

# Strange New World

If you take a look at the model of the global village, you might tend to miss how it differs from reality. Because in many ways, our world is now as small and close as a village. Compared to the past, we travel unbelievably fast and trade even faster. But the key characteristic of our time is of course the heart of every close-knit community: communication. From the era of social media emerges a new generation of global relationships. Our communication is fast and it reaches far.

## **What the fuzz is all about**

If this generation had to choose its superpower, it would certainly be the smartphone. The older the reader, the harder they might shake their head at this. While discussing the time youths invest in the internet and how usefully they spend it, some forget that those who know how to use the internet, or at least some relevant parts, have access to powerful sources: books, scientific publications, tutorials, free online courses and much more. The pretty little pieces of plastic teenagers almost seem to worship are the key to an immense online community supporting each other. You can educate yourself with books, but only on the internet do you find blogs about almost every situation in life, comments, personal experiences, ... . A growing portion of humanity's knowledge is at our fingertips.

## **Catching up with friends**

International relationships are no longer a privilege of businessmen or frequent travellers – it has never been so easy to keep in touch. No matter if our friends are just around the corner or on the other side of the world, they sound the same on the phone. After an international scout-camp in Scotland, many are still in touch a year later. Whether chatting directly or following each other's lives on Instagram, many have deepened their friendships.

## **The language of gibberish**

As communication evolves, so does language. Generation Z are fluent in a wide range of emojis, abbreviations and acronyms and have already enriched their vocabulary with a range of new words. Barely understandable to outsiders, teens themselves consider their way of talking a very efficient one. Despite all objections against this "war on proper language", it is a perfectly natural process. The internet merely enables new forms of expression, especially visual ones, like memes. Young businesses are already participating in the new slang of pictures.

It is a strange new world we live in and it is still changing at a great speed. But better try to keep up because social media as a form of communication has to be taken just as seriously as any other. Who knows what is yet to come for the next generation.

– Anna-Marie Christely, 6A