

INK & OAK

SCHOOL EVENTS

By Isabella Kannermeier

GRADE 10–12 SING-OFF



On the 6th of September, we will be having a Sing-Off from Grades 10–12. It is free entry and there will be food on sale. We encourage you to come and enjoy it, as every class has been practising and working hard on all their pieces. Each class will be performing five songs, all of which we are extremely excited to have you hear.

I'm sure Mr Quickfall is probably the most excited of all, considering how much time he has spent helping everyone prepare and get ready for the big night, so a huge thank you, Mr Q! This isn't just a normal performance though. It's a competition and every grade will be giving it their all to try and walk away with the title of Sing-Off winners! To make sure everything is fair, our judges will be coming from outside the school, meaning there will be no bias and the winning grade will be chosen purely based on their performances.

This night is one that we don't want you to see as just a school event but something to come and gain genuine memories from. Each grade is extremely excited to show off what we have and try and win but that is not as much fun without a good audience. So please come and enjoy the evening and singing!

“ THE MONTHLY STUDENT BULLETIN

GRADE 9 SHAKESPEARE PLAY

The Grade 9s recently performed their Shakespeare play, one that they spent long hours preparing for and all the effort was worth it in the end. I watched the play on three separate nights. There were two different casts and I think it was truly worth seeing both. Each one was entertaining and so enjoyable and despite having the same script, characters and set, each cast brought a bit of a different feel. Both were absolutely phenomenal but somehow so different.

There were definitely some fun mistakes but I feel it added such a nice touch to see how well everyone could stay in character. The entire show was so wonderfully produced and you could see the dedication they gave. The jokes and story were so beautifully created and the set and costumes were both beautiful as well.

It was such a pleasure seeing everything and watching people who I knew change for the stage. The entire night was absolutely worth it and I'm so grateful I was able to see both casts.

GEES WEEK



Everyone's favourite week is upon us once again this term and I'm sure we are all more than ready to have a whole week filled with fun, enjoyment and a little bit of friendly competition between the houses.

I'm sure we all understand how Gees Week works by now but I thought I would highlight some of the fun things that we should all be looking forward to.

Gees Week will start off with a quiz day, which I'm sure many of us are extremely happy about, as there is nothing better than getting into our groups, putting our heads together and seeing who can come out on top. I personally have some of my greatest memories and funniest moments from being in these groups.

Throughout the week, there will be different themes and genres for each day, giving everyone something different to look forward to and a chance to get involved in whichever activities they enjoy most.

Along with the quiz day, there will also be a sports day, where we can get competitive, support our houses and hopefully earn some important points along the way. There will also be many other fun activities throughout the week, giving everyone a chance to participate and contribute to their house.

The last day is normally one of the most exciting and probably one of the most fun, as there will be some cool and active activities for us to take part in. An example of this could be a scavenger hunt, a play or some other activity, with everything still being done within our houses and giving everyone the chance to get involved.

Although the activities are all about having fun and making memories, I'm sure we all still have the same end goal in mind: becoming Gees Week champions.

At the end of the day, it's about getting involved, supporting your house, enjoying the week with your friends and making the most of every activity.

So get ready, get involved and most importantly, bring the energy because Gees Week only comes around once in a while and we might as well make the most of it! Hopefully, this year will be filled with plenty of laughs, competition, memories and moments that we'll still be talking about long after the week is over.

Most importantly, let's have a good time, support each other and see which house can come out on top.



They won their first Women's Africa Cup of Nations in 2022, beating Morocco 2-1 in the final and have competed 14 times over the years and have been in the top 5 ranks for most years. They have won 3/7 COSAFA Women's Championship tournaments and they have a good shot of participating in the 2027 FIFA World Cup in Brazil.

Women's sports are becoming increasingly popular all around the world. Despite prejudice and demeaning, condescending views from men, women's sports are becoming more popular and have more funding, although they are still severely underappreciated compared to men's sport.

To all of those people who enjoy watching and supporting sports teams, start watching female sport too. Let's support those who have worked ridiculously hard to make it to the top and give them the appreciation that they deserve.



Author's Note

There is definitely a lot I could not fit into this piece, so I strongly encourage you to read *Women and Gender in South African Soccer: A Brief History*. If you search that, the document should pop up and it is a VERY interesting read.

Sources

Women and Gender in South African Soccer: A Brief History by Cynthia Fabrizio Pelak, Department of Sociology, New Mexico State University, Las Cruces, NM, USA (*Soccer & Society*, Vol. 11, Nos. 1–2, January–March 2010, 63–78).

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THE DINNER PARTY

By Amelie Bernade

Throughout history, women have often been excluded or misinterpreted in art, politics and culture and the creation and celebration of them. Judy Chicago makes a move against this exclusion with “the dinner party” where she creates a table to give hundreds of women through the ages a place.

The Dinner Party is an installation artwork by artist Judy Chicago that is made up of a long, triangular dinner table laid with embroidered, fancy placemats emblazoned with the names of famous women Chicago admired, from Empress Theodora to Georgia O’Keeffe. On top of the placemats are shiny goblets and utensils and plates painted or sculpted in surreal, varied versions of abstraction, all resembling vulvas. I don’t think it would be far-fetched to assume that Chicago took inspiration from Georgia O’Keeffe in the style of her plates.

The installation is not site-specific and has been packed up and re-set up in different galleries. The gallery is usually dark with the table being brightly lit at each place. This makes it feel intimidating or important. The viewer can walk all the way around the long table and read every placemat.

The artist is exploring the themes of female oppression throughout history, objectification, empowerment and inspiration, as well as the concept of “giving someone a seat at the table.” The plates are flatter in parts of history where women were more oppressed and more sculptural when they have more rights. The more recent plates are practically reaching off the table, “where no woman should be,” as Chicago says. I can only guess that the installation makes people feel awe at first, then discomfort when they take a closer look and curiosity or offence when they read the names.

The plates in *The Dinner Party* could be displayed alone as artworks, but by setting the table, Chicago is displaying them in context. The artworks would not be so grandiose if they were displayed separately in an exhibition. So interactive, I would love to experience this in person. Not only can the whole atmosphere and setting only be experienced as the artist intended it in person, but the photos online focus on a few places — Virginia Woolf, Emily Dickinson, Georgia O’Keeffe, Theodora, Sappho, “Primordial Goddess” and others. I’d love to walk around and see them all in order.

This artwork gives me permission to think about all of the very different women Judy Chicago admires, from Sojourner Truth to whoever “Sophie” is, as sitting at the long table fighting to get up.



THE GLASS CEILING : GENDER INEQUALITY IN THE WORKFORCE

By Grace Molver

In the advanced and technological world of the 21st century we like to think that everyone is equal in every way. Despite major advancements in equal rights for all humans there still remains noticeable gender inequality. Women today still do the majority of unpaid work like household chores and childcare, and men are usually the primary “bread winners”, demonstrating an unequal workforce.

In South Africa there has been major progress in ensuring that every female receives an education. Women usually perform highly in their education and often surpass males in tertiary education. Despite their strong academic performance, women and men do not enter the workforce equally across all occupations.

In today's society we still suffer from occupational segregation and usually encounter many females in teaching, social work and administration roles while men are still more heavily represented in construction, engineering, mining and other traditionally male-dominated technical fields. Although there are women in higher level positions in the workforce they remain under represented.

The latest data from Statistics South Africa shows that occupational segregation remains evident. In 2026, secretarial occupations accounted for 17% of employed women but only 5.8% of employed men, while domestic work accounted for 10.8% of women's employment compared with just 0.5% of men's. Women are sometimes encouraged towards care-based professions because of the stereotype that women are naturally more nurturing and emotionally suited to these roles. While many can honourably enjoy these occupations one should not feel pressured into a certain job because of their gender.

According to PricewaterhouseCoopers' 2025 analysis of JSE Top 200 companies, women held only 8% of CEO positions, compared with 92% held by men. Among the current JSE Top 40, women held 27.4% of executive roles and 38% of board seats in 2025, showing that the situation is improving but remains far from equal. This proves that women are not generally promoted into top-tier suites at the same velocity as males.

Currently women are the primary carers and workers as in many households they face the brunt of unpaid household work and childcare responsibilities even though we have been working to banish that stereotype for decades. In Q2 2025, 2.1 million South African women were outside the labour force because they identified as homemakers, compared with only 280,000 men. This means that for every man who was outside the labour force due to homemaking responsibilities, there were more than eight women in the same position.

For many women, the end of their working day in paid employment does not mark the end of their work. Domestic chores and childcare can create a second, unpaid shift at home. This can compromise a woman's ability to take on a full time job, as domestic work takes up so much of their time, therefore contributing to women earning lower wages and widening the gender pay gap.

In May 2026, the Constitutional Court judgment confirmed the implementation of the employment equity amendment act. It introduces five-year sector-specific numerical targets across 18 economic sectors. This means that the government can set targets for the representation of designated groups (including women) at different occupational levels. Is legislation enough to fully break the glass ceiling or will it only shatter?

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It is important for inequality in the workforce to be addressed, the South African government is taking necessary steps to ensure that the workplace is more equal. Unfortunately legislation, though important, does not erase the stereotypes found in occupational segregation and the legislation has no impact on the unpaid work that affects women's working hours. The glass ceiling is certainly cracking but it is unlikely to fully shatter if the law is the only tool we use to break it.



Sources

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PwC — 2025 Directors Remuneration and Trends Report

Just Share — Gender Parity in Leadership Remains Elusive in JSE Top 40 Companies

Department of Employment and Labour — Constitutional Court judgment on Employment Equity targets, 28 May 2026

Department of Employment and Labour — Employment Equity Regulations and five-year sector targets



NEWEST ITEM ON YOUR TO-READ LIST: *Little Women*

By Cilla Rijsdijk

“Make sure she’s married by the end of it. Or dead.”
— Mr Dashwood

When I was eight, I was given my first copy of *Little Women*. I didn’t actually read the whole thing because the words were too big, but I carried it everywhere with me because it made me feel smarter. At fourteen, I found out they had made a *Little Women* movie. I forced my brother and dad to watch it with me and by the time it was finished, everyone was gobsmacked.

Little Women follows four sisters growing up while their father is at war. Our narrator, Jo, is the second eldest, free-spirited, boyish and looked down on by the more traditional members of her community. Jo’s ultimate challenge is that she is a talented author in a time when a woman’s story was never read and hardly ever made it past the publisher’s desk. When she takes her book to a publisher to see if he will print it, he tells her that her female main character has to be married or dead by the end of the book.

Meg is the eldest of the sisters, carrying the image of her family on her shoulders. She must never stumble, never leave the house without gloves and never snap at her sisters. When read by someone for the first time, Meg seems shallow. She cares so much about her looks, about marrying and about having a family. But Meg never had another choice. Meg went through so much weight and anxiety in her life, but she is seen as weak by new readers. Meg shows that to want a traditional lifestyle, to want to find love, doesn’t mean you are any less strong than the girls who wanted to pave their own path

But everything gets complicated when the sisters meet their rich next-door neighbour, Laurie. Laurie loves the girls and his bond with Jo is particularly strong, but Jo’s younger sister Amy grows more and more in love with him as they grow up. Then their other sister Beth is diagnosed with a fatal disease. Jo attempts to sell her book again to earn money, but it fails and she ends up cutting all her hair off and selling it to afford Beth’s medication.

Each sister has a battle they are fighting. Jo shuts off Laurie’s affections in bitterness that she is never taken seriously. Meg is crumbling under the pressure of the family. Beth is battling her illness and as Amy grows up to be an artist, she realises that no matter how talented she is, no matter how hard she has worked, no matter how much they tell her marriage is about love and not finance, everything she has worked so hard for will always belong to her husband.

Nearing the end, Jo grows lonely. She reaches out to Laurie, but Laurie has finally reached out to Amy, who is disgraced because she feels Laurie loves her like a second option.

As I write this, I realise that no words can actually say how dearly and fiercely I love this book. The plot is so complex, the characters so deep and twisted. It doesn’t show the pain of one woman who suffered more than everyone, it shows the pain of four women living a very average life that yet would seem so difficult to us today.

Little Women is a must-read for any girl who has ever felt mocked, underestimated or used. No matter how different you are, there is a *Little Woman* inside every girl.

“Women have minds, and they have souls as well as just hearts. And they’ve got ambition and they’ve got talent as well as beauty. I am so sick of people saying love is all a woman is fit for. I’m so sick of it!... but I’m so lonely*.”* — Jo March



Life Style

By **Raphaëlle M. Richman**

Having problems with your period or want to understand it better?

Well, here are some tips to help you along the way:

1. Pack a small kit

Put a small pouch in your backpack.

Make sure it has extra pads and/or tampons.

Pack a spare pair of clean underwear and socks.

If you get low blood sugar, it might be helpful to have a sweet treat on hand.

If your cramps are really bad, buy some heating patches from Dis-Chem to help with the cramps.

2. Track your cycle

Track your cycle with your phone or a calendar to predict your next start day.

3. Go to the bathroom

Go to the bathroom between classes or at break.

4. Be prepared for leaks

Tie a jacket or hoodie around your waist if you suspect a leak.

5. Wear dark pants

Wear dark pants during the heavy stages of your period.

6. Change your pad or tampon

Change your pad or tampon every 2 to 3 hours.

7. Ask for help

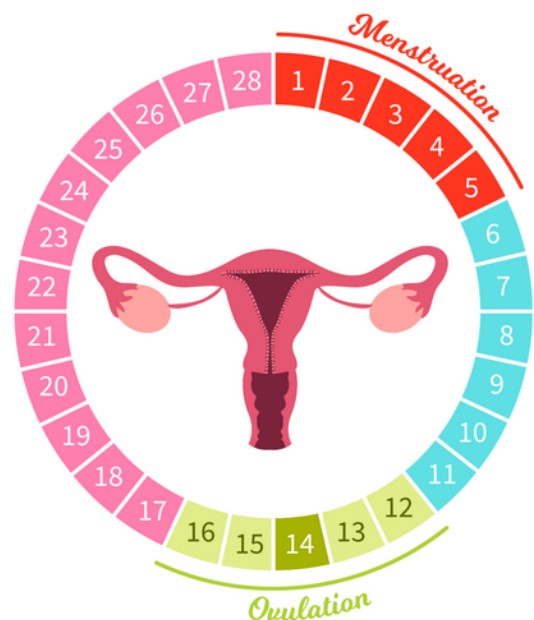
Ask your friend or a female teacher if you forgot a pad and/or tampon or if it's your first time having one.

What is a period?

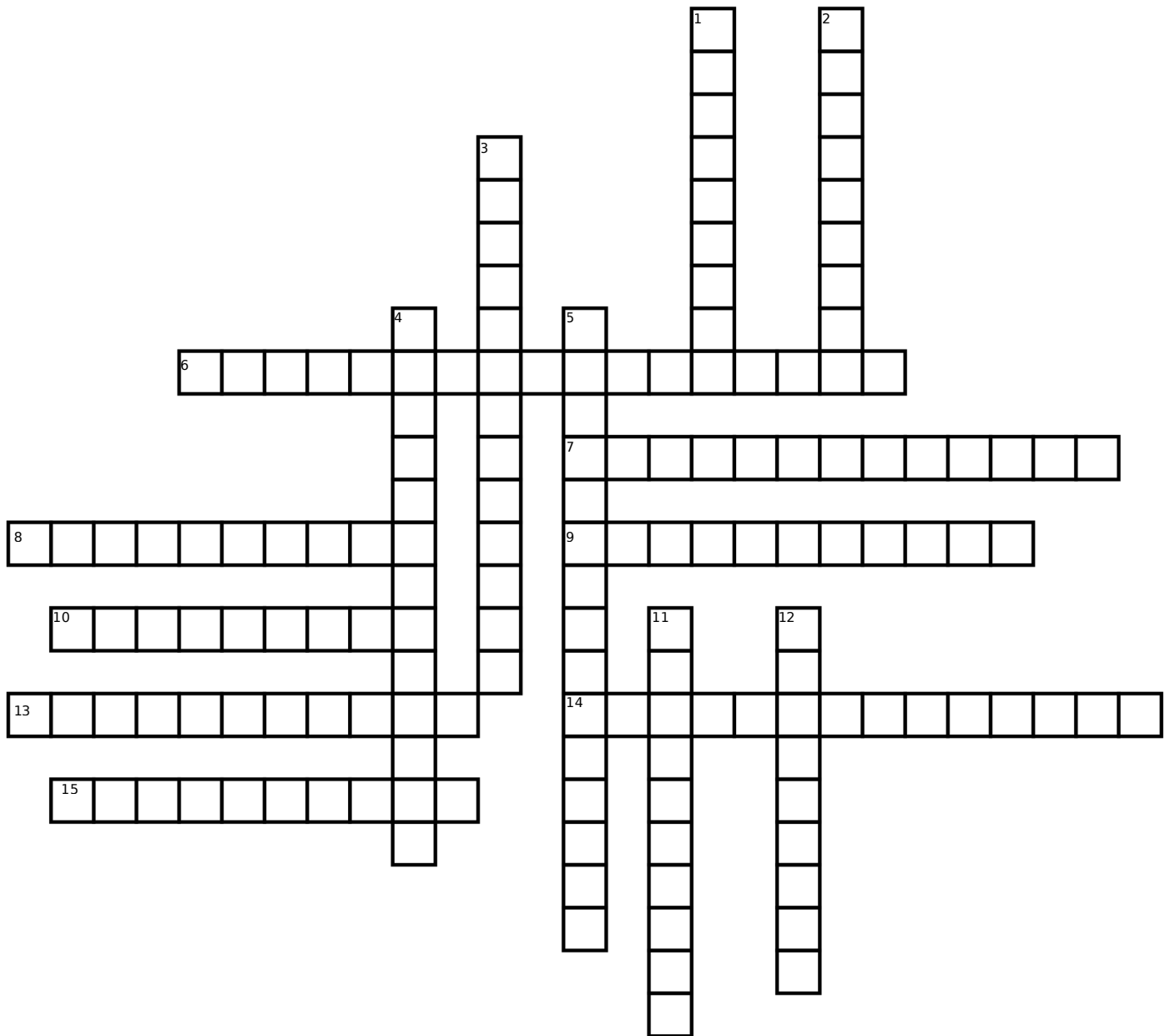
A period, or menstruation, is a normal part of the menstrual cycle. It happens when the uterus sheds its lining because pregnancy has not occurred, causing blood and tissue to leave the body through the vagina. Periods usually last between two and seven days and may come with cramps, tiredness, headaches or mood changes. Everyone's experience is different and periods are a healthy, natural part of growing up.

One last thing...

People who menstruate may experience pain, fatigue, mood changes or discomfort during their period. Being patient, respectful and understanding can make a meaningful difference. This is not about making assumptions or treating anyone differently, but about listening, showing empathy and offering support when needed.



Famous historical women



Down:

1. Queen of England who ruled from 1558 to 1603 during a period known for major cultural and political changes.
2. American activist whose refusal to give up her seat on a segregated bus became an important moment in the Civil Rights Movement.
3. American abolitionist and activist who escaped slavery and helped others escape through the Underground Railroad.
4. British writer and feminist whose novels and essays explored women's lives, independence and society.
5. Pakistani activist who campaigned for girls' right to education and became the youngest person to receive the Nobel Peace Prize.
11. Polish-born scientist who pioneered research into radioactivity and became the first woman to win a Nobel Prize .
12. French military leader who helped lead French forces during the Hundred Years' War and became a symbol of courage and resistance.

Across:

6. British activist who led the women's suffrage movement and fought for women's right to vote.
7. American aviation pioneer who became the first woman to fly solo across the Atlantic Ocean and inspired women to pursue careers in aviation.
8. English novelist best known for *Pride and Prejudice* and *Sense and Sensibility*, whose novels explored women's lives, marriage and social expectations.
9. English mathematician who is often considered the world's first computer programmer for her work on Charles Babbage's early mechanical computer.
10. Queen of ancient Egypt who was a powerful and influential ruler known for her intelligence, political skill and leadership.
13. American poet, author and civil rights activist who used her writing and voice to challenge racism and inspire others.
14. American tennis player who became one of the most successful athletes in tennis history and helped raise the profile of women's sport.
15. Mexican artist known for her self-portraits, which explored identity, culture, pain and her experiences as a woman.

Down:

- 1.Elizabeth (first).
- 2.Rosa Parks
- 3.Harriet Tubman
- 4.Virginia Woolf
- 5.Malala Yousafzi
- 11.Marie Curie
- 12.Joan of Arc

Across:

- 6.Emmeline Pankhurst
- 7.Amelia Earhart
- 8.Jane Austen
- 9.Ada Lovelace
- 10.Cleopatra
- 13.Maya Angelou
14. Serena Williams
- 15.Frida Kahlo