

Lockdown, something that wasn't as easy as everyone thought. It was like everything changed. No more gathering with friends and families, no more going on long fun walks and no more adventures. It's like a pause from one chapter and skipping to another. It was difficult. You could always say you are bored but really compared to how you felt for a day was a million times worse for us. Well, we were stuck at home for months. There was only little you could do until you get bored. You might say that you are having a difficult time well you're not on your own we are having a difficult time too and trying to adjust to this unimaginable situation.

Loss of routine. There was no specific time for anything you could go to bed late wake up late, everything was out of time. But home schooling is extremely hard when you have little siblings distracting you all the time and it has also put a lot of pressure on my mother because she was trying to make sure that we all was keeping Up To Date with our work and our routine and at the same taking care of the house and my siblings. When we do schoolwork online it was like there was no right time you could do it whenever like 12 at night to 12 in the morning. Everything was out of order and all over the place.

As the lockdown came to an end things had started to ease. It was like nothing ever happened and we were doing our normal things. I must say that people didn't really care, and everyone decided to start going out with friends and families; and went out to eat at restaurants and many more but what people didn't realize was what they were doing wrong.

Day after day the death rate increased and because of this everyone was no longer excited this was because everyone was hoping to celebrate Christmas with their families but turns out that the conditions are so bad that they are no longer able to enjoy Christmas with their family.

January 2021 was announced as the biggest decision of having a national lockdown. Lockdown had begun because of the new strain of virus; it brought thousands of people to the hospital. It was so severe that hospitals were running out of supplies like beds and ventilation. Due to the raise of the virus Doctors had to work 24/7.

As the national lockdown came to an end people begun to find a cure. One thing that we had to do that was a change was every time me went out or went to school we had to wear a mask. During this difficult time people were sent a pack home to get tested to see if you had the virus; if you did you would have to quarantine for ten days.

Monday June 15th our new costume was revealed; if you were above the age twelve you had to wear a mask when you go out. It was compulsory, you were not allowed to enter any shops without a mask, and it was a rule in order to keep us safe. As I said before; how many people were fighting over many items in the shop. Well, due to the chaotic experience the shops had now made a rule of allowing only one or two of the same items.

Many people were having lots of difficulties with earning money. Due to the virus many people weren't earning lots of money and were struggling to provide their family with food and essentials. This left people with a tight budget and needed to spend their money in a wise way. Also, many people that were self-employed were struggling to earn money because for example taxi drivers can't earn money if there are no customers.

As dismal as this can get, we weren't allowed to meet our loved ones to see how they were in fact, we weren't even allowed to go to weddings we were only allowed to have fifteen people and were not allowed to get together as a family and celebrate.

On the 8th of December arrived our hero a vaccination that came to rescue us. Finally, we are having lots of people come to get the vaccination. But they are first going to help the elderly then they will come down slowly to other people. But they are still giving it to NHS workers and care workers and people with severe underlined health conditions.

2020 overall was a tough year and there is more to come who knows what's going to happen in 2021. We have had a crazy experience and an adventurous year. We hope that everything will get back to normal soon. I hope you have had an interesting experience in listening to our journey. Who knows what will be next to come?

Jumara Begum

Haniya Rashid

Dear future,

Where am I to start? Well, it all began around December 2019. The news was flooded with a strange thing called Coronavirus. It was first discovered in Wuhan and eventually overtook the world. It's quite scary to think that two years ago, us humans thought that we were invincible until this tiny piece of bacteria came to existence and ended lives.

Coronavirus has sent me on a rollercoaster of emotions. Everyday, you wake up to hear of family and friends who have fallen victims to this monster, and now no longer are in this world. On the contrary, there have been some positive aspects of lockdown. One being that I appreciate school a lot more. Not just the people, but also the education. I shudder to think about the amount of education that I have missed out on in nearly two years! Home school isn't the same as being in school and I definitely do not take it for granted anymore. I am grateful that I am able to go to school, learn new things and make friends. Another positive of lockdown I have found is that I am able to spend a lot more time with my family than I would have otherwise. We are all much closer now and have learnt so many new things about each other. However, it has been quite hard as we are continuously falling into silly arguments.

Covid-19 has had a detrimental effect on people's mental and physical health. I am fortunate enough to have a garden where I can exercise in. others do not and are not able to keep fit at home. It's going to have a huge effect on today's people as obesity will be on the rise. I worry to think of how all this will have a negative effect on our future generations.

I am extremely grateful to all the front-line workers. Without these people we wouldn't have been able to survive.

I hope this letter has given you a small insight of what it's like to be living life in lockdown.

Your friend from the past,
Haniya Rashid

Hafiza Yasmin

Dear future generations,

It's 2021 and so far, this year has not been what I expected it to be. Unfortunately, the world is currently still in lockdown, but it is for the best. We need to keep safe. The world is struggling. Loved ones are dying. However tough times never last, only tough people do. We worry that this virus may not end any time soon but if we have hope then it would make the present much easier to cope with. I cannot have a better future if I keep thinking about the past. My future depends on lockdown as it has affected my education and health. I am now learning from home once again and staring at a screen all day. I find it hard dealing with not seeing my friends at registration, classes, break, lunch. It doesn't feel the same anymore... I would always want to skip school when I was younger but experiencing it now, I miss the trivial things like waking up early, seeing myself in a school blazer and going to classes with my friends. The hardest thing for me was not being able to finish my first and second year of secondary in person. But sometimes life has unexpected events when you are not paying attention. In the future, I hope that everything goes back to normal, and everyone can forget that this pandemic never existed...

Hafiza Yasmin 8e

Jennifer Uddin

Dear future generation,

Yes, this is the year 2021 in January I am writing to you in. How are you? You are probably laughing right now listening to you speaking about what you have achieved so far. The biggest change for me this year and for maybe everyone is that we can't see family I can't go to school and see my friends, it is like we are trapped in a prison cell where the only thing we can do is eat and sleep. It is quite boring at home. Do you remember it? The biggest challenge for me is doing work over the internet, I was quite scared because I thought what if my work got lost- but now I have learnt. What scared me the most this year was this national outbreak from the Coronavirus, I was scared that I would catch it, our family would catch it, or even people I don't know. It is a serious problem that everyone is trying to solve. I think that this year I have learnt how to be me. I have enjoyed the snow (even though it wasn't a lot)! An unexpected silver lining is that I might have to celebrate my birthday in Lockdown, and my sister will probably celebrate her 10th birthday for the second time in Lockdown. In the future, I hope to be successful, well I hope you are. But...the trickiest thing probably this year for me is picking my GCSEs! I picked art and photography but I still don't know what to pick for my career- so I'm still thinking. I hope to have a good paying job and just have a successful life. Lastly, I would like to live in a world where there is no pollution, all races, genders EVERYONE is treated like they belong and they should not feel like an outsider. All animals are safe and should not be at the verge of its existence ever. I hope you stay safe and that whatever has happened in 2021 will not happen again ever.

Goodbye,
Jennifer

Pourabi Chakraborty

Dear future generations,

I would like to tell you about our past year,

We dealt with the pandemic of Covid 19 even in a very tough situation.

We handled very hard deeds and lost people around and far from us,

We cried and wish for people and freedom,

But we always know how fundamental it is to follow rules.

Though I wonder why some don't,

We must respect rules and regulations and NHS and all the law.

We stay in homes with love and care,

As virus is what we don't share.

I hope that the future generations stay stronger and healthier and happier,

I hope you do fight through anything like this.

I wish for you to be a better one,

I wish for you to be a tougher one,

I hope you to go freely and have a good time with the world.

Fatuma Sahra Mohamed

Dear future generations,

I am writing to you in February 2021, reflecting on a year which a pandemic broke out. We had no control over the pandemic or lockdown and none of us could have stopped it. However, we had some control of ourselves and our actions. This year I have spent most of my school year at home. I felt worried and sad. Many people were in hospital and were being put in graves. The biggest challenge was staying at home for 6 months (2020). The hardest challenge has been to get use to learning from home. An unexpected silver lining has been that less pollution has been used as people don't go out a lot. Something that has made me hopeful was when they found the vaccine to the virus. I think society will be more respecting as people have offered to help each-other.

Neemah Begum

Dear future generations,

I am writing to you in 2021, reflecting on a year which has been difficult for everyone. This year I have felt different than usual as many things happened in my life that I have never seen before. The biggest challenge that faced everyone was a virus. I know it sounds crazy but that's how our lives were in 2021. The virus was called coronavirus but for short it was called COVID-19. It spread around the whole nation. It was killing everyone and so many family members died. This was painful for everyone. It got worse throughout the months. It was so bad that going into hospitals was a risk as people died from going inside them. We never actually knew that there was a virus until people started getting sick and the news informed it to the globe. Also, the government informed us that we weren't allowed to go outside until we wear face masks. We also had to make sure we wash our hands often and use hand sanitizer, so we don't get ill. I know what you are thinking. How could you breathe on those things? Well, that's how life was for everyone.

As the virus continued, we were more informed to wear masks and keep ourselves safe and clean. We were also informed by the government that we had to be quarantined and the country was in lockdown. This meant that we weren't allowed to go outside at all. Adults had to work from home. Unfortunately, people lost their jobs and children could not go to school. We did remote learning which meant we were on the computer everyday listening to the teacher and doing live classes. This was hard for some people as not a lot of people had the internet that was good and had bad WIFI. This was painful for everyone. During this lockdown, no one could go out unless it was to go and buy necessary things. For example, grocery shopping or medical needs. Every day, when you turn on the TV all you hear about was the virus and how much people have died every 24 hours. It was so awful and sorrowful. People hearts were falling down the cracks. But then they started to make a vaccine so people can get it and be cured from the virus. They were also doing COVID-19 tests. These are to check if you have the virus or not. Some people would be positive which means they have it or negative which they haven't, and they must self-isolate for 14 days. This was also a risk for the NHS because they could have caught the virus from other people to. This has been going on for more than a year. We never know when it's going to end.

Captain Tom, A man who walked 100 laps around his 25-meter garden. He raised £17 million for the NHS. He was 99 years old when he done this. When he had his 100th birthday he raised up to £30 million. All this money went to the NHS. Unfortunately, he died at the age of 100 on the 2nd of February 2021. This was so surprising that he raised so much money, but I was so downhearted when I heard he passed away.

I have changed a lot since 2020-2021 virus pandemic had happened. Lots of people including me have learned to appreciate what we have. This is because not everyone had a lot of money to buy food. Shops were empty because people stacked their houses with essential items like shampoo, toothbrush and boxes of tinned food. But there has been some thoughtful and supportive people that have been working and opening foodbanks and giving people free food. I mean how great is that! I would never forget people who did that. I think society would learn to appreciate what they have and to never forget people who have passed away during these upsetting tremendous months.

My plan for my future has changed. I hope that this pandemic will go, and the future will be much better. I will pray to god that everyone can live in a peaceful and privileged life. I hope that no one will forget about what happened during these harmful times and to be grateful for everything they have. Finally, I would love to live in a world where there is freedom and happiness. I hope this will change for everyone as everything has changed for me and the world.

Naima Nur Ahmed

Dear my beloved sister,

I must confess that I'm nervous about what this new stage of life will bring but I am also filled with hope about the world that you will step into – a world reset in 2020 after COVID-19. Let me take you back to that difficult year. You were three and a half years old, too young to know what was happening. All we asked you to do was wash your hands frequently, not touch your face, and the toughest part – stay indoors. We read, played, watched cartoons, but you soon started craving school; you always wanted to sleep in my arms, holding me. Being with you was the only thing that gave me solace about our lives beyond the crisis until you stumped me with an innocent question. "Sister how do people who don't have water wash their hands so many times?" I knew sanitizers were not the answer as people without basic access to water certainly couldn't afford them. The virus travelled without restraint across the planet, affecting millions. It showed us that not everyone had the same access to treatment and protection, that the world we'd built was not a fair one. But it also laid out the initial sparks of real change, teaching us how interconnected we all are and how fragile the balance between humanity and nature is. As I look back on the past decade since that awful pandemic wreaked havoc, I want you to know why I am so hopeful for the world you have before you.

Iqra Ahmed

Dear future generation

I am writing to you in February 2021 reflecting on a year. Last year has been one of the worst year ever for lots of people. I think that 2021 will be better because more good things are happening already and everything is starting to get normal again.

In the future I hope that Covid -19 is gone.

In the future I hope that everything is normal for everyone and the disease that is going on is more calmed down.

One thing I'll remember about lockdown is staying at home and spending time with family

Iqra Ahmed

Leon Martin de Barros

Dear Future Generations,

I am writing to you in February 2021, reflecting on a year in which it has been chaotic because of Covid, the lockdowns and the closing of the schools. What has been the hardest thing is not being able to see my friends and family, going to the countryside and going on holiday. I miss being under the warm sun in Portugal and Brazil.

I hope in 2022 there will be no pandemic so then I can see all my friends and family because I miss them all so much.

I wish that whoever reads this will understand why I am writing this to the future. So, I hope you live in a world where there is no violence and pandemics and bad presidents and prime ministers.

The best things about being a child before the pandemic included building dens, jumping in puddles, climbing trees and being free. These things I will value for the rest of my life.

Yours sincerely

Leon Martin de Barros

Umar Shah

Dear Future Generations,

I am writing to you on Monday 1st February 2021. This year has been tough with the virus on and this and that. No one has got to know each other and help others. Well, I have. See during this year, all I have seen on every single device is a virus, people grieving, and people passing away. My initial thoughts on it were that I wasn't really interested in it. But when I heard about it on the news. I got so terrified; I did not step a foot outdoors.

This year has been rough for some people. They're losing their jobs, money, and even houses. Plus, it was the start of a new year, which is very depressing. The biggest challenge was when we had to be in lockdown forever that all the things, I learnt in school... I... forgot. But thanks to the state-of-the-art technology. I learnt even better things that I learnt before.

A teenager was killed in the countryside, and it disgusted many people, but to some, the air was filled with melancholy. Tears would fall down like the blood rushing out of people dying. That's how sad they were. Society these days are... how should I put this? Lost. They thought they were omniscient, so they did whatever they did they could. But the bright side of it, is that UK found a vaccine! And 'the number of cases' were down.

I really hope the streets change. There's too much gang violence, and murders, and all those crimes. Well, I want to get those illegal things off the road and become a police officer. That is my plan for the future. And help other people to change their ways and restart like they're kids growing up. I plan to make communities better by connecting people together like they are made of magnets. I have learnt a lot of things like to code and stuff.

In conclusion, this year is pretty decent and a lot fun. By online learning, to online games. And many people are relying on the vaccine. And some say, "2021 is a year of action: and bring the world to justice, peace, and equality."

Well, then. This year was decent, but better than last year...

Umar Shah

Samantha Ezemah

Dear Future Generations,

I am writing to you in February 2021, reflecting on the eye-opening yet sombre year of 2020. Many of us were looking forward to 2020, but once we started the year, we could have never predicted the year we all had to face.

This year I have started online learning, like many children across the country and I have also made one of the first most important decisions, choosing my GCSE options during lockdown. Plenty of teenagers this year have felt overwhelmed with either their schoolwork or the fact that many of them feel sorrowful and down because they are not able to socialize, see their friends or family.

One of the biggest challenges I have faced is adjusting in starting online school, but an unexpected silver lining has been that as I have started online work, I have found myself enjoying some subject more such as science. Something that made me hopeful is God, my family and planning and envisions what tomorrow my look like.

Some ways that I changed during lockdown is that I have learnt to exercise discipline, become self-sufficient and proactive. One way, I believe that the coronavirus has changed society is it allowed us to become more a community and work better together.

My plans for the future are to hopefully to resume school and to be able to get the best grades possible for my GCSEs.

From Samantha Ezemah

Year 9

Fahmida Rashid

Dear Future Generations,

Could you ever imagine living during a time where you were trapped at home, and relaxing and watching TV was the last thing you wanted to do? I know I couldn't. Quite a lot of us practically lived for telly. But the time I am living in right now, at this very moment, is February 2021. It is a time of sadness, reflections, lessons, gratitude and peace. A year in which our home planet is going through many challenges. A year in which life didn't feel real. Due to a deadly virus called COVID-19 spreading across the world, causing a global pandemic, we have all went through struggles but we also persevered and reflected on this astonishing journey.

Over the past year, things have been different not only for me, but millions of individuals near my age around the world. School kids like me are usually always told to stop being a couch potato and go out, be productive. We were never bothered at that time. This time, it's a whole different story. A story which almost depicts wonderland. Our parents went from "STOP SITTING AROUND ALL DAY AND DO SOMETHING! GO OUT FOR A WALK!" to "don't even think about moving a muscle, you stay where you are, thank you very much." You can clearly tell we are living in an upside down world. Over the past year, I felt like I was able to experience life in a whole new perspective. Teenagers across the world have felt this way as they have taken a look at what has happened to society and our environment. Every time I would watch the news and hear of the conditions of the pandemic, my jaw would drop. Goosebumps would appear on my skin and I

would feel a slight chill on my spine. As students, we were able to experience something which we have never imagined happening in our lives, it almost felt like a dream. We missed 6 months of school for the first time when the first lockdown came into being, which sounds almost impossible in reality. It doesn't stop there. We spent almost 7 hours with a 20 minute and 40 minute break, staring at a screen and virtually studying for class. Me saying this sounds as if an alien has invaded our planet. I guess you could say it has, but in the form of a revolting virus. We had a tremendous urge to go outside and we were getting sick of using our phones and televisions all day. We felt trapped. Some of us surprisingly missed school. We were fed up of looking at the screen all day and not being able to see our friends' faces. We missed being in a classroom and embracing the soothing atmosphere. I would usually see the streets filled with people and everyone moving around in the shops and getting food casually like we would on a daily basis. But now, the most amount of people you would find in a shop would probably be about a maximum of 5 or 15, all spread out. Travelling on the other hand, was a whole other story. Normally, I would hop on the bus like as if it was a normal regular day and I didn't care that much about there being loads of people inside. But this pandemic has made me tremble in fear of even taking a step inside because no one knew who or what was contaminated or who or what wasn't. The virus was highly discreet and fooled many of us. Even though this year was different and affected us in a saddening way, one thing that has turned our frowns upside down was being able to connect with our loved ones and bond with them.

However, along with these differences came unexpected silver linings. For me, one of them was school, both online and in person. With online school, it wasn't easy working at home since there was so much going on around me and for many other people too. With me, I was unable to concentrate properly. My house isn't the best place for a school. My 7-year-old sister was also doing online school and finished her classes at a different time. So, when she was off school, she would most likely run around or try attempting to watch TV. I only had one room available to myself, which was the living room so there was a lot of noise and not enough space for me to study. Whereas with normal school, I had all the space I needed and no distractions at all. Even so, things were out of the ordinary. We barely had any time to consume our food, the most time being 15 minutes or maybe even 10. We had to stay away from other people in other year groups, we were only allowed in one section of the building which made going to other places really hard. The most aggravating part was that wherever we went, we always had to wear a mask over our mouths, unless we were in our classroom or eating lunch. Us students weren't the only ones facing challenges though. Parents have, by far, faced the most challenges during this pandemic. Many of them were unable to teach their children and had to risk their and their children's lives by going to school. And a lot of adults, not just parents, have lost their jobs.

Even though this pandemic has been very troublesome and depressing for us, we have also seen some positive aspects of it. We have seen people standing outside of their front doors or peeping outside of their windows every day, coming out at 8:00 pm in the evening to applaud and bang spoons against pots and pans and cheer for the NHS for their hard work and dedication to our country and for risking their lives to save ours. We got to do things which we never had time for and experience what it was like to live during such a mind-blowing historical time, even if it seems tough and daunting. And for me, personally, this may sound utterly ridiculous to quite a lot of you but, as you may or may not know about a religious event called Ramadan and another one called Eid, I was thrilled at the fact that I could stay home for it. The reason for that being is because I got to spend time with my family, do fun things such as make food and read books. I was able to get closer to God, which a number of us had the opportunity to do whilst we were at home. Having my family with me and praying to God has benefited me in so many ways that saying how I felt was unexplainable. Also, I got to know myself better during this pandemic and see all the things I love and not like as much.

This year, I have been able to learn things in which I never imagined having the time to reflect on or do. Two things I have learnt are, to embrace myself more and express myself, and what it truly means to be a family. Not just go out with them and tell each other how much you all love and care for one another, get to know them, spend some quality time with them, do things that both you and your family love, have a laugh. Just take the time you have and spend as much of it as you can with them.

Compared to how life was before and how life is now, I feel that the future will be very contrasting. People

will take education more seriously. People will not become attached to things so easily and look at the other amazing things out there. People will see the world in a much wider perspective. And most of all, as the universe expands, so will our minds.

I strongly believe that this experience has changed society in the sense that many people have become more considerate and respectful towards others and aided them and supported them with their needs. People are more obliged with what they have. They have learnt the true meaning of loving and supporting others. They have realised how short life is and nowadays, society is all about 'living it up'. More people wish to travel and explore the natural and physical beauties of this world.

I would like to live in a world where there is more peace and serenity amongst others. I want people to realise that what they have at the moment, can go away any second and to cherish that moment they have. I hope that in the future, schools become more advanced and students can get the opportunity to explore different careers whenever they like, walk along the pathway which represents their passion. This doesn't just go for older kids like 16-year-olds, but kids of all ages. I aim for our planet to be saved to prevent problems such as global warming and for the world to become more environmentally friendly.

This year has given me the occasion and time to explore the different aspects of life and things that I could pursue. I could finally find what I feel most passionate towards and frankly look at life as a blessing and a gift to us. We are here to live a happy life, take care of our planet and each other and fulfil the many duties that we have.

Lamentably, this letter has come to an end. So, before I end it, there are some things in which I sincerely hope you can take from this letter. Firstly, make the most of the things you have, even if they are as small as a seed. Secondly, put life in a perspective of a roller coaster, meaning that life is a roller coaster with many twists and turns. All you need to do is sit back, relax and enjoy the ride. Secondly, as a previously mentioned, always remember that as the universe expands, so will our minds. So, fill it with as much knowledge and bright memories as possible. And lastly, don't waste a single moment of your life, as you may not get the opportunity to do something you wish to do again.

From Fahmida Rashid

Yasmin Mahek

Dear future generations,

It has been almost a year since March – when school had first closed due to Covid-19. An abundance of changes has warped around my friends, family and I, and whilst some have been difficult to adjust to, others have been incredibly fun.

Due to school closing, we've had to resort to education online. Though getting to wake up 5 minutes before school starts and being able to attend in bed is amusing, online school has its challenges. As teenagers, it is not much of a surprise that we have trouble paying attention and focusing on lessons; it also is rather difficult to stay motivated during school hours due to the general lack of classmates and humour. Things like weak Wi-Fi and technical problems has its toll on both children and teachers, though being able to participate in new online teaching methods such as Kahoot is certainly something I'll miss when returning to physical school!

Some factors about this situation that make me feel hopeful is the fact that I can always talk to my friends – whether in lesson or not. Being able to ask a friend a question about a certain topic whenever I want has certainly helped me in a few of my subjects. Though I do miss them, I am content with messaging and the occasional call together. I also immensely enjoy the differences, such as the fact that I can listen to my favourite music whilst I'm doing an independent comprehension. Although I'm sure some teachers may

look down on this, listening to music has shown me that it helps me remain focused and creates a fun environment for me to attend school in.

Having to adjust to numerous online websites and virtual resorts has especially helped me know my way around a laptop. I'm positive that technology will play a large role in the future; literally relying on it for education, entertainment, news and interactions has shaped our society to become a little more accustomed to its features.

Being able to access apps like Instagram and TikTok whenever I feel like it is extremely fun, however, it has also stripped away the exhilarating feeling of engaging due to how often I use the apps. To save myself from an endless abyss of boredom, I resorted to an old hobby of writing and reading. As I wrote and read more and more, I came to realize how precious those two things are to me. Specifically, with writing, I can happily say that I desire to become an author in my future; it surprises me that I came to this conclusion from being forced into a lockdown.

While being separated from the schedule I had grown accustomed to, I re-established what I wish to do and achieve in life. Things like attending university, travelling the world, discovering what squid tastes like, having a lightsaber fight with baguettes in France, and writing a book is what I wish to accomplish.

If I had any advice to future generations, it would be to let go of your daily schedule and social media for a few days every now and then. Cleanse yourself of the pressures and addictions they may inflict on you – try reading a book, or getting to know a friend a little more, or learn how to cook. Try a new hobby, go for a walk, learn how to make Pad Thai, do something you'd never normally do! You'd be surprised how many things we as humans are oblivious to regarding who we are and what makes us, us.

Hansha Aktar

Dear future generation...

Dear future generations I am writing this letter on the Tuesday 26th of January 2021! This letter reflects on a year of which were hard times, over thinking and stress. I have learned that everyday is a challenge and you need to work together sometimes to accomplish things like getting rid of Covid. This year has been challenging for everyone some people have lost loved ones and some people have got Covid and survived it like a hero. Loads of people have missed each other not seen family members for months. I've learnt you need to cherish and value every second u get with your family and friends because they are more important then you can ever imagine. Over this time period I have felt very scared and also missed my loads of people that I haven't seen for a long time speaking over the phone or sending a few messages were not the same. You should always check up on your loved ones because you never know how their doing some people could be having trouble with their mental health and no one should feel like they are alone. Teenagers have had to cancel GCSE one of your most important exams of your life and teenagers also found online work stressful and difficult I know I did it was very different from normal school. But the one positive thing I will always remember from this is that so many people over the world have made an effort to try make Covid disappear and eventually we will achieve this. We all went through these challenging times so you hopefully won't have to!

Imran Miah

Dear future generations,

I am writing this to you in January 2021, reflecting on a year which has been devastating and dreadful. 2021 wasn't worse than last year to which a dreadful virus had hit Britain killing thousands of young children and adults. Hopefully by the end of 2021 the coronavirus will be finally abolished, gone.

This year and last year were just miserable, but some parts were fun such as spending more time with siblings and family, but I know for other people didn't have a good relationship with their families.

I think the hardest thing for me about lockdown was trying to learn at home, well not independently, well kind of, but it was hard to learn, and it was harder to communicate with teachers and friends without being face to face. Something which made me hopeful was my drawing. At home I was more able to draw more and develop my skills and many people discovered a new skill they had never known they had. I have enjoyed drawing and painting a lot, but I miss talking with my friends and going out without having to wear a mask.

I have learnt that over the course of this year how precious life is and to always look for the good and positive light in life.

I think society will continue to change and will learn from COVID-19 how dangerous a virus can actually be.

To future generations, good luck.

Mehreen Chowdhury

Dear future generations,

I am writing to you in February 2021, reflecting on a year in which, most of the time, was spent staying at home. Because of COVID-19 a deadly virus that infected the world, globally. This year I have felt stressed, tired and sometimes even lonely, as I wasn't used to staying at home for long periods of time. Teenagers were depressed, isolated and were eager to go outside and live the ordinary lives they were used to.

The biggest challenge for me was adjusting to online learning and how different it was compared to outdoor learning. What has been the hardest was not being able to learn all school subjects to the best of my capability. An unexpected silver lining has been being able to spend more time with my family, that I wouldn't have been able to do with school.

I have enjoyed chatting to my friends and checking in to see how they feel about lockdown and online learning. I have learnt to have hope and acknowledge that life will eventually go back to being normal, but it will take time. I think society will get used to COVID-19 and hopefully in the future it will turn into something that isn't life threatening and can be tackled. I would like to live in a world where even though unexpected events may happen and change the world, people will learn to work together and co-operate to help stop it from affecting their lives.

Mehreen Chowdhury

Year 10

Josiah Burdsell

Dear future generations,

In this letter, you will get a brief look into what has been labelled by many as the worst year in human history through the perspective of a young student in East London through the monstrosity that was 2020. The year certainly did hold some drastic changes in the world, starting with the threat of world war III to a deadly virus threatening our survival as human beings to the spectacular downfall of my home nation the USA. Through this year, and as always, there is always hope for the future however and I do believe that we can put the struggles of this year behind us some day and move on with our lives.

January

It didn't take long for 2020 to get off to a rolling start with the US attack of Irani general Qasem Soleimani on January 3. This attack was especially worrisome as it was an unprompted attack on a very important public figure in Iran which could potentially bring the two nations to war. Two US military bases were later bombed by Iran though the bases were previously evacuated. The bombings were the last bit of controversy over the threat of a war between the USA and Iran however and at least for the start of the year, America and Iran dodged what could've been a very lethal bullet (don't worry there's plenty to come of America). The world later come to a few days of mourning for the sudden death of basketball star Kobe Bryant and his daughter in a helicopter crash, the death was sudden and undeserved yet happened regardless. The death was interesting in a way as the entire world seemed to mourn the death not just the basketball fans, rest in peace Kobe Bryant. At this time, I remember the jokes that I heard, that the year was off to such a great start with world war III and Kobe, jokes which I think have aged like fine milk, oh how little we knew of what was to come.

February

February was a surprisingly normal month considering that it was 2020. The main thing of note for the month was that it was the first time that I heard about the corona virus. At the time I was more concerned as to what a Wuhan was, I didn't really think much of the virus, after all nothing quite like this had never happened in my lifetime. I don't think that anyone suspected that such a large-scale lockdown would've happened. While the world was at least not in shambles, I enjoyed a great trip to the city of Liverpool the home of the Beatles and two of historically biggest football clubs in England, Everton FC and Liverpool FC, it was an overall decent month.

March

It was March when everything began to change, the virus had done its worst to China, but the world was the next target, and off the gate Italy was ravaged by the virus and went into complete lockdown, at the time when Italy was hit very hard, the UK had only a few cases, all we could do was hope that the same measures would not be taken in the UK. On March 5 was the first confirmed death from the virus in the UK, and just few days later, the UK announced that they were going into lockdown that would be put in place by the next week. Throughout this time, I never really took the virus to seriously, I at first assumed that it would be a few weeks at most before we recovered from corona, it was the last day at school before the lockdown where my perspective began to change. I remember the atmosphere on that final day, all the year elevens signing each other's shirts preparing for the day to be their last together, and the abrupt way that we all left, there was no goodbye, just a teacher telling us to get out of the building as quickly as possible. One the train ride home, it was the first time that I really felt affected by the virus and lockdown, I felt a way I had never felt before, I wasn't happy for school to be done quicker, I wasn't mournful over lockdown, I just felt numb. Later that day I went to the store to get myself some pop before lockdown, and it was shocking, every shelf was almost completely starved of food, everything had been taken, other than the pop I wanted,

and I began to wonder if the lockdown would have more of an effect than I expected.

April

April was a weird month; we couldn't go outside unless absolutely necessary and we didn't have as many supplies as we normally did, it was an experience which to me was very unfamiliar. While the hospitals began to overflow with people, and the stores had very little in stock, as businesses struggled to keep income with the loss of customers, and all sport was put on hold, we stayed in our homes for a fairly dull month where nothing really happened due to the lockdown. The US at the time was only affected in the northeast where more extensive lock-down procedures were put in place, many states only recommended lockdown. Another hurdle for me was online school, I have learned to much prefer in-class school as opposed to online school. Online school was the main thing I struggled with through lockdown. It could be boring and frustrating, but I kept on top of it regardless. Despite the struggle of online school, I honestly didn't struggle much through lockdown, I was always able to feel alright through lockdown even if it was tough, in the end, I have a savior who loves me who will never leave me, it's hard to feel too worried through lockdown when you take a quick moment to trust God and to understand that everything is in his control no matter the hardships.

May

For the start of May, it was basically the same as April, but a little calmer. The hospitals were no longer overflowing with people, and the stores began to have more stuff available, businesses still had to cope with a loss of customers, but things did seem better over May. It was not only the stores and hospitals doing better, but in general cases were down a bit, still not enough that we could come out of lockdown, but better than in April. The drop in cases in Germany led to the glorious news that football would be returning in the German Bundesliga, the return of football was possibly the best news over all of lockdown. The Bundesliga was only the beginning however, and soon leagues across Europe announced their return, and finally I could mindlessly watch or follow football leagues, football and sports in general were back. Despite the joy over the return of sports and a drop in cases, 2020 would not be so kind as to let the worst of the year fade, and on May 25 came the brutal act of police brutality in the US in the murder of George Floyd. In the first week or so following the brutal act in the US no one really took notice, but the injustice would be exposed, it wouldn't take long for the events to be noticed. These events weren't anything new though, the US had these problems long before 2020, and all it would take was a global pandemic to finally shed light on the issues a light which would cause a storm which was brewing for years to be unleashed upon a silently broken nation.

June

The storm was no longer hiding, the thunder would rage in the US destroying everything in its path. Riots spread like wildfire across the US, and though there were many more peaceful protests, the shattered political spectrum of the US focused much more on the violent events, using them as an excuse to pretend that racial injustice didn't exist. The nation became fully divided between two sides, as half the nation (mainly democrats) supported the protests and the need for change, the other half (mainly Republican) saw no need to change, and hated BLM for trying, but the democrats hated the Republicans as well. Once again, this hate was nothing new the year just exposed the problems we already had, our two main parties (Democrats and Republicans) have hated each other for decades. While Republicans pointed to the BLM protests as useless violence accomplishing nothing but hurting the nation, the Democrats supported the protests and the need for racial change, yet through this argument, it's hard to believe that they were ever really trying to stand up for their ideas but rather just defeat the other party. It was disappointing because we all knew that nothing would really change. For any new policies or laws to be passed, the Senate and House of Representatives would need to agree on a deal to send to the president, a policy or law is hard to pass though when the senate and the house have a majority of different parties. What was more disappointing was to know that even if a law was passed, President Trump wasn't going to pass any deals that would provide change, he was more concerned with appealing to his audience that oppose BLM so he

could be reelected. At least in the UK things seemed better, the lockdown rules were beginning to be laxer, for the first time in months we could talk to people from outside our household. The laxer lockdown rules provided at least some joy while my nation died, June could've been a good month, but instead the US was engulfed in flames.

July

July was another fairly normal month for 2020, of course it wasn't great in the US, the storm only continued to rage on there, but throughout Europe, travel was allowed, and we could spend more time outside of our house. I remember that I was very tempted to brag to my class about a bunch of farmers defeating Britain's 'superpower' of an army on July 4, but I decided there wasn't much to brag about with the current state of the US. I don't know if many would consider it to massive, but also in this month was the return of MLS (the American football league) through a tournament, the tournament format for return was weird, but it was a fun comeback for another league that I love, at least America wasn't completely terrible. Overall though, the highlight of my month was a trip to Cornwall, the UK had allowed travel for holidays in the summer, and it was especially fun to see the Ocean. Once again it may not seem like much, but when you spend most of your life in a cornfield infested state in the middle of the country, seeing the ocean is pretty cool. Cornwall was also fun because of the freakish hedgerows, America does have some nice things, for example wide roads where you don't have to question whether a car is going to come around a corner that you can't see. To summarize, America was still on fire, but at least MLS was back, and I got to take a trip to Cornwall and see more of the UK, the nation that wasn't on fire because their leader was at least a little more competent than Trump.

August

Throughout August America just got worse, the lockdown rules became laxer in the US, but unlike the UK, the US wasn't ready to come out of lockdown when they never truly had a normal lockdown. In the US, the increase in cases combined with an already strong storm caused things to somehow get worse. The trouble in the US can be blamed on many things, but I think the main thing was that no one really cared, they didn't see the virus as a main problem, half the country didn't even acknowledge its existence. While the decision to go outside and refuse to wear a mask was down to the person, I do not believe that the media helped, in American society, the Media has a massive influence on people, and when the news tells you that you don't need to worry, of course they will be believed because people don't want to worry about something that can threaten them. Another big source of blame for me is Trump, in many ways, the main thing Trump did was fan the flames, so many people flocked to Trump when Trump used his power to attack safety, insinuating that you shouldn't wear a mask and that we shouldn't strive for change. In the end, the main thing is once again even bigger than refusing to wear a mask or influences telling you what to do, just the divided state of our nation. Unity is a powerful tool that I do believe could help to build a better nation, but we hate each other too much to try. I believe that sometimes I fall into the trap of hating the opposition rather than causing difference, it is so easy now to hate each other, I am not sure how this can change but it must if we are going to move forward as a nation. While the US was on fire, that was nothing new, at least the UK was still doing okay, Arsenal won the FA Cup and the Timbers won the MLS tournament, so I got a little happiness out of the success of my teams.

September & October

I don't actually remember much happening in September or October, school was back in person for the first time since March, that's the only main thing I can really remember. Throughout the world America was still on fire and Britain was still alright. Nothing new really happened, it was another one of those decent two months when the world didn't burn (except for the US, but as previously said, that was nothing new).

November

November started off with the US election, this was in many ways the most important election in years,

I don't know if any nation first world has suffered more than the USA during 2020, so it was vital that the citizens elected the right official to bring our nation forward. On October 4, the votes were polled, I went to bed worried of the results I would find in the morning. Unfortunately for the nation, the results were not clear on November 5, and the next few days I spent strenuously checking my phone seeing if there were any changes in the results, (I'm pretty sure that Hecking Nevada still haven't fully counted their results my gosh they were slow). As the weekend approached following the election, we saw key states swing towards Biden as president and the dawning of a new era seemed almost certain, no more did I have to check my phone fearing every single change in result because Biden was announced as the victor of the 2020 US election on November 7. I wish that I could say that things were going to be better, but instead the man-child President Trump couldn't accept defeat, instead he claimed that there was fraud despite having no proof for the claim. Trump's claims should've had a quick investigation with the safe conclusion that there was no safe election, but instead Trump's mindless cult of followers believed this and hence the fire only grew. Biden wouldn't be sworn in until January, so Trump instead of accepting defeat decided to bring the country down with him, the arguments continued, and the claims of fraud continued even after investigations concluded that there was no large-scale fraud. America may have had a better leader coming, but for the time being, the nation would just continue to burn with a new fuse.

December

After all the problems in the year, December should've been a nice month for Christmas to finally put the horrid year to rest, instead 2020 gave us it's final 'gift'. Cases in the UK began to rise again, after all the progress we made, the UK seemed to be getting better, almost every nation looked to be getting better, but instead the virus began to grow again. Shortly before the end of the year, Boris announced that there would be no Christmas travelling, this wasn't a problem for me, but it was for the many families that did plan on travelling to see family for the first time in almost a year. The month wasn't all bad though, December also saw the approval of the Oxford vaccine for the virus, it would take a while to vaccinate everyone in the nation, but there was hope of a stronger future for us free of corona. While the rest of the UK would struggle, I actually got lucky, my brother flew in shortly before the rise in cases and I got to spend the majority of December spending time with my brother who usually stays in the US for college. And to summarize the month that ended the year, 2020 wouldn't die and instead would just carry on under a new name, America was still on fire (I didn't even had to talk about it, is it a surprise at this point) but I had surprisingly good December compared to the overall events that occurred, however the change in rules would mean it would only be so long before we were all even more effected.

Hope for the future

2020 was undoubtedly a terrible year, and as I have previously said, the issues would continue into the next year. On January 5, one of the worst days of my nation occurred as rioters attacked the capitol in an attempt to stop the results, chants to kill VP Pence and Speaker of the house Pelosi, and the beautiful capitol was ransacked of century old art. While many did try to stop the riots, some police opened the gates of the white house for the rioters to run into the building, 5 people died in a terrible sorrowful event. The virus would continue to threaten us and early into 2021, the UK declared another lockdown, 2021 looked like it was going to be another 2020.

While these events are painful, I would like to end this letter with hope, sometimes throughout the death of my nation it was hard to remember that the eternal lord of the universe was watching after us. In the end, everything is always in God's hands no matter how terrible the year may be, even when the world around you dies, a stronger home in Heaven is watching in love to guide us, as I previously said, it is hard to be too worried when you take the time to acknowledge that everything is in God's control. The US may be struggling with racial injustice, yet someone writing a letter like this in the 50s may never have anticipated that withing the next 2 decades a great civil rights movement would occur. A young Rwandan writing a letter in the midst of the 1994 genocide may never have anticipated that a unified Rwanda would rise stronger from the ashes in unity less than 5 years on. Change is never easy, but historically we have improved ourselves and recovered from our faults. I would like to end this using the word's Joe Biden spoke

in his inauguration to presidency 'when we can work together in unity, there is nothing that we cannot accomplish'. We as humans are resilient, the virus may threaten us, racial injustice will continue to exist, yet we will still rise, the road may be long but there will always be an end. The vaccine will save millions, already some cities have acted upon racial injustice, we were stabbed but never died, the wounds will heal, and we will rise above our past, no matter the trials.

Yusra Mohamed

To future generations

I'm sure you may have learnt it by now in history books but 2020 was a special year. And like many others agreed: death to 2020.

Well I'll start with a few events that have shaken the world: Black lives matter which had gained astronomical attention when George Floyd was brutally murdered, forest fires, global warming and Biden winning the election. Now even though I am not American let's just say that was one of the main positive things, but it's not 2020 without the worst of all: Corona.

Corona had, and still is changing the world as we know it.

Suddenly we were put in a lockdown, something many of us had never would have guessed unless it was a horror movie. At the beginning many had said corona was similar to a flu, and young people thought they were immune and it wasn't that big a deal. Everyone was proved wrong in the worst way and it had in fact been underestimated in media. Death tolls and still were rising, many had lost their jobs, panic buying, school education a mess and it soon became a waiting game until it spread everywhere.

Many teenagers had spent the first 6-month lockdown, which originally should have lasted 2 weeks, in around 5 phases, however this was based on the people around me experiencing it.

1. Understimation of the situation

Suddenly we were preparing for a different lifestyle, everyone saying that it will be over soon(confusion) and many like myself viewing it as a 2-week holiday. You would see from time-to-time people wearing masks, and just often washing hands and carrying on school as normal until the last day when we were given packs of paperwork, everyone waiting for what Boris would say next. This without a doubt was the most uncertain moment.

2 Fear and realization

Panic buying.

On the 3rd of March 2020, it was announced to the British public we were no longer to go outside unless it was essential. I had the pleasure of having to go outside and getting small food shops, sarcasm intended. What was supposed to take 5 minutes resulted in waiting in a queue for 30, only to get 1 out of the many essential items. Grocery stores had looked as though it was robbed and the fight for toilet paper was extreme. At first it was just bizarre but soon a hard realization hit, this was no ordinary flu: it was a pandemic no one had seen before.

3. The thinking I should make this productive if we are going to be a while

This is more personalized, but I know many went through the same thing. I had spent a while feeling sorry for myself, and mad about the fact that I had wasted time on realizing how much I didn't achieve. Then as if it was a new years; resolutions, goals and motivation had driven me. Did I complete any of them? Absolutely

not. Why may you ask? Well Netflix and we were in a pandemic that had changed life as we knew it and, in every sector imaginable.

It was like corona had put everything on hold.

4. The events

Many things had happened and during the lockdown, one being the Black Lives Matter movement.

On 25th May 2020 George Floyd was murdered by the police in Minneapolis for allegedly using a counterfeit bill. In the video it had shown him on the floor, a policeman putting a knee to his neck despite Floyd saying he couldn't breathe. Now the reason why it had gone viral was it highlighted police brutality on particularly black lives to the public, something that has been going on for generations. It was shown everywhere and sparked global protests (peaceful and some that had resulted in looting and burning down stores) despite it being a pandemic. This had led many people thinking: that could have been me and has been the reality. People had forgotten although we had come far there is still a long way to go, and this had served as reminder.

However, this led to a lot of performative activism which is problematic as well as many arguing back all lives matter. Black Lives Matter do not mean other lives won't, it simply means black lives are not treated as lives right now, so we need to emphasize they do.

A positive thing was people having difficult talks, discussions about equality and equity and how to move forward as a generation so there could never be a George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, Travyon Martin and countless more again.

5. Reflection

Simple things were no longer simple and going outside was an event. Not wearing a mask was unusual and everyone was in high alert constantly. Now there is one small thing I loved about everything: no one ever sits near each other and the bus anymore.

And for those of us in year 10 currently-the last time we had a full academic year was yr8. Corona started in year 9 and I will be going to year 12(college) next year, Corona is still very much alive right now.

Nearing towards the end:

Everyone had experienced 2020 differently for better and for worse. My experience is not representative of all the struggles that people had to face during this difficult time. At this point in time there have been over 2.27 million deaths on corona alone and almost everybody has known one of these people.

2020 is something I would not like to ever do again and so to the future generations looking back or in general, live with kindness and compassion. Be aware of those who are struggling and try to stay calm during confusing times. I believe it will hopefully get better, for example even COVID-19 vaccines are coming out. Do not waste time, life is truly way too short and being alive is a gift in itself. Strive for improvement and don't base yourself worth on others actions. It lies on the growing generations and future generations to ensure a better tomorrow and I have hope it will happen. As hope is all we can have

Yusra Mohamed

Fabiha Rahman

Dear future Generation,

The world is dying. I am writing to you in February 2021, reflecting on a year which has been an extremely eccentric experience for everyone. Throughout the early stages of the pandemic, we could not foresee the ending of this crisis. It was very unpredictable like the British weather. With the development of the covid vaccine, now there is hope.

During the first lockdown in March, it was very stressful doing online work and it was upsetting not being able to see my friends and not being to go shopping. Also, the fight for tissue rolls!!!! :) However, there were positive things which was spending more time with family and not waking up early in the morning to go to school!!!! The positives for me were that: I enjoyed the free time I had, enjoyed baking and playing online.

Life was very different as from March 18, we had to go home, and Boris Johnson said 'STAY HOME AND SAFE LIVES' and not to go out unless you are a key worker or to shop for essentials. Life was different for everyone, as no one was going to school and instead we are doing online school, clothes shops are closed, and travelling is restricted. It became normal to me after a few weeks of doing online school but using google classroom was good, but we could not do live meetings which meant we had to do the work by ourselves. We went back to school, after six months in September 2020, and it was weird, but lovely to see my friends and teachers again. I am in year 10 now. Unfortunately, someone in our year had Covid-19 and we were sent home on 7th October. It was Christmas holiday and again we had to 'STAY HOME, PROTCT THE NHS AND SAVE LIVES' and therefore we could not go to school again. However, this time we are using Microsoft teams. It is better this way as we are doing live lessons which helped quite a lot. I must give thanks to the teachers who have always been hardworking and helpful throughout the pandemic, giving as much support as they can.

From the past year, I have learnt to be more patient. I have improved my baking and drawing skills. IT skills have also improved due to doing online work. I think people will be more appreciative of the small things they have taken for granted in the past. For example, going to eat in restaurants, or a stroll in the park will be greatly desirable and appreciated. Education will be valued more as people realize the importance of going to school. I think people will want to go to holidays more and enjoy things that they may have not done a lot before the pandemic. If a new pandemic ever happens, listen to the government as they know what is best for everyone and make sure to always be safe!!!!

Thanks,
Fabiha Rahman

Fahim Hossain

Dear future generations.

As I'm writing this, it's the 7th of February 2021 coming from a year which most would call the worst of their lives. This year undoubtedly, I have changed a lot not only mentally but physically, I've learnt how to be a better person and developed new skills and I'm also sure most people have too but if I am talking about myself it's certainly been a challenge to live without friends and sports but the hardest has unquestionably been the crisis a lot of people have gone through, people are losing their lives and loved ones and its very painful to know however there's still hope because of the vaccination developed by Pfizer.

This year I hope to see myself and other people evolve more and realize how everyone should help each other in these rough times. I have a lot of plans for this year, like making our world cleaner by volunteering.

Fahim Hossain

Year 11

Maariya Hussain

Dear future generations,

I presume you are living in a society much more advanced than the one I have lived in, not that I could imagine a world where it's any different. As kids, we experienced something that most people had to face, and that was the world coming to a halt.

It was the ultimate test of patience and endurance. It tested our mental strength and our physical strength. We were all locked within our abodes and nobody dared cross their thresholds into the outside world. Being locked up for nearly a whole year pushed us into making many sacrifices, even if we really didn't want to. We were subjected to loneliness—and only the lucky made it out.

The plague came from the east, and the origins were defined. However, xenophobia and disrespect blinded people and they blamed a culture for the virus. This led to multiple racial attacks against innocent people. How could an advanced society, in which the vast majority of people were actively against social injustice, treat others this way?

You will have probably learnt about the many plagues and viruses the world has faced, just as we had, but you'd wonder why a society seeming so forward found it so difficult to maintain a virus. There were many factors to this. The only people that were granted permission to be outside were key workers, and both of my parents were. Other people who went outside and socialised within close proximities to others were hooligans who didn't care about the spreading of such a disease. These so called hooligans set out an example for the weak hearted and more and more people started going outside, which increased the cases and fatalities. It became extremely difficult to those who abided by every regulation. I couldn't count the times where I was so stressed that I just broke down due to being apart from my social life from so long. But I knew that the only way I could ever go back to that was by remaining apart from those I loved.

I'd never lost so many people I loved, until it came to the virus. Many family members and friends became victims to the virus and many of them didn't win their battles. I hope this is something you will never have to experience. People acted as if they didn't care about their people. They can claim that they did, of course, but in times like these actions spoke louder than words and even the tiniest of selfish actions had major consequences.

You must remember, no matter how much times change, that your actions have consequences. May it be during a pandemic or during your day to day life, every action you take is like a chain reaction; whatever you do is followed up by a new choice or consequence, whether that be a positive or negative ramification. And if you do ever find yourself in a pandemic, educate yourself. Would you ever want to be the cause of a death or an illness? I doubt anyone would want to be so intentionally stupid. No matter how much times change, humans will always remain flesh and blood. The ways of avoiding illness will always be the same. We will never be immune to everything. Remember what your morals are, and how you will project them into your life.

Goodbye

Someone from the past

Jasmine Asca Munoz Sarmiento

Dear future generation,

Welcome to a glimpse into the mind of an almost 16-year-old in 2021. I hope you can get a feel for what the times and we were like.

Right, where to start. I guess with the 'bad news' to rip that band aid off. At the moment it has been just over a year since the first case of Covid-19 and we're coming up to the anniversary of London's lockdown/quarantine. In case you are unfamiliar with what the lockdown entails I will summarise it roughly. At the start of March 2020, the whole of England went in a lock down. The rules of this was to stay inside at all times and only leave your house either for food/groceries or if you were a doctor. If you had the virus you would have to self-isolate for 2 weeks (roughly how long it takes to beat the illness) The rules were then eased up in around August and in September, school was opened again. – More on school later- The rules were tightened up again in December where we were introduced to Tiers. Tiers went from 1 – 5 and described how dire the situation was in certain counties/cities. At the moment London is in tier 5.

School has obviously been altered due to the unfortunate circumstances. I didn't have any school apart from a few bits of homework left by my teachers on a website, other than that we were expected to be revising and trying to teach ourselves – this went on until September. I was in year 10 when all the chaos happened but unfortunately the year 11's GCSEs were cancelled, and their grades were predicted by an algorithm. When we went back to school after summer, there was a new system put in place to isolate all the year groups from each other to reduce the risk of spreading the virus. We were doing tests every other week to make sure that our grades were as accurate as possible if the GCSEs were to be cancelled again. Now after the new lock down. We have online lessons, and everyone is just trying their best to take it one day at a time and learn as much as possible in the situation. However, this isn't the first time we've been online; my year was isolated twice dure September to December and we had to take school online back then too.

A lot of teenagers also suffered a lot from mental health issues from being alone so much or from the stress of what was happening with school. But from that stemmed a lot of mental health awareness and lots of people were supportive and sharing of their own experiences.

So, some good things happen over the past year. For me the good thing was I found a love for going on runs/hiking and I became closer with my family. I did lose a few friends over the pandemic, which was disheartening, but the friendship between me and the ones who sticked around are now stronger than ever.

I Hope that this letter has given you some insight into what it was like, at least for me, during 2020 – 21 and I hope that you learned to not take going outside and meeting with your friends for granted.

Yours faithfully
Jasmine

Wilfred Birch Carter

Personally, I believe that the question did you change over the lockdown is missing the point. For example, lock down or not, a year is a long time. A lot can happen in a year: we lose people, we make new friends, we get older. All of which would have happened regardless of this lockdown. Especially as a teenager you are changing your mind and opinions all the time. In fact, it's one of the times in your life where you learn the most and began to develop your own opinions which will stay with you for the rest of your life.

For someone to tell me they have not changed in the last year, I would tell them to look at it from a broader perspective. For example, every little thing you do is going to change your perspective. As well as things you do, the things which the world does will change you, new discoveries, new inventions all will change you as a person whether you notice it or not.

Sonia Mehregan

Dear future generation, I am writing to you in January 2021, reflecting a year which managed to end the life of 2 million people, create uprisings and events making us all sigh in a demoralized pity for humanity as we sat behind screens surrounded by bars of only physical safety. This year I have learnt many things, but one thing I have learnt that will never leave my mind is that 'you can never be prepared for somethings'. It may be false in certain contexts, but its point still stands firm in a catastrophe like this. You will never be ready, you won't see it coming, one day you will be living your best life, studying, being practical, going out with friends, and the next you will be locked inside, stripped of your last year of true innocent childhood bliss. While I feel beyond frustrated with what has transpired, I also feel glad it happened. I am angered by the lives that were taken too soon, for the year of my youth stolen from me, for ignorance of privileged people, their discrimination and the pain it has caused. But I am also grateful; I have learnt time is short. I have reflected on my life of sloth and gluttony, I have lived a wasteful 16 years which this entrapment has brought to mind. This year has taught me to end the cycle of wasted potential and has taught me to do what I have wanted to do for too long. I have created an Etsy shop and have been working on creating social media platforms to show case my work. I managed to receive 20 orders in a week and 1000 views on my shop. If I hadn't been stuck inside for a year, I would most likely never have opened it. I am no longer waiting for a better time to do things or waiting till I am less busy and am working on creating the life I want not the 10 second 'that would be nice' thought just to let it fade away. I hope this year I can complete other goals I have and stop putting them off and I hope in the future, we can live in an accepting society where the sexist or racist or discriminatory members are cast out so we can live in a world where we are finally stepping forward.

Sonia 28/1/21

Sara Shah

Dear future generations,

I am writing to you in January 2021, reflecting on a year in where we all lost, gained, grieved and celebrated. This year I have lost people I would never have even imagined losing, I felt like I wouldn't be able to recover, that this would be the forever me, that this is how bad life would go on for the rest of my time. Teenagers were growing with all the world's uncertainty around them, the number in mental health decreasing rose, education being moved online, staying at home- some with toxic households, some with uncomfortably quiet households and some with extremely noisy households. The biggest challenge has been adjusting to this new way of life, with shopping being the only way out of the house every other month. Exercise was allowed but my parents weren't taking any risks. What has been hardest has been the constant deaths. Especially during the peaks of the virus. Every week at least someone you or your parents know passed away. An unexpected silver lining has been realising that most things just aren't worth it. I started liking myself more, enjoying my own company and knowing when it was the right time to remove someone from my life. Something which kept me going was zoom calls with my family. On days I felt the worst, I knew I had my family to be grateful for and that people had it worse. As much as I miss the ones I lost, I was glad for the ones I still had. I have changed as I had used the time to think about what I really want to come out of my life, what and how I can be the better me imagined in my head. I have learnt to appreciate the things I do have, that out of everyone in the world, the only person who truly has my back is myself. I think people will be more aware of what happens when people have nobody to talk to. I think society will also appreciate the freedom we had before we were under constant restrictions. My plan for my future has changed as now I know which subject I would like to pursue and hopefully that would be enough to help me through the future.

Sara