EAL Newsletter 2025

Legends and Icons – Stories Around the World

Editor's notes:

Welcome to the annual EAL newsletter! Since the EAL club is one for students with English as their second language, a great focus is placed on cultural diversity and inclusivity. Therefore, for the third year of the EAL newsletter, we decided to ask our members to research and write about different people and cultural influences: to learn more about their unique stories and to celebrate the many achievements around the world. From editing this year's newsletter, I have learnt so much about the cultural richness and the inspiring individuals who shape them. Perhaps by reading this newsletter, you may also learn so many new things, and be inspired by some of them too.

by Bernadette :)

Thank you for the submissions that had been made this year and they had been quite diverse in different fields as well! I also have to thank Bernadette for formatting the newsletter as the experienced editor from the previous two years, despite her busy GCSE schedule she did end up giving a submission and helped a lot in the editing. I hope all readers can enjoy what the students have wrote, it takes a lot of courage and time to decide and contribute to the newsletter. We had been given instruction by Ms Shah to not get too worked up by grammatical errors, the EAL department is here to support students that do not have English as their native language, and we wish to encourage their English communication with opportunities such as this. So do read this as an appreciation of our EAL students!

by Caleb

The variety of stories and range of people from around the world is genuinely impressive, everyone did a fantastic job at conveying their passions.

by Nathan :D

Gilgamesh- The Impact of a 5000 Year old Epic

by Brandon

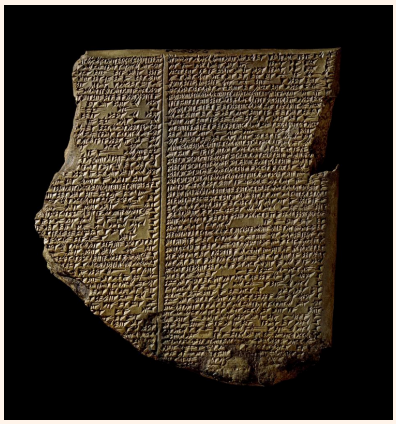
In the six thousand years of human history, we have developed such a rich civilisation. From the invention of Egyptian hieroglyphs to the development of English, we use language to communicate, to record, and to worship. But out of all the usage of language, we are most proud of our stories. Some share their happiness with others; some warn us to be careful of our path that we are picking; some are moral lessons that he or she might want our attention on. But do you know which story is the oldest among them all? We need to look back to 5000 years ago, where we can find the "og" story, "The Epic of Gilgamesh".

The Character, Gilgamesh was a king that ruled Uruk around 2900-2350 B.C. After a thousand years from his death, the Epic of Gilgamesh was crafted. The first-ever record was in the Old Babylonian period (1830-1531 BC); learning language was still a thing that is in nobel, and not many people could read and write their language; however, that did not stop the spread of the epic; over the next 500 years, there were a lot of translations and duplications of the tablet in different languages and locations. Yet when they were compared to the original version, scientists found a lot of similarities between the stories, with slight variation between each of the versions. The most recognisable and completed version was composed in Akkadian during the Middle Babylonian period. It contains 5 poems, all of them singing the same story – the epic of Gilgamesh.

The story describes the king Gilgamesh, a ⅓ god figure. He was what you think a tyrant would be, but in the following 5 stories, he went through a series of trials, a friendship and their death. At long last, as he came back to his kingdom, he has developed into a new man, a respected character. And there we have arrived, the first “redemption arc” in human history – what a good way to start human civilisation.

After a long time, fewer people spoke that tongue, and fewer people spreaded the legend to their children. As “the lone and level sands stretch far away,” The Epic of Gilgamesh has been lost through time; no one will know the journey of Gilgamesh... Until in 1849, at the Library of Ashurbanipal, we found a tablet that was crafted out with an unknown language; it sat under the British Museum until 21 years later. We roughly translated those words into a language that we understand, hoping to take a glimpse into the past. But as we translated more, a story had been woven out between them. After 4000 winters, the Epic of Gilgamesh was discovered again; hence, the oldest epic in the world was found.

The epic journey of the human story will go on, and we will meet a lot of great stories on the way. But perchance, once in a blue moon, go and check out the oldest story in history. Look back to the root of our civilisation; the answer you are seeking might just be lying in front of you.





Leonardo da Vinci

by Anonymous

Leonardo da Vinci was one of the greatest inventors in the world. Leonardo da Vinci's inventions are still remembered today. Leonardo da Vinci had not a lot of education but his painting techniques let him to do work.



Leonardo da Vinci had other talents in his life and invented things to help people.

Leonardo da Vinci had little education and was inspired by science and nature. He was born April 15, 1452 and died on May 2, 1519 at age 67. He also studied the laws of science and nature. He began painting on an apprenticeship at age 14 with an artist.

Leonardo da Vinci's techniques allowed him to work slowly develop shading in his painting. He used earthy browns, greens and blues in his paintings. He normally paints on damp walls with oil. His most famous painting is The Last Supper which was done on a dry wall with tempera paint.

Leonardo da Vinci was not just a painter but had other talents. He was an architect, musician, engineer, scientist, inventor, and a painter. He also sketched the first parachute, helicopter, tank, repeating rifle, swinging bridge, paddle boat, and motor car. He also made famous paintings like Mona Lisa and The Last Supper.

Leonardo da Vinci was a hero because he never gave up and invented things to make people's lives better. He was in the Italian Renaissance. He also inspired countless of artist to paint. He was a hero by studying nature, inventions, and his art.

Leonardo da Vinci is that he never gave up on his inventions. Leonardo da Vinci also spent days on his paintings to get them exactly how he wanted them. He made a lot of impact with his paintings and his inventions. His paintings because he took a long time to create them. His inventions because he helped people with them. He also inspired people to paint and invent things like him.

Isaac Newton

By Himson and Bosco

❏ Born in 1642 in Woolsthorpe, England

❏ During the 1660s, while Cambridge University was closed due to the plague, Newton made several discoveries that would change the course of science forever. He developed the laws of motion and the universal law of gravitation, which provided a comprehensive explanation for both terrestrial and celestial mechanics, unifying the motion of falling apples and orbiting planets under one theory.

❏ Alongside his scientific achievements, he co-developed calculus

❏ Newton also delved into alchemy and theology, writing extensively on topics outside the realm of empirical science.

❏ Newton also made pioneering contributions to optics, showing that white light is composed of a spectrum of colors, and he invented the reflecting telescope to improve astronomical observations.

- Later in life, he became President of the Royal Society and took on administrative roles such as Warden and then Master of the Royal Mint, where he helped reform England's currency.
- Isaac Newton died in 1727 and was buried in Westminster Abbey, honored as a towering figure whose ideas transformed the way humanity understands the natural world.



Artwork

By Elly



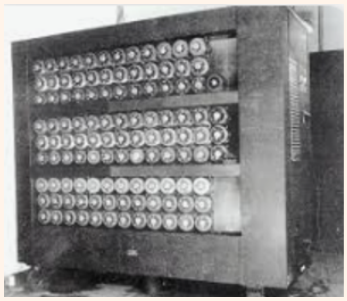
Alan Turing

By Hyson

Alan Turing is the man who made the world's first modern computer.
Alan Turing was born on 23 June 1912.
He died at 7th June of 1954.
He helped break codes during the second world war, he broke the Germans Enigma code.
He is known for breaking the code during the Second World War and he invented the first modern computer.
His IQ is 185 and it is the top 0.1 percent of the earth.
He is recognised as a genius and he is known for being a good mathematician.



Turing's most notable work today is as a computer scientist. In 1936, he developed the idea for the Universal Turing Machine, the basis for the first computer. And he developed a test for artificial intelligence in 1950, which is still used today. But he also studied physics, especially as a young man. In 1936, he developed the idea for the Universal Turing Machine, the basis for the first computer. And he developed a test for artificial intelligence in 1950, which is still used today. But he also studied physics, especially as a young man.



William Shakespeare

By Kingsley

Introduction



Who is a legend? Everybody have different definitions of their own Legends, Icons Heroes and More. But today I will tell you about A legend/Icon that have a fairly significant influence and impact to the world. Which is William Shakespeare. Who is William Shakespeare? Many people might have first thought of Romeo and Juliet when you first hear the name “Shakespeare”. But rather than Romeo and Juliet, there are many other stories he has yet to tell. So today, I will tell you about Shakespeare.

Who?



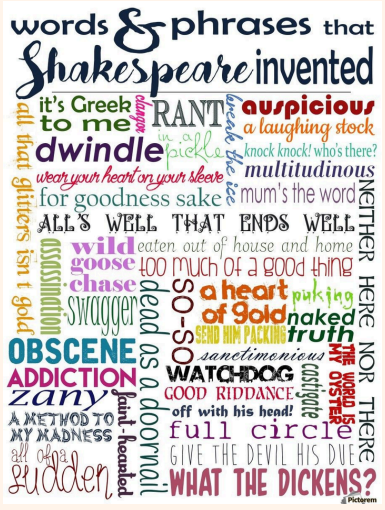
Who is Shakespeare? He was an English playwright, poet, and actor. He is widely regarded as one of the greatest writers in the English language and world literature. He have many famous poets. Such as “Romeo and Juliet”. He was born in April 1564 in Stratford-upon-Avon, England. But he died in April 23, 1616, at only age 52.

How?

How Shakespeare is a legend? He is a legend because he wrote 38 plays, 154 sonnets. He contributed over 1,700 English words. His works have been translated into every major language and performed more than those of any other playwright. Shakespeare's work redefined theatrical storytelling. His use of soliloquies, complex characters, and layered plots set the stage for modern drama. Now, His plays continue to be taught in schools, adapted into films.

Why?

Why did I choose Shakespeare? He invented or popularized many words and phrases we still use today. He create iconic characters in his plays which they reflect real human emotions and conflicts. Also, He inspired writers, poets, filmmakers, and thinkers for over 400 years.



Key facts

1. He written 39 plays.
2. He contributed over 1,700 words to the English language.
3. He considered the greatest writer in the English language.

Thank you for reading this!

Martin Luther King Jr.

by Isaac



Martin Luther King was an American Baptist. He was born on January 15, 1929. He fought for black people's civil rights, so they had freedom and the ability to do whatever they wanted.

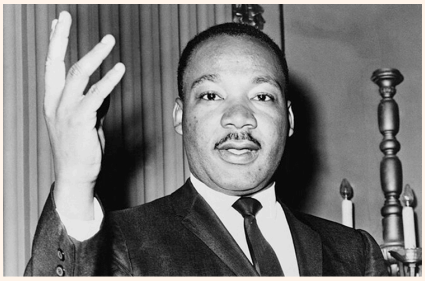
In 1954, Martin Luther King became pastor of the Dexter Avenue Baptist Church in Montgomery, Alabama. But by this time, he was a member of the executive committee of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, the leading organization of its kind. In December 1955, he became the leader of the first great African American nonviolent demonstration of that times in the United States, the bus boycott, which lasted 382 days. On December 21, 1956, after the Supreme Court of the United States had declared unconstitutional the laws requiring segregation on buses, African Americans and whites rode the buses as equals for the first time. During these days of boycott. Martin Luther King was arrested, his home was bombed, and he was subjected to personal abuse. But at the same time, he emerged as a leader of the first rank.



He also gave a speech on “I have a dream” (the most famous speech in the universe) on August 28, 1963, during March in Washington for Jobs and Freedom. The speech, delivered at the Lincoln Memorial in Washington, D.C., is a defining moment in the American Civil Rights Movement.

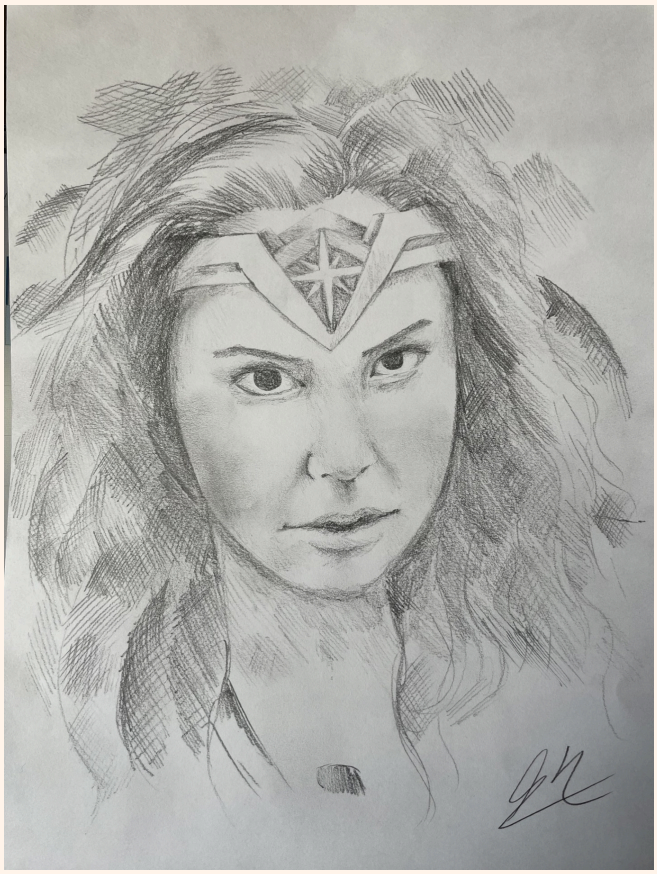
But he died on April 4, 1968. He was assassinated in Memphis, Tennessee. Also, he made some important speeches like

1)“The whirlwinds of revolt will continue to shake the foundations of our nation until the bright day of justice emerges.”
2) “We want all our rights, we want them here, and we want them now.”
3) “Now is the time to make justice a reality for all of God’s children.”



Artwork

By Hayley



Neil Armstrong

By Mario

He was an American aeronautical engineer.

In 1969, Neil Armstrong ride the rocket Apollo 11 to the moon to defeat the Russian in the space race to the moon. He was the first ever man to walk and planted the first flag on the moon.

His famous quote was “That’s one small step for man, one giant leap for mankind” which marked a historic moment in space exploration.

He was my hero because he inspired me to learn more about space, supernova, stars, wormhole, black holes, neutron stars, red giants and red dwarfs/ white dwarfs/ black dwarfs to travel to other planets and transform it to be habitable. And this can expand the reaches of mankind.

Mobile Suit Gundam - Realism from Within

By Nathan

The Mecha genre is a popular anime subgenre within science fiction. One that features flamboyant mechanical robots, catchy theme songs, relatable protagonists and often explore themes of war and the questioning of humanity. One famous example is Mobile Suit Gundam, known to most today for their life-size statues and intricately designed model kits, the original series subverted the expectation of the Mecha genre established before its inception. It entirely reinvented and transformed it into the Real Robot genre. Gundam was written by Yoshiyuki Tomino and Hajima Tatate in 1979. Depicting the fictional world known as the Universal Century, and telling the story of a young boy fighting in a conflict known as the One Year War.







As a relatively new fan of Gundam, one can assume that what attracted me the most was the mechanical designs and the countless releases of model kits. However what captivated me to read and watch so much about Gundam was the core themes of the series and the beliefs that the show's creator: Yoshiyuki Tomino, demonstrated in (what I consider to be) his magnum opus.

Tomino was born during the 1940s (the Showa era) in Kanagawa, Japan. He subsequently grew up in a post second world war Japan, during which Japan was financially recovering from the war and the spirit of Japanese patriotism waned after its empire was dissolved. Like many legendary anime directors and creators such as Hayao Miyazaki, Tomino's childhood was majorly influenced by differing ideologies of both left and right, these beliefs would not only influence him into his later life when writing on series such as Daitarn 3 (1978), and directing Osamu Tezuka's Triton of the Sea (1972), and ultimately, Mobile Suit Gundam.

At the core of Gundam's story is telling the events of war through the lens of the youth. The original show featured a young cast in their teenage years, with the protagonist Amuro Ray being 15 years old. His characterisation and development is one irregular of protagonists typically seen in modern anime works, who often are shown with impeccable courage and relentless moral and physical strength. However, his character is one filled with self doubt, trauma, and the mourning of comrades and loved ones. Amuro is confronted with the estrangement of his own parents, his mother astounded and horrified by her son's act of violence and his father's loss of sanity and blind encouragement to Amuro piloting the Gundam.

Mobile Suit Gundam depicts the brutality and less glorified elements of war, albeit fictional, the stories and characters feel grounded, real and ones with genuine motivations and emotional journeys. It sends a message to the next generation, one filled with its realistic and inevitable moments in life, but also one filled with hope and prospect that humans will persevere no matter what.



Model Photography by Nathan

Joe Hisaishi: the fusing of popular music and classical music

By Bernadette

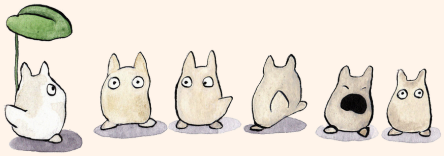
Mamoru Fujisara (藤澤 守), professionally known as Joe Hisaishi (久石 譲), is Japan's most beloved contemporary composer, conductor and pianist well known for his compositions. While his name might not be instantly familiar to everyone, his music almost certainly is. If you've ever been swept away by the emotional soundscapes of a Studio Ghibli film, chances are you've already heard Hisaishi's work.

His early recognitions were written for anime series, which drew inspiration from Japanese popular music (J-pop), electronic music, New Age music and the pioneering band Yellow Magic Orchestra. The minimalist music he composed unfolded into orchestral grandeur as he presented his first public performance in around 1975. As his reputation grew, he formulated an alias, a tribute to the American musician Quincy Jones: the Japanese kanji of "Hisaishi" could also be read "Kuishi", which is similar to the Japanese word "Kuinshī", the Japanese pronunciation of "Quincy", whereas "Joe" was taken directly from "Jones".



You may have heard of Hisaishi from some of his more renowned works – his soundtracks which accompanied director Hayao Miyazaki's films. This collaboration has been likened to the legendary duo of director Steven Spielberg and composer John Williams, with Hisaishi's music playing a vital role in bringing Miyazaki's cinematic worlds to life. After creating the image album for Nausicaä of the Valley of the Wind (1983), Hisaishi founded his own recording studio, Wonder Station, and continued scoring for the films from Miyazaki's newly established Studio Ghibli, including "Laputa: Castle in the Sky" (1986), "Porco Rosso" (1992) , "Princess Mononoke" (1997) and many more. Over time, his music has come to define the style associated with early anime. Around this time, Hisaishi also began his solo career, releasing his debut album in 1989.

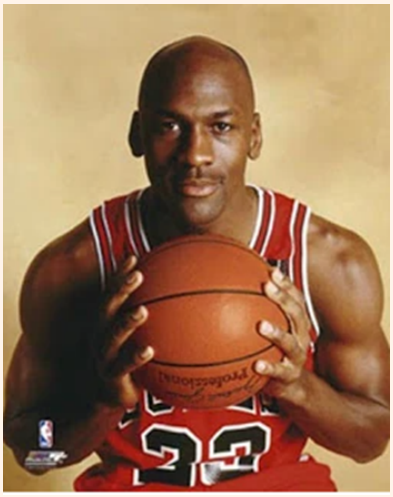
Moreover, he provided the soundtrack for the 1998 Winter Paralympics, and in the years that followed, he constructed some his more memorable works: from immersing his listeners into the nostalgic liveliness "Summer", to the bittersweet and wistful tenderness of "One Summer Day" (from "Spirited Away" in 2001), and to "Merry-Go-Round of Life" (from "Howls' Moving Castle" in 2004), a whimsical and graceful waltz which has become one of his most iconic themes. Of course, his popularity continued growing, as in August 2008, he arranged, performed in, and conducted a concert which celebrated his 25 years of collaboration with director Miyazaki. Featuring over 1200 musicians, the performance sold out the world-famous Budokan.



Hisaishi has received numerous honours for his remarkable contributions: In 2009, he received the Medal of Honor with Purple Ribbon and The Order of the Rising Sun in 2023 by the government of Japan. He was also appointed as the Composer-in-Association of the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra in 2024. In recent years, he has continued to compose many new works in the contemporary music style, including three symphonies and a series of concerti for many different instruments. His journey stands as an enduring inspiration; his music enchants generations, and undoubtedly, many more to come.

Michael Jordan

By Nicholas



Today we are talking about Michael Jordan. Why are we talking about him? Because the best match he played on March 28 1990 was the highest-scoring game. It was 69 points against the Cleveland Cavaliers. This game also included 18 rebounds, 6 assists, and a 23-37 shooting performance from the field. It's considered one of his greatest individual performances, with many people highlighting it's significance in his Hall of Fame career. Jordan's unmatched athleticism and competitive drive revolutionized the sport while winning six NBA championships with the Chicago Bulls (1991–93, 1996–98).

How many MVP did Michael Jordan get? He won the NBA's Most Valuable Player (MVP) award five times. He was awarded the MVP in the years 1988, 1991, 1992, 1996, and 1998.

Vocaloid: technology influencing modern J-pop since 2010s

By Caleb

Hello everyone, I am Caleb, have you heard of Hatsune Miku?

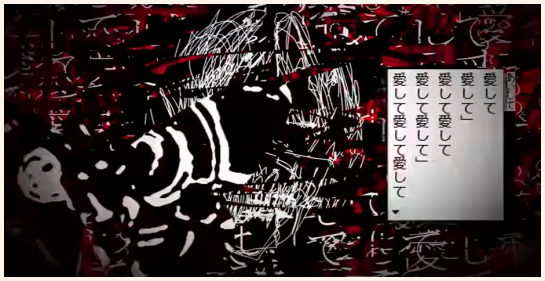


Vocaloid and Early Vocaloid culture

Vocaloid (ボーカロイド) is a singing voice synthesizer software,the artificial production of human speech, released by Yamaha in 2006. Think of it as an instrument used in digital music production, where instead of using instruments, a human voice can be used for the songs. There are many different voices that can be used, released as individual voicebanks. Hatsune Miku is one of the released voicebanks of the catalogue and became the most recognisable Vocaloid, with initial sales exceeding previous Vocaloid releases tenfold. This acts as the start of Vocaloid culture, allowing people to create and experiment on music without constraints of the person's singing abilities. Vocaloid culture became contemporary within the Japanese video sharing platform - Nico Nico Douga and videos such as World Is Mine, Senbonzakura, Ievan Polkka, with well animated music videos were released.

Vocaloid and creative freedom

The reasons for Vocaloid's success may be due to Miku's anime art styled avatar that made it appealing to make music videos of, but I would think it's due to the creative freedom allowed by Vocaloid. Vocaloid is quite unique in that it is released around the time internet culture started to bloom. Not only does it allow people to experiment with music production without concerns of their own voice, it also allows people to share their music with relative anonymity, giving introverted people to explore their hidden talent in a comfortable environment. This genuinely may have made Vocaloid as popular as it is today with its miraculous timing of release. Through Vocaloid, many producers found their own style of music to upload on the internet. Kikuo is a producer known for creating high tempo, blood pumping music with his style, contrasted by the dark undertones of its lyrics.



His most listened to song, "Aishite Aishite Aishite" gives a mysterious and chaotic symphony and layered with an intensely addictive chorus, as the character screams for love. It mimics the broken mind of a young girl who did everything to get the attention of her parents, using the voicebank of Hatsune Miku.

His use of lyrics is always explained with the quote by Cesar A. Cruz, that "Art is meant to disturb the comfort and comfort the disturbed". It brings attention to detrimental traumas to their audience while comforting the ones knowing that their issues are heard. Like Kikuo, each producer can put forward their own style, their own version of Miku and other Vocaloids as they wish, which cultivates an audience who discovers relalting characteristeristics among the Mikus.

Oppurtunities: VocalPs

With the release of Vocaloid, vocaloid producers are given an opportunity to share their music, which may expose their talents as music producers. Vocaloid producers are called VocalP (ボカロP), which includes Kikuo as previously mentioned, as well as other well known VocalP such as HACHI, Syudou and Ayase. These are artists that are well known within the Vocaloid sphere with high quality music production. Vocaloid production enabled them to expand their music production career within the J-Pop sphere. Ayase, initially a leader of a band went into hiatus due to medical treatment. During his treatment, he launched his VocalP career through Nico Nico Douga, which gained traction in the platform.

He gained the attention of Sony Music Entertainment Japan, and with his newfound cover artist, Ikura, they made their debut as YOASOBI with "Yoru ni Kakeru", becoming a musical success in Japan and rose YOASOBI up at the Japanese music scene. Their release of the single "Idol" became the first Japanese act to feature on the Billboard Global Excluding US.



HACHI, having difficulties with communication, made his debut in Nico Nico Douga in 2009. Being diagnosed with high functioning autism, uploading Vocaloid songs allows his genius to excell despite his hardships experienced in communication. His songs were highly appraised, with “Musunde Hiraite Rasetsu to Mukuro” featuring Hatsune Miku became the first song to receive over a million views on the early platform. HACHI and other like minded Vocaloid artists created the independent music label Balloom, where he started featuring his own vocals in his albums, making his official debut as Kenshi Yonezu, his real name. He continues releasing albums, improving to create his optimal form of J-Pop release



after release since his Vocaloid days. His hit song “Lemon” from 2018 became the most viewed J-pop single in Youtube. Both Ayase and HACHI's experiences are enabled because a singing voicebank project is released, and it is quite wonderful that it allowed such opportunities

Opportunities: Utaitte

What if it was the other way around? If you had talent to sing rather than producing songs yourself? This gave birth to the Utaitte culture in Nico Nico Douga. Utaitte (歌い手) refers to people share their own covers of preexisting songs, which Vocaloid songs are also quite popularly covered. They normally release “Utattemita” (歌ってみた) videos which means I tried to sing.

They provide a safe atmosphere for Utaittes to share their attempts in singing as lighthearted, amateur attempts where they gain their crowd on Nico Nico Douga. Like VocalPs, Utaittes can also get exposure to major labels, boosting their career in the J-Pop sphere, vocalPs and Utaittes work quite closely to each other, allowing collaborations to occur utilizing skills from both sides.



Mafumafu is one of the most influential utaittes since 2010, known by his high-pitched voice, allowing him to sing in both masculine and feminine tones. He makes active uploads on Nico Nico Douga during the 2010s, inspiring other Utaittes along the way. He inspired Ado, where in 2014 she got introduced to the Vocaloid sphere through Nico Nico Douga on her 3DS.

She was quickly attached and uploaded utattemita videos in 2017 when she was only 14. On the day before her 18th birthday, she made her debut with Universal Music, releasing Usseewa produced by VocalP Syudou. It became an instant hit in Asia due to her unique vocal strength and its harsh criticism for the Japanese working society. Her continuous release of songs has proved to fans that she is not a one hit wonder but rather a consistent, versatile vocalist. She is also featured as the vocals for One Piece Film Red, getting a lead role for the vocals as the antihero in arguably the most popular series in modern day. This skyrocketed her popularity both locally in Japan and internationally.

Today, at the young age of 22, she is already leading her second world tour Hibana (We were there), being one of the youngest and first Japanese artist to lead one of the largest scales world tours for the Jpop sphere. She even performed with Miku ,the figure that initially inspired Ado, in her Special Live: Shinzou, giving a heartfelt performance for Vocaloid and Ado fans alike.



What does this entail?

Vocaloid is nearing its 20th anniversary, but this piece of technology still beats strong within Internet culture, in Japan and worldwide, even having great influence in the current Jpop sphere. It gave birth to many who have been recognised as the best representative of Japanese music, with Kenshi Yonezu, YOASOBI, Mafumafu and Ado all been featured in Japan's yearly Kouhaku performance, which shows off Japan's most successful musicians of the year. Their influence is nationwide and spreading globally as time passes.



Although the development of generative AI seems diminishing for the future of human creativity, I think Vocaloid gives a certain reassurance that there will still be a time where a miracle like Vocaloid can show its face to the world, exposing people back to the beauty that is human creativity, that the (indomitable) human spirit might just allow culture and effort to prevail in the future.

Isagi Yoichi

By Sammi

Legends aren't always born to be great - some fight to become it. In Blue Lock, this is the case for Isagi Yoichi, the central character. While fictional, Isagi, represents more than just a character in a story. He is a symbol of ambition, transformation and the relentless pursuit of purpose - qualities that define heroes across time and culture. He represents a new kind of legend - not someone born to win, but someone willing to fight for it.



Artwork

By Hannah



Lamine Yamal

By Kristy

Lamine Yamal is a Spanish professional footballer who plays as a winger for Barcelona and the Spain national team.

At 17 years old he has one of the highest transfer fees in the football industry.

He has won 1 international trophy and four club titles. He is better than most experienced player at 17. He has recently passed his fourth year of ESO, the equivalent of a high school diploma in Spain.

He managed to balance his schoolwork with his commitments to football. Yamal has been studying during the tournament and has a tutor helping him with his education alongside his presence at a major football tournament.

He is a hero for many children all around the world from his football skill and he is more relatable because he is young. He is a big inspiration for many young football fans to keep doing well in school as well as chasing their dreams.





Fig 1: EAL Gremlins

Credits:
Editors: Bernadette, Caleb, Nathan
EAL coordinators: Mrs Shah, Mr Lau
Ms Parsons
Also thank you all EAL members!!!

THANK YOU FOR READING THIS YEAR'S NEWSLETTER!