Examen HAVO

Engels (nieuwe stijl en oude stijl)

Hoger
Algemeen
Voortgezet
Onderwijs

Tekstboekje

Tijdvak 1
Woensdag 29 mei
13.30 – 16.00 uur
In the dark

SIR—I think that your weather report, provided by the Meteorological Office (Jan. 5), surely must surpass that of Michael Fish’s for the Great Hurricane, back in 1987.

It predicted for SE & Central S. England: ‘‘Early mist clearing to give sunny spells & scattered showers. A light south-easterly breeze.’’

This I managed to read by candle-light during a six-hour power failure and amid the sound of tiles being ripped from our roof.

RICHARD SKINNER
Puttenham, Surrey

Do exams make good sense?

NIGEL WILLIAMS writes scornfully about A-level examinations in News Review: “Examination results tell us nothing about a person apart from how they performed in an exam.” Just so. He overlooks the fact that examinations test performance in matters important to life outside the examination hall. Somebody who has gained a high grade in a German examination can understand spoken German and write it well.

Would Williams like to take his next flight with a pilot who has not shown, in an examination, that she or he can fly a plane safely?

Howard Bailes
St Paul’s Girls’ School
London W6

APART FROM knowledge of a subject matter and communication skills, doing well in a “traditional” A-level exam demonstrates that the pupil can work in a disciplined manner over a period of time and perform under pressure. (If you know your stuff you don’t need Prozac.) Most companies do not require their employees to discuss the meaning of life but it does help if people are numerate and literate and able to absorb new information.

I suppose to be a journalist requires a hefty dose of imagination and creativity but should I need a hip replacement, some dental work or the services of a barrister, I shall consult someone who has passed traditional exams.

Toria Forsyth-Moser
Ross-on-Wye, Herefordshire

‘The Sunday Times’, September 6, 1998
Comics being serious?
Don’t make me laugh!

If you are reading this with a squeaky red plastic ball attached to the end of your nose, then read no further. You will not enjoy what follows. Yes, I know that this is the day set aside for national hilarity, and I should be laughing my head off as I reach for my chequebook. But I cannot get into the spirit of the thing. The whole idea of Comic Relief’s Red Nose Day fills me with the profound gloom – and I know that I am not alone.

Before I go any further, I ought to set out exactly what I am not saying. Above all, I am not saying that people should be discouraged from contributing to the Comic Relief appeal. On the whole, Comic Relief has established a good and improving record over the years for supporting charities that actually do good. It has learnt from its mistakes. Money given to Comic Relief is now very much more likely to be spent on relieving suffering than government-to-government aid.

Money given to Comic Relief is now very much more likely to be spent on relieving suffering than government-to-government aid.

Tom Utley

Nor am I questioning the motives of the comedians who run the appeal. I believe that they are driven by a genuine desire to do good and not, as snide critics suggest, just to look good. It does not bother me that most of them have large houses, with Ferraris in the drive. All the more understandable that they should want to give up some of their time and energy to helping those less fortunate. Nor do I blame other celebrities – ministers, actors, television cooks, etc – who have been roped in to do stupid and embarrassing things for the cause. If they stood on their dignity and refused, the tabloids would tear them to shreds: “Humourless Minister Snubs Starving Children”.

It is the element of moral blackmail, pervading the whole event, that stiles my laughter and makes me feel sick. For the fact is that preaching and comedy simply do not mix. To be any good, a preacher must be an authority-figure. If a comedian is any good, he will subvert authority.

There is no more humourless activity than analysing what makes us laugh. But subversion is obviously the key: the archbishop slipping on the banana-skin; John Redwood, the cleverest man in the last Tory cabinet, opening and shutting his mouth like a cod, pretending to know the words of the Welsh national anthem.

The Comic Relief comedians clearly understand this point. Year after year, they have all looked hideously uncomfortable when required to switch from mirth to solemnity, comedian to preacher, in the course of an evening’s TV show. All the indications are that tonight’s six-hour bore-in on BBC1 will follow the pattern of the past: Lenny Henry, pulling a comic face and putting on a silly voice in the studio; cut to Lenny Henry in sub-Saharan Africa, pulling a long, solemn, caring face and telling us that children are riddled with disease here, for lack of nothing more luxurious than clean water.

The trouble is that we have all become so conditioned to laughing when we see Lenny Henry’s face – or that of any other national comedian – that we find ourselves looking for laughs in all the wrong places: Ho! Ho! There is good old Lenny strutting his funky stuff in some African village. Hang on! That wretched child sitting on his knee is all skin and bones. This isn’t funny. This is heart-rending.

Britons have long been contemptuous of the Germans for their supposed lack of a sense of humour and their readiness to submit to authority. Indeed, it is easy to see Red Nose Day rendered as an anti-German joke, with an authority-figure comedian in charge: “Ve vill now show you a clip of a humorous television programme. You vill now larrf. Ve vill now show you a clip of people suffering in Efrica. You vill now cry. You vill now feel bad zat you vere larffing a moment ago. You vill now reach for your chequebook.” But no self-respecting German would dare attempt such a vulgar manipulation of the emotions.

The awful truth is that this utterly humourless event is typically British.
Shop for Little Horrors

Children are not big earners or spenders. So why are television channels so keen to reach them?

By the time American children leave high school, they have spent more than 20,000 hours watching television – almost double the 11,000 hours they will have endured in the classroom. But, from a TV programmer’s viewpoint, the American child is an exasperating and demanding beast. Children change with bewildering speed: every year at school is a different audience. They are increasingly distracted by other screen-based delights, such as video games and the Internet.

All this explains why children’s television has usually been treated as a Saturday morning ghetto of cartoons and clowning; and why two of the three older broadcasting networks, CBS and NBC, are now their children’s programming. But the other big network, ABC, now owned by Disney, is rapidly expanding its children’s broadcasting. And two media moguls who seldom miss a trick, Rupert Murdoch and Ted Turner, are pouring money into childish TV projects of their own.

The reason is the cable channel, owned by Viacom: Nickelodeon. Watched on average by 1.3m two- to eleven-year-olds a day, Nickelodeon has wired its young audience so deftly that in most weeks it has at least 40 of the top 50 shows on American basic-cable TV. “We are,” boasts Jeffrey Dunn, its chief operating officer, “the fastest growing network in the United States in terms of ratings.”

American children’s television has lots of, but Nickelodeon seems astonishingly immune. Amy Jordan, an academic who recently compiled a report on children’s television, found that Nickelodeon accounted for 18 out of 75 programmes listed as “high quality”, more than any other broadcaster.

The channel’s magic recipe has been to see the little dears as an audience in their own right, rather than appendages of their parents. That makes sense. These days, American children watch with mum: a study by Roper Starch, a consultancy, found that 32% of six- to seven-year-olds have a television in their own room, as do 50% of eight- to twelve-year-olds and 64% of thirteen- to seventeen-year-olds. So children are largely free to choose.

Resistance is futile

One reason why the moguls are now scrambling after kids is that advertisers have begun to realise how they are. Douglas Zarkin of Grey Advertising, an agency that claims to place about a quarter of all children’s advertising in the United States, reckons that children aged between three and twelve control about $47 billion of spending a year. Their own pocket money comes to $540m; the rest, says Mr Zarkin, is “pester power”.

Others produce different numbers; but all agree that the growth in the numbers of dual-income, one-child and single-parent households has increased children’s spending. “If you have so little time with your children, do you want to spend it arguing over whether to go to McDonald’s or Burger King?” asks Joan Chiaramonte at Roper Starch. McDonald’s is one of the biggest spenders on advertising on children’s TV.

Children are the consumers of the next generation. One of Mr Zarkin’s triumphs was to help launch Kids’ Aquafresh, a children’s version of the adult toothpaste. Hook them on a brand today, and with any luck they will still be using it in the middle of the next century.

But another reason for chasing children is that a channel, once created, can be sold abroad. “If you think about worldwide markets,” says Lloyd Shepherd of TV International, a newsletter, “they boil down to news, business news, sports and children – and children must be the most lucrative.”

Keeping the attention of the little horrors will not be easy. Apart from distractions, electronic and otherwise, they have to step through a minefield of regulation: even in the less-regulated United States, they have to provide a minimum amount of “educational” material. But the way children watch today will be the way adults watch tomorrow. That alone makes them a market worth chasing.

‘The Economist’, July 5, 1997
Preservation of Oxbridge privileges

From Mr Duncan Fallowell

Sir, In the September issue of Oxford Today, the official university magazine, the editorial introduction to a survey of new Oxonian MPs begins: “It is a healthy sign that the proportion of MPs educated at Oxford and Cambridge is in decline …”

I find this death wish in one of the two most successful English institutions quite terrifying. And if the editor appears to consider the influence of Oxford on national life unhealthy, why doesn’t she edit something else?

Yours faithfully,
DUNCAN FALLOWELL,
Leamington Road Villas, W11.

‘The Times’, November 20, 1997
EATING PEOPLE IS WRONG
So is refusal to consider scientific evidence for cannibalism

Cannibalism is not just a taboo diet. In the past generation it has also become a taboo topic. That is why news of *Man Corn* by Christy Turner is already creating outrage around the campuses and laboratories of the world even before it is published in America next month. As we report today, this controversial anthropologist has spent the past 30 years investigating cannibalism in the American Southwest. His book provides proof for widespread cannibalism until 400 years ago among the Anasazi (“Ancient Enemy”), the ancestors of the Hopi Indians. His report shocks both conventional wisdom and political correctness.

Conventional wisdom regards the Hopi Indians of Chaco Canyon in New Mexico as a great civilisation. Their architecture and engineering are wonders of prehistoric America. Their peacefulness and their society with equal rights for all have made Chaco a Mecca for followers of the New Age, seeking a spirituality outside Western civilisation. And political correctness calls cannibalism a myth, invented by the European invaders in an attempt to justify their conquest, conversion, enslavement and genocide.

The name “cannibal” was a Spanish libel on the natives of the Caribbean. Modern anthropology treats the forbidden food as 99 per cent legend, except for survival cannibalism by castaways or survivors of an air crash. Claims have constantly been made that savages and outsiders are cannibals.

Europeans accused Africans of cannibalism, and Africans accused Europeans of the same thing. The Romans said that early Christians ate human flesh, and the Christians said the same of the Jews. But the sensational travellers’ tales of cannibalism in Victorian encyclopaedias have shrunk to a footnote by their latest editions. *The Man-Eating Myth*, 1979, an influential book by William Arens, argued that there were no reliable, firsthand accounts of cannibalism anywhere in the historical or ethnographic record. Until now, that is.

Mr Turner’s findings are unusually convincing. His study of human bones and other remains point to widespread slaughter, butchery and cooking. Heads were used as containers to boil the brains. Myoglobin, a protein that is found only in skeletal and heart muscle, has been identified in coprolites (fossilised human excrement). That could only have been ingested through the bowels.

Unsurprisingly, his demonstration of cannibalism has been met with denial and hostility. Museums refuse to display his bones. Other academics accuse him of everything from insensitivity and racialism to obsession. Truth must matter more than fashion in anthropology. The ghosts of the vanished Hopi deserve a cold eye, not a blind one.

‘*The Times*, November 28, 1998
I come from Des Moines. Somebody had to.

When you come from Des Moines you either accept the fact without question and settle down with a local girl named Bobbi and get a job at the Firestone factory and live there for ever and ever, or you spend your adolescence moaning at length about what a dump it is and how you can’t wait to get out, and then you settle down with a local girl named Bobbi and get a job at the Firestone factory and live there for ever and ever.

Hardly anyone ever leaves. This is because Des Moines is the most powerful hypnotic known to man. Outside town there is a big sign that says WELCOME TO DES MOINES. THIS IS WHAT DEATH IS LIKE. There isn’t really. I just made that up. But the place does get a grip on you. People who have nothing to do with Des Moines drive in off the interstate, looking for gas or hamburgers, and stay for ever. There’s a New Jersey couple up the street from my parents’ house whom you see wandering around from time to time looking faintly puzzled but strangely serene. Everybody in Des Moines is strangely serene.

The only person I ever knew in Des Moines who wasn’t serene was Mr Piper. Mr Piper was my parents’ neighbour, a leering, cherry-faced idiot who was forever getting drunk and crashing his car into telephone poles. Everywhere you went you encountered telephone poles and road signs leaning dangerously in testimony to Mr Piper’s driving habits. He distributed them all over the west side of town, rather in the way dogs mark trees. Mr Piper was the nearest possible human equivalent to Fred Flintstone, but less charming. He was a Shriner and a Republican – a Nixon Republican – and he appeared to feel that he had a mission in life to spread offence. His favourite pastime, apart from getting drunk and crashing his car, was to get drunk and insult the neighbours, particularly us because we were Democrats, though he was prepared to insult Republicans when we weren’t available.

Eventually, I grew up and moved to England. This irritated Mr Piper almost beyond measure. It was worse than being a Democrat. Whenever I was in town, Mr Piper would come over and chide me. ‘I don’t know what you’re doing over there with all those Limeys,’ he would say provocatively. ‘They’re not clean people.’

‘Mr Piper, you don’t know what you’re talking about,’ I would reply in my affected English accent. ‘You’re a cretin.’ You could talk like that to Mr Piper because (1) he was a cretin and (2) he never listened to anything that was said to him.

‘Bobbi and I went over to London two years ago and our hotel room didn’t even have a bathroom in it,’ Mr Piper would go on. ‘If you wanted to take a leak in the middle of the night you had to walk about a mile down the hallway. That isn’t a clean way to live.’

‘Mr Piper, the English are paragons of cleanliness. It is a well-known fact that they use more soap per capita than anyone else in Europe.’

Mr Piper would snort derisively at this. ‘That doesn’t mean diddlysquat, boy, just because they’re cleaner than a bunch of Krauts and
Eyeties. A dog’s cleaner than a bunch of Krauts and Eyeties. And I’ll tell you something else: if his Daddy hadn’t bought Illinois for him, John F. Kennedy would never have been elected President.’

I had lived around Mr Piper long enough not to be thrown by this abrupt change of tack. The theft of the 1960 presidential election was a long-standing plaint of his, one that he brought into the conversation every ten or twelve minutes regardless of the prevailing drift of the discussion. In 1963, during Kennedy’s funeral, someone in the Waveland Tap punched Mr Piper in the nose for making that remark. Mr Piper was so furious that he went straight out and crashed his car into a telephone pole. Mr Piper is dead now, which is of course one thing that Des Moines prepares you for.
The old country

According to the promotional video which Her Majesty’s Government inflicted on 51 representatives of Commonwealth countries yesterday, we are now part of “Britain – a young country”. However, the fact is that Britain is not a young country. It is an old country. Britain was created in 1603 or 1707 – depending on whether one takes the union of the crowns or the Act of Union as being the decisive event. To call Britain a young country, therefore, is absurd especially in the company of many Commonwealth countries on whose constitutions the ink is barely dry.

The Government’s “re-branding” film showed quantities of young people but it would also be untrue to suggest that the British people are particularly young. On the contrary, we are older than ever before. Whereas in 1961 12 per cent of the population was over 65, now 16 per cent have exceeded that age. In 30 years’ time, the proportion will be nearly one in four.

Mr Blair announced yesterday that “there is a new British identity”. When he is talking such palpable nonsense, one can only be grateful that he did not go so far as to proclaim a “new, improved Britain”.

E-Smart puts environmental monitoring on the spot

Engineers at the Georgia Institute of Technology have developed an environmental monitoring system that can analyse contaminants on the spot.

The system, called E-Smart, consists of sensors capable of measuring small amounts of contaminants, such as heavy metals, solvents, petroleum oil and lubricants, that are linked to data management software and hardware.

E-Smart can give a response in seconds and is sensitive enough to measure parts per billion. The sensors are expected to have applications in food safety and medical testing.

*Georgia Institute of Technology: 4048943444; http://www.gtri.gatech.edu/rco.html*

Virtual sight for a safer reality

Having watched a blind man crash into a bow-shaped cupboard his walking stick failed to detect, two Austrian students have devised a small ultrasonic scanner that alerts the wearer to obstacles ahead, *writes Marcus Gibson*.

Fitted to the upper arm, it provides protection for the "exposed" area – between the hip and head, often missed by trusty sticks. Paul Pak and Peter Weilenmann from the HTBLA engineering school in Klagenfurt say the scanner can "see" objects up to 5m away. A small motor built in the system generates a vibration to warn the user.

*Virtualblindmanscan: Austria, tel 43 664 253 9540*

Vanessa Houlder

*‘Financial Times’, October 18, 1998*
Shy dishonesty

SIR — You are understandably proud of J. Paul Getty’s decision to seek British citizenship (leader, Dec. 30). There is indeed still much goodness around in these islands, and even when breaking the law Britons can do it generously and with style.

Recently, while queueing to buy non-transferable Underground tickets, my friend and I were shyly approached by a young couple. Would we like their Travelcards for nothing? This has not happened to me anywhere else in the world.

BERNARDO RECAMAN
Bogota, Colombia

MARK HODSON turns up the sites that give you the inside track on the tourist industry. You’ll never believe a brochure again...

H ow many travel websites are out there in cyberspace? Hundreds of thousands? Millions, maybe? And how many pages of information do they all contain? Tens of millions? Billions? It’s a daunting thought, but there’s no need to panic because the vast majority are irrelevant, unreliable, or both. A tiny proportion, though, are genuinely useful, publishing information that, without the net, we would probably never find. These are the sites worth tracking down: they enlighten and empower the consumer, cutting through the purple prose of the holiday brochure. Here are some of the best.

OAG GAZETTEER
www.virgin.net/travel/resortfinder/index
The OAG Gazetteer is sometimes known as the “truth book”, a warts-and-all guide to resorts around the world, traditionally kept by travel agents under their desks and only shown to the general public. The comments on some resorts are particularly caustic. Playa de las Americas in Tenerife, for instance, is described as being “popular with the British; also, sadly, with lowlifes and drug peddlers”. The contents of the book are published on Virgin’s travel site.

CRUISEOPINION
www.cruiseopinion.com
Cruising is confusing — all those ships look much the same. Many travel agents also struggle to tell one from another, which is why it’s worth consulting an independent database such as this. Although American, the site contains more than 4,000 ship reviews, including all the main British lines, such as Cunard and P&O. There’s a guide to each line, a summary of its strong and weak points and each ship is rated out of 100 in 42 categories, based on the views of visitors to the site. Exhaustive.

HOLIDAYS UNCOVERED
www.holidays-uncovered.com
Straight from the horse’s mouth — this simple home-made site allows holidaymakers to post comments, both good and bad, about popular resorts and hotels. It’s a fascinating insight into the British holidaymaker — “the beer was off … watch out for bus drivers charging full price for toddlers … no decent bars … kids run amok until the early hours” — and, given time, it could grow into a mine of useful information.

CHARTER AIRLINE DELAY STATISTICS
Every year, a performance table appears in your newspaper showing the average delays of charter airlines. You read it, throw away the paper and forget about it. Then, when you want to book a holiday, you don’t know where to find the information. Here it is, compiled by the Air Transport Users Group. The figures relate to last summer and are calculated using two methods: the proportion of flights more than an hour late, and the average delay in minutes. Among the big airlines, the best performer was Britannia; the worst, Airtours International.

THE THORN TREE
www.lonelyplanet.com/thorn tree
Say what you like about backpackers, but they do have a tremendous knowledge of obscure destinations around the world. A few years ago, they might have shared their hard-won wisdom around a campfire; today, they go to the Lonely Planet site and post it on the Thorn Tree, a giant message board. The subject categories are wide ranging, from staying healthy to using laptops; there is a women’s section (“from tampons to crampons”) and — of course — you can always find the address of that cheap hostel in Kathmandu.

FLY IN THE SOUP
http://flyinthesoup.com
This is a site for restaurant staff, many of whom seem anxious to vent their frustrations at undertipping and arrogant customers, and to reveal the erratic behaviour that goes on behind the kitchen doors. The site has recently been revamped in a typical victory of style over content, but many of the stories are worth reading, with categories such as “The worst thing I ever did to a customer”. I suspect some of the most gross boasts have been censored, but there is still plenty here to put you off your lunch. You might never be rude in a restaurant again!

BREEZE NET’S GUIDE TO AIRPORT CAR RENTALS
www.bmm.com
The main purpose of BreezeNet is to track down the cheapest car-hire deals at airports across the UK, but it’s also a knack that it does rather well. But click around the site and you’ll be presented with an easy-to-read explanation of how the car-hire business works, from drop-off charges to upgrades.

TRAVEL HELPERS
www.geocities.com/The Tropics/2442/database.html
The surest way to get the inside track on a strange city is to know someone who lives there, a friend who’ll tell you which bars to visit and show you their favourite haunts. If you don’t have that special person, the next best thing is a Travel Helper. This site puts travellers in contact with locals who are willing to answer e-mails and maybe even meet you for a drink. In Moscow, for instance, you can choose between Julia, who speaks English and will reply to e-mails, or Alexei, who will show you around at weekends, “preferably out of the city” to destinations several hundred miles outside Moscow. On second thoughts, I’m not sure I like the sound of Alexei.

BRADMANS
www.bradmans.com
So where do you turn if you don’t get any joy from Julia and you don’t like the sound of Alexei? Try Bradmans, a series of city guides aimed at business people but which is also handy for tourists, particularly in those out-of-the-way places. So, there is a 2,000-word essay on Moscow, with everything from a potted history to restaurant reviews.

But, because business people go just about everywhere these days, there are also reports on the sort of cities that normally only turn up in trivia questions: Ashgabat, Al Manamah and San’a. (The answers, by the way, are Turkmenistan — which, for some reason, is listed under eastern Europe — Bahrain and Yemen.)
Facts and Figures on the Death Penalty

Last updated : 16 November 2000

1. Abolitionist and Retentionist Countries

Over half the countries in the world have now abolished the death penalty in law or practice.

2. Progress Towards Worldwide Abolition

More than three countries a year on average have abolished the death penalty for all crimes in the past decade.

Over 30 countries and territories have abolished the death penalty for all crimes since 1990. They include countries in Africa (examples include Angola, Côte d'Ivoire, Mauritius, Mozambique, South Africa), the Americas (Canada, Paraguay), Asia (Hong Kong, Nepal), Europe (Azerbaijan, Bulgaria, Estonia, Georgia, Lithuania, Poland, Turkmenistan, Ukraine).

3. Moves to Reintroduce the Death Penalty

Once abolished, the death penalty is seldom reintroduced. Since 1985, over 40 countries have abolished the death penalty in law or, having previously abolished it for ordinary crimes, have gone on to abolish it for all crimes. During the same period only four abolitionist countries reintroduced the death penalty. One of them – Nepal – has since abolished the death penalty again; one, the Philippines, has resumed executions, but there have been no executions in the other two (Gambia, Papua New Guinea).

4. Death Sentences and Executions

During 1999, at least 1,813 prisoners were executed in 31 countries and 3,857 people were sentenced to death in 64 countries. These figures include only cases known to Amnesty International; the true figures are certainly higher.

In 1999, 85 per cent of all known executions took place in China, Iran, Saudi Arabia, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the USA. In China, the limited records available to Amnesty International at the end of the year indicated that at least 1,077 people were executed, but the true figure was believed to be much higher. At least 165 executions were carried out in Iran. As many as 100 people
were executed in the Democratic Republic of the Congo after being sentenced to death by a military court. In Saudi Arabia, 103 executions were reported, but the total may have been much higher. Ninety-eight people were executed in the USA. In addition, hundreds of executions were reported in Iraq, but many of them may have been extrajudicial.

5. Use of the Death Penalty Against Child Offenders

International human rights treaties prohibit anyone under 18 years old at the time of the crime being sentenced to death. The International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the American Convention on Human Rights and the Convention on the Rights of the Child all have provisions to this effect. More than 110 countries whose laws still provide for the death penalty for at least some offences have laws specifically excluding the execution of child offenders or may be presumed to exclude such executions by being parties to one or another of the above treaties. A small number of countries, however, continue to execute child offenders.

Six countries since 1990 are known to have executed prisoners who were under 18 years old at the time of the crime – Iran, Nigeria, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, USA and Yemen. The country which carried out the greatest number of known executions of child offenders was the USA (13 since 1990).

6. The Deterrence Argument

Scientific studies have consistently failed to find convincing evidence that the death penalty deters crime more effectively than other punishments. The most recent survey of research findings on the relation between the death penalty and homicide rates, conducted for the United Nations in 1988 and updated in 1996, concluded: “Research has failed to provide scientific proof that executions have a greater deterrent effect than life imprisonment and such proof is unlikely to be forthcoming. The evidence as a whole still gives no positive support to the deterrent hypothesis...”


7. Execution of the Innocent

As long as the death penalty is maintained, the risk of executing the innocent can never be eliminated.

Since 1973 more than 85 US prisoners have been released from death row after evidence emerged of their innocence of the crimes for which they were sentenced to death. Some had come close to execution after spending many years under sentence of death. Recurring features in their cases include prosecutorial or police misconduct; the use of unreliable witness testimony, physical evidence, or confessions; and inadequate defence representation. Other US prisoners have gone to their deaths despite serious doubts over their guilt.

The Governor of the US state of Illinois, George Ryan, declared a moratorium on executions in January 2000. His decision followed the exoneration of the 13th death row prisoner found to have been wrongfully convicted in the state since the USA reinstated the death penalty in 1977. During the same period, 12 other Illinois prisoners had been executed.

Announcing the moratorium, Governor Ryan said: “I cannot support a system which, in its administration, has proven so fraught with error and has come so close to the ultimate nightmare, the state’s taking of innocent life... Until I can be sure that everyone sentenced to death in Illinois is truly guilty, until I can be sure with moral certainty that no innocent man or woman is facing a lethal injection, no one will meet that fate.”
INSTRUMENT AMNESTY

A collaboration between


classic

guitar

BC Music Live, in collaboration with the charity the National Foundation for Youth Music, are calling an Instrument Amnesty – anyone who has a working instrument that they can spare is asked to hand it in. It could be the start of a lifelong love of music for one child, or a glittering career for another.

The idea of the Amnesty came about because of a worrying shortage of instruments available to people who desperately wanted to learn to play, and didn’t have the opportunity.

The campaign was launched on 30 March and is a focal point of the BBC Music Live weekend from 25-29 May. Along with the live music broadcasts, there will be appeals on national and local TV and radio stations to alert the public to the Amnesty.

Anyone with an instrument in good condition that they’d like to pledge can call the BBC audience line or go online. Youth Music will allocate the instrument to music projects local to donors, and they will all make arrangements for the hand-over of the instrument following BBC Music Live.

To find out more or to make your pledge, call the BBC audience line on 08700 100125 or go online. All calls are charged at national rate.

HOW CAN I TELL IF MY INSTRUMENT IS PLAYABLE?

- Make sure that there aren’t any serious dents or other distortions of the instrument’s shape that might affect the sound.
- If you encounter tuning problems on your instrument, it does not necessarily mean it is irreparably damaged. Strings can be changed, screws tightened, pads replaced. As long as the tuning post or planks is itself not damaged then all it probably needs is simple adjustments.
- Check that all keys work smoothly and do not stick when depressed.
- For more unusual instruments, and specific instruments like flutes and trumpets, you may need an expert to determine its state of repair.

STRINGS

- Be wary of cracks on the underside of the instrument where the sound post joins the roof to its base, and also cracks directly underneath the bridge (where the pressure from the strings is greatest).
- Cracks in other places may not be so serious.
- Worn strings may cause the overall tuning of the instrument to wane but they are easily replaced.

PIANOS (Upright)

- Pianos with wooden frames are more susceptible to warping – humidity and central heating can wreak havoc on them. If in doubt, get an expert to check the condition of your piano.
- Worn keys can be replaced but the action must be in good working order.

BRASS

- All valves and slides must be present and in good working order.
- Check for rust – if it has gone through the metal, it can disable the instrument.

WOODWIND

- Varnish should be intact on oboes and bassoons, as air and water can leak through the wood itself.
- In bassoons the U-bend can be a common trouble spot – water is sometimes left there after playing.
- With flutes, it is very hard to tell whether air is escaping due to a leak, whether it’s the player, or whether it’s the design. Only a repairer or experienced player can give a full picture of its condition.

Compiled by Benjamin Arnold, with thanks to Phelps, Markson Pianos, Boosey & Hawkes and Howarth’s.

PLAY YOUR PART, MAKE TOMORROW’S MUSICIANS

BBC AUDIENCE LINE 08700 100 125 www.bbc.co.uk/musiclive