

Philosophical Musings

by TempleCarrig School 1st Years

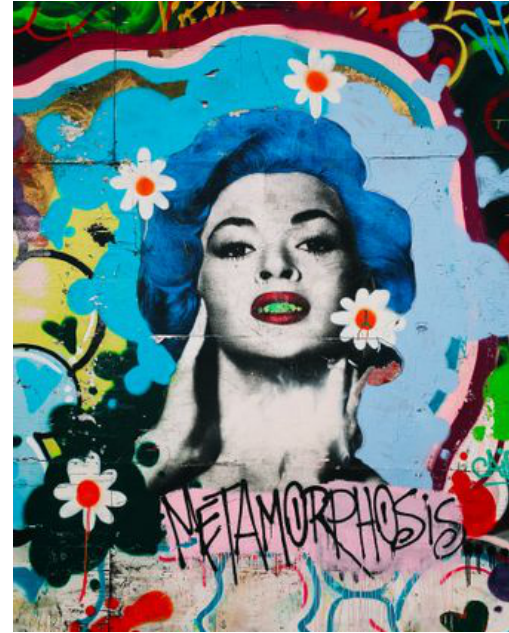
About the Authors

1st Year Philosophers

Mind Work. Temple Carrig has been running the Junior Cycle Short Course since 2014. A rich, reflective, disruptive and critical thinking course starting in 1st Year, it has permeated all learning, in an environment where challenging bias, analysing truth and critically assessing accepted knowledge is the norm. These are our future leaders, consumers, voters and decision makers. They are amazing thinkers and I wish you could all listen in to our conversations.

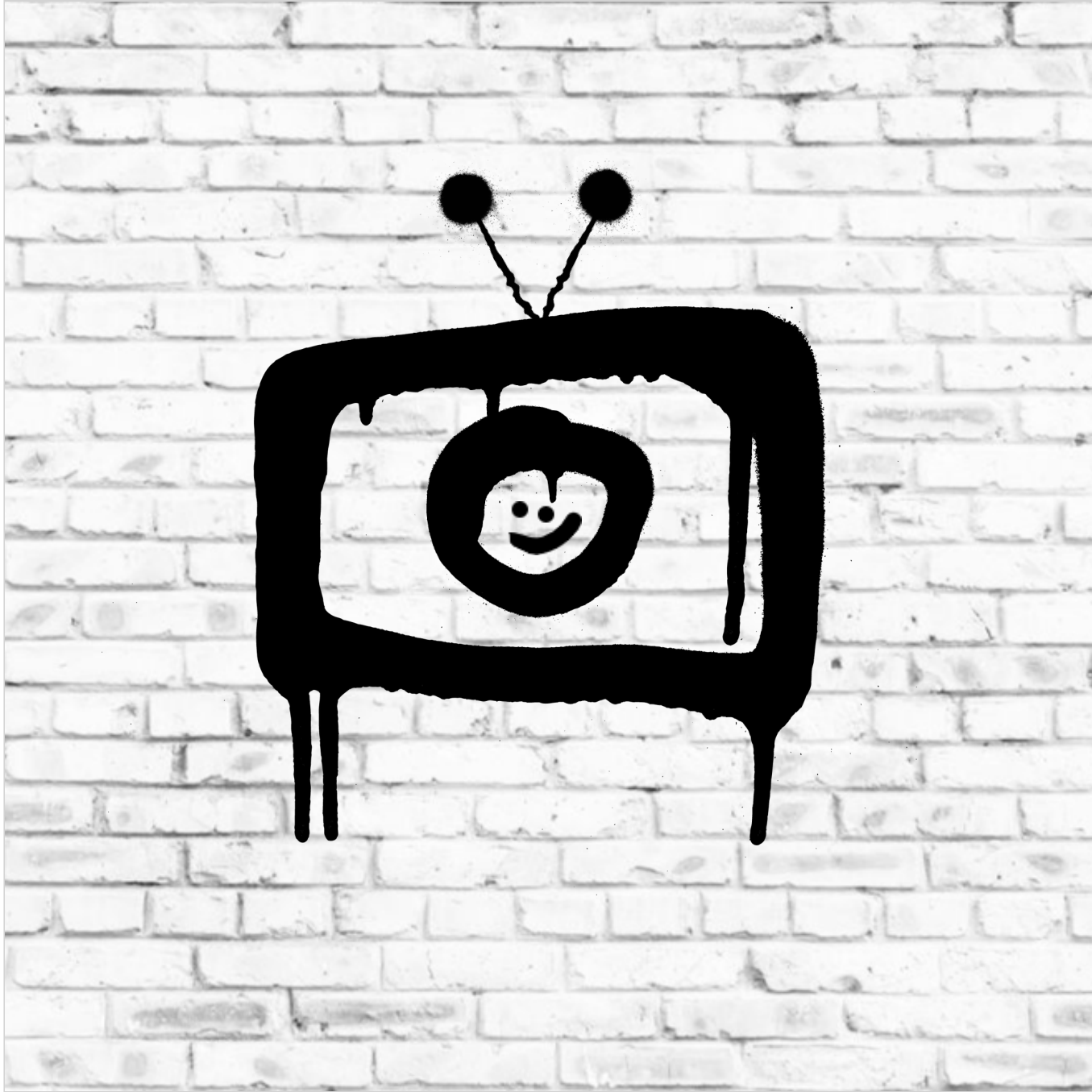
As a project for the 2022 Young Irish Philosopher, they decided to do a little book as a class including a snapshot of their philosophical questions and musings at the beginning of their 3 year learning expedition.

Susan Andrews



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Who am I?

Know Thyself, Socrates This sounds easier than it is and I think it depends on where you are in life. I agree that it is important to know yourself before you can know other things. Our teacher showed us a picture of herself when she was two and asked us what made her the same person in the picture. Some of us said it was her name, her brain, her personality but typically she had an answer for all that and everything had changed. So what bit of her has stayed the same? Some people believe it's the soul or some energy that stays the same in us while we age and change. Maybe it's our memories and experience then but what if you lost your memory? Does that mean you are not who you are anymore? Would I be the same if I changed gender or nationality? I think it would feel different if I had different characteristics and personality but the voice in my head would be the same. So maybe what I am is just a bundle of feelings and thoughts. Now I am thinking what would be the answer you want to hear. How I want people to see me is coming to mind and trying to catch myself - my real self - is more difficult. To be continued..



Should I help others?

If it is in our power to prevent something bad from happening, without thereby sacrificing anything of comparable moral importance, we ought, morally, to do it.

Peter Singer

Most people believe it is a good idea to help out others in need. Do you? Peter Singer asked if I am walking past a pond and see a child drowning in it, I should go pull the child out. I think most people would agree with this. This will mean getting my clothes wrecked, but this is insignificant, while the death of the child is terrible. If we act on the idea that we should always be good and prevent very bad things happening, how much should I sacrifice? What if it was down at the sea and I could potentially risk my own life? Would it matter if the child that was in danger was someone I knew?

This thought experiment shows it is easier to help the child 'right in front of us', that is our bias towards local things. But thinking of all the things happening in the world right now, and the fact that TikTok and other technology makes us aware of this suffering in Ukraine and other countries, should I try help someone further away? Having a bake sale at least helps the feeling that bad things happening are out of our control



Why do we need leaders?

“Before mass leaders seize the power to fit reality to their lies, their propaganda is marked by its extreme contempt for facts as such, for in their opinion fact depends entirely on the power of man who can fabricate it.”Hannah Arendt.

What would happen is I think ...

Thanks

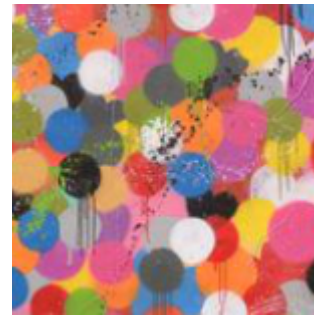


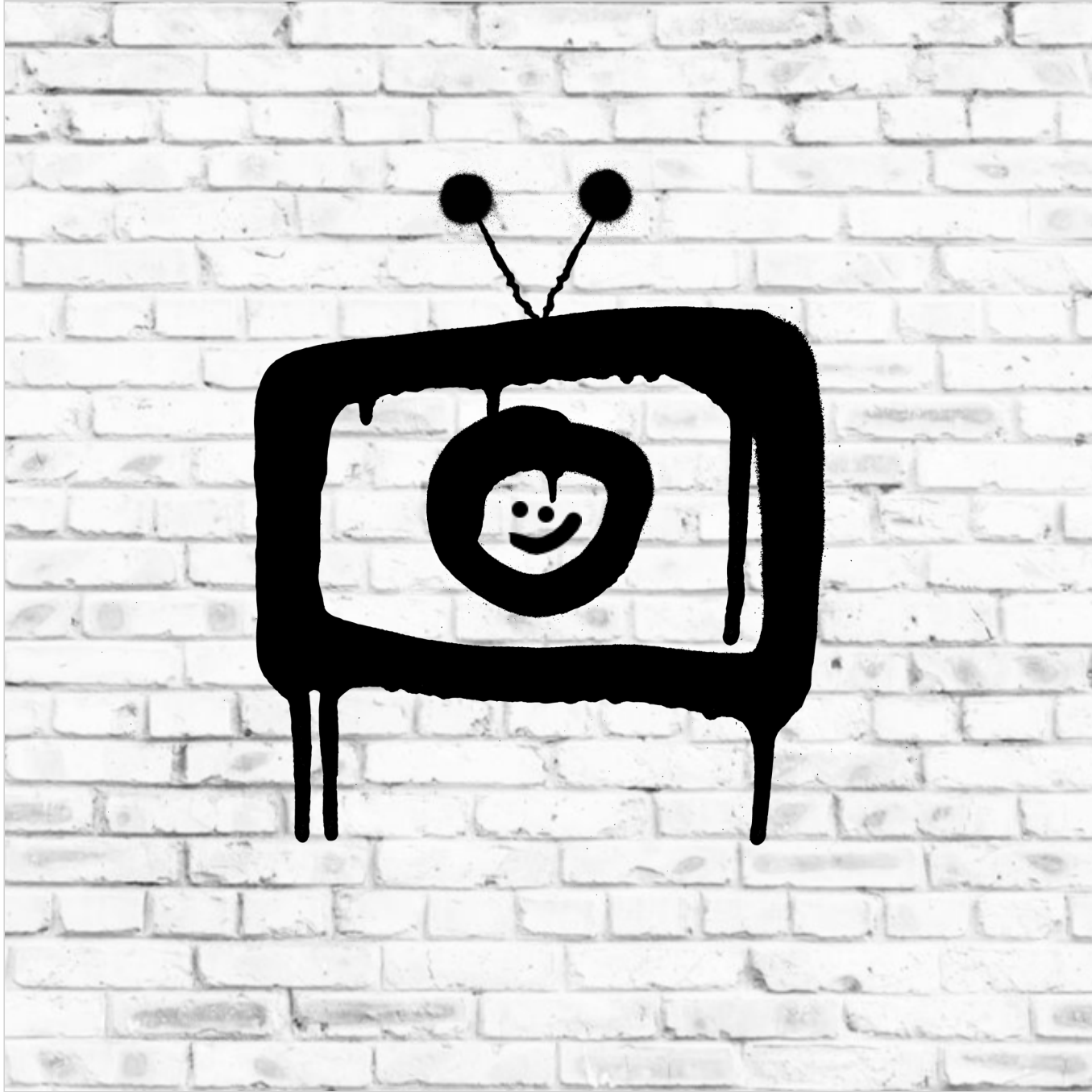
- Is there more future than past?*
- Is it better to play well and lose or play badly and win?*
- Can you still be at school if you are at home?*
- Can a bad person be a good leader?*
- Do you have a history or a past?*
- Should a footballer be paid more than a nurse?*
- Can you be friends with someone you don't like?*
- Who decides what news is real?*



Are we free?

"Freedom is the only worthy goal in life. It is won by disregarding things that lie beyond our control." Epictetus. Some things are in our control and other things are not. For example we can control being a good friend or being responsible for stuff we put online but we can't control bad things happening to good people unfortunately. The problem with Philosophy is you have to really figure out what your definition of the idea you are discussing is. So for example what freedom is will have different meanings. It could mean having no school or having no mortgage. But it could just mean not being in jail. I think freedom means....





Do I deserve happiness?

Happiness depends on ourselves. Aristotle If I think about Aristotle's idea about happiness not coming from anywhere but inside of us, I suppose we only deserve it if we work on becoming happy. There are lots of philosophies about happiness from making money to having friends or love but there is no one recipe. Maybe its easier to think about what unhappiness is and does that depend on ourselves...

Should we eat our pets?

The question is not 'Can they reason?' nor 'Can they talk?' but 'Can they suffer?' Jeremy Bentham.

We were asked in class to think of the differences between human animals and non-human animals and we came up with a list with fur, legs, speaking, creativity, employment etc. But are these a big enough reason to not do anything we want with animals? What makes people special? I think its....

Do these differences make it alright for us to harm animals? Just because there are differences between us physically does it mean its ok? And why is it ok to eat a pig and not a dog? That makes no sense to be fair. I mean if we want to be good to the environment for a start we shouldn't waste things so if a dig dies, it would make sense to eat it but we don't.

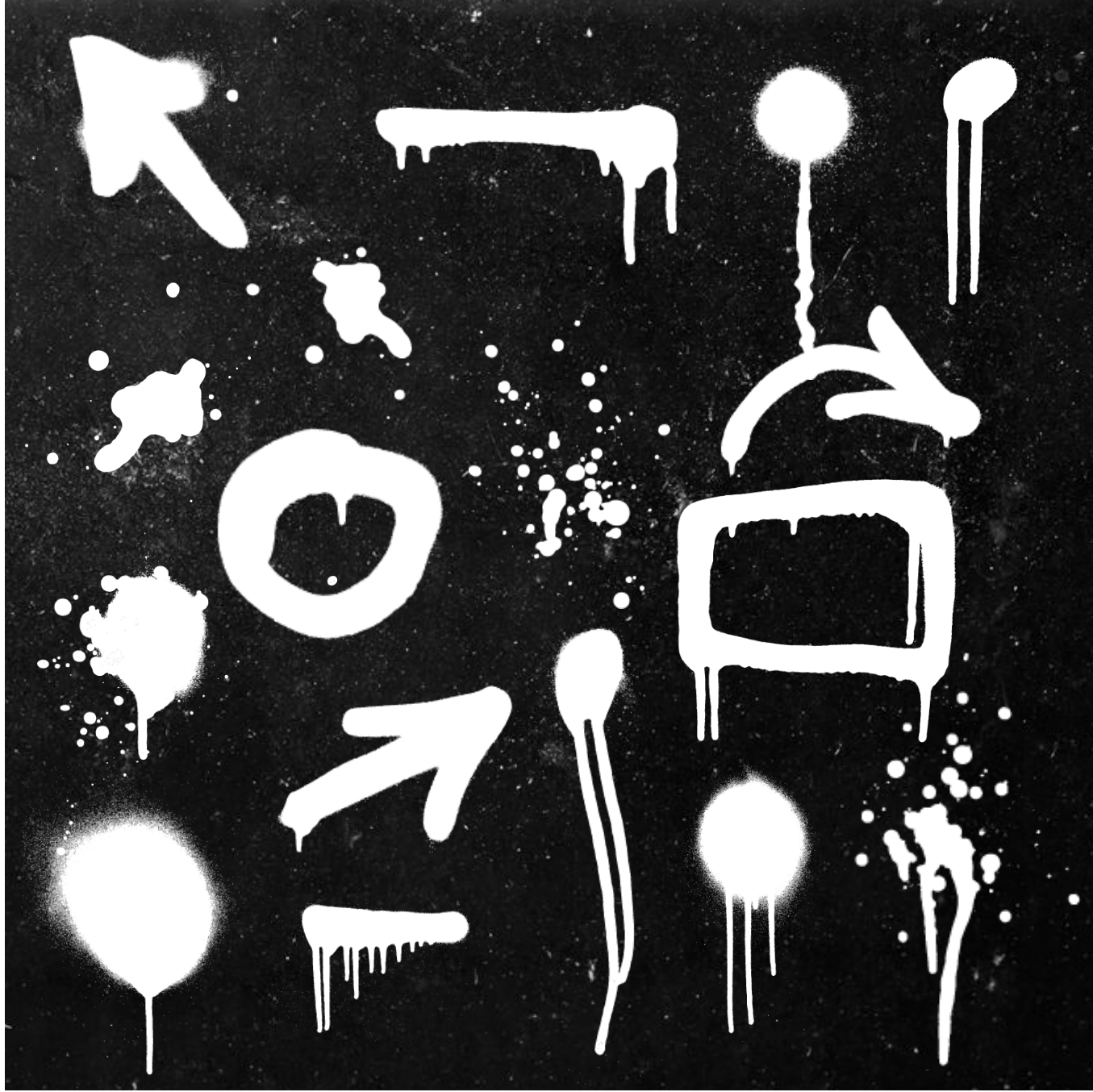


What is it like to be someone else?

What is it like to be a bat? Thomas Nagel. When you watch a marvel movie it is hard not to wonder what it would like to be a superhero like Spiderman. I would love to experience being someone else for a day. If I could choose it would be..... because.....

Who would you like to be? I guess we do know what it is like to be someone else because they can tell us. I asked my friend what it was like to be them and they said....The only problem with this as evidence is my friend might just say what I want to hear. I suppose it depends what we are talking about. The philosopher called Wittgenstein said that the way we talk to each other is just a game. You never know really what someone is thinking but you need to listen so you can respond like in a game of chess. So back to the batty quote.

Thomas Nagel says that maybe a human might be able to imagine what it is like to be a bat by taking "the bat's point of view", or hanging upside down but it would still be impossible "to know what it is like for a bat to be a bat." So my friend doesn't actually know themselves what it is like to be them...



What is a true friend?

A friend to all is a friend to none. Aristotle The ancient greeks had lots to say about friendship which I think is useful for today. Aristotle talked about different types of friends and he thought friends was a key to a good happy life. Some friends are just because you end up on the same team, your family were friends when you were little or you are in the same class at school. These are "utility" ones. But we are much more likely to connect with our friends when we've seen them at their worst and watched them grow and change — or if we've had a hard experience together. We have to build trust, be caring, like the stuff they do or at least try and understand their hobbies and spend time making a good relationship to be a good friend. For me...



Love is...



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What is Sport for?

What doesn't kill me makes me stronger. Friedrich Nietzsche

The importance of sport in schools is a big topic. For example today half our school has gone to support our Junior and Minor Hockey teams in their finals and the atmosphere in the school is electric! But why?

In Ireland people love their sporting heroes - mine are footballers like Mohammed Salah, Sadio Mané, Andy Robertson.

Plato had a three part explanation for sports. One was to win material goods, money, medals. Professional footballers get paid more than doctors or lawyers and this must be a big reason to play. The second was to for the honour and glory of your team. Our hockey teams put in so much work but not for money. They are thinking about the school and will feel pretty nervous today when they see 400 supporters wearing the blood and gold colours. The most important part in Plato's system was to prove something to yourself - to strengthen your character. I

play rugby and football. I play because I enjoy it so I haven't really thought about why before. I have heard others say that it gives you confidence in yourself. But why does a person having confidence matter? Is that a reason to spend hours in the freezing cold winter months, training in the dark? What improvement will that bring to my life? Will I still have confidence if I lose? If I need to win to have confidence then why even play rugby or hockey in competitions, where there is a chance at losing? Why don't we play hockey against a primary school where we know we will always win? But we want to win fairly and achieve something.

I suppose, it must be the risk of losing that needs to be there to feel good about playing. But what about people who don't like sport? Are they hiding away from an opportunity to improve their character and be the best? Or do they just not like playing? I think Plato missed out on the biggest reason - being with your friends.

TCG

Philosophers

Ascoli, Luca
Brennan, Lily
Brennan Moriarty, Fionn
Brown, Noah
Farrell, Josh
Fox, Darragh
Hone, Harry
Kelly, Samuel
Kenna, Kim
Lewis, Emma
Maynard, Kyla
O'Dea, Ellen
Rahmán, Samarah
Rodgers, Kyle
Rowlette, Luke
Simpson, Elliot
Stringer, Liv
Swaine, Cian
Watchorn, Robbie

Cavanagh, Ronan
Emerson, Darragh
Farrell, Astrid
Flynn, Martha
Gallagher, Lizzie
James, Nuala
Keane, Ella
Lande, Caitriona
Maginness, Eleanor
McFarlane, Bella
McGuinness, Clodagh
Mooney Jones, Ayla
Purcell, Aoife
Quinn, Danny
Radziute, Eva
Redford, Aoife
Samarasan, Joshua
Shirley, Chloe
Stynes, Amy
Taylor, Luke

