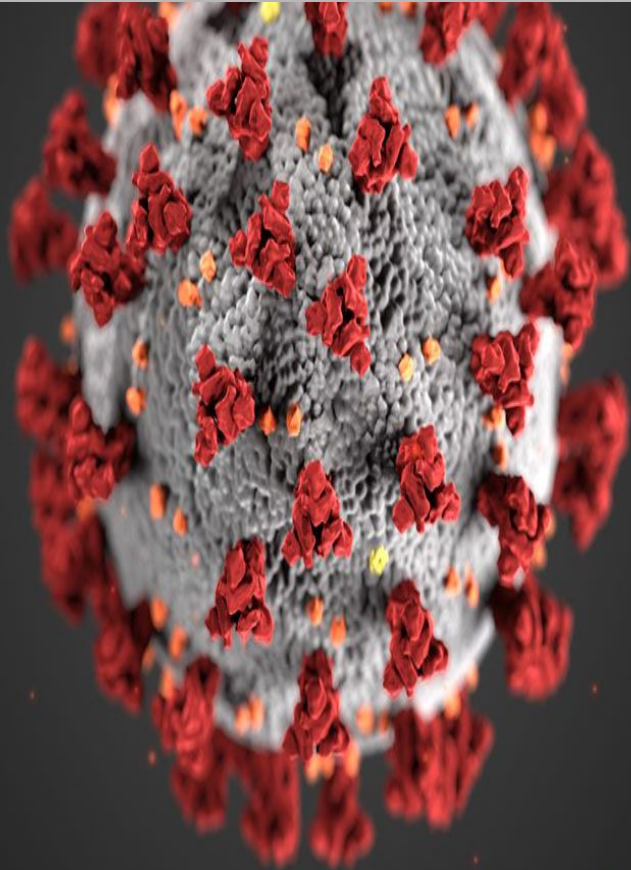


Our experiences researching the pandemic



Members

Artist and editor: Ellie Knox
Script writer/ host: Daniel Yilmaz
Host: Archie Butler
Editor: Rafael Yilmaz
Script writer: Francesca Ingram

Alice Betsie: Original head of group, has unfortunately left the group. A large thanks to her for creating order in the group.

The topics and scripts of the Podcast.

The subjects: Science/ Health, Education, Effects on the environment, Covid effects on social lives, and economic effects by Covid-19.

There will be 5 or more episodes that will cover each individual topic.

Environmental



The most obvious positive outcome for the environment was to be observed on the very first day of lockdown. Almost no cars on the road. Public transport was also cut down to a minimum. This in turn resulted in less noise and air pollution.

There was also less air pollution because factories across the world either shut down or slowed down their production. In fact, so little fossil fuel was needed, that last year, on April the 20th (a month after lockdown was announced in the UK) oil prices on the futures market dropped to below zero.

The next thing we knew, we could hear bird song more clearly and animals started entering our cities. Social media posts started appearing showing deer grazing near an East London Estate, Coyotes entering San Francisco town centre and Pumas in Santiago, the capital of Chile.

There were, however also some negatives. Because shopping online became the order of the day the use of plastic packaging went through the roof.

PPE and disposable masks further added to the plastic waste dilemma.

Economics



The most obvious economic backlash from the pandemic is the increased Government Debt. We will have to grapple with this for decades to come. And it will be left for us young people to sort this one out. Mark Carney, the former governor of the bank of England spelled this out very clearly in his Reith Lecture on BBC radio 4, earlier in the year.

Alongside the increased government debt, comes personal debt. This will be a hard pill to swallow for many people once the furlough and the mortgage holidays stop. This is also when we will see a massive increase in unemployment as a result of a dramatic increase in redundancies.

The result of this will not just be social misery but also tax hikes for those who are still employed. Somebody will have to pay for those that are out of work.

On the positive side, this pandemic has forced us step up our game when it comes to technology and science. In virtually no time at all we have produced and licensed new vaccines. Technology has seen a vast innovation, having to keep up with homeschooling and home working amongst other things.

Social



In terms of how Covid has affected our society the worst aspect must be the isolation caused by the social distancing rules. This particular aspect has touched every single member of our society. The old and frail could not be visited by their families. Adults could not socialise with other adults. Single people could not meet other single people in order to establish relationships. Young mothers could not meet with other mothers or even their parents in order to seek support. Teenagers were deprived of being with other teenagers, which is something they desperately need for mental health. Young children could not play with other children which is paramount for their social development. Babies have been isolated in their family bubble and do not know what it is like to be with other babies.

Because of this isolation and the lack of human touch, mental health issues have gone through the roof.

On top of this, the pandemic has exacerbated the inequality in schools and households. A government study has found that students that are less well-off have slipped academically more behind than their wealthier peers. Inequality in society also became more apparent with people living in houses with gardens having a much better lifestyle than those in flats.

On the other hand, with so many parents working from home people were spared the stress and time loss of commuting. They have more time to pursue new hobbies and more spare time to relax. And with both children and parents being at home it gives families the chance to spend more quality time together.

These scripts are flexible to allow better dialog between the hosts and the guests, who have learnt about these specific topics.

We believed that these topics targets all the aspects of what Covid-19 has done to the young generation.

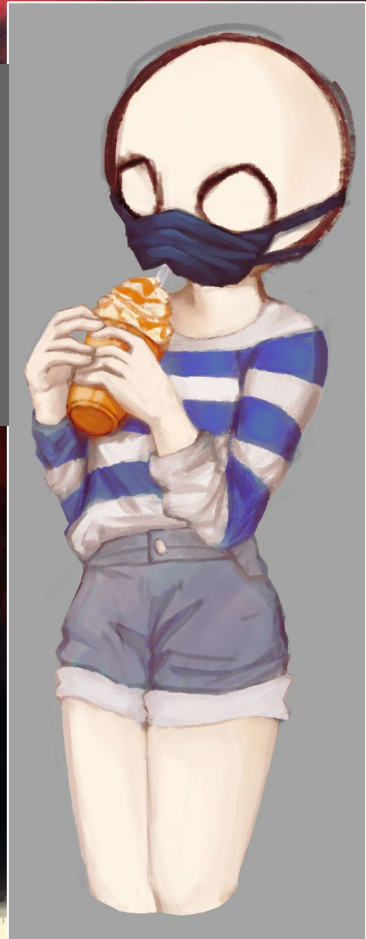
Research methods

A combination of illustrations and journaling

I knew for this research project that the primary and most easily accessible source of information on the effect of COVID-19 on the lives of young people would be my own experiences. Therefore, to organise my thoughts coherently, I settled on a combination of writing and illustrations that I would construct into journal entries.

For me it was necessary to employ both these elements; I wanted to write to explain situations or detail experiences but I realised I don't like how that writing sounds when it is too emotionally charged. Feelings can change but words capture a very specific snapshot of your mood at that time, one that you may not agree with retrospectively. Illustrations, I feel, give a better perspective of how a situation has affected you. Firstly, they take longer to complete so some of that reflection has time to happen while you work on a piece. Secondly, an illustration avoids making a direct statement as its meaning is at least partly down to interpretation and has a tendency to draw out the emotions of the person viewing it as well as those you originally intended. Therefore, for content that needed to give information and provide perspective I used the explicit detail of writing and for my own feelings I used illustration. Then I combined the two elements as journal entries.

An example of a light-hearted illustration done for a journal entry exploring the early pandemic's benefits for family life when it was (for me) an unexpected break from intense study and an opportunity to catch up on relationships outside school.





Two pieces with similar dark moods, these explored stressful time periods and themes to do with managing one's school life amid a situation that's constantly changing. The second one however was supposed to be more positive than the first represented by a more active pose, the subject is moving to put things back together rather than sitting inertly like the first.

The first illustration I did and the latest I've completed. Both big environments with two main subjects, both took a long time to finish. Both explored the theme of a looming crisis while one tries to get on with their life but where the first features a passive subject ignoring what's outside the window the latest is actively and angrily confronting it. I think this represents the difference in the general feeling surrounding the lockdowns as the crisis goes on.



I've loved making these illustrations. I've loved exploring these themes of the pandemic's effects on education and its effects in turn on the everyday lives of young people. I feel like these pictures can say a lot more than I could write down and I'm so happy to have had this opportunity to share my experiences in this way.