

ROTA WEEK 2024

A SPECIAL NEWS PUBLICATION CREATED BY ROTA NEWS STUDENTS.



What a week!

Saturday 9th March to Friday 15th March 2024

We made it! Rota week is back in sunny España... what a treat. Hosted by I.E.S. Pintor Antonio Lopez in Tres Cantos, Madrid, we met with students from 4 countries; Spain, Belgium, the Netherlands and Germany for this extraordinary cultural exchange. The theme for this week is defending and strengthening democracy, looking at the past, present and future of Europe.



TRES CANTOS: HOSTING TOWN

Tres Cantos is a Spanish town in the Community of Madrid, located 22 kilometers north of the capital of Spain. It has around 46,750 inhabitants (and keep on growing!)



This city once belonged to Colmenar Viejo, a bigger town in the north of Madrid. But, in March 21st 1991, 32 years ago, they achieved independence.



In June 23rd, the local festivities of Tres Cantos begin with a big bonfire (because of the holiday of San Juan) that some people even jump over. The city council offers lots of activities for people all ages, from fairground in the afternoons to DJs and concerts in the night. This celebrations lasts between 4-5 days and usually end with fireworks. In September, our town also celebrate local festivities to end the summer ("Ola Septiembre"). These ones last a weekend, usually the last of September, so they are shorter and revolve around teenagers and adults (DJs, concerts...) but they are also very popular.



Last year, 2023, Tres Cantos was proclaimed "European City of Sport 2023" thanks to the variety of sport activities and facilities, such as "Polideportivo de la Luz" or "Laura Oter" where you can play basketball, volleyball, soccer, tennis, track and field, among others.

Furthermore, Tres Cantos has many parks and green areas where you can walk. But, as citizens, we are aware that there is room for improvement.



SINT-LODEWIJKSCOLLEGE

THE PARTICIPATING SCHOOL FROM BELGIUM, BRUGES

A school with many facilities

Sint-Lodewijkscollege is a school located near the station in Bruges. The school consists of about 1500 students and therefore it is a pretty big school. It has a new library with a lot of remarkable literary works. Additionally, the library houses medieval maps and books of significance to the city of Bruges. The library is highly beneficial for students, but it's also accessible to the public. Additionally, the school features an auditorium where teachers and professors deliver lectures on various topics. Students attending Sint-Lodewijkscollege also have the option to reside in the new boarding school, conveniently located on the school grounds, ensuring that students don't have to travel far to attend classes. The college also boasts a spacious gymnasium, a well-equipped laboratory, a football field, and numerous other facilities to cater to the diverse needs and interests of its students.



The Belgian schoolsystem

Every child in Belgium begins their education in primary school at the age of six, starting with first grade. Upon reaching the age of 12, typically in sixth grade, they transition to secondary school, also known as high school. They continue their studies in high school for six years, until they reach the final year, typically at age 18. At this point, they have the option to pursue higher education at a university or enter the workforce. It's important to note that in Belgium, children are required to attend school until they reach the age of 18.



SINT-LODEWIJKSCOLLEGE

Venice of the north

Bruges, known as the "Venice of the North," is a charming medieval city. Its well-preserved architecture, romantic canals, and cobblestone streets make it a timeless destination. Visitors can explore historic landmarks like the Belfry of Bruges and the Basilica of the Holy Blood, indulge in Belgian cuisine, and admire Flemish art in museums like the Groeningemuseum. With its picturesque scenery and rich cultural heritage, Bruges offers a truly enchanting experience in the heart of Europe.



GYMNASIUM WALDSTRASSE

THE PARTICIPATING SCHOOL FROM GERMANY



Gymnasium
Waldstraße



General information

The Gymnasium Waldstrasse is a high school located in Hattingen, in the west of Germany. Due to many international projects, such as multiple exchanges with Israel, Brugge or the ROTA project, which takes part every four years, our school has received different labels, which represent our school. The most famous ones are the fairtrade label, “school without racism, school with courage” and our label as an “European school” (below).

Our school consists of about 850 students and 70 teachers, our principal is Anette Christiani, who has worked at the Gymnasium Waldstrsse since 2017.

German school system

The German school system consists of the primary school, which is from grade one to four. Normally, at the age of ten the children can choose based on their academic performance, what secondary school they want to go to. There is the “Hauptschule” which offers the lowest education. But still, after grade ten they will have earned a good degree. Then, there is the “Realschule” where they also earn a degree, that offers more job opportunities. The secondary school form with the highest education is the “Gymnasium”. The Gymnasium is the school form that we attend. After grade 12 we have our A-levels, which allow us to go to university. However students can transfer from the other schools to the “Gymnasium” whenever they want - if their academic performance allows it. Typically it happens after year ten, when they have earned their diploma and we start to prepare for our A-levels. The last school form that we have is the “Gesamtschule”. The students there complete secondary school after year 13, also with their A- levels.

Building and structure

Our school is divided into four buildings, the first one is our new building and the second is the older building. In addition we also have a mensa with a cafeteria in it. Besides that, the school has a gym with a sports pitch. In general the Gymnasium Waldstrasse has approximately 60 rooms.



Gefördert durch



ELDE COLLEGE

THE PARTICIPATING SCHOOL FROM SCHIJNDEL, THE NETHERLANDS

All about the Dutch school system

At four years old, you start going to school in the Netherlands. You then go to what we call the "basisschool". Children from all different levels are mixed together here. After 8 years, you go to high school, this is where the different levels get split up. You have three different levels: VMBO, HAVO and VWO, where VMBO is mostly practical and VWO mostly theoretical. The lengths of the levels is also different, VMBO lasts four years, HAVO five years and VWO lasts six years. Depending on what level you did, you then go on to further education.



Everything you need to know about Elde College

Elde College actually has two locations, one in Schijndel and one in Sint-Michielsgestel. However, in Sint-Michielsgestel they only teach at VMBO level. At the location in Schijndel students can do all three levels, this location has around 1900 students. In addition, the school offers a bilingual program for students who follow the HAVO or VWO level. During this programme students have all of their lessons in English for the first three years and have extra English exams. They also go on trips abroad.

Schijndel, the place to be

The town of Schijndel is located in the province North-Brabant, which is in the south of the Netherlands. It has around 22,000 inhabitants. Schijndel is very well-known for Paaspop, a festival that always takes place in Schijndel during Easter. This festival starts off the festival season in the Netherlands. Schijndel is part of a municipality called Meierijstad. Other towns that are part of Meierijstad are Sint-Oedenrode, Veghel and Erp.

PINTOR ANTONIO LÓPEZ

THE HOSTING HIGH SCHOOL IN TRES CANTOS, SPAIN



Spanish school system

We start school at the age of 3 years old. Firstly, we have three years of kindergarden and then six years of primary school. At 12 years old, we begin secondary school which is called E.S.O and these four years are also mandatory. Afterwards, you can go three ways: start working, keep studying with a Professional Formation (more specific and practical) or choose a Bachillerato from one of the offered fields (both last 2 years). Then you can choose between a Superior Profession Formation or university (both can follow the other).

General information

PAL is a highschool located in the centre of Tres Cantos. It has four buildings with several types of facilities like a gym, an assembly hall, a library and chemistry, biology and physics lab, etc.

Throughout the mandatory years (E.S.O) it is possible to choose three paths: Bilingual with french, bilingual with english or non bilingual.

After the “E.S.O” you can pick out between four “Bachilleratos” to opt to university: science, social sciences, bachibac and excelencia. In this highschool we also have Profesional Formation (FP) of sport and nature.

The history behind the name

Our high school owes its name to a famous spanish painter and sculptor called Antonio López.

He was responsible for painting the portrait of the Spanish royal family ('La familia de Juan Carlos I'). It took him 20 years to paint it.

His artistic style is realism, and his paintings almost seem like photographs.

Language school

In addition to being a high school, the building is used in the afternoons as an official language school, offering classes of various languages to people of all ages and levels.



THE FIRST DAY

THE ARRIVAL AND WELCOMING CEREMONY



The airport trip

Every country needed to come to the I.E.S. Pintor Antonio Lopez school in Tres Cantos, Spain.

The welcome ceremony

Upon arrival in Tres Cantos, the students were warmly greeted at I.E.S. Pintor Antonio Lopez school. They were then directed to find their respective groups, which they would be joining for various activities in the days ahead. Following this, the students met their host families and watched introduction videos showcasing each participating country in the Rota exchange program. Afterwards, both students and host families gathered to sample and explore different cuisines from around the world. Engaging in conversation and culinary delights, the evening concluded with students heading home with their host families, eager for the adventures ahead.



The groups:



A DAY IN MADRID

PICASSO AND SIGHTSEEING



photo credits: Sten

Photographical gymkana

After we visited the Reina Sofia museum, we went on a photo tour throughout Madrid. In the same groups as before, we were challenged to take lots of pictures around Madrid. Every group received 20 cards with places in Madrid to take pictures at, the first group to arrive at Plaza Mayor wins. But the most important part of this assignment was getting to know each other and to see lots of beautiful places in Madrid. Following these activities everybody had some free time to explore the city and to do some shopping.



Reina Sofía Museum

On Sunday, we spent a beautiful morning at the Reina Sofía museum. The Spanish students explained the history and significance of some paintings. Ones that we had looked at the day before. After that, we had free time to enjoy the rest of the museum and get to know each other.

FIRST DAY AT SCHOOL

The assembly

Monday morning, everyone met in the assembly hall at twenty past eight. Once everyone had arrived, the teachers from Spain gave us information on what we would do that day. The Spanish students were then separated from the other countries and they had a german or dutch lesson. The other students were divided over two different classes and all partaked in a spanish lesson.



Spanish lessons

In the Spanish lesson, we began with a round of introducing ourselves in Spanish. After that, we learned some basic sentences for self-introduction. Additionally, we covered basic vocabulary that could be useful, such as numbers and countries. We were all seated in a circle, so it wasn't like a traditional lesson. The lesson was exceptionally interactive and open. Our teacher, Isabel, was very nice and helpful with the students. We all learned a lot and really enjoyed the lesson.

Dutch lessons

In the first dutch lesson we learned basic questions to start a conversation, and in pairs, we made dialogues to practice. After that, we learned the numbers and sang two songs, one about the numbers in dutch and another one about the parts of the body. We all participated and the teachers were very helpful and kind.

VISIT TO TOWN HALL



Learning about Tres Cantos

After a long lunch, we walked to the town hall and talked to the mayor. First we were received by one of the councilors, she explained to us a little bit about the building. After that we went to the most important room in the building, the one where all the decisions are made. The mayor explained to us how the Spanish legal system works and told some interesting facts. For instance, did you know that Tres Cantos is the youngest town of Madrid? It is only 33 years old!

Besides this fact, the mayor told us numerous interesting things about Tres Cantos. It's a growing city and it currently has 50,000 inhabitants. He also told us that the city keeps on growing and lots of companies are located in Tres Cantos.

The most interesting part of the talk was the explanation of his work week and how the mayor and ministers got elected.



Meeting the mayor

Jesús Moreno has been the mayor of Tres Cantos for 12 years now. He has been the mayor since March 21st 2012, after his predecessor, José Folgado, stepped down. He thinks it is very important that the people are involved in the changes that are made in Tres Cantos. He told us multiple ways people can make proposals to him, but the most common way is when people come up to him at the grocery store or his children's school. He likes that he can be personally invested in the lives of the people living in Tres Cantos.



TUESDAY ACTIVITIES AND WEDNESDAY TRIP

ACTIVITY DIRECTED BY MIGUEL LÓPEZ, DANIEL ARROJO AND MARIO JIMENO

Orientating in the woods

On Tuesday afternoon, students gathered in Parque Central for a game organized by fellow students, who study outdoor activities. Those from ROTA participated in diverse sports competitions, earning puzzle pieces as rewards. After conquering all challenges and assembling the puzzle pieces, they completed the puzzle to emerge victorious in the game.

"The game was well organized, and the weather couldn't have been better," says William Hovine. "We thoroughly enjoyed ourselves."



El Valle de Cuelgamuros

On March 13th afternoon, we first visited El Valle de Cuelgamuros, located in San Lorenzo de El Escorial. Its is a monumental complex formed by a Catholic basilica, an abbey and a cross. It was created in 1940 by Franco to commemorate his military victory and bury his supporters. Its original name was "El Valle de los Caídos".



El Escorial

Later on, we arrived to San Lorenzo de El Escorial, in the northwest of the Community of Madrid. This town is well known because of The Royal Monastery that includes various facilities. It was ordered to be build by Felipe II, and since then several spanish kings have been buried there. After visiting the town, they gave us time to eat and rest in this beautiful village.

OUR WORKSHOPS

Rota news



Feminism



Shadow theatre



Body expression



Background information

At the beginning we had the opportunity to choose between the five workshops and a few people from each country came together. Since we were mixed, we got to know the others better. Everyone had a lot of fun during their creative workshops and the atmosphere was great. Above all, our knowledge and skills have improved on various topics plus speaking English.

Debate



ROTA NEWS

WORKSHOP BY PILAR NAVARIDAS, SONIA VARGAS AND ALICE SANDERS

The Rota Team: Journalists in the making

Perhaps including the journalists of the future, the 10 students from the Rota News workshop have enjoyed working on this very newspaper. We designed our newspaper with professional details to mirror that of popular broadsheets. We divided to conquer our topics, ranging from the workshops to our own countries and experiences visiting this wonderful city. We visited the other workshops to observe and learn. Interviewing students and teachers helped us to write summary reports on each to showcase the fabulous work done this week here at Rota 2024. Our efforts did not stop there, we have even written additional articles on our schools and passions.



This newspaper has been brought to you by the fabulous Rota News Journalists: Isabel Van Oorschodt, William Hovine, Jana Bilsing, Roos Thelissen, Annika Steffen, Louis De Bruyn, Alicia Valverde, Paola García, Lene Ronckers, Christin Weber.

FEMINISM

WORKSHOP BY ROSA ALONSO, EVA GALDÓN AND EMMA DAUPHIN



Why is feminism important?

This is the question that opened the Feminism Workshop on March 11th. All students were encouraged to discuss it and they got to the conclusion that the feminism movement often have a negative impression, especially through the eyes of some men (44% of spanish men think it has 'got too far'). Sadly, nowadays it is still needed.



Think of important women

The group decided to focus on a female perspective of history and participants were encouraged to write down some famous women's name. Shockingly, they found it harder than expected and the board took a long time, and a bit of help, to be filled.

The results were varied: Cleopatra, Marie Antoinette, Rosa Parks, Marie Curie, Anne Frank... among others.



Focusing on spanish woman

Afterwards, they decided to focus on important spanish women. The group had to match names and professions, to pictures of the important women such as Maria Lejarraga and Clara Campoamor. After they succesfully matched everything, they split into groups of two and choose one of the women to focus on for the next few days.



SHADOW THEATRE

**WORKSHOP BY JORGE BAYON, DINO LÓPEZ, MARTA HELLÍN AND RAFA PEREZ...
STEVEN SPIELBERGS IN THE MAKING.**

Getting to know each other

Before the students can really start exploring theatre, it is important that they get to know each other. This is not only the case for the shadow theatre workshop, but also for the body expression workshop, therefore the students are all together at the start. The participants introduced themselves in different ways, whilst using rhythm and music. The key in this workshop definitely was communication as well as concentration.



Behind closed doors

This project is all about the students finding out how they really feel about themselves, we interviewed Anne and Anouk on Monday. Anne and Anouk are two Dutch students who chose the Shadow Theatre workshop. They selected this workshop as they like acting and this was a great opportunity to improve their acting and boost their self esteem along the way. They hope to “get to know students from different countries on a deeper level” during the ROTA project and improve their confidence. They especially like the creative exercises and think the teachers are really good and fun.



SHADOW THEATRE CONTINUED...

Through the shadows

Body expression and shadow theatre split up on Monday afternoon and they are both exploring new things about their workshop. In shadow theatre, they have started working with shadows through different exercises. When we walked in, they were doing an exercise linked to their demeanor. Students stood behind a white sheet, a beamer shining at the sheet projected the students' shadows. They had to dress up and walk behind the sheet, the other students had to guess which student was behind the sheet.



After this activity, the teachers distributed some cards with different actions. The students had to act and have other students guess.

This activities help the participants of this workshop be more confident behind the sheet and working as a team.

The shadow theatre group led by director Jorge, are preparing a short piece to perform to us all. Rota news were allowed to watch a rehearsal... and let's just say we know we are in for a spectacular show!



BODY EXPRESSION

WORKSHOP BY M^a ÁNGELES MARTÍNEZ, CARLA BLANCO AND MARIAELENA KOURIABALIS



Introduction

As already mentioned above, the workshops of body expression and shadow theatre started their workshops together playing little games with music, motion and rhythm. They both have similar goals which the participants will achieve as part of the ROTA project.

Expressing yourself

"The workshop on body expression teaches students how to express themselves," explains Mariaelena, an English assistant teacher. "It's important for students to learn how to express themselves using their body. For the workshop, we use music and dance to convey the emotions and release the stress."

Goals and Achievements

M^a Ángeles is sure that the body expression workshop will help introverted people become more open. Therefore, the main goal of the workshop is to build self-confidence, as well as a chance for us to get to know each other better. It is a great opportunity to develop and discover ourselves, making us calmer people. All the students were motivated and participated in the games and tasks very well and successfully.



DEBATE WORKSHOP

WORKSHOP BY DAVID SEIZ, JULIA DIAZ AND ANAÏS SORIN

In the debate workshop, the students discuss about the inequality between people in our society. This can be about the inequality in salary but also in talent or health. The workshop was also assisted by Pablo Pinar

Preparing for the debate

Before the discussion, they watch a video of a debate of the topic. With such video, students have an example of a good debate and they can already listen to other people's opinions on the topic. The students take notes during the projection that they can use in the debate.



Discussing the topic with others

After watching, students were grouped in threes or fours to discuss the topic. While discussing, they had to keep in mind the following questions;

What types of inequality are there in our society?

In the documentary the example of the difference between the income of Cristiano Ronaldo, the football player, and a normal teacher was shown. Also whether talent or luck plays a role in inequality. Other questions as, How to resolve/improve inequalities? or, Why is it important?; were mentioned.

Discussing this with others can help finding out different opinions on these topics and finding solutions.



Interview

After the discussion, we did an interview with Julien Claeys. We asked him about the structure and process of a debate. He told us that there's always a moderator, who brings up the topics and tries to stay neutral in the discussion. In this debate the teachers said that they didn't want to be the moderators because that would extend the discussion too much.

Today's topic was democracy. This led to interesting discussions over different types of democracy and voting procedure. The students told us that they have improved their debating and public speaking skills in English which will benefit them in future school and professional settings.

LIVING WITH A HOST FAMILY

HOW IS IT TO LIVE WITH A HOST FAMILY?



The opportunities

Living with a host family provides numerous opportunities for learning and personal growth. For instance, it enhances students' social skills as they interact with people who are initially strangers to them. Additionally, students can delve into Spanish culture, traditions, and cuisine, enriching their understanding of the world around them.



A warm welcome

On Saturday, we were all welcomed by our Spanish host families who picked us up from school and brought us to their homes. Some of the students were paired with another student in one host family, while others stayed alone in a host family. All the families welcomed us with open arms into their homes.



Personal experience

"Living with a host family is a nice experience," says Louis De Bruyn. "In the beginning, I felt a bit stressed about meeting my host family, but this stress quickly faded away after they welcomed me with open arms into their home. My correspondent was Marcos, the son of Manuel and Mariola. Since Manuel is Australian and speaks English with his kids, it was very easy for me to communicate with the family. I also got to experience Spanish cuisine and culture."

CULTURAL DIFFERENCES

Eating habits

In Belgium, the Netherlands, and Germany, the normal eating time for lunch is twelve to one o'clock. On the other hand, in Spain, most people eat at around three o'clock. Many students from other countries initially struggle with this eating schedule, but after a while, you get used to it. The food is often different here than in our home countries. In Spain, it's much more common to eat tapas, paella, and other local specialties.



Late evenings

Spanish people have the habit of not only eating lunch later, but also for dinner, this often results in people being out later. Another reason that people are out later is because the shops also close later here. In Spain it's very normal to still see the streets full of people at 9 PM, while in Belgium, most people won't go out anymore at that hour.

The siesta

In Spain the siesta is a traditional afternoon nap. Spain is a very hot country (although not extremely at this time of year), and the temperature reaches a peak in the afternoon. Most people can't be productive due to the high temperature and so they take a break. This also means that most shops are closed around this time. I haven't seen anyone do the siesta during my time here yet, but that may be because it's winter now and the temperature is lower than normal.



Rota News

Madrid, Spain

Special Edition Volume, March 2024

COLLECTING MEMORIES WHAT AN INCREDIBLE WEEK!



COLLECTING MEMORIES WHAT AN INCREDIBLE WEEK!



THE END AFTER AN AWESOME WEEK

Everything comes to an end and so does the Rota project. On Thursday, we had our closing ceremony, where every workshop presented their individual projects. We watched an amazing play presented by the shadow theatre workshop, and a fantastic choreography piece shown by the body expression workshop, as a few examples. Afterwards, there was a farewell party and even though we still had a half day left on Friday in Madrid, where we visited the Prado museum, the Thursday felt like a goodbye.

We can look back on an awesome week in which we met lots of new people and made friends, where we developed skills further and experienced many wonderful memories.

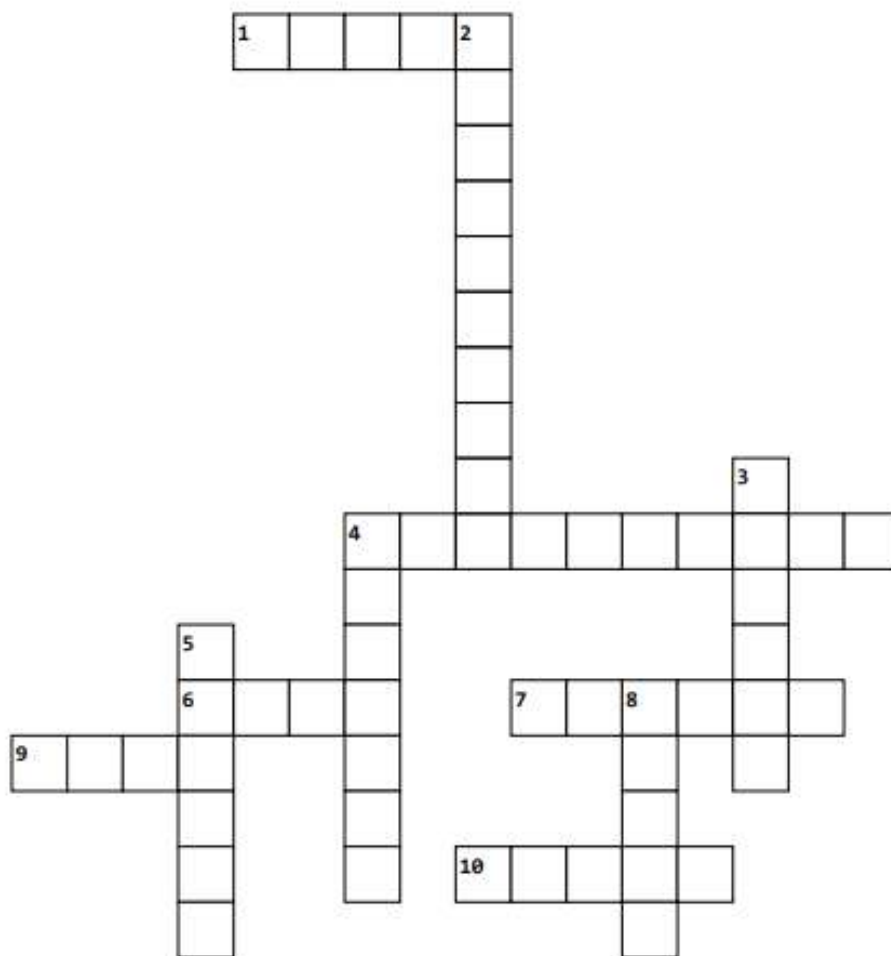


Special thanks to the coordinators of the project: Martina Marín and Eva Galdón for their effort and the organization of such a special week.

ENTERTAINMENT

TO DO ON YOUR WAY HOME!

Solve the crossword puzzle



Across

1. What is a famous flower from The Netherlands?
4. Which important building for the European Union is located in Brussels?
6. Whats the name of the program?
7. Whats the capital of Spain?
9. How many workshops we participate in?
10. Whats the first color of the german flag?

Down

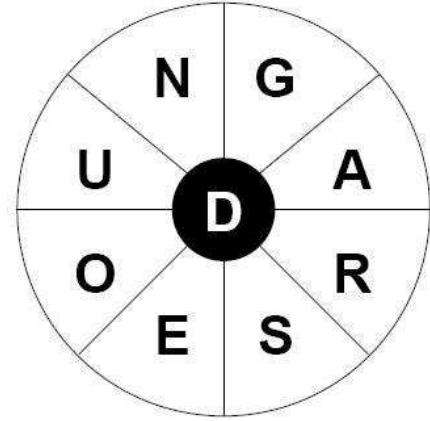
2. Where the Sunday's gymkana ended?
3. Whats the capital of Germany?
4. Whats the surname of the painter who painted the Guernica?
5. Whats the other language that is spoken in Belgium besides Dutch?
8. Which language do they speak in The Netherlands?

ENTERTAINMENT TO DO ON YOUR WAY HOME!

COFFEE BREAK

Word Wheel

Find as many words as you can in the wheel. Every word must use the central letter.



Solve the Sudokus

3	4	5						8
6	1			8	3	5	4	9
7	9			4	5			6
			1	5	7			
				6	4	9		
	7	1	9			4		
		9		2		6		4
	5			1				
2		6				3		

Find 12 words related to our week

V	X	N	W	R	O	T	A	S	P	A	I	N	Z
G	H	B	R	U	S	S	E	L	S	K	W	R	N
C	H	X	Q	U	K	B	E	L	G	I	U	M	H
L	C	Q	D	E	M	O	C	R	A	C	Y	Z	I
R	W	E	M	H	A	M	S	T	E	R	D	A	M
N	P	Q	D	L	M	J	Z	U	D	K	L	N	U
O	X	F	R	W	W	O	R	K	S	H	O	P	S
R	X	J	E	C	O	H	R	G	W	U	L	B	X
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Q	X	Z	N	W	B	E	R	L	I	N	U	H	L
K	G	E	R	M	A	N	Y	W	Z	C	T	U	Z
S	N	E	T	H	E	R	L	A	N	D	S	C	D
E	G	E	X	C	H	A	N	G	E	W	H	P	Q
P	B	Y	J	J	M	A	D	R	I	D	O	V	W

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