

The DBL Times



February 2009

Happy Carnival!

Editor: Carla Kerr

Congratulations to the winners of our New Year Writing Competition! Here are the winning entries. If you're not one of them, better luck next time!

My Memories of the Chinese New Year by Kar Yan Lam

Chinese New Year was one of my favourite festivals when I was a child, because it's the first festival of the year after my birthday. The happiest thing is that I could get two weeks off school to celebrate.

When I was a child, I would ask older people to give me a red envelope with money inside, saying "Happy New Year" or "I wish you a nice year", etc. I remember I had more than a thousand dollars during this festival.

In my memories, my family always slept all day and watched TV on the first day of the lunar New Year. The second day of lunar New Year, we would have lunch with other members of my family. We also had steamed fish, steamed chicken, etc. The name of these dishes means good in the New Year. After that, we had our own parties.

One year, we went to a temple to worship. It is one of the most famous places in my country, because it has a Make a Wish Tree. You can throw a paper plate onto a tree to make a wish. If you can throw it on the tree once, it means your wish will come true. However, I couldn't do it.

One year, we went to a Chinese traditional market on the last day of lunar New Year. It was overcrowded. The owners shouted to sell their products beside the road, and news reporters had their live reports in the middle of the road. It was really noisy, but full of happiness. Perhaps this atmosphere is the main feature of the Chinese traditional market.

Something happened to me at lunar New Year that I won't forget in my life. I remember I was 8 years old and I went to a countryside village to visit my aunt to celebrate. My father let me light a firework myself. I was delighted. Unfortunately, the firework exploded and my hand was burnt. I was crying while my father was washing my hand. He said I was very lucky that I was wearing gloves when the firework exploded, otherwise I would have lost my right hand. However, I still have a scar on my hand today. This is one of my unforgettable lunar new years.

In recent years, I am interested in the twelve animals which represent the twelve Earthly Branches. They are rat, ox, tiger, rabbit, dragon, snake, horse, sheep, monkey, rooster, dog and pig. Different animals have their different events each year. It could be good or bad. Some famous professors will come out to say who are the luckiest and unluckiest animals of the year, and how to prevent the unlucky events. I found that you can learn something new in this topic.

This year, my family went to Macau for 3 days without me. Unfortunately, I'm still in Dublin. I hope I will go back to my country during lunar New Year one day. Anyway, I'm here to hope everyone has a nice year of the Ox!

Culture and Traditions in My Country by Cristina Santana

Brazil is known worldwide for its many different traditions. We host one of the biggest and best-known parties in the world, the Carnival. It began as a religious party, but, after some years, the Carnival changed into a popular party, and it is celebrated every year, usually in February, now, not only in Brazil, but also in the United States and in Venice, Italy.

The most popular Carnival is held in Rio de Janeiro, and there is a competition between the groups, called "Escolas de Samba". Even though people think that the Carnival is only for fun, people work really hard all through the year to do their best and get the big prize. It is a colourful party and the parade goes on the streets, always in a special place, showing people dressed in costumes, singing, dancing, and supporting their "Escolas".

But this is not the only way to celebrate Carnival in Brazil, and it doesn't happen just in Rio de Janeiro. In Sao Paulo, the style of celebrating Carnival is the same, but a bit smaller and less famous than in Rio de Janeiro.

But if you travel to the north of Brazil, you have the chance to see a different way of celebrating and enjoying this amusing party. In Salvador, Bahia, for example, instead of going to the special places to watch the big parades, you are invited to be part of the Carnival. There is no competition. Anyone and everyone takes part and we all follow the big trucks with our favourite singer or band on them, and it lasts for at least 4 or 5 days, non-stop.

In Recife, the Carnival is celebrated in an old fashion, but very funny. The people keep the tradition from many years ago. They also go on the streets, but without cars, and the locals and the people who take part in it go all along the streets, wearing cheap costumes and showing the local culture and a lovely dance called "Frevo".

Anyway, to understand Carnival is kind of difficult, because every state of Brazil celebrates it in a different way, all with an incredible lot of fun and joy. I think that any single person on this planet should have a chance to see Carnival for themselves, because it is inexplicable, unbelievable, amusing... no words can explain this experience. It looks like something from another planet, if any planet can be more exciting than Earth!

Culture and Tradition in my Second Town by Yan Dong

I have been in Ireland for the last few years, so I decided to write about the culture and traditions in Ireland. In my opinion, the Irish are always good at drinking Guinness and eating traditional food. So the day in my mind is "Pancake Tuesday", when the whole country goes mad for pancakes. On this day, everyone makes pancakes, which are made from eggs, flour and milk, mixed together in a bowl. Then it is fried in small amounts on a hot pan. When cooked, they are sprinkled with sugar and lemon juice. It looks nice and tastes good. I have to say it's very, very nice.

Another tradition is St Patrick's Day, which is celebrated on the 17th of March. This day is a great experience to have, as everyone dresses in the traditional colours, which are green, white and orange. They also wear shamrocks, which is a symbol of Ireland. This is a day for the Irish, as they will eat their traditional food, which is corned beef and cabbage, Dublin coddle, Irish smoked salmon and many more. The drink is Guinness. Big parades march through the towns of Ireland, with the biggest parade taking place in Dublin. Everywhere you go, you will hear traditional music playing. This day is celebrated in many countries, and many people travel to Ireland for the special day.

Christmas Day is another day they celebrate. They do this by putting up Christmas trees in their homes and decorating them with lights, and also by hanging decorations around the house. In the last few years, people put decorations outside their homes. It is very nice to see all the lights flashing on and off. Ireland celebrates Christmas as we would our New Year. They have a feast of turkey, ham and fresh vegetables for dinner on this day, then all the family exchange presents. The other very important thing is drinking. Drink, drunk, tomorrow is another day!

My Memories of Chinese New Year by Dong

I was born in China and grew up in China. I stayed there for more than 20 years, so when I came abroad here, and I have lived here for 5 years, the different life still can't change my mind, so I think I am totally Chinese.

People who have good memories always have them from when they were young. My memories of Chinese New Year are from when I was a child. In the 1990s, my village was still very poor. There were even no lights on the streets. Maybe when you are poor, you always dream of some good things - food, clothes, fireworks, family all together, and school holidays.

One month before the New Year, I just felt the time was so slow. I always asked my mum, "How many days until the New Year? I just can't wait!" At nearly one week, you can feel the New Year is coming, because all the family start to do something for the New Year. For example, we have to prepare food for two weeks. We have to clean the entire house, and buy some new stuff for the family, because at New Year everything should be clean or changed.

Before New Year's Morning, the entire house has to have colourful banners behind the door, and on top of the windows we write good luck words. That can stop bad luck coming into your home. After every family finishes that, you can feel New Year is really coming. In the afternoon, people also have a little rest. About 4 or 5 o'clock, people have to go to the mountain to their own family graveyard. We let off some fireworks and tell our ancestors to come home with us for the New Year. At night, people will make a big dinner. Dumplings are very important.

At about 9 or 10 o'clock, people start to let off fireworks in front of their own houses. That means next year will be good. Old people have to give young people money. It is put in a red envelope. People wait together to hear the New Year's bell. Children have to wait to grow up one year.

On New Year's Day, we all change into new clothes and go to everyone we know, family or neighbours, to say "Happy New Year" to each other.

My Memories of the Chinese New Year by Shang Qian

Spring Festival, also known as Chinese New Year, is the most important festival for Chinese people. I have spent five Chinese New Years in Ireland without my family. In this special occasion, I always miss my family, my city and my friends. I have a lot of good memories as well as a few bad ones of the Chinese New Year.

When I was younger and my grandparents were still alive, every Chinese New Year, my family and I would go to visit my grandparents and celebrate the New Year together. As my paternal grandparents and maternal grandparents lived in different cities, we would go to one of the cities this year, and another one next year. I can still remember clearly the Chinese New Year I spent in my paternal grandparents' house when I was five years old. It was not a good New Year for my parents. I got sick just two days after New Year's Day because I ate too many sweets and snack food. However, it was fantastic for me. On New Year's Eve, my cousins and I got a lot of fireworks. We threw fireworks into the chickens' roost and the pigsty. All the chickens were scared and a big cock even tried to fly. The pigs were much braver - they were too lazy to move and just made some funny noises. My granddad spoilt us. He laughed and said, "I'm afraid we won't have eggs for a couple of days." I will never forget those days.

Like all teenagers, I did not want to listen to my parents when I was in high school. I made my mum cry at the Chinese New Year of 1998. If time could go back, I would not have done such a terrible thing to my mum. My father was not at home during that New Year, since he was working in another city. After dinner, my friends rang me and asked me to go out. When I got the call, I asked my mum if I could go out. My mum refused, because she knew my friends would smoke and drink together. She told me she did not want me to go out so late. I insisted on going out, and started fighting with her. After a while, she cried. Suddenly, I realised I was so bored. Every time I remember this New Year, I deeply regret it. I've spent five years in a foreign country, and now I totally understand that nobody would love me more than my mum. I wish her a great Ox year.

Since I graduated from college, I had been working in the Operating Theatre of a hospital for several years. I spent the Chinese New Year with my colleagues a few times. Although there were emergency surgeries from time to time, we still enjoyed the food everyone brought in. Some doctors were very good at telling jokes. It was different than spending the New Year with colleagues and family though. I missed them as well.

The only thing I do not like about spending the Chinese New Year in Ireland is the lack of atmosphere. There are red colours everywhere in China during the Chinese New Year festival: red flags, red flowers, red clothes and red balloons. Despite missing my family, I had three lovely Chinese New Years with my boyfriend. He is a good cook and always cooks a big dinner for us. I will definitely go back to China next Chinese New Year and spend the whole holiday with my family.

I wish everyone in DBL a happy Chinese New Year!

Culture and Traditions in My Country by Emerson Nascimento

I live in Sao Paulo, so maybe my opinion of this city is higher than the entire country. Well, in Brazil we celebrate Christmas and New Year. However, Christmas is more for family, and New Year is more for friends. We prepare a big dinner one day before the 25th and start eating at midnight, and usually, we eat this food for lunch on the 25th. At the New Year, those in cities on the coastline jump seven waves to get good luck. I did it once!

If the holiday is on Thursday or Tuesday, we extend the holiday by Friday or Monday respectively. It's really good, because we get four consecutive days off to travel or relax. Usually in Sao Paulo, most people go to the beach, which is about 70km, one hour by car.

Barbecues are common. You always hear someone saying that they went to a barbecue in their friend's house or are having their own barbecue and inviting some friends. Actually, barbecue is not just for eating or drinking beer, more than that, it is to get in touch with people and have a fun day.

Soccer, what can I say about soccer? Brazilians are mad for soccer, at least men. The championship is televised on Saturday and Sunday, and on Sunday at 4pm, if that is possible, the TV shows the games in each state.

Brazil is known as a Catholic country, but I don't think so. Why? Because if you don't have a religion, you are Catholic! We have a tradition to baptise our babies even if we have another religion! I think everybody wants to belong to some religion, and Catholic is a pretext for it. For example, there are a lot of gays that are Catholic, however, in the Catholic religion, to be gay is a sin!

Do you want to know more about Brazil? Travel there! Brazilians are very friendly, and they will be pleased to show you a lot of things.

About DBL

Where is DBL College? DBL College is in Dublin, the capital of Ireland. There are seven classrooms. There's no internet cafe. There are a lot of teachers and students. TOM

DBL College is in Dublin, the capital of Ireland. There are seven classrooms. Dublin is on the east coast of Ireland. It's a great city, and there are a lot of restaurants, shops and cafes. The big tourist attractions are the Spire, Christ Church Cathedral, and Trinity College. They are very big and beautiful. ALAN

DBL College is in Dublin, the capital of Ireland. There are seven classrooms and the classes are small – between ten and twelve students. DBL is on the east coast of Ireland. The big tourist attractions are the city centre and the beautiful Christ Church Cathedral, the high Spire and the very big Trinity College. SUSAN

DBL College is in Dublin, capital of Ireland. There are seven classrooms. Dublin is on the east coast of Ireland. It's a great city and there are good shops, restaurants and museums. The big tourist attractions are Trinity College, the Botanic Garden, and the beautiful city centre. ALICIA



Are you looking for a holiday destination? Here are some suggestions!

Come visit Rio de Janeiro!

The wonderful city is open for you if you want to relax or have good fun!

We will make a tour of the city, to see its history, from the colony, passing through the Empire, and coming to the present. Also, you will be able to see the God-blessed beaches like Copacabana, Banna da Tijuca, and more!

Of course we will provide the best accommodation that Rio can offer. You will stay in an excellent hotel in front of Ipanema. We have amazing seafood dishes, but you can go to any other restaurant in this big city.

This is only the beginning! Our best event will be the Samba Schools show, where you will see the biggest and most famous carnival in the world. If you contact us before the 15th of January, we guarantee one really good place there for you to enjoy the big party.

For the night seekers, the hotel will also provide, every Saturday, a big show outside the building. Nice girls can be found there, and we have the honour to bring to you the best samba singers and popular Brazilian singers. Also, after the shows, we will have electronic music, and our DJ will play the hottest and latest famous music from around the world!

If you want an unforgettable holiday, one of the places where you can get it is here, in this wonderful city. LUCAS

Howth

Howth is on the east of Dublin. It's an island and a beautiful harbour, especially in summer, where we hope to see very interesting wildlife, like dolphins, sea lions and seagulls. You can see the beacon. It's a very old building. You should be prepared for four seasons in one day. It can be sunny one minute, hail falls one minute, and it's pouring with rain the next. After these, maybe you will see rainbows. On occasion, you can see twin rainbows. They're the most beautiful rainbows I've ever seen.

During the day, you can visit the pub, restaurant, and fish shop, which sells fresh fish, but it's quite expensive. WEN JIE

The Visconde de Maua of Brazil

If you like waterfalls, exotic nature, beautiful views, and trekking, this is the perfect place for you to visit on your next holiday.

You should be prepared for baking sun during the day and a little cold after the sunset, like ten or eleven degrees.

During your stay, try to visit the Alcontie eco park. There are nine different waterfalls, and you can swim in the river! If you like to ride a horse, it's a good idea to go to this park on horseback. But if you prefer rallies or motorcycling, you can rent a jeep, bicycle or motorcycle and go to visit other places at the top of the mountains, like "Selada" rocks.

In the town, there are lots of small hotels and campsites in the countryside. At night, you must go to the Casebre bar and drink "cachaca" with honey - it's a traditional drink that will warm you very fast! After that, try some typical dishes like "truta" fish with potatoes, or a soup. JULIA

Venice

If you are a traveller, you should go to Venice, one of the most famous places in the world. We have to go by bus to the outskirts of Venice, and then change to a ferry to Venice. There really are a lot of things you have to see – the buildings, the river, and the bridges. Because Venice is built on the sea, every year it falls a little bit. You can't see the difference with your eyes, but in a hundred years, when the sea water is full, it will cover all of St Mark's Square. We are lucky. When we were there, in the afternoon, there was no water.

The people living there mostly do business and sell souvenirs. The buildings are all very typical. All the buildings are joined to each other. You can't see a single building. The only way to travel or go out is by boat. They don't have bikes or cars. One typical boat is called a gondola. It's a very small boat. Only six people can sit in it at a time. It's very popular, but quite expensive – €30 each. The people are very friendly. I think it's because they like tourists.

There is a special food. It's noodles, but the sauce is a type of seafood only made in Venice. DONG

Qi Pan Mountain

If you like skiing and seeing lots of different wildlife, you'll enjoy this trip.

Qi Pan Mountain is in the northeast of China. It's a small mountain. You can have lots of fun there. You can go skiing there in the winter, and you can pay a little money to get a horse-drawn sleigh or dog sleigh. You'll feel the speed with them. There is a wild zoo as well. You'll get in a special bus in the zoo. Tigers, lions and bears are very free in there. Also, you can buy some meat for them. You take a stick which has some meat on it. If you put it outside the bus window, they will come to eat it. It's very exciting. I bought a fish for a polar bear, to see how the bear could get a fish in the water. There are very strange hills, very interesting – water and cars go up the hill by themselves. Do you want to come and see it?

There is also a 4 star hotel, and very nice food there with great value. CHEN

Munich

Munich is the richest and most beautiful city in Germany.

There is the BMW factory and Siemens factory. You can find hundreds of big, famous factories in Munich. You will also have time to go to the Olympic stadium, where Bayern Munchen football club plays. There is a famous park called Chicase Garden. You can enjoy traditional German food there – a big glass of beer, large pork, potatoes... If you go to Munich in October, you have to go to the Beer Festival, called October Festival. That's really good to see.

When you have enough time, go shopping. It's a great city for shopping. You can take any underground to the city centre. It's really convenient. You can find everything in this city. The people there are very nice and kind. Almost everybody speaks English, so there is no trouble for you if you speak English.

The weather is very hot in summer, but it is very clear, not too much rain. But in winter, it's snowing. You can enjoy the four seasons in a year. ANON

South of Spain

If you are a traveller, you will enjoy this trip. We will fly to the South of Spain. People always go to that part of Spain like tourists, they have package holidays, and they spend all their time in one place. This is the most common way to go to that place, but it will be better if you go to different places in the South of Spain. You can bring your camping gear and rent a car to visit all the secret places, beaches, coves... it is a wonderful way that we'll decide.

We will start in Seville, in the capital of the South of Spain. It is a gorgeous place. All the houses are white and have a lot of different flowers in the front. After that, we can go to Malaga, Cadiz... to small towns, whatever we want. We will continue our journey through Andalucia, and we can see a lot of farms with livestock such as bulls and Iberian pigs.

Then we will drive from the coast and enjoy all the small coves. When we arrive at "Los Canos" beach, we will stay in a small open-air bar, drinking beer and eating cured ham and fresh fish. We will meet the gentle, nice, and always happy people on the beach, and we can enjoy live music with them on the beach.

You will enjoy the sun, culture, people and experience in the South of Spain. OJHERE

Rio de Janeiro

Rio de Janeiro is one of the most famous cities in the world. It's located in the southeast of Brazil, right in front of the Atlantic Ocean. The weather is very hot in the summer, with temperatures above forty degrees. This fact makes the people go to the beautiful beaches of the city every weekend, and sometimes, every day!

Rio is also known for the exotic mix between nature and the modern world, with high buildings trading spaces with the forest. It's the city which has the biggest "urban forest" in the world: Florest de Tijuca (in English, it's like Tijuca's Forest.)

The people are hospitable and very friendly, always ready to help tourists. There are a lot of shops, where you can buy anything you need or want. For foreigners, it is a cheap place to spend some money. Also, there are many nightclubs and bars open until morning. The nightlife is awesome, with a lot of options for music parties where you can dance, drink, and have fun!

You can't leave the city without seeing the Christ Redeemer, one of the seven newest Wonders of the World. Also, make sure to visit the Sugar Loaf, where you can see almost all of the beaches in the city from a high mountain: Morro dos Dois Irmaos (In English, it means the Two Brothers Climb). CARLOS

Salvador

If you want to relax and just pass your time, you have to go to Salvador city in Brazil. All the beaches have white sand and the colour of the sea is transparent mixed with blue. There are hospitable people and there are some stones all along the beach. The food is really fresh. Normally, the restaurants are managed by families. Once, I asked to eat a shrimp, and they didn't have any, so the guy went fishing at that moment while we were waiting at the table! The weather? Don't worry about that! There is sun all day long, and even at night it is hot as well. The hotels are not expensive and many package tourists go there. There are many kinds of beaches. One is for night people who enjoy listening to live music. For other people, others are very quiet, just for

relaxing or having some privacy. No matter what kind you choose, all the beaches are picturesque. To summarize, it is a paradise! EMERSON

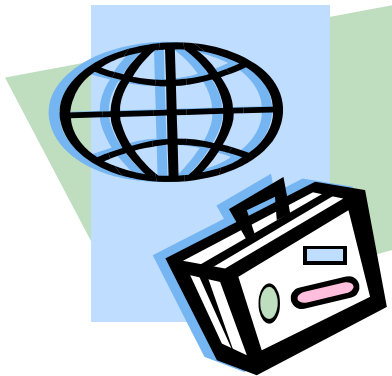
Travelling Round Beijing

Beijing is the capital of China and one of the most influential cities in the world. It was several Chinese dynasties' capital, too. Beijing's climate is a continental climate. The best time for travellers is the summer, but at the beginning of fall is also good.

There are a lot of interesting places to see in Beijing. For example, Tiananmen Square, the Forbidden City, The Great Wall, and some famous temples. If you're interested in Chinese Kong Fu, you can go to a park and study it from hospitable locals. Beijingers are always friendly to foreigners, as they're talkative!

Meanwhile, don't forget to try some local food. We can describe it as being varied. The most popular is Beijing Duck, which is President George W Bush's favourite!

The accommodation is cheaper now, because the Olympic Games have gone. Normally, a single room in a 4 star hotel only costs you €40 per night. Don't hesitate - book now! XUE



Limericks

There was a young man from Brazil
He liked to live up on a hill
In Ireland, he bought a coat
He gave it to a goat
And now he is always ill. (By Evelyn)

There was a girl from Beijing
She liked to walk and sing
She tripped on a rock
And lost both her socks
So now she wears boots in the spring. (By Eshan)

There was a young man from Brazil
He always looked very ill
Today he is not dead
But lying down in a bed
By the way, his name is Bill. (By Rodrigo)

There once was a girl from Beijing
She had a dream to marry a King
Diana's death woke her up
Then she grew up
She wished in Heaven Diana could sing. (By Shang)

There was a student in DBL
Who always had problems to spell
But he knew what it took
He looked in his book
And now he is doing well. (By Dayre)

Book and Movie Reviews

Mr Bean's Holiday



I like Mr Bean because he's funny. I don't like the book because I prefer films. Mr Bean is happy, the girl is beautiful, and they are funny. CHEN M

Bean is my favourite character, because Mr Bean is very funny. I prefer the film to the book. The film is more interesting. Mr Bean goes to France on holiday. He wants to go to the beach in Cannes, but he got lost, and lost his bag and money. Mr Bean meets Stepan and Sabine and they go to Cannes together. In the end, Mr Bean goes to the beach. JACKIE

Mr Bean won the first prize from the church. It's a video camera and a holiday in France. Mr Bean wants to go to the beach in Cannes, because he lives in England and there's rain, rain, rain. He can't speak French, and he has lots of trouble in France. He loses his bag and wallet so he doesn't have any money. He misses his train and meets Stepan. Then they act the story of music and make some money, but when he wants to take the bus to Cannes, he loses his ticket again, so he must walk to Cannes. On the way, he meets Sabine, and she takes him to Cannes in her car. Police want to find him, because they think he took Stepan. In the cinema in Cannes, he plugs his video camera into the projector, but the people like his film. At the end of the story, Mr Bean goes to the beach and everybody is happy. CHEN Q

The Secret Garden



The book is about a bad-tempered, selfish girl. After her parents died in India, she had to move to live with her sad and bad-tempered uncle in Yorkshire, England. There, Martha, a servant, told her about the secret garden and what happened there. Her uncle's wife had died there and because of this the garden was locked and the key was buried for ten years. But, of course, Mary, the little girl, found the key when her new friend Robin, a bird, showed her where the key was and where the door was. She met Dickon, the lovely boy, Martha's brother, who helped her recreate the garden again.

But in the house, Mary discovered another big secret. She discovered Colin, her cousin, Mr Craven's son. He was kept in secret, because everybody believed he was ill and he would die soon. But Mary and Dickon helped him to feel better and the three children gardened together in the secret garden.

When Mr Craven was in Europe, he had a dream about his wife, and later he got a letter from Susan, Martha and Dickon's mother, telling him to come back to England as soon as possible. On the way to England, Mr Craven thought about his son and how he was important. When he arrived in his house in Yorkshire, what was his surprise? The secret garden was open and he recognised his son healthy and happy. Mr Craven gave him a huge and hard long hug and they lived happily ever after.

For me the most important thing is the change in temperament of the people. In the book or in your life, you can become a better person. Sometimes, we don't know what is happening with people, and many times we misjudge people, but we do not know them very well, so let's give them another chance. IDOUE

After her parents died in India, Mary Lennox arrived in Yorkshire to live with her sad and lonely uncle. At first, she was lonely because she only thought of herself, and was selfish and bad-tempered. But little by little, she became more interested in other people. One day, when she was playing outside in the fresh air, she met Martha's brother Dickon, and they became very good friends. They took care of the Secret Garden of the red roses.

One night she heard again, like every night, that someone was crying, and she went to investigate. Finally, she arrived in the big bedroom and she saw one little guy. They started to speak and they knew that they were cousins. She was very surprised because she never knew anything about him. He told her that he was frightened that his back would be crooked, like his father's, and this fear made him ill.

After some days, Mary knew that he wasn't ill, that it was only his feeling. So Mary and Dickon planned to go to the Secret Garden with Colin (Mary's cousin). They arrived, and Colin felt very happy. He didn't understand now that the door of the secret garden was locked after his mother's death. Colin started to walk with Dickon's help, and they spent all the afternoons in the garden, running, laughing and talking, while Colin's father was travelling in the beautiful places of Europe.

One night, Colin's father dreamed about his wife, who told him to go to the Secret Garden. So the lonely widower returned to Yorkshire and he went to the secret garden, in which he saw that his son could run and walk. Finally, Mr Craven looked happier.

I think that it is a lovely book, because at first you can see some changes in Mary's behaviour. She was selfish and bad-tempered, but after that she became interested in other people. And in Colin's behaviour too, because he was always feeling sorry for himself and he was so frightened about being crooked and this fear made him ill. But after he met Mary, he started to feel much better, with himself and with everybody. He needed someone to tell him that he was as normal as any other boy in Yorkshire, in this case Mary. We can see a lot of changes in the conduct of the characters in this book, and in my opinion, like in the Secret Garden, we can change our behaviour for the better with things that happen, feelings that we have, friends that we make – in all of our life. ANON

The Secret Garden is an interesting book about Mary Lennox, an Indian girl who moved to Yorkshire after her parents died. In Yorkshire, she meets other people and discovers her own feelings.

In the beginning of the book, Mary is a bad-tempered, selfish and bossy child, but during the story she gets to know nice people like Dickon, Martha and Ben. These people change her and she starts to love them. One day Mary meets Colin, her cousin. Colin is a very sad and lonely child who lived all his life inside a bedroom thinking he will die.

With help from Mary and Dickon, he forgets this idea of death, and begins to believe in himself. Together Mary, Dickon and Colin play in the Secret Garden and discover the magic of life.

I really enjoyed this book because the Secret Garden isn't just a physical place, but it is a metaphor about the feelings of the characters. After they discover the Garden they change themselves. Dickon isn't a wild boy any more, Mary becomes a friendly and kind person, and Colin loses his fear of death. When I read this book I think about "my secret garden" and what I can do to dig it. JULIA



St Patrick's Day

There will be no classes on the 16th and 17th of March for St Patrick's Day.

Instead, why not head into the city centre and enjoy some of the events, parades, plays, funfairs, fireworks, music and dancing? Visit www.stpatricksday.ie to find out what's going on – you'll find a timetable for the whole (extra-long!) weekend.



The Future is Simple....

Aries

If you feel lonely, why not join a club or take up a sport? Someone you're meant to meet is waiting for you!

Taurus

You had a problem, but now you know what to do to solve it. You just need to trust yourself and do it!

Gemini

You'll be spending some time with your family. Try to take it easy because you need a break. Enjoy yourself.

Cancer

You've been worried about something, so ask someone to help you. It will make you feel better so you can relax.

Leo

Don't settle for second-best. You deserve good things, so if something isn't perfect, don't accept it.

Virgo

You should do something to help the environment. As well as being eco-friendly, you will feel much better.

Libra

You already know what to do about something, but you don't believe it. You must trust your own judgement.

Scorpio

Don't be pessimistic, because that will make things worse. You should expect good things to happen - they will!

Sagittarius

There's something you really want - so go for it! It's not as difficult as you think it is at the moment. Just try it and see!

Capricorn

You have too much going on in your head. Take some time out for you - go for a walk somewhere peaceful.

Aquarius

You're about to have a great opportunity. Watch out for it. When it comes, you should take it. Good luck!

Pisces

Don't be too serious! It's good for you to laugh, so go out with your friends or watch a comedy film. Have fun!

Ask the Stars!