

the ponds high Gazette

issue one

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Welcome Back!

The Gazette team is officially back for 2025, and we're more excited than ever to bring you fresh, insightful, and entertaining issues throughout the year! Whether you're a returning reader or brand new to the Gazette, we can't wait to share the latest school news, thought-provoking articles, creative pieces, and exciting features with you.

This year, we're taking things up a notch!! Bigger stories, sharper designs, and even more student voices are shaping our publication. We're here to inform, inspire, and entertain, covering everything from school events and student life to global topics and creative storytelling. No matter your interests, there's something for everyone in the Gazette, and we can't wait for you to be part of the journey! Furthermore, this year we'll be listening to you! QR codes/links will be available at the end of every issue so that you, our student body, can submit suggestions and critiques on our publications!

To our incoming Year 7 cohort - Starting high school is a huge milestone, and we hope your first five weeks have been filled with new friendships, exciting lessons, and memorable moments. Adjusting to a new school can feel like a whirlwind - new teachers, new classrooms, and a whole new routine! But remember, you are not alone. Everyone around you, from your peers to your teachers, is here to support you as you settle in :) The first two issues of the TPHS Gazette will be catered solely towards you! In this issue, the 'Teacher Feature' pages will give you fun facts about some of the teachers at our school!

I'd also like to congratulate **Ameerah Hassan** and **Maher Mann** on being named the TPHS Gazette Vice Editor-in-Chiefs 2025! Their introductions are below!

- **Shaldeen Gorthi, EIC.**



Hi guys! My name is Ameerah, and I'm so excited to introduce myself as one of your Vice Editor-in-Chiefs! I'm in Year 11, and I love to read books, watch movies/tv shows and write (especially for the gazette:)). I joined the Gazette in the middle of Year 7, and from day one, it made me feel welcome—a place where I could share my voice, connect with others, and grow as a writer. The Gazette has been such a big part of my high school journey, and I can't wait to continue this adventure with you all and contribute to bringing our team's and all of your amazing ideas to life!

Hey guys! My name is Maher, and I'm your other Vice Editor-in-Chief for Gazette! I joined Gazette in early Year 8 and have loved writing for it ever since. I'm so excited for this year's plans and be sure to keep checking up on our articles every few weeks :) If you want to know a little bit more about me, I LOVE reading, listening to music, and sports! A little fun fact about me is that I'm actually known as the tallest person in our grade, reaching a whopping height of 5'0. If any of you see me around, do come up and say hi, I might be intimidating with my height but don't worry I don't bite!



Swimming Carnival

Mt Druitt Swimming Centre

The Ponds High School hosted our annual swimming carnival on the 13th of February.

It was an amazing day filled with water and land activities for everyone, competitors and non-competitors, bringing our school together. We had many amazing, talented swimmers competing in all the races and trying their best against their fellow peers. It was exhilarating to watch the students of our school shatter records while displaying Ponds Pride! Congratulations to all the competitors!



A special congratulations to the following age champions and school record breakers!

Age Champions:

Boys

- * 12 Years - Bailey I
- * 13 Years - Vedaant K
- * 14 Years - Levi R
- * 15 Years - Vansh P, Jamie I
- * 16 Years - Davran Z
- * 17+ Years - Dylan I

Girls

- * 12 Years - Piper M
- * 13 Years - Layla M
- * 14 Years - Taylor S
- * 15 Years - Zoe P-S
- * 16 Years - Natasha J
- * 17+ Years - Lily M

Records broken:

- * Girls 12 200m Free - Piper M (2:45.00) - Lachlan
- * Boys 16 200m Free - Jacob W (2:07.99) - Murrumbidgee
- * Girls 17+ 200m Free - Lily M (2:35.00) - Nepean
- * Boys 16 50m Fly - Jacob W (27.51) - Murrumbidgee
- * Girls 16 50m Free - Natasha J (30.44) - Lachlan
- * Boys 16 50m Free - Jacob W (24.94) - Murrumbidgee
- * Boys 17+ 50m Free - Elijah W (25.90) - Murrumbidgee
- * Girls 12 50m Breaststroke - Piper M (47.20) - Lachlan
- * Boys 12 50m Breaststroke - Bailey I (39.22) - Hawkesbury
- * Girls 12 50m Backstroke - Piper M (41.67) - Lachlan
- * Boys 16 50m Backstroke - Jacob W (31.67) - Murrumbidgee
- * Girls 17+ 50m Backstroke - Lily M (37.93) - Nepean
- * Girls 12 100m Free - Piper M (1:17.89) - Lachlan
- * Boys 12 100m Free - Bailey I (1:11.01) - Hawkesbury
- * Boys 16 100m Free - Jacob W (56.88) - Murrumbidgee





Lunar New Year

Year of the Snake

Lunar New Year truly has a unique and interesting history. There are many legends of Chinese New Year, but one legend says that thousands of years ago, a monster named Nian (also known as "Year") would attack villagers at the beginning of each new year. Nian was afraid of loud noises, bright lights, and the colour red, so those things were used to chase the beast away, turning into a beautiful tradition over time!

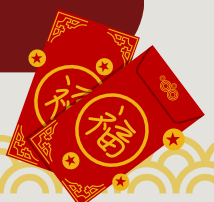


Fun Facts About Lunar New Year!!

- 1/5th of the world celebrates Lunar New Year.
- Each year is represented by one of 12 animals (this year is the year of the snake!)
- Monsters are fought off.
- No showering, sweeping, or throwing out garbage is allowed on this day.
- Children receive lucky money in red envelopes.

On the 14th of February, the multicultural team were selling lunar new year goody bags outside the hall. The money raised from the goody bags would go to a good cause and we had so much fun! The bags consisted of two chocolate gold coins, white rabbit candy, a gummy snake and two fortune cookies with the positive encouraging notes inside!! What did yours say?

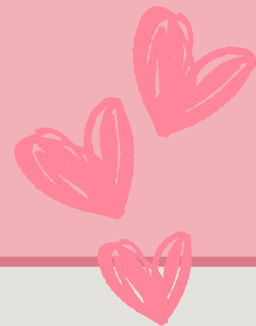
The multicultural team have one more sneak peak to give out! We are going to host multicultural night on the 4th of April instead of the 21st of February due to Ramadan. More details about the event will be given out soon, we cant wait to see you there!! :))





Valentine's Day

A short (dark) history



Some believe Valentine's Day is celebrated in mid-February to mark the anniversary of St. Valentine's death around A.D. 270, while others suggest it was established by the Christian church to replace the pagan festival of Lupercalia.

Lupercalia, held on February 15, honoured Faunus, the god of agriculture, and the founders of Rome, Romulus and Remus. Priests performed rituals, including sacrificing a goat and a dog, using the goat's hide to whip women and crop fields, which was believed to enhance fertility. City bachelors would draw the names of these newly fertile women from an urn, often leading to romance and marriage.

The true identity of St. Valentine is unclear, as multiple figures share the name. One legend depicts Valentine as a priest who defied Emperor Claudius II's marriage ban by performing secret weddings, leading to his arrest and execution on February 14. In the late 5th century, Pope Gelasius I banned Lupercalia and possibly replaced it with St. Valentine's Day to honour him.



FEB

14



HAPPY

Valentine's
DAY



Gvalentine's day!

How it became what it
is today

How did the honouring of a priest hosting secret marriages and a sacrificial ceremony turn into the event of gift-giving that we know today? When did February 14th become the day we celebrate with chocolates and roses with those we admire?

The Industrial Revolution made Valentine's Day accessible to the masses by producing cards, popularised in the 1840s. Gift-giving of flowers (especially roses) and chocolates from brands like Cadbury also became common.

During the Medieval Age and Renaissance periods, Valentine's Day began closely associated with love inspired by famous poets of the time. Moreover, the mating season for birds coincidentally arrived around mid-February, romanticising the date and solidifying it in tradition, now known as Valentine's Day. While in the Renaissance, this festival of love grew in popularity among the elite, exchanging love letters much like today.



The modern age of the 20th century encapsulates the globalisation of Valentine's Day where the range of gifts expanded to jewellery, candle-lit dinners, and personalised gifts. This further transcended the link between consumerism and love by expanding preparation for the holiday immensely.

Now dawns the digital age, we engage in digital spreads expressing love and promote a range of love, like introducing sub-genres of such as Galentine's Day and gift-giving ceremonies for familial affection. This advancement promoted sustainability and waste awareness on Valentine's Day by encouraging handmade gifts and experimental celebrations.

The Covid-19 pandemic highlighted the importance of appreciating love and celebrating Valentine's Day, which means so much to many of the 8 billion people worldwide. This proves that love in all its forms is enduring, evidenced by centuries of societal, cultural, and technological advancements.





TEACHER FEATURE

GET TO KNOW YOUR TEACHERS!

MISS SANTOSO

Faculty: English

Favourite Subject: Music and Maths

Fun Facts:

- I used to play at the Sydney Opera house
- I play violin and piano
- I liked Maths more than English for most of high school because i liked that there would be only one solution.

Advice:

- Don't stress too much and worry too much, high school should be enjoyable and worrying too much about work isn't always good in the long run.
- Never be afraid to ask for help as well, from any teacher especially their year advisors.

MRS KUCUK

Faculty: English.

Favourite subject (excluding their faculty): PDHPE

Fun facts:

- I love hiking.

Advice for year 7:

Always be your true self and never be fake just to impress others :)

Where to find them at lunch ext:

English Staff room.



MISS BURN

Faculty: HSIE

Favourite subject: (excluding their faculty):

My favourite subject is Ancient History but I do think Languages is a very important subject

Fun facts:

- When I was in University, I got to do archaeology in Greece for a month
- I have four sisters (3 of them are triplets)
- I enjoy painting with watercolours and playing hockey

Advice for year 7:

- Stay organised. Find out what you need to do and then break it up into smaller parts. Then, make sure that you plan when you are going to do each part.

Where to find them at lunch ext:

- You can find me in the HSIE staffroom in staffroom 2 (across from the lift).



SINGH SENSEI

Faculty: Head Teacher Languages

Favourite subject (excluding their faculty):

My favourite subject besides Japanese is Maths.

Fun facts about them:

I have climbed to the top of Mt Fuji in Japan. My favourite animals are chimpanzees. I love running.

Advice for year 7:

Enjoy the new experiences offered to you and make the most of every opportunity.

Where to find them at lunch ext:

You can find me in the Languages / Maths staffroom in E Block.

MISS SUTTON

Faculty: PDHPE

Favourite subject (excluding their faculty):

TAS – specifically hospitality.

Fun facts about them:

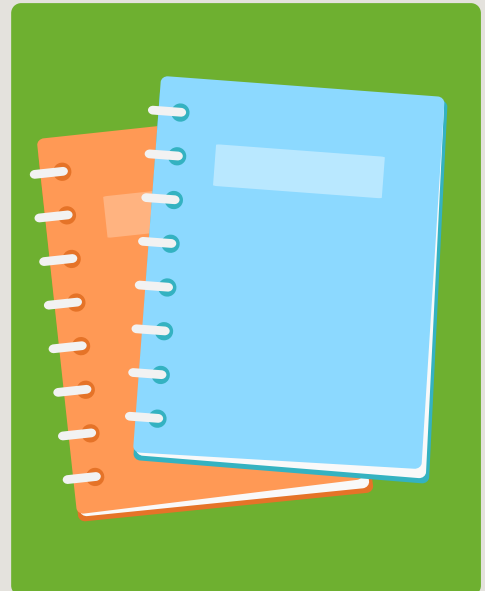
- I am highly allergic to cats
- I have represented Australia in Ultimate Frisbee
- I have had 5 surgeries on my knees alone.

Advice for year 7:

Always be willing to make new friends, doesn't matter if it's at the beginning of Year 7, part way through or in Year 12.

Where to find them at lunch ext:

In the PDHPE staffroom, above the canteen.



DR. ANEJA

Faculty: Science

Favourite subject (excluding their faculty):

Apart from my passion for science, especially Biology, I really appreciate the work produced by the CAPA faculty and absolutely love the artwork created by our students.

Fun facts about them:

- I enjoy reading books
- love listening to old music
- enjoy exploring new places.

Where to find them at lunch ext:

You can usually find me in the Science staffroom at lunch—unless I'm on duty!

Advice for year 7:

Take things one step at a time as you settle into the high school life. Do not hesitate to ask for support—there are plenty of people, from senior students to teachers, who are always happy to help if you ever feel overwhelmed. Most importantly, find joy in your learning, embrace new opportunities, and explore different subjects to discover what truly excites you.



Year 8 Advice

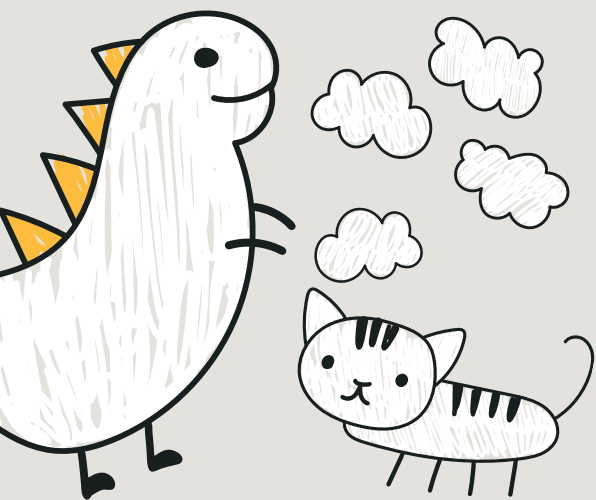
(And experiences!)



THE BASICS

The transition from primary school to secondary school is a major step, and for many Year 7 students, it comes with a mix of excitement and nerves. Now in Year 8, students at our school have shared their experiences, offering insights into what it was like to take that leap. For most, the change was significant but smooth. “At first, all I hoped for was a new class, but I ended up making so many more friends than I expected,” one student shared. Another noted, “The transition was actually flawless. It was a big change, but I settled in quickly.”

One of the biggest adjustments for new Year 7s was the increased workload. Many students mentioned that while the number of assignments and tests felt overwhelming at first, they eventually found their rhythm. “It took me a while to get used to the amount of work, but over time, I figured out how to manage it,” said another Year 8 student.



For those currently in Year 7 or about to start, the advice from Year 8s is simple, embrace the experience, don't stress too much, and take every opportunity to make new friends. “It might seem scary at first, but you'll get used to it, and soon it'll feel like home,” one student reassured. So, to all new and current Year 7s, enjoy the journey, ask for help when needed, and make the most of your time at High School!



Pitch For Purpose

GO GREEN

Hosted by Rotary District 9685



WHAT IS IT?

Pitch For Purpose is a competition based off innovative skills and requires students to think outside the box. The first round was held on Thursday 20th February. Attendees looked at "The School Bag Design" Project and came up with various solutions as a warmup for their major challenge. For the major challenge, students were told to 1 of 6 topics to protect the environment and support "Go Green!" initiatives.

WHAT NEXT?

In Round 1, students were judged on a short video or poster that they made to convey their solution for the topic that they chose. The best few were shortlisted by the judges and will be attending the Final Round on Saturday 22 March.

Here, they will present their ideas to Rotary Club Members (The Club which is hosting this competition) who will select the top three as winners. After this, the top three can ask for more mentorship to improve their ideas more and even implement them in real life.

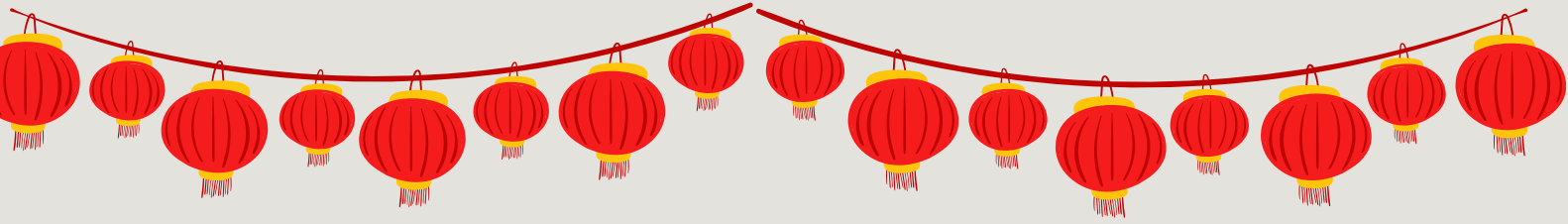
We wish all TPHS students trying out the Best of Luck!



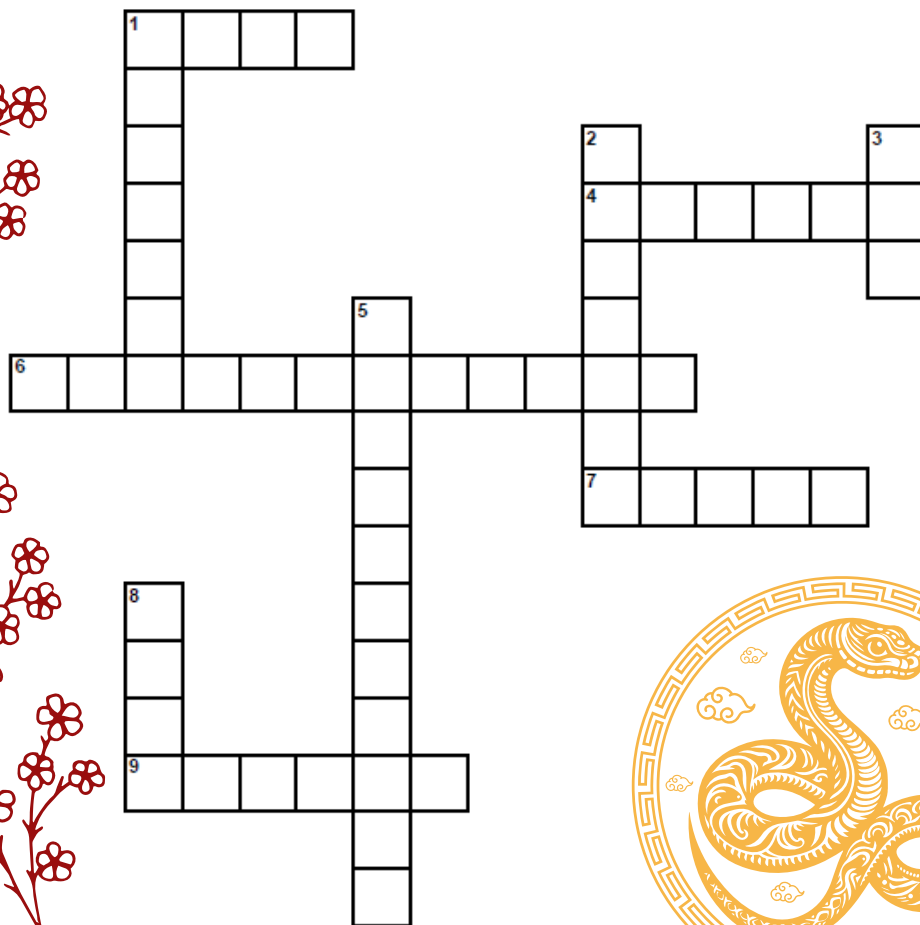
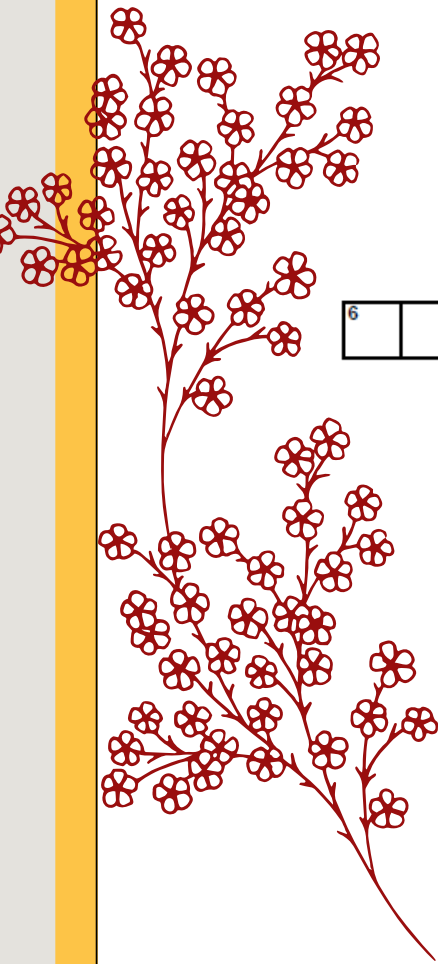


Activities

Lunar New year Themed!



Lunar New Year Crossword!



Across

- [1] An animal used in dances and celebrations to ward off negative spirits.
- [4] A common citrus fruit used in many celebrations to symbolise good luck and wealth.
- [6] Holiday marking the start of a new zodiac cycle.
- [7] The current zodiac for 2025.
- [9] A mythical creature.

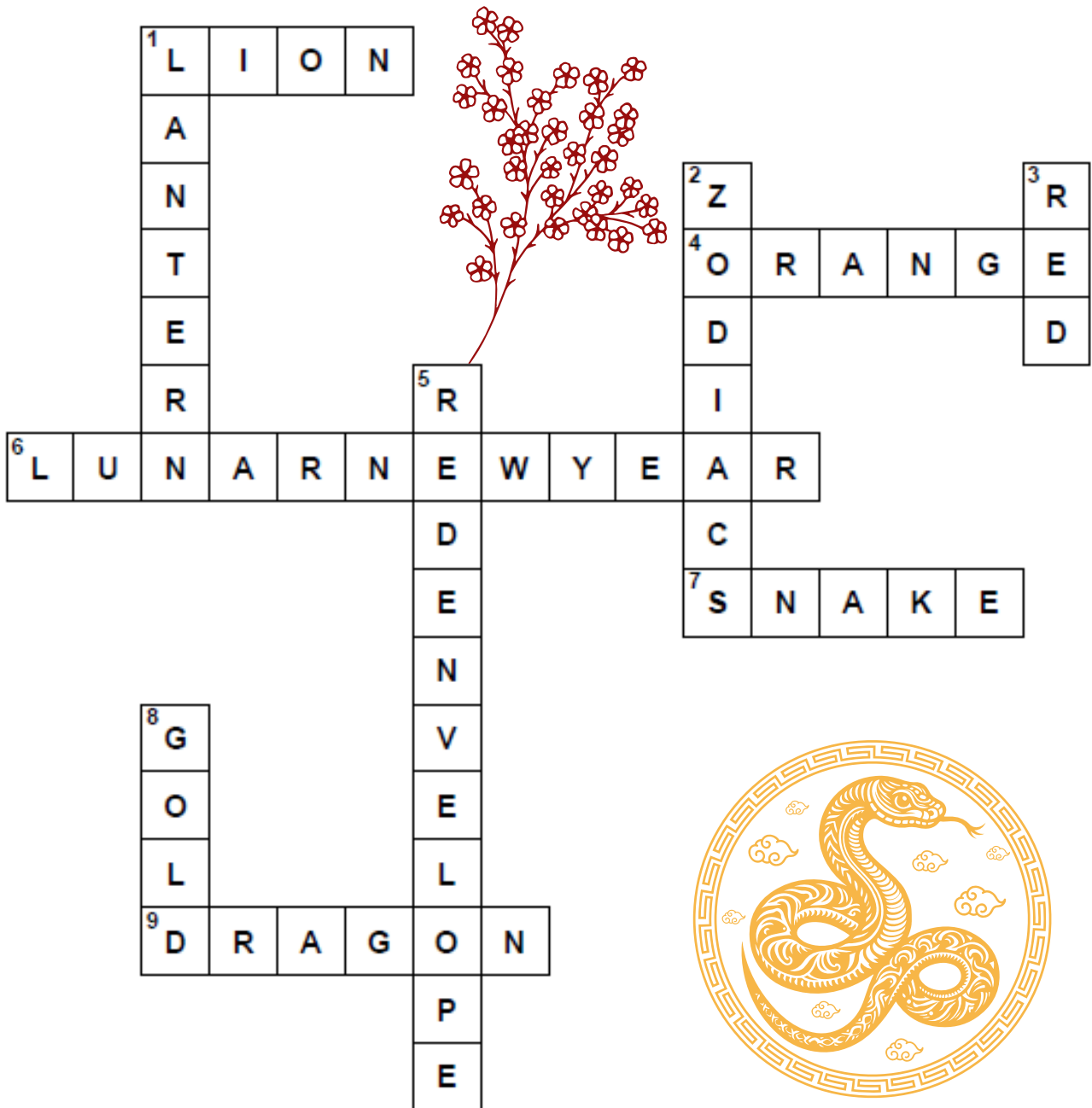
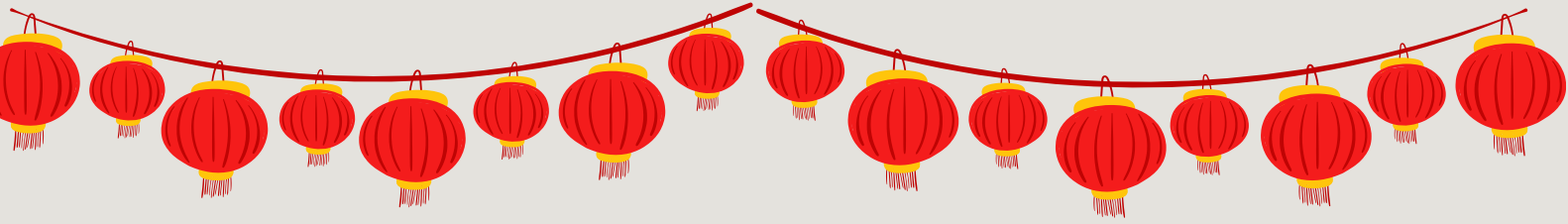
Down

- [1] A glowing decoration used in celebrations.
- [2] A 12-year cycle representing different animals.
- [3] A colour used to symbolise good luck.
- [5] An item children receive as a gift with money inside of it.
- [8] A colour which symbolises wealth and prosperity.



Activities

Solutions!

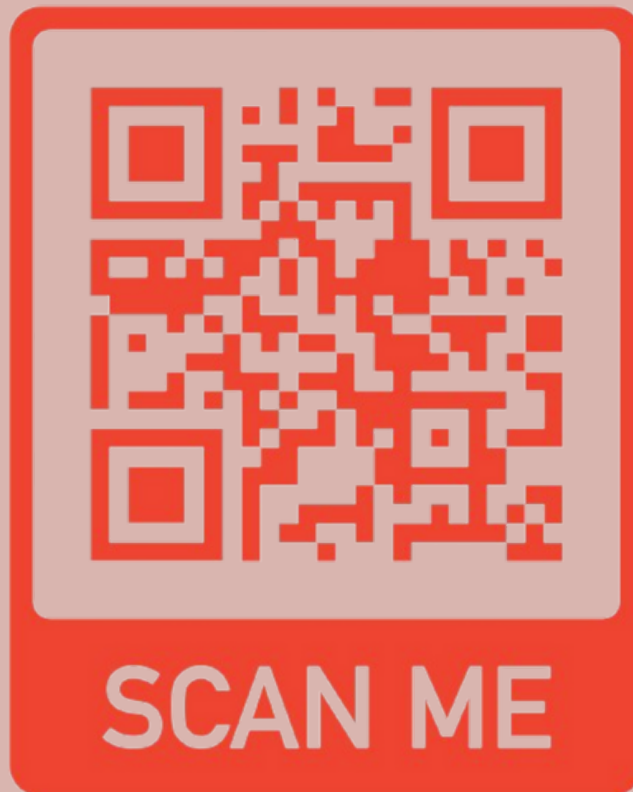


Please like and leave a review,
as this concludes our first issue.

Have a great 2025!

Give us feedback! :)

Please Use Your Education Email



or... <https://shorturl.at/Apml3>