

## Transcripts – Best Shots AHS. Student’s Practice Pack 8

### 2 a Aspect: climate activism

Track 1 + 2

#### Some of London’s hidden gems

London, which I’m proud to call my home, is an incredible city. It’s impossible to see all it has to offer. I’m definitely not telling you to skip the highlights of London, but if you want to experience the local side of this beautiful city, then my list will give you plenty of ideas for more unusual places to see in London. Without further ado, these are some of the best hidden gems:

Sleepy **Little Venice** is a series of tree-lined canals that many tourists miss during their London trip. Spanning from Hyde Park to Warwick Avenue, it’s near enough to the city centre that you can squeeze it in between other attractions. What makes Little Venice unique is that it’s completely unlike anywhere else in the city: colourful canal boats roam the waterways, and many serve as tearooms and cafes. Afternoon tea or brunch on a London canal boat – does it get more memorable than that? The popular café boats are located near Paddington, while Camden is a great place to wander the locks and board a water bus boat trip.

If you love walking around aimlessly looking for colourful streets, pretty corners, secret bookstores, and quiet tea shops, then you will love discovering London. One of the best secret finds in London is a small alley called **Neal’s Yard**. It opens into a courtyard defined by colourful facades, housing, health food shops and cafés, just a few minutes’ walk from the Covent Garden train station. Just walk up Neal Street to Short Gardens and turn left, you will enter an area that seems completely separated from the busy atmosphere of London. Neal’s Yard is also a great place to buy organic soaps and beauty products, organic cheese, as well as homecoming gifts for friends and family from the various shops.

Cool, crazy, incredible, extravagant, fascinating ... There are no words to fully describe one of the most unusual places in London – **Sir John Soane’s Museum**. What a museum! Sir John Soane was an architect and art collector born in 1753, who used his own house in order to test all kinds of architectural ideas. After his death in 1837, his house became a museum, and now houses over 45,000 exhibits, all collected by its extravagant owner. From the moment you enter the house of Sir John Soane, you’ll be awe-struck by this labyrinth of corridors and rooms. Even the ceilings are covered with sculptures, paintings, and other decorative objects.

One of my favourite places in London that not many people know about is most definitely **The Churchill Arms**. Located in the Notting Hill area of the city, Churchill Arms is a pub with a beautiful array of floral decorations. Spring is one of the best times to visit as you can see the flowers in full bloom, although the pub is incredibly beautiful at any time of year. In fact, at Christmas, the festive spirit is in full swing with Christmas trees and lights having their moment to shine. The Churchill Arms is probably one of the most photographed pubs in London, and when you see it for yourself, it is easy to understand why. Originally there were only a few hanging baskets and it has since “blossomed” into a lot more.

London has no shortage of markets to visit, but I’d argue that **Leadenhall Market** is one of the most beautiful. It is a covered market, with an ornate roof that features glass windows and curved beams. The building dates from the 19<sup>th</sup> century, and there has been a market on this location since the 14<sup>th</sup> century, making it one of the oldest markets in London. Leadenhall Market is found on Gracechurch Street, accessible via one of the narrow pedestrian alleyways. Film buffs might recognise Leadenhall Market as one of the *Harry Potter* filming locations in London. The market was the location for one of the entrances to Diagon Alley.

Let us now leave the city centre for Greenwich. As you walk along the Greenwich riverside, you may notice a small red brick circular building with a glass dome. This little, easy-to-miss building is the entrance to one of the most astounding feats of Victorian engineering, the **Greenwich Foot Tunnel**. It is a pedestrian tunnel built under the Thames River to connect Greenwich with Island Gardens on the Isle of Dogs. Greenwich Foot Tunnel was opened in 1902 and its purpose was to provide access to the docks on the north of the river for dockworkers that lived in the south of the

river. It has been recently refurbished, and it is now a pedestrian highway and free for everyone to walk through.

One of my favourite pubs to take visitors in London is **The Dickens Inn**. Not only is it a beautiful building, but it also has a long and intriguing history intertwined with East London heritage. This 18<sup>th</sup>-century three-storey former warehouse was thought to have housed tea or be owned by a brewery. It's worth noting, however, that novelist Charles Dickens himself had nothing to do with this pub. It was his great grandson, Cedric Charles Dickens, who formally opened the pub in 1976, apparently declaring, "My great grandfather would have loved this inn". The best bit is that it is only five minutes' walk away from both Tower Bridge and the Tower of London, making it a great spot for a drink or something to eat. Children are allowed into the pub during the daytime as well. If you are looking for another beautiful hidden gem in London, then head to **Kyoto Garden**, easily accessible from central London. Kyoto Garden is located around Holland House, which used to be an old castle which many famous families have lived in. It was originally built in 1605 but was destroyed in the Second World War. Kyoto Garden was officially opened in 1991 to mark the friendship between Japan and the United Kingdom. The gardens have been beautifully landscaped and designed to reflect how Japanese gardens typically look. You will find stone carvings in Japanese style, peacocks and herons roaming around, numerous varieties of flowers and trees, waterfalls, and even the beautiful koi carp fish. The gardens can be visited in any season.

I hope you enjoyed my personal recommendations! Even if you visit just one or two of the hidden gems, it will make your trip so much more special!

## **2 b** Aspect: books

## Track 3 + 4

### **Behind the scenes of book cover design**

**Interviewer:** Here with me today is Janet Hansen, Creative Art Director at Everyman's Library, who has designed several stunning book covers over the years.

Now, some of us imagine a cover designer collaborating closely with the author, finding a way to capture the essence of the book in one beautiful image – only after reading it and pondering its themes, symbols and characters. I'm sure it's not always quite as romantic as that. How does it typically go for you?

**Janet Hansen:** While I do enjoy reading and visually analyzing a manuscript, it's true that I sometimes am not able to, due to deadlines and abundance of projects. There's also a surprising number of people involved in the cover approval process: publishers, agents, editors, sales – so it is not likely for me to be in direct contact with the author without many others involved. It's also important to remember too that while writing is an art form, ultimately a book is a product, and its cover is an advertisement. My job is to find a balance between capturing the essence of the book while also making it "commercial" enough to entice retailers into marketing it and readers into buying it.

**Interviewer:** Like any design work, I imagine there are publishers who just "get it" and give you full creative freedom, and others who don't. Is that accurate, or are you typically given freedom to explore whatever direction you choose?

**Janet Hansen:** I'm lucky enough to work with people who allow a good amount of creative freedom. I will admit though, due to years of working with a group, I sometimes habitually steer my design into approaches I know will gain a more mass appeal. It's important to break out of that habit though, and to test what a book cover could be even if it means more recurring rejection. There are of course instances where an editor or author requests a very specific approach. I find that in these cases it's sort of like shooting yourself in the foot because too many restrictions limit the creative flow.

**Interviewer:** When it comes to the design job that I do, we have systems and best practices in place that guide the work. Are there any kind of best practices for designing book covers?

**Janet Hansen:** Reading the manuscript is step one for me. If I don't have the time, I at least read several chapters. I highlight recurring themes or any visuals that I think could represent the book well, then create a grid of these themes and try to think of ways to visually represent them all. I usually will narrow my ideas down to three different concepts, and then focus solely on those.

**Interviewer:** It seems like a practice in restraint. Any insights you can share with us for narrowing your focus?

**Janet Hansen:** While I think of visuals that capture the essence of the book, it also needs to work well with its title. I try to steer clear of imagery that is used often on covers, and instead go with something that is visually interesting to me personally. I usually find my inspiration outside of book cover design, in fine art or film. If the concept is one I have not seen on a book cover, and it is abstract enough that it could be interpreted in more than one way, I think that is a good thing.

**Interviewer:** Despite everything happening online now, we are still – thanks to Instagram – more visual than ever. And we all know you can't judge a book by its cover, but we also know ... we've all noticed and purchased books based on the cover alone. Do you think, in this current age, a cover is still a valuable sales tool?

**Janet Hansen:** A good cover is a signifier that the process of putting this book out in the world has been thoughtful. It lets you know that the people putting it together care about it. And if a cover is good, people are more likely to share it on their social media. There are so many more outlets for advertising in that way.

## **2 c** Aspect: the US justice system

Track 5 + 6

### **How “second chance” laws could transform the US justice system**

It was like any other peaceful afternoon in my home in 2004. Cartoons were blaring, kids were running around the house, yelling loudly. But then there was a loud knock at the door that just disrupted that laughter. And my kids yelled out to me, “Mommy, the police are at the door!” And as I walked up to talk to the police, it's almost like I walked into the *Charlie Brown* movie. Do you all remember the teacher when she was just like, “Womp, womp, womp?” Because the words were just getting lost, and it was just like that, I didn't know what was going on. I just snapped out of it and I was like, “Oh, sh\*\*\*, I'm about to be arrested!”

I was about to be arrested because two months prior I had written a check for 87.26 [dollars] for groceries. And that check had bounced. Let me be clear. There is a thing called prosecutorial discretion, meaning the district attorney did not have to prosecute me, but they did. And that day, they handcuffed me in front of my babies. They took me to jail.

You know, luckily, I was able to come home pretty quickly because it was my first offense. And I promise, the first thing I did when I got home, I borrowed some money so I could pay that check back. And then I had to borrow some more money to pay back the fees for getting arrested and going to jail because, of course, I was loaded in cash because I was a young mom with four kids bouncing 87-dollar checks.

I just knew that that chapter of my life was closed. – Except it wasn't, because, see, that arrest and that conviction, it remained on my record. At that moment, I realized that my true sentence had just begun, because you know what? I was no longer allowed to volunteer at my children's school. I could no longer rent where I want to rent because it is legal for landlords to discriminate against a person with a record. I even faced barriers getting into college. And still to this day I am excluded from certain certifications and occupational licenses.

All I could keep asking myself was, “when will my sentence end?” Sadly, I'm not alone. There are more than 100 million Americans, that is one in three people, who have an arrest or conviction on their record. And get this, more than 94 percent of employers, more than 90 percent of landlords and 72 percent of colleges and universities use background checks to screen out applicants, making it harder for millions of Americans to access jobs, housing and education.

It's like, "damn, how am I supposed to get out and do better if no one will rent to me, no one will hire me, and I can't even go to school?" But I believe, I truly believe that America is a nation of second chances. I say that because just about every state has laws on the books that allow a person to get their record cleared once they're eligible. Right now, there are more than 30 million people who are eligible to get their record cleared.

But this is where it gets a little crazy. Less than 10 percent of those people actually get it done. Either they don't know about it, or, if they do, the process is so bureaucratic, costly and full of red tape that they don't do it. But this record clearance problem is solvable, it's fixable. The key is automatic record clearance for those who are eligible. We are removing all that red tape, and we do that by passing what we call 'clean slate' laws. What that is, is laws that say once a person has remained crime-free for a set period of time and they're eligible – a set period of time by the state's definition, remaining crime-free –, that their record is automatically cleared. Red tape cut.

This is the beautiful thing about it. We shift the burden from the person who made the mistake to the system that tries to trap them in that mistake. And y'all, these policies are working. I know that because I am the proud CEO of the Clean Slate Initiative and in just the last three years, we've been able to help six states pass 'clean slate' laws. That has resulted in three million people getting their records cleared. That's millions of people who no longer have to walk around with stigma and shame attached to their name.

It's like with a stroke of a governor's pen, we were able to unlock dreams for millions. We're building a pathway that automatic record clearance is a reality in all 50 states which will unlock second chances for an additional 14 million people.

I just want to leave you all with this: I want you to think about all the second chances that you've received. Whether it was from your teachers, your parents, your community, even your kids. Think about what that felt like. Think about what that did for you. I know for me, it enabled me to be able to change, like turn my pain into purpose. It enabled me to be able to walk into a room and feel seen, not as damaged goods, but as untapped potential. That is the power of a second chance. That is the power of a clean slate. And there's no greater gift than that. Thank you.

## **2 d** Aspect: neurodiversity

Track 7 + 8

### **Confessions of a synesthete**

My name is Debra Lynn, I'm a composer and I have synesthesia. It's a neurological condition where stimuli experienced in one sensory pathway, such as sight, trigger an involuntary response through a different cognitive or sensory pathway, such as sound or smell. More specifically, I've chromesthesia: one of the most common forms of synesthesia in which sound evokes very distinct images of color. I also have auditory-tactile synesthesia, which means that I associate sounds with specific textures. This is one of the rarest forms of synesthesia. Every color I hear has an unmistakable texture, although these textures can vary within a single color, for instance blue isn't always a smooth tile – it can also feel like tree bark to me, or a tread on a tennis shoe.

Synesthesia is pretty rare. Four percent of humans are synesthetes and, interestingly, most are female. Most synesthetes experience multiple forms of the condition. Neurologists suspect the percentage of synesthetes is higher among persons on the autism spectrum, although communication delays among autistics make reliable data difficult, if not impossible, to collect. I have a daughter with autism, so I understand how this is likely.

Not surprisingly, synesthesia is associated with high intelligence, although most synesthetes struggle to learn basic concepts in the traditional manner. Hence, we tend to feel pretty stupid a lot of the time. When I was in middle school, I began to realize that other people weren't hearing, seeing and feeling what I was, and it was quite a strange and isolating experience. My brother Gary heard color as well, and we began to discover this was an anomaly at about the same time. Until then, we thought our experience was normal because we hadn't really tried to discuss music with anyone except each other. Once we were in public school music classes and expected to describe what we heard, we realized our language was gibberish to the rest of the world. Gary and

I were always close, but once we realized our experience was unique, our bond became even stronger. There was always this pervasive feeling that we were different – and that’s pretty unsettling for adolescents. It would have been comforting to know there were others like us, and that what we experienced was really a gift.

For many years, I reluctantly learned everyone else’s music vocabulary. It made sense to me, but it seemed quite inefficient. Why should I have to describe tonal centers and chord qualities in terms of numbers, letters, and labels when it would be just as easy to call it a “brick red triangle” or “canary yellow sphere?” I don’t really compose from a music theory perspective. It is all color and texture in my head, so I basically transcribe that into notation on staff paper. I ended up being a theory wiz-kid through both graduate degrees, but the path would have been much more agreeable for me had I understood early on just how my brain was functioning.

A few years ago, I was helping my daughter Abby with a research project on the paintings of Wassily Kandinsky. She showed me his essays describing the sound-to-color associations he experienced while listening to music. I was astounded to find that this early-20<sup>th</sup>-century artist heard music the same way I did! Not only was he hearing color, but his instrument associations to color were almost identical to my own. Abby clued me in on some of what she had learned about synesthetes, and I realized I fit the description. She asked me to create a composition based on his magnum opus titled *Several Circles* using the color associations from his essays. It began as an experiment to see if I could help people hear Kandinsky’s painting the way he did. For me, this was easy because I had been composing this way for decades. Now, I just had to transcribe, or rather compose someone else’s images instead of my own. I finished and fully orchestrated the piece in a day, and enjoyed the process a lot.

Since then, I’ve studied a lot about synesthesia and so many things are now clear about the way my brain processes sound. In fact, most chromesthetes are composers and visual artists. It is a great relief to know there’s a reason I’ve felt so misunderstood for most of my life and that there are others like me.

## 2 e Aspect: marketing techniques

## Track 9 + 10

### Mascots in ads aimed at children

**Presenter:** So, Professor Brucks, you say it isn’t just the taste and smell of sugary cereals that cement memories in our minds. It’s the advertising that sells those products. For a 6- or 7-year-old, commercials with fun mascots like Lucky the Leprechaun and Tony the Tiger can be really powerful.

**Brucks:** Children are vulnerable to messages that are fun and sound good, that you can sing along to, and that have fun characters. Children’s minds are so open to all of that. They’re open to everything.

**Presenter:** True. Small children are not sceptical. They don’t listen to commercials with cute rabbits and think, “a multibillion-dollar company is trying to influence me.” Of course, at a certain point, this changes, and kids start to think of commercials as commercials. Presumably, do you have some ideas on when the window opens and closes in terms of our vulnerability or impressionability?

**Brucks:** The research says – and I’m not sure I believe it – that the vulnerability ends around 13 in terms of your cognitive ability, meaning children’s understanding of what advertising is, and how it works, and that they should not be open to it, and should be thinking critically.

**Presenter:** That’s interesting. What do you think happens to those messages that we heard when we were small? Do our grown-up minds really question them?

**Brucks:** Two colleagues and I tried to answer that question. We gathered a sample of people in the United Kingdom and asked them to rate the healthfulness of a chocolate puffed rice cereal called Coco Pops. Some people in the study only learned about Coco Pops when they were adults. Others grew up eating the cereal and had seen commercials for it when they were small kids. The people who saw the commercials when they were younger rated

them as much more nutritious. So everyone else had a more accurate rating of how nutritious Coco Pops are, except for the people who had seen the commercials as a child and who had positive feelings towards the Coco monkey.

**Presenter:** In the commercial they say, “Coco Pops are part of a nutritious breakfast.” Cereal commercials often use language like this. Now, if you’re a kid, a nutritious breakfast sounds pretty good. But if you’re a sceptical adult, you might guess that a cereal with cocoa or marshmallows in the ingredients is not your healthiest option. So shouldn’t your grown-up brain correct for the mistakes of your impressionable brain when you were a kid?

**Brucks:** Well, to me, one of the scary things is: adults don’t correct for it. They don’t later on say, “I have these memories from when I was a child, and, you know, they’re wrong – I really should rethink that.” So in our later studies, what we actually checked was: would people, if we helped them by reminding them of health, for example, or reminding them of children’s vulnerability to advertising, would they then correct these biases? And what we found again was that the people who felt that emotion towards these characters did not correct for it.

**Presenter:** But why is this effect still persisting? Why do the effects of what we hear in childhood stay in our minds if we want to leave those behind in a way?

**Brucks:** So I think that’s an individual difference, that some people do move away from the love of the things they had as kids. But if you think about it, parents love to have their kids experience the same wonderful things that they did, which is why parents love to take their kids to Disney. And they love to share with them the toys that they had. And I think that they still love these things.

**Presenter:** A few years ago, the country of Chile banned mascots from all product packaging and launched a media campaign to educate people about healthier foods. Mascots have been removed from all sorts of products, from chips to cereals. Some foods also have a black sticker slapped on them with labels like ‘alto en calorías’ (high in calories), or ‘alto en azúcares’ (high in sugar).

**Brucks:** Based on my research, I would be fully supportive of that effort. If they do it for ten years and it doesn’t work, well, then we should go back to the way it was. But I think it will work. I just don’t think you’re going to see the results for a while because these effects build up over a long time.

## **2 f** Aspect: education

Track 11 + 12

### Schools around the world

**Speaker 0:** Education isn’t the same everywhere. While you probably realize this on some level, chances are that you’ve never really thought about just *how* different it can be in other countries. While experiences may vary even within an individual country’s school system, one thing all American students are very familiar with is standardized testing. While all schools administer tests at some point or the other, their number differs vastly between schools and school systems. My guests will give you a glimpse of what school looks like elsewhere in the world.

**Speaker 1:** Hi. Elementary students in Finland spend around 75 minutes at recess, compared to just 27 minutes for American children. The thinking goes: children don’t learn if they don’t play, so they have to play – every day, even if it’s cold. Finland is internationally recognized as a model for progressive educational philosophies, and the general rule of thumb is 15 minutes of recess per hour of work. Play is considered more important than homework. Finland quickly rose up the PISA test-score chart over the past few decades, which is why American schools are now trying to emulate their methods. In significant contrast to American schools, Finnish students don’t take standardized tests until they graduate from high school. Teachers are also held in incredibly high regard. And that’s really how it should be since the right teacher truly has the power to change a child’s life if you ask me.

**Speaker 2:** I grew up in the Philippines and attended a somewhat rural school, in which grades 1–6 were together in one classroom. The groupings in the class were based entirely on intellect, with the “smart kids” in group one and those who were “not so good at school” in group 6, with descending levels between. While it worked well because I wasn’t competing with people who weren’t at my level, I would have “felt dumb” if I had been placed in the lowest group.

We all went home for lunch, which was about a five-minute walk, and enjoyed snacks packed by our mothers during recess, where we also played Hopscotch and similar games. In terms of classes, some were taught in English and some in Tagalog. While most students knew English after a few years, they didn’t practice it often. There were also large holiday celebrations at school, including gift exchanges at Christmas and festivals and parades in the spring.

Also, there are two “shifts” of schooling in many schools in the Philippines, with one starting quite early between 6 and 7 am and the other starting after lunch. The schedule is an attempt to solve the problem of overcrowding and the lack of space due to poverty in the country.

Teachers frequently have to deal with 65 children at a time, and sometimes there aren’t enough chairs or desks for everyone. While the rich can send their children to private institutions with air conditioning and computers, rural public schools often have to make do without reliable electricity, and classes are sometimes held outside or in the stairwell, so these two types of schooling are vastly different.

**Speaker 3:** I have been a high school teacher in the United Kingdom for eight years, and schools typically begin between 8:45 and 9 am. One school in London even moved back to a 10 am start time after research showed that students learn better later in the morning.

Once they get to school, students refer to teachers as ‘Sir’ or ‘Miss’, which feels a bit odd. Most male teachers have never been knighted by the Queen and married female teachers don’t usually go by the name ‘Miss,’ but teachers are never called by their first name because we are English. Therefore, we do lots of pointless things because the powers-that-be fear anything that we didn’t do in the days of the British Empire. Sadly, high fives, fist bumps, and one-on-one dance greetings are not prevalent in classrooms, apart from *my* classroom.

**Speaker 4:** Across multiple standardized test models, Singapore students have been labeled “the smartest.” The country’s traditional lecture-based learning process boasts major success, but it also has kids taking life-changing tests as early as primary school. Students have already been “tracked” into lower- and higher-achieving brackets by age 12. Movements are underway to remake the education system to de-emphasize grades and reprioritize skill-ready future employees.

The aim is to provide students with greater choice to meet their different interests and ways of learning. Being able to choose what and how they learn will encourage them to take greater ownership of their learning.

**Speaker 5:** In Thailand, for example, students typically sit at desks with other students, rather than individually, and group learning is considered “productive and effective.”

Surprisingly, students may often be on their phones or even answer phone calls in class. There is a lot of talking while class is in session. It may appear disorderly or chaotic to Americans, but this works in Thailand. And this behavior shouldn’t be confused with disrespect, as the country holds the teachers in very high esteem. There’s even a special ceremony for teachers on a national holiday called Wai Khru, when students provide them with flowers, in alignment with the hierarchical culture there.

Another notable difference is that students do not wear shoes in the classroom, and even some hallways. There is a uniform in most schools. Boys are also required to have certain haircuts. In the morning before school at the beginning of the year, you can hear teachers shaving boys’ heads who don’t meet the requirements.

Plus, sports are less of an ongoing daily occurrence in high schools. Instead, there are specific days in which schools compete in a variety of events, with little training ahead of time.

**Speaker 6:** In the United Arab Emirates many schools are segregated by gender and social norms for how a male teacher is allowed to interact with a female student are “quite rigid.” A casual relationship is not seen as culturally appropriate in Islamic countries, so there tends to be a more formal and professional relationship between teachers and students.

When it comes to career paths, parents tend to encourage things like law, business, medicine, and engineering over the arts, humanities, and teaching. Maybe that isn’t all that different from some parents in the States, but there is a different expectation in terms of how children follow those directives. Therefore, learning how to encourage students to follow their passions while also being respectful to the parents’ expectations is difficult.

## **2 g** Aspect: sport

## Track 13 + 14

### **Paralympic sports**

**Speaker 1:** Personally, I am fairly new in parasport. So far, I feel like there’s a lot of inclusion. Everybody looks out for each other, and I was pretty much welcomed into a sport I didn’t know about. I didn’t know anybody. And everybody is just kind and wants to see me succeed and try different things out. People understand you, like in a family, a community. It’s like you can be vulnerable because people understand you at a base level. And I think parasport’s really interesting. But I think inclusion of sport in general has a long way to go still. I think we’re still viewed as less than the Olympics – namely as the Paralympics – and so I think that whole movement has still a lot of work to do.

**Speaker 2:** I came to parasport quite late. I got hurt in 2005 and didn’t start until 2018. After I got hurt in 2005, one day I was fine and the next day I wasn’t so fine. I tried to hide my disability as well as I could and did able-bodied sport. And whenever someone asked about the last lap that was not so good, I was like “oh, I just have a really bad form” and would brush it off. I wouldn’t even tell my college coach. But when I joined the Paralympics, I let that happen. And you know I really noticed I was running better. A lot of times people don’t know how to address me because my disability is in my brain. So people are like “what’s wrong with you?” and I say, “that’s probably not the best way to say that.” I think I have really gotten better because, you know, sometimes those disabilities can be very serious ones and you can’t see mine unless you see a CAT scan.

**Speaker 3:** This year we were in the Commonwealth Games for the first time playing three and three basketball and it was amazing because it was so inclusive. You had the Canadian team playing standup ball, then wheelchair, then standup, then wheelchair and so we were all super integrated. We were in the back together; we were talking to each other; we were riding the bus together. They were able to ask tons of questions about wheelchair basketball. Having events like that is a huge moving forward in all sport. We need that extra voice from able-bodied sports, people saying “what I saw was so cool!” We should go do it and get our butts in a chair and try it out. You know, because it’s always different when you actually try it and you’re like “oh my God, this is so hard!”

**Speaker 4:** I have a passion for my sport. Any questions coming along about it I want to talk about; I want people to know about it. So when I’m in the gym by myself or just anywhere and people are coming around asking questions, I think it’s a really good opportunity because I didn’t know about basketball prior to my injury. And I wish I even just watched it, heard about it. And I didn’t know anything about parasports. So being able to kind of showcase it to people that might be the first time watching somebody play in a wheelchair is something I want to give out to other people. I’ve never met someone who didn’t like parasport; they just don’t quite understand it. So I’m more than happy to talk about my sport. It’s just who I am as I’m really proud to be a Paralympian.



**Speaker 5:** When I reached out to a bunch of shoe companies, they said, “Well, you haven’t won anything yet. Come and talk to us again when you have some medals.” And then I basically won everything that you could win and I came back to them. And they said that “your story is not good enough and your disability is not sexy.” And so I thought maybe I just need to tell my story better. There are able-bodied athletes who are running barely faster than me and have shoe deals that I can’t get.

So I finally tweeted saying “hey you know I’m not mad at this certain company but I’m getting tired of companies saying that they’re going to sponsor a pair of athletes and just sponsor *one* in the world.” I was done this year. I actually almost had to quit because I couldn’t pay my bills and I’m in the best shape I’ve ever been in and set a huge personal best indoors. I think that was really frustrating.

## **2 h** Aspect: unusual workplaces

Track 15 + 16

### **What is it like to live in Antarctica?**

**Presenter A:** Scott’s Hut, Antarctica. The hut built by the British Antarctic Expedition of 1910–1913, led by Robert Falcon Scott who would eventually die on his way back here. It’s kind of hallowed ground for explorers to see how fast they departed and how they left everything behind. Although it was an improvement over the first hut built at Hut Point, living here was pretty rough. And even today, in some ways, it still is.

**Presenter B:** But despite its hostility, people are still drawn to this desolate continent today. What is living here like now? Who comes here and why?

**Presenter A:** While living in Antarctica for a month, we experienced basically two very different lifestyles: one in the remote fuel camps, the other in what residents affectionately call “the town”: McMurdo Station.

**Presenter B:** This 105-building station was established in the 1950s and today houses around 900 people in summer.

**Presenter A:** McMurdo provides logistical support for science across western Antarctica and the South Pole, but most people in this town aren’t scientists. There are the people who handle the trash. There are the cargo coordinators, carpenters, cooks, the mechanics, ...

**Technician:** Without us, without support people, there would be no science. You need this big population of 700 to 1,000 people to support maybe 300 scientists, because you’ve got to get them where they need to go. You’ve got to get their equipment, their food, their water and so forth.

**Presenter B:** They’re essential for the science to happen, but a lot of them never even get to leave the station, which looks sort of like an ageing mining town on its way out. So it’s hard to see on the surface what’s so appealing about this place. So why do people come here?

**Technician:** Well, people either come down for their first season, say “that’s it”, it’s a bucket list thing, they come out of curiosity, the unknown, then they never come back. And there’s others, you know, that just come back year after year after year. It’s either just out of adventure, or they simply get into the community and stay with the community. I never thought I’d be doing this. I left a pretty good job to come down here.

**Presenter B:** What was your previous job?

**Technician:** I worked on the space shuttle, Kennedy Space Centre, Florida.

**Presenter B:** No kidding? Space shuttle to snowmobiles.

**Technician:** Yeah, yeah, I know. It’s kind of ...

**Presenter B:** That’s really ... You must really like it down here!

**Presenter A:** In a way, McMurdo kind of operates like a college campus. All of your basic needs like meals and housing are taken care of.

**Refuse collector:** You can do more with your social time here than anywhere else in the world because you’re not buying groceries or not buying gas, not paying bills. I see more live music

here than I do almost anywhere else. And then I get to eat three meals a day with eight of my close friends, you know.

**Presenter A:** In the few weeks we spent here, we found that the bottom of the world is actually a pretty social place.

**Worker:** I mean, there's a lot of people who come here to escape people. Yeah, but, it's not that great of a place to escape people, honestly.

**Presenter B:** And it turns out on a continent where there is no cell phone service, you get to know people on a whole different level.

While McMurdo Station can be the social and logistical hub of Antarctica, the science it supports can happen in much more remote and isolated environments. This is where we encountered the second Antarctic lifestyle.

**Presenter A:** Out in the remote field camps, things aren't as you're used to or as they are in McMurdo; you often live in a tent, cook your own food, even poop in a bucket and bring it back to town. Outside you have to watch out for deadly hidden cracks. And, of course, it's freezing cold and windy.

**Presenter B:** In addition to surviving though, researchers or logistical support teams have to, well, deal with an environment that makes everything exponentially harder. Be it in McMurdo or in a remote camp.

**Hydrogeologist:** Working here is like going up the down escalator. You have to push a little bit harder or else it can push you back down again. And so things are breaking all the time, it's cold, so things snap, things freeze up. You have to make that extra push in order to make things work again.

**Presenter B:** But despite the challenges, or perhaps because of them, comes an addictive sense of satisfaction.

**Hydrogeologist:** I always tell people it becomes more and more like work all the time and that's just a joke, it's not true ... *(fade out)*

## **2 i** Aspect: learning

## Track 17 + 18

### **Three tips on how to study effectively**

During their training, medical residents learn countless techniques, surgeries, and procedures which they'll later use to save lives. Being able to remember these skills can quite literally be a matter of life and death. With this in mind, a research study took a class of surgical residents and split them into two groups. Each received the same study materials, but one group implemented a small change in how they studied them. And when tested one month later, this group performed significantly better than the other residents.

We'll discuss the secret to that group's success along with two other highly effective study techniques which can be applied both in and out of the classroom. But to understand why these methods work, let's first unpack how the brain learns and stores information.

Say you're trying to memorize the anatomy of the heart. When you're introduced to a new concept, the memory is temporarily encoded in groups of neurons in a brain area called the hippocampus.

As you continue to learn about workings of the heart in class or study its chambers for an exam, you reactivate these same neurons. This repeated firing strengthens the connections between the cells, stabilizing the memory. Gradually, the knowledge of heart anatomy is stored long-term, which involves another brain area known as the neocortex. How information is transferred from short-term to long-term storage is still not completely understood, but it's thought to happen in between study sessions and perhaps most crucially during sleep. Here the new knowledge is integrated with other related concepts you already know, such as how to measure a heart rate, or the anatomy of other organs.

And the process doesn't end there. Each time you recall heart anatomy, you reactivate long-term memory, which makes it susceptible to change. The knowledge can be updated, strengthened,

and reintegrated with other pieces of information. This is where our first study technique comes in.

Testing yourself with flashcards and quizzes forces you to actively retrieve knowledge, which updates and strengthens the memory. Students often prefer other study methods, like rereading textbooks and highlighting notes. But these practices can generate a false sense of competence, since the information is right in front of you. Testing yourself, however, allows you to more accurately gauge what you actually know.

But what if, while doing this, you can't remember the answers? Not to worry – making mistakes can actually improve learning in the long term. It's theorized that as you rack your brain for the answer, you activate relevant pieces of knowledge. Then, when the correct answer is later revealed, the brain can better integrate this information with what you already know.

Our second technique builds on the first. When using flashcards to study, it's best to mix the deck with multiple subjects. Interleaving, or mixing the concepts you focus on in a single session, can lead to better retention than practicing a single skill or topic at a time. One hypothesis of why this works is that, similar to testing, cycling through different subjects forces your brain to temporarily forget, then retrieve information, further strengthening the memory. You may also find connections across the topics, and better understand their differences.

Now that you know *how* and *what* to study, our final technique concerns *when*. Spacing your review across multiple days allows for rest and sleep between sessions. While “offline,” the brain is actively at work, storing and integrating knowledge in the neocortex. So while cramming the night before the exam may seem logical – after all, won't the material be fresh in your mind? – the information won't stick around for the long term. This brings us back to our medical residents. Both groups studied the surgery for the same amount of time. Yet one group's training was crammed in a single day, while the other more successful group's training was spread over four weeks.

The reason all three of these study techniques work is because they're designed with the brain in mind. They complement and reinforce the incredible way the brain works, sorting through and storing the abundance of information it's fed day after day.

## **2j** Aspect: herbs

Track 19 + 20

### **Evidence-based benefits of stinging nettle**

Stinging nettle is a nutritious plant popular in Western herbal medicine and has been a staple in herbal medicine since ancient times. Ancient Egyptians used it to treat arthritis and lower back pain, while Roman troops rubbed it on themselves to help stay warm. Its scientific name, “*Urtica dioica*”, comes from the Latin word “uro”, which means “to burn,” because its leaves can cause a temporary burning sensation upon contact. The leaves have hair-like structures that sting and also produce itching, redness and swelling.

However, once it is processed into a supplement, dried, freeze-dried or cooked, stinging nettle can be safely consumed. Studies link it to a number of potential health benefits.

Stinging nettle's leaves and roots provide a wide variety of nutrients, including vitamins A, C and K, as well as several B vitamins, minerals such as calcium, iron, magnesium, phosphorus, potassium and sodium, various fats and amino acids many of which also act as antioxidants inside your body. Antioxidants are molecules that help defend your cells against damage from free radicals. Damage caused by free radicals is linked to aging, as well as cancer and other harmful diseases. Studies indicate that stinging nettle extract can raise blood antioxidant levels, but it is unlikely that the amount of stinging nettle in herbal supplements would provide significant amounts of most of these compounds.

Stinging nettle harbors a variety of compounds that may reduce inflammation. In animal and test-tube studies, stinging nettle reduced levels of multiple inflammatory markers by interfering with their production. In human studies, applying a stinging nettle cream or consuming stinging nettle products appears to relieve inflammatory conditions, such as arthritis. For instance, in one 27-

person study, applying a stinging nettle cream onto arthritis-affected areas significantly reduced pain, compared to a placebo treatment. In another study, taking a supplement that contained stinging nettle extract significantly reduced arthritis pain. Additionally, participants felt they could reduce their dose of anti-inflammatory pain relievers because of this capsule. Yet, research is still insufficient to recommend stinging nettle as an anti-inflammatory treatment. More human studies are needed.

Let us now focus on yet another potential benefit. Hay fever is an allergy that involves inflammation in the lining of your nose. Stinging nettle is viewed as a promising natural treatment for hay fever. Test-tube research shows that stinging nettle extracts can inhibit inflammation that can trigger seasonal allergies. This includes blocking histamine receptors and stopping immune cells from releasing chemicals that trigger allergy symptoms. However, human studies note that stinging nettle is equal to or only slightly better at treating hay fever than a placebo. Thus, more long-term human studies are needed.

Stinging nettle has been traditionally used to treat high blood pressure for some time. Animal and test-tube studies illustrate that it may help lower blood pressure in several ways. For one, it may stimulate nitric oxide production, which acts as a vasodilator. Vasodilators relax the muscles of your blood vessels, helping them widen. In addition, stinging nettle has compounds that may act as calcium channel blockers, which relax your heart by reducing the force of contractions. In animal studies, stinging nettle has been shown to lower blood pressure levels while raising the heart's antioxidant defenses. Nonetheless, stinging nettle's effects on blood pressure in humans are still unclear.

Although consuming dried or cooked stinging nettle is generally safe, you shouldn't eat fresh leaves, as they may cause irritation. There are a few potential side effects that should not remain unmentioned. Be careful, for instance, when handling fresh stinging nettle leaves, as their hair-like barbs can harm your skin. These barbs can inject an array of chemicals, such as: acetylcholine, histamine, or serotonin all of which can cause rashes, bumps, hives and itchiness. However, these chemicals diminish as the leaves are processed, meaning that you shouldn't experience mouth or stomach irritation when eating dried or cooked stinging nettle. Pregnant women should avoid consuming stinging nettle because it may trigger uterine contractions. Also, speak to your doctor before consuming stinging nettle if you're taking, for example, blood thinners, blood pressure medication or diabetes medication. Stinging nettle could interact with these medications.

Stinging nettle is incredibly easy to add to your daily routine. It can be purchased in many health food stores, but you can also grow it yourself. You can buy dried or freeze-dried leaves, capsules, tinctures and creams. Stinging nettle ointments are often used to ease osteoarthritis symptoms. The dried leaves and flowers can be steeped to make a delicious herbal tea, while its leaves, stem and roots can be cooked and added to soups, stews, smoothies and stir-fries.

Stinging nettle is very versatile. If you're curious, why not try adding this leafy green to your diet?

## **2 k** Aspect: travel destinations

Track 21 + 22

### **A home in the rocks**

The region of Cappadocia, in Türkiye's Central Anatolia region, is renowned for its otherworldly beauty. This dramatic landscape consists of high plateaus, lunar-like boulders and the rocky pillars known as 'fairy chimneys'. The rocky topography changes colour from red to purple when the sun sets, and gleams softly under the full moon. There's plenty to explore here for adventure lovers. You could hike through Sword Valley, following the paths that meander between its sharply pointed fairy chimneys. Another spectacular hiking trail takes you through nearby Rose Valley, where the undulating rock formations are striated in different shades of pink. Cross the rifts and folds of this surreal landscape on a mountain bike, or head off on a multi-day horseback ride passing through the region's traditional troglodyte villages. It's the ideal place to try paragliding; drifting on thermals over the region's spires and valleys in the fading light.

While exploring Cappadocia, you'll see that many of the fairy chimneys have small entrances and openings in them. Explore more closely and you'll discover the landscape is honeycombed with rooms, which have been painstakingly hollowed into the soft rock. But how were these mysterious rock formations created in the first place?

Millions of years ago, volcanic eruptions rained ash across the Central Anatolia region. This volcanic ash hardened into tuff, which is a soft, porous rock. This was eventually covered by a layer of harder basalt. Millennia passed, and the slow process of erosion began. Wind and water slowly wore away the softer tuff to form pillars of rock. The basalt on top eroded more slowly and formed a mushroom-shaped cap over each pillar, protecting it from further erosion. The geological name for this rock formation is 'hoodoo', but they're more often known as 'fairy chimneys', 'tent rocks' or 'earth pyramids'.

Cappadocia lies on the historic Silk Route – a network of ancient trading routes running from China to Türkiye. Various civilisations have laid claim to the territory. It was an Indo-European people known as the Hittites who first settled the area, in around 1800 BC. They soon realised that the soft tuff could be excavated and carved into rooms. In fact, they created entire underground cities. One of the most famous is Derinkuyu – a labyrinthine underground complex encompassing 18 levels of tunnels, burrowing down to 85 metres below the ground. But this wasn't just the work of the Hittites. It's thought that they excavated just the first few floors and used the caves as spaces to hide from the Phrygians. To no avail – the Phrygians took over the cities and they are likely responsible for the large-scale excavations the area is known for.

The underground civilisations of Cappadocia were used to their fullest extent during the Byzantine period (which began in 330 AD). At this point in time, the expanding Roman Empire hunted and cruelly persecuted the new Christian religion. By the 7<sup>th</sup> century, Islamic civilisations were also conducting raids on the Byzantine Christians. During its peak, it's thought that around 20,000 residents were able to shelter underground in Derinkuyu.

In times of peace, however, people dwelled above ground. They carved out homes for themselves in the 'fairy chimneys' of Cappadocia. You can still see the soot-blackened walls of former kitchens, and Byzantine churches hewn into the rock. Dark Church has the best-preserved frescos. Some of the region's more interesting inhabitants were Stylite ascetics – 6<sup>th</sup> century monks who lived on top of pillars. Examples of these Stylite hermitages include St Niketas Church and the Rose Valley monastic area.

The underground cities of Cappadocia were used intermittently up until the 20<sup>th</sup> century, when Cappadocian Greeks used them to escape persecution. But when the last residents were expelled from them in 1923, the subterranean cities were closed up and forgotten. Many people moved into more modern settlements built out of, rather than into, the rock. In 1963, a man from Nevsehir province near the Turkish city of Cappadocia was renovating his basement. Imagine his surprise when he knocked down a wall and discovered a secret room behind it. While exploring, he realised that there was a tunnel leading out of the room, and descending into a dark labyrinth. He'd found a way into the city of Derinkuyu.

It was in the 1960s that tourists became interested in the region. In 1985, the Rock Sites of Cappadocia gained a UNESCO designation, which helped preserve and rehabilitate the area. Many of the fairy chimneys and cave complexes have now been converted into boutique hotels, where it's possible to have a comfortable stay in a unique location.

Even today, lost subterranean metropolises are still being discovered. In 2019, a 5,000-year-old underground city was discovered under the Çalış township of Avanos, in the heart of Cappadocia. Around 15 houses in the district had called to say their houses were mysteriously filling up with water. While searching for the cause, municipality crews discovered the submerged underground city, which stretches to almost 1.2 million square metres. This shows that the Cappadocia region has yet to reveal all its secrets.

**Crossing Mexico ever more challenging for migrants**

In 2023, US border agents were trying to process 10,000 migrants wanting to cross into the US from Mexico every day. In April 2024, that number was significantly down, which is surprising because crossings typically rise in spring as it gets warmer. But as the Boston-based news program *The World* reports, it's not that the migrants stopped coming, it's that they're increasingly stuck in Mexico. Huehuetoca is a rural village about forty miles north of Mexico City. This place would go unnoticed if it weren't for the hundreds of migrants who come here every day looking for a place known as El Basurero, or "the landfill." El Basurero doesn't show up on most maps, but everyone here knows about it. So I ask for directions. When I arrive, I see there is indeed a huge landfill, with trucks and workers bringing in the garbage.

The reason why migrants come here is to catch cargo trains going to the north of Mexico. The trains often stop here for several minutes to change tracks, and people jump on the roof and ride for twenty hours or more. Dozens of migrants are waiting for the next train. The schedule changes every day and it's subject to mystery and speculation.

There's one coming at 3 pm, says Andreína Rodríguez. She comes from Venezuela and is here with her daughter, Ashley, who's six and very excited about the train. Ashley sees riding the train as an adventure. But the adults are well aware of the dangers. There's the risk of falling and losing an arm or leg. There is hypothermia or heat stroke after being exposed to the elements for so many hours.

But in recent months, the trains have become a preferred transportation mode for migrants heading to the US. And that's because the Mexican government started making it harder for undocumented migrants to cross the country on their way to the US.

The National Authority for Migration has suspended providing humanitarian permits that allow for people to transit. Without those permits, the migrants can't buy bus tickets. Truckers and other motorists face fines if they give rides to undocumented people. And there are immigration checkpoints along the highway and on public buses.

In the first two months of the year, Mexico said it detained three times more migrants than the same period last year. Josmar García, another migrant from Venezuela in the landfill, says he had to walk for days and sometimes bribe police officers to board public buses and get to Mexico City. He was lucky because he had some money.

Migrants who get caught without money are sent to the south of Mexico, which has its own dangers. Members of organized crime have set up operations there and migrants are often robbed, kidnapped and extorted.

Andreína Rodríguez says Mexico has been the most difficult part of her journey. She tells me she was advised to take birth control pills because rape is common in Mexico. By traveling on these trains, the migrants are hoping to avoid immigration authorities and cartel members.

After waiting for seven hours, a group of construction workers repairing the tracks yelled that the train is finally coming. People grab their belongings and run to the train. Their faces show a mix of fear and excitement. The train stops for a few minutes to switch tracks and the migrants climb up to the roof. Once they're there, they take selfies and wave at us.

The next morning, I checked in with Josmar García and Andreína Rodríguez to see if they made it to the north of Mexico. They said immigration officials stopped the train about an hour after leaving the landfill. They forced the migrants off the train and onto a bus that headed back to the south of Mexico, except for those who could pay bribes.

Josmar says he gave the officers everything he had, about 300 dollars, and they let him stay in the area. Now he's working in construction to save money and continue northward. Andreína did not have the money, and she was bussed back south with her daughter and the rest of the migrants. She told me that she's determined to reach the US with her daughter, and they will cross Mexico as many times as it takes to get there.

### **Textnachweis Listening tracks (MP3s)**

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