

Stripped Pyjama Squid is a type of cuttlefish with vibrant black stripes on its body.

All top quotes contributed by Prasant Tiwari, AIS Jagdishpur, X



Bizarre beings

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2020, a year that transformed our lives completely and made us realise how life is uncertain, full of twists and turns. However, this very year also taught us few lessons, lessons that we learnt while adjusting ourselves to the new customs that have become a part of our lives. Here are some of them, take a look:

School

Although there was a time when going to school every day was a dreadful thought, we now beg to go to school, just to sit with our classmates under one roof and learn together. But now that virtual learning has helped us in a lot of ways, it will prove to be more helpful even when things get normal. Thus, 2020 made us question how online extra classes could actually take the load off students and teachers when exams are near and students want to study at home

Work

Before the pandemic scenario, our parents would rush to work every day, having to juggle household chores, our

school and their job. But today, things have changed drastically. At first it was a little difficult going online, but now we have all gotten used to it, given that a balance has been made.

Thus, 2020 made us question if our parents have the option to go to work and work from home alternatively

Health

Throughout last year, the most we cared about was our health; to be hale and hearty and keep the virus at bay. But this was also the time when we were scared to go out in the open, and thus resorted to online check-ups. Our grandparents got regular health examination done and it was as effective and convenient as one-on-one check-up.

Thus, 2020 made us question if we can cut down the unnecessary trips made outside and take as many precautions as we can to always stay healthy.

These are some of the many lessons that the year 2020 has taught us, each leaving us with a question and hope, to embrace the new normal and walk towards a better 2021. 🇮🇳

A year full of learnings

What Has The Year 2020 Taught Us?

Travel diaries

Killjoys- The Ones Who Ruin Your Vacation

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Traveling is said to be a great experience; after all, you get to see the world, explore new cultures and see how you fit into this planet as a global citizen. But whilst traveling in a group, we all have had that one travel partner who does nothing but whine and crib the whole time, ruining your mood, and in the end says that the trip was 'not that bad', making you want to hit them. Well, if it's any consolation, you are not the only one who has had to deal with someone like that. Here are the stages we have all had to see of *that* person.

Stage 1: As soon as the topic of 'next vacation' is brought up, this person's siren is switched on. Even before the planning of the trip begins, they are already nit-picking and doing their best to find a fault in everything and anything. From "it

will be too hot" to "it will be too cold," all arguments are presented.

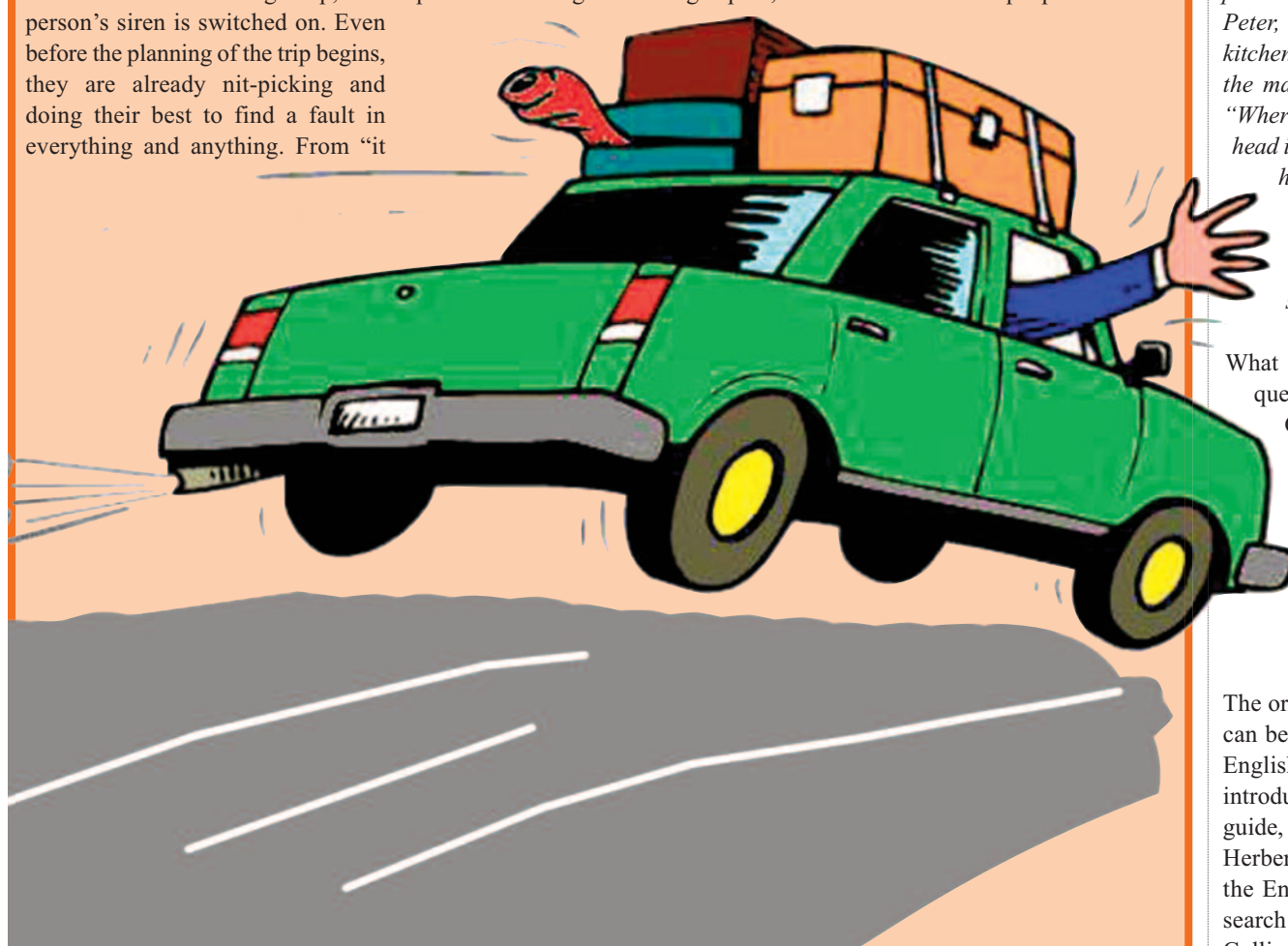
Stage 2: In what can be called a miracle, the group somehow manages to finalise the destination, only for the next challenge to present itself aka the itinerary. Every attraction that the group wants to see is dismissed by this person with a "eh, it'll be boring!" Pointing out how it will be too much of a hassle or a waste of time, their ultimate suggestion is to cancel the trip altogether.

Stage 3: The show must go wrong, and we must deal with it, but people in this category were never taught that. Or even if they were, they chose to ignore it. As the bags are packed, bookings made and something as expected does not go according to plan,

they begin with a 3-hour medley of whining, complaining, crying and throwing tantrums that nobody wants to deal with.

Stage 4: Bearing their Ekta Kapoor level drama, the group somehow manages to make something of the trip and come back in one piece. And just as their feet touch down in their hometown, the smile on their face is unmatched. As everyone else stands with a straight annoyed face because *somebody* ruined their vacation, they come up with - "The trip was good! We should do this again sometime." Others? They are only left staring at each other in amusement.

Writer's advice: The next time you can choose to plan your vacation without this kind of people. *wink*



The curious case of comma

Analysing Oxford's Tiny Character

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“Oh dear! The microwave is on fire!” the head chef yelled. He messaged the newly-appointed restaurant manager, “Quickly, get Peter, the sous chef and an expert on kitchen fires- there’s a fire.” Shortly after, the manager arrived, Peter by his side. “Where is the expert on kitchen fires?” the head inquired. “You called Peter, you said he was an expert on kitchen fires in your message!” the manager exclaimed. “No, I’m the sous chef; the expert is a few blocks away!” said Peter.

What we witnessed above is a consequence of the lack of the Oxford Comma- also known as the Serial, Series or Harvard Comma- an often-debated piece of punctuation that is placed before a conjunction like 'and' or 'or'. But, how can such a tiny character cause such a great catastrophe? Let's find out.

The origin

The origin of the elusive Oxford Comma can be traced back to style guides in the English language. F Howard Collins first introduced the Serial Comma in one such guide, saying it had been used by scientist Herbert Spencer (who ended up evolving the English language along with his research on evolution) in a letter he sent to Collins, to ease differentiation in a list.

The dispute

The Oxford Style Manual itself recommends limited usage of the comma, only if it is necessary to avoid vagueness in a sentence. But how does this affect writing? We'll tell you, it resolves ambiguity: Someone may frame a sentence without the Oxford Comma as "I love my parents, Poseidon and Marilyn Monroe." Without the comma before 'and', the speaker could imply their parents to be Marilyn Monroe and Poseidon and they are a demigod! However, if we put the Oxford comma prior to 'and', we could avoid some confusion- "I love my parents, Poseidon, and Marilyn Monroe." This is the argument that could have saved our burning microwave in the introduction, simply by adding the comma before 'and an expert on kitchen fires.'

A resolution

The only solution to this unending battle is that the addition of the Oxford Comma is left to the writer. A comma, in itself, denotes a pause in a sentence and can be used according to the effect the writer wishes to have. To signify a closer bond between two entities, it is best to not use the Oxford comma, "A tree, tall and lush." It should be used carefully in important documents to signify correct meanings of rules, regulations, or procedures, for ease of differentiation in lists, and to add breaks when required- exactly like the way it has been used in this sentence. 🇮🇳