

## June

My mum showed me a cartoon of a gamer on his laptop. The speech bubble read: "Pandemic? What pandemic?" It reminded her of me. I pretended to be annoyed but I had to chuckle. She's not far off.

I do like playing games on my computer. And I like coding and designing games. I use blender. In a way the lockdown has been really good for me because I do all my schoolwork during the day and don't have to do homework in the evening.

So we have to study every day from 9 until 5 or 6. My mum sits right next to us. She won't even let us talk to each other unless it's about school stuff. This is worse than school. When the lockdown first started I thought "HOLIDAYS". But on the first day of lockdown my mum started putting the rules down. 8 a.m. start. Breakfast. Joe Wicks workout. Then lessons. 1 pm lunchbreak until 2 and then lessons again until 5 or 6. Luckily, she gave up on Joe Wicks after two weeks. But that meant we had to start lessons half an hour earlier. I just can't win! I really miss school and my friends.

When the lock-down started my mum said we can choose between learning German, Greek, French, Spanish or Portuguese. We both picked German. We use Duolingo. It's actually really fun. My mum thinks my accent is actually quite good.

Luckily all my friends and my cousins are on line to play games when I finish with school work. Most of them have been playing all day. I envy them, even though I know it's wrong. My dad is really cheesed off that I'm on the computer ALL THE TIME. But what else am I supposed to do? All my lessons are on line and if I want to play with my friends, well that's on line too!

I have been asking my parents to get a pug for years. Looks like my mum is giving in. Even though she's already said that IF (BIG IF) we were to get a puppy it wasn't going to be a pug. I think she wants a puppy because she wants us to go out for walks.

My twin brother is glued to every bit of news coming out of every country you can imagine. If it's not Venezuela, then it's Brazil or China or Taiwan. The other day he was even talking about something that happened in Guam! Where is Guam???

My mum and dad insist every day on a proper sit down dinner at the dining table. Unless the weather is nice (which it is most of the time) then we eat in the garden. Mostly BBQ. I have to admit, that I LOOOVE meat. I guess this comes from being half Turkish and half Greek.

My mum downloaded "Sapiens" by Yuval Harari. She was trying to get us to read the book. Finally she gave up and just downloaded it on audible. It's actually very interesting.

Last month our school made my brother and I lead editors of our school newspaper. My articles are mainly film and game reviews. But I did write an article about the amateur radio operators too. I got my license two years ago. It's quite an interesting hobby.

## July

We are going to have our end of year exams at the end of the month. That's going to be interesting! The school sent an email the other day. Looks like only 40% of year 10 are doing "some" schoolwork. I did a quick calculation – with 150 kids in year 10 only 60 kids are doing "some" work and 90 are doing nothing. GCSEs next year... bring them on!

Some of our cousins and friends go to private schools. And they've been having proper zoom lessons every day since March. How is this going to work? NOT FAIR!!! I have no idea how I'm going to do with my end of year exams. My mum said she won't allow us to cheat because she wants to see how we are going to perform. She has taken this on as personal mission. If we fail, she has failed. She doesn't say this, but I can tell.

My aunt got a puppy!!! It's a Jug. Half Jack Russell and half Pug. It's really cute but doesn't look anything like a pug. I can see my parents springing into action. They are looking for puppies.

And sure enough – we got a puppy. But not a pug. It's a Parson Russel. It's tiny!!! It sleeps in the palm of my hand. I came up with the name Humphrey and everyone liked it. We had to do lots of videos this month. One for our school for the new year 7, one for Barnet Youth Council and one every day for 10 days for sports day. Humphrey was in all the videos for sports day.

Our end of year exams have finished. I don't think I did well. There will be no marks or any real feedback. Looks like they only wanted us to sit these exams to see how the whole year is going to do and how far we are all behind. What's the point?! Most people cheated.

It's the last three weeks before the holidays and year 10 and year 12 are going to school. Only twice a week for 2 hours. We are socially distancing. So no real chance to interact with my friends. And the lessons are boring. All of a sudden I'm glad I've been studying with my mum and not at school. It looks like we got a lot more done.

Some time ago my brother and I took part in a competition for RS. My brother wrote about "Does God exist?" and me "Are science and religion compatible". And what do you know! I got 1<sup>st</sup> price and my brother 3<sup>rd</sup>.

## August

A really large explosion happened in the port of Beirut. My brother and I were talking about it. We know that Lebanon is one of the countries taking part in this research. We don't know if any children that are part of this research were affected. I'm sure that we're going to see or read something about it in this research in the future. It made me think about how small the world really is. First Covid and then this!

We got to see some of our uncles and cousins. We were all in the garden and all duly social distancing. It was really nice to have some of the family around. My eldest uncle (my dad's brother) is 76 and has heart problems. So we have to be careful. My dad has 5 older brothers. So far we have only been able to have lock-down zoom quizzes on Sunday night. My cousin Jeyda was the quizmaster. Some of the questions were really funny – about smelly bodily functions – without putting too fine a point of it. My uncle Ali was very clued up on these questions. He knew quite a bit. Misspent youth, according to my dad.

We submitted our stories to "Storychest – Children of lockdown". 200 kids from all over the country submitted stories or pictures. [This is the link for my story.](#)

## September

We were allowed to have one of our best friends over for a sleep-over. My mum said that we are in the same bubble at school, so what's the harm. And school starts in a few days time.

School has started again! It's really nice to see all my friends again. And of course nobody is really socially distancing. Especially not before and after school. We have only been in school for less than a week and some of our friends in our year have to isolate already. One of the younger year groups had some confirmed Covid cases and they have to isolate with their siblings.

I got a cough in the third week of school and my twin brother and I had to isolate for 5 days. Turns out it was just a cough.

I am really stressed about my mock exams in November. I don't think I will do well at all. Even after all the effort I put in since March.

## October

My school closed down for 3 days. We've had 4 weeks of school and some of my friends have only been 4 days. I know that some of my friends have asked their parents for private tuitions but a lot of parents can't afford this now because they have no jobs because of Covid.

We had zoom lessons for the first time during those three days. Only three lessons per day. And the whole year group together. Some kids started spamming during the lessons. In maths the teacher made the students admin by mistake. Some kids started streaming games and spamming. We called this "badmin abuse". "Badmin" stands for "Bad admin". If anybody complained they just muted them. My friends, my brother and I got muted. They even muted the teacher. I was really angry at the time. Especially as I'm really weak at maths. But now I think it was actually quite funny. I'm sure the maths teacher didn't think so!

My friend Zach and I have set up a group chat for our close friends. We are going to try and help each other with our revisions. Let's see how it goes.

We're having mocks this week in Computer Science and nobody has a clue. We haven't had a proper teacher since year 9. And we haven't covered most of the subjects that will be in the test. I'm really angry. How can the school or the government or whoever, do this to us??? How can they put all the children through the same GCSEs if we didn't all get the same resources?

My brother and I are sharing tuitions with another friend. I don't know if my parents can afford it but they haven't mentioned anything to us. I'm doing all I can but I don't think I'm even going to pass my GCSEs. I had a long conversation with my mum and told her that I didn't think I was going to pass. She said that I should just do the best I can and not worry about it.

I became very religious from Tue to Wed. There is a God and he LOVES me!!! We were supposed to have our Computer Science mock test on Wed. When we got to school they sent us back home. We all have to isolate. We won't be back at school until the 3<sup>rd</sup> of November! But for the first time they are putting proper zoom classes on following our timetable. They're not great because they are lagging and the teachers got through everything too fast. But it's a lot better than before. So, by the time we go back to school we would have spent 2 weeks in school out of 8. And some of my friends even less! And they are talking about another short lockdown.