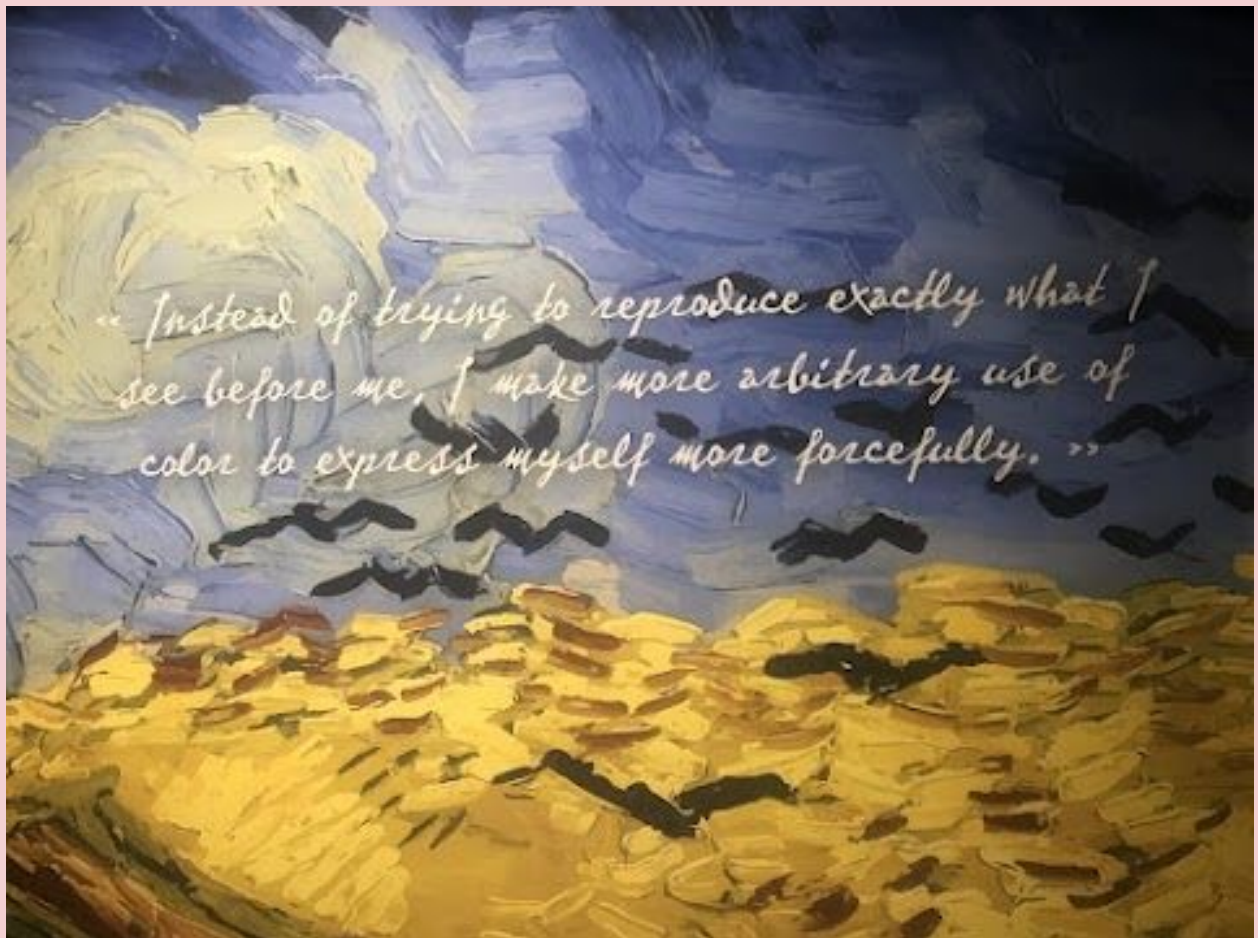


Meopham Monthly

Meopham School's Student Magazine
Issue 21: April-May 2024



Contact us at MSS-magazine@swale.at or come along on a Thursday lunchtime in the Library.

Cover photo by
Nshira Ansah

WELCOME

Hello! Welcome to our April-May issue of Meopham Monthly. This issue features lots of beautiful pictures from the Easter trip to Cyprus and an interview with one of our star footballers in year 8, as well as theatre trip and book reviews.

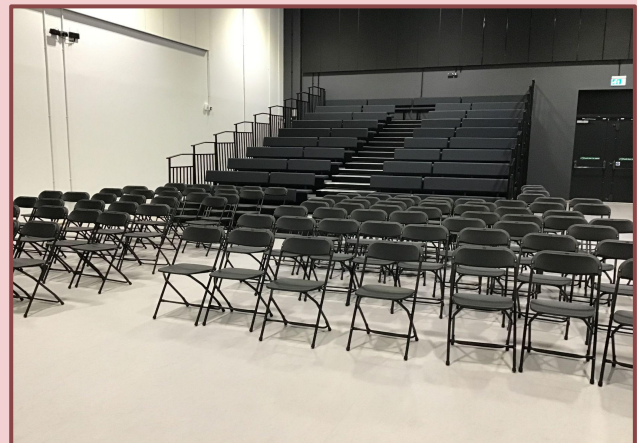
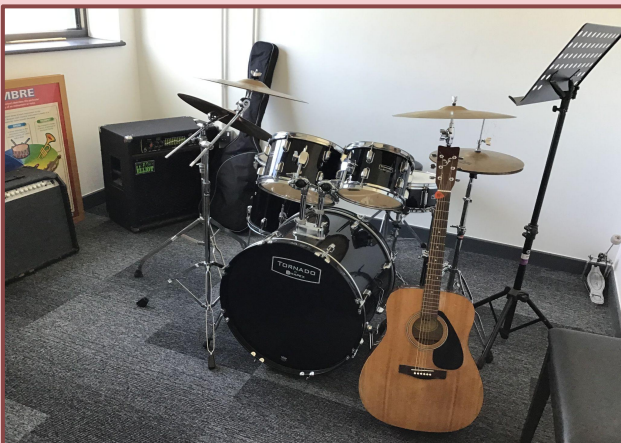
If you would like to submit a short story, article, poem, photos or anything else for our future issues, please contact the team at MSS-magazine@swale.at or come along on a Thursday lunchtime in the Library from 12.50pm.

We hope you enjoy this issue!

Editor: Robyn Fitzpatrick (Yr 13)

Editor's Song of the Month: 'The Last Time' by Taylor Swift

NEW BUILDING NOW OPEN!



Photos taken by Albie S

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**With thanks to everyone who
contributed this month:**

Nshira Ansah (Yr8)

Luke Ricketts (Yr11)

Mia Colledge (Yr8)

Amelia Rogers (Yr8)

Joshua Croxford (Yr7)

Albie Snelson (Yr10)

Lily Deal (Yr8)

Mr Vilday

Charlotte Hooker (Yr13)

Mrs Vince

Silver Kesby (Yr8)

Mrs Williamson

James Reader (Yr11)

EDITOR'S NOTE

By Robyn Fitzpatrick (Year 13)

I remember when I was in Year 11, about to sit my GCSEs, Mrs Williamson pitched the idea of a **school magazine**. At the time we had just been practicing how to write articles for our exams, so magazines and newspapers were brought to our English class the following week so that we could look through and get inspiration on structure and content. Prior to this I had no real knowledge of what usually went into a magazine, much less a school one, but I went into the first magazine meeting with a rough idea of what to expect, and even then I could never have guessed what Meopham Monthly would become.

The first issue was released in March of 2022, featuring so many incredible stories and articles from such a wide range of student contributions, that really set the tone for what the magazine was capable of doing, especially in terms of collating the school's culture and **broadening our individual understanding of the collective**. The weekly magazine meetings created a new community in the school of people who loved to write, and to be a part of that community has been so very inspiring. Even now, two years later, walking around the corridors and being able to say hello to students who have contributed or come along to the meetings is incredibly rewarding.

As Editor from the first issue to my last, it's interesting to compare the differences and developments between both the design and content of the magazine. Over the course of the two years that Meopham Monthly has been running, there have been many cover changes to mark the start of each new era, and the list of contributors has grown exponentially. I've also noticed that the magazine has **become more interactive with other communities around school**: our previous issue, for example, featured reviews and summaries of school trips for theatre and science, allowing a fluid mixture of humanities and STEM in a manner that everyone can easily enjoy.

For me, the scariest moment of writing is before I start, holding pen above paper waiting for the perfect entanglement of words to spill out. Being a part of this community of writers and creatives is so inspiring and I hope that our lovely contributors found inspiration from their work on the magazine, because all of it was so wonderful to read.

The experience of being editor has been so rewarding and I will be forever grateful! In fact, the chance to write for the magazine has unlocked many new opportunities for me; on the following page you can see an article I wrote for King's College London that was published online in their spring Comparative Literature magazine, and in September I will be moving on to University to study English Literature and Creative Writing. If you take anything from this note, I would like for it to be this: pursue your passions, no matter how silly or useless you believe them to be.

Since the beginning I have been very attached to the magazine. I love getting to choose the book recommendations for the month (as well as my recently added song of the month - can you tell I have a favourite artist?), so I will be sad to see it go. **I would like to conclude by saying a massive thank you to Mrs Williamson for creating the magazine to begin with, the incredible Editorial Team who make every meeting so exciting, and to our loyal readers who get excited every month to read the new issues.**

Thank you,
Robyn.

LEGACIES OF COLONIALISM

By Robyn Fitzpatrick (Year 13)

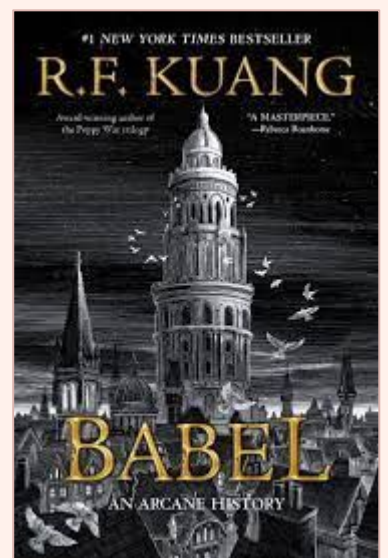
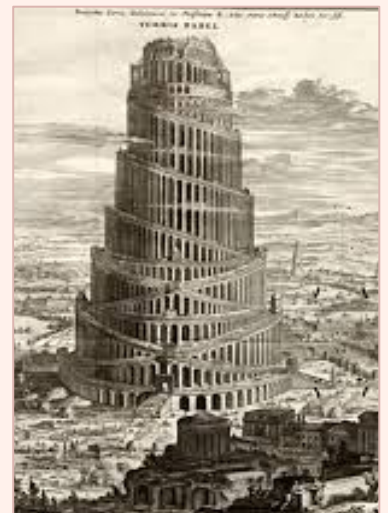
Colonialism, the process of a powerful country overtaking the control of another country in an attempt to exploit their economic prospects or population, involves pushing the hegemonic ideals of the colonisers society throughout history. Through the **historical narrative** pushed by colonisers, they have the ability to characterise themselves as the saviours, whilst simultaneously characterising those who they wish to colonise as inadequate.

This idea of colonialism is thoroughly explored within the world of **'Babel'** by **R.F Kuang**, as the author uses a fictional depiction of Oxford alongside real world history to craft an explanation as to how narrative can influence societal perception: *"History isn't a premade tapestry... We can form it. We just have to choose to make it"*. Beyond the aestheticism of tapestries, they are used as reliable historical sources of cultural and social norms. The reference to a *"tapestry"* rather than another form of art has implications of crafting and rewriting history, accentuating the concept of decolonisation.

Kuang characterises the protagonist, Robin Swift, as experiencing the **complexities between aspects of identity** as a direct result of colonialism. Robin has to choose between the utopia of being accepted in England as an asset to furthering the empire's power, and fighting against colonialism. Kuang focuses on how those being colonised are conditioned into believing the view that they are the problem: *"This is how colonialism works. It convinces us that the fallout from resistance is entirely our fault"*.

The **importance of language and the act of translation as betrayal** is thoroughly explored throughout 'Babel', as Kuang uses linguistic differences to describe the process of colonisation: *"Language was always the companion of empire, together they begin, grow, and flourish. And later, together, they fall"*. This references the decline of language, shown through the theoretical decline of the empire - as English decreases as the hegemonic language, the importance of speaking a lesser known language holds higher importance. Moreover, the title 'Babel' links to the **biblical allusion** that presents an allegory for the novel as a whole; the Tower of Babel was built as people wanted to be closer to Heaven, and so they ignored God's commands to stop building. This caused God to destroy the Tower, and therefore this symbolises desire for power in regards to the colonisers in 'Babel' desiring the language that would empower them.

Furthermore the process of decolonisation is explored throughout linguistic contexts and secret societies that function underneath Oxford University. Once Robin realises that the British Empire is planning on exploiting his motherland - *"It took witnessing it happening, in person, for me to realize all the abstractions were real"* - he attempts to initiate the process of decolonisation and Kuang therefore suggests plans for a decolonised future.



First published in King's College London's Comp Lit Mag (Spring 2024)

MR VILDAY'S VIEW

Views from a latter-day Viking

The joys of the English language

One thing I've become more aware of as I've got older and have travelled more around the UK, is just how weird and wonderful the English language is. There are certain dialects, for example Geordie, which are lovely to hear but at times, to a Southerner, completely incomprehensible.

When I was at university there was a lad on my floor in the Halls of residence who was from Spennymoor, deep in the Geordie heartlands. Not only did he have a deep accent, but he also spoke so fast that nobody, not even another lad from Newcastle, could understand him. It took 2 to 3 weeks to get him to slow down enough that we could talk.

It's not just the dialect though that confuses tourist in particular, it's the way in which words have been adapted in the way we pronounce them.

I've done an exercise many times with different classes where I've written old surnames that still exist on the board and asked the class to pronounce them. My favourite ones are -

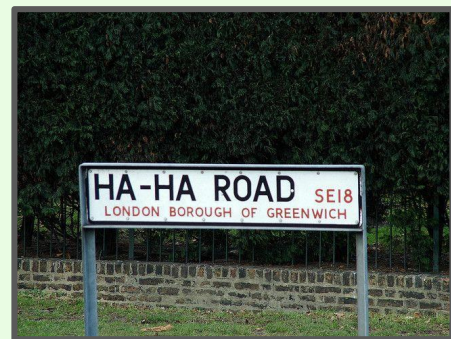
Name	Pronunciation
Featherstonehaugh	Fanshaw
Cholmondeley	Chumley
Marjoribanks	Marchbanks
Brougham	Broom
Beauchamp	Beecham

It's something we also see in place names. I use taxis a lot and the firm I use have an automated voice system to tell them the next job that they have. With the place names round here, the system can't cope so I'll often be hearing that the next job is in Issted Reece or Mee-o-fam or Roth Ham. Not sure how it would cope with Trottscliffe being Trosley.

The other thing with travel is the interesting place names you come across.



Devon, England



Greenwich, England

CONTINUED...



Aberdeenshire, Scotland



York, England



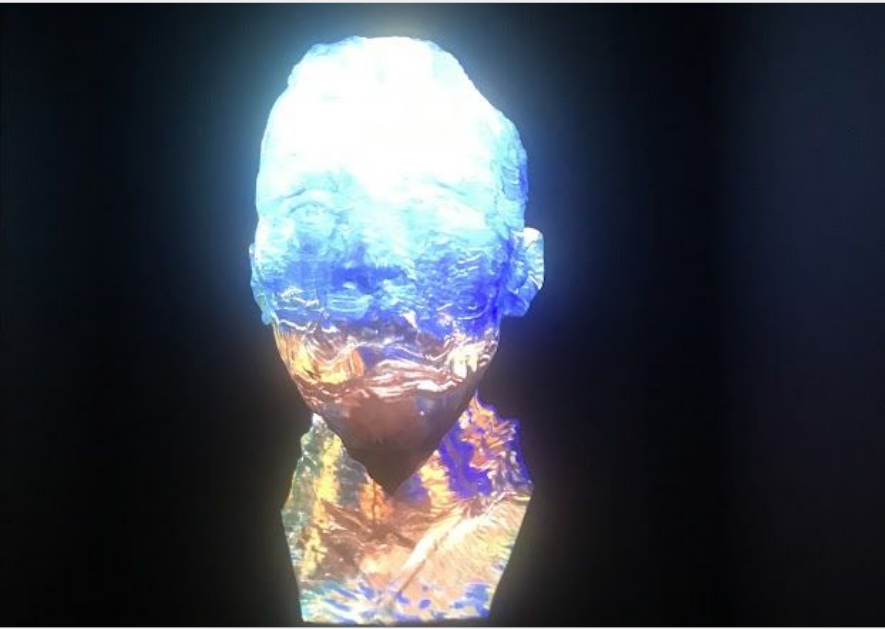
Kent, England

I think my favourite place name in the UK though is one that was actually made up in Victorian times to encourage tourism. Someone had the bright idea that if you renamed a village so it had the longest place name, certainly in Europe if not the world, then people would be curious enough to visit. It's on the isle of Anglesey in Wales and the idea was very successful and even now people will visit just to get a photograph of the railway sign.



Llanfairpwllgwyngyllgogerychwyrndrobwlllantysiliogogoch translates as St Mary's Church in the Hollow of the White Hazel near a Rapid Whirlpool and the Church of St. Tysilio near the Red Cave. That beats Gravesend any day of the week in my book!

THE GALLERY



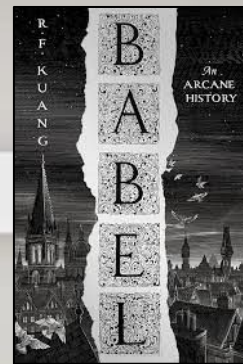
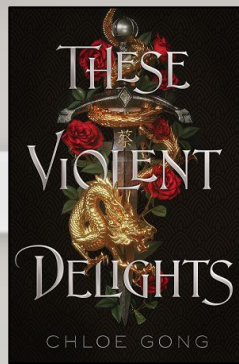
Photos by Nshira A and Charlotte H

THE GALLERY

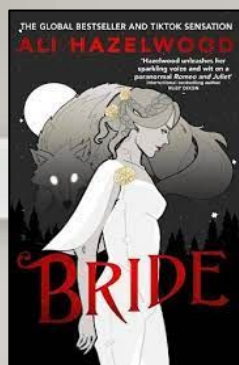
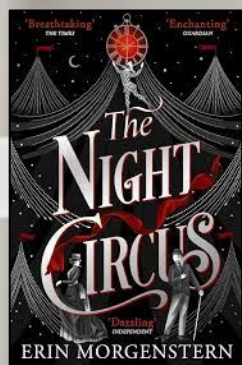


Photos from the Cyprus Trip by Mrs Vince

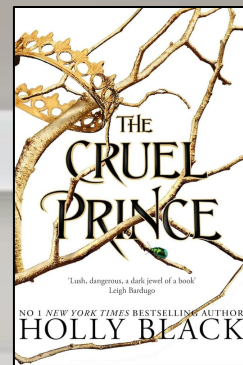
BOOK RECOMMENDATIONS



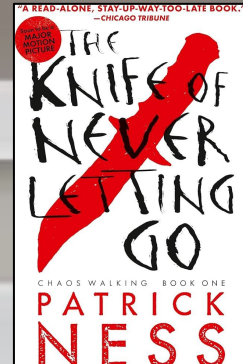
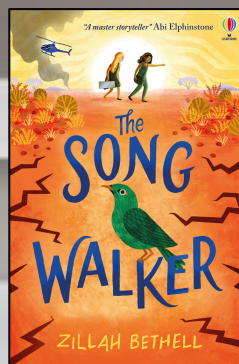
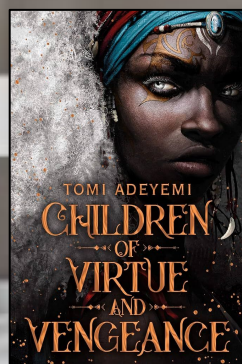
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11



9/10



7/8

If you have a recommendation, or would like to write a review for a future issue, email us at MSS-magazine@swale.at

BOOK REVIEWS

Song Walker

Review by Joshua Croxford (Yr7)

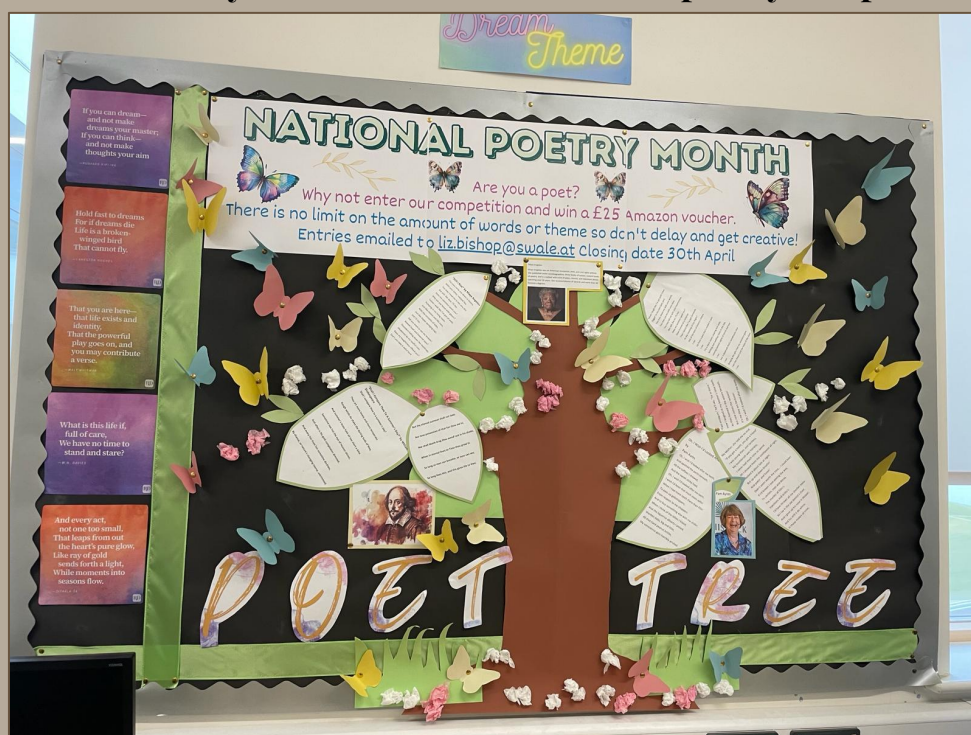


This book is about a girl who wakes up in the Australian desert with no idea of who she is and only one shoe! As the story progresses, the tensions and relationships between the characters are challenged.

It was quite a mysterious story about friendship and adventure, and I enjoyed it very much. I liked finding out who the girl was and how she got there. There was a surprising plot twist at the end that revealed much more about some of the characters.

I would recommend this book to year 7 and 8 students who like a mysterious adventure book.

Ms Bishop, our Librarian, does the best displays!
Visit the library to find out more about our poetry competition.



LIFE OF PI TRIP

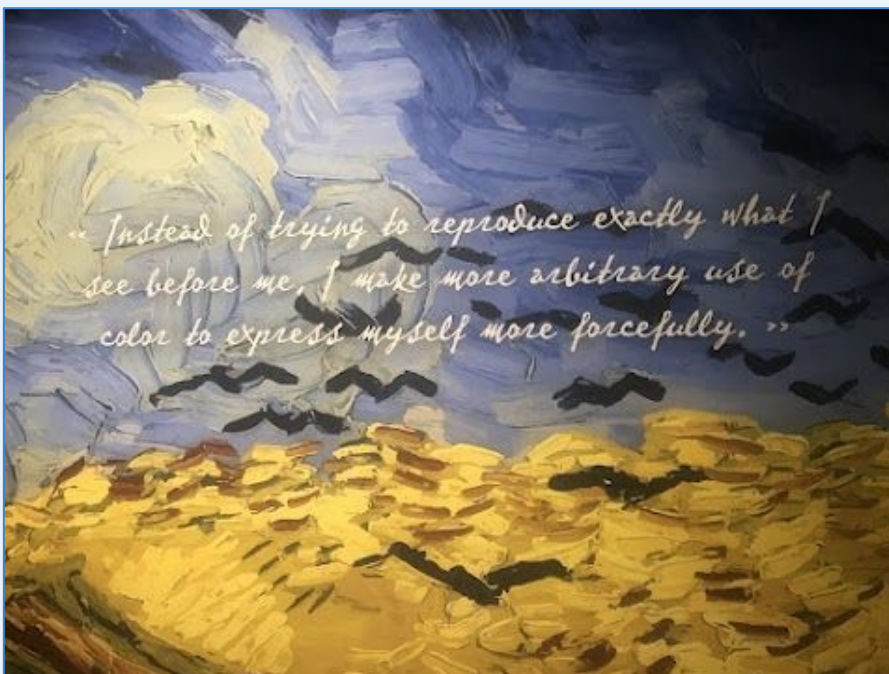
By Lily Deal & Silver Kesby (Yr8)

On Thursday 22nd March, Year 8-11 went to go see The Life of Pi at the Churchill Theatre in Bromley. The show was about a 17 year old girl who got trapped on a boat with many dangerous animals for a long period of time. The girl received advice on how to survive by various family members. This show was visually outstanding and we all left the theatre feeling starstruck and amazed.



VINCENT VAN GOGH

By Nshira Ansah (Yr8)



Vincent Van Gogh was a Dutch Post-impressionist painter who is among the most famous and influential figures in the history of Western art. He created around 2100 artworks, including 860 oil paintings, most of them created during the last two years of his life.

There is also an exhibition named the Van Gogh immersive experience, where you can step into the pictures and learn more about his life.

PLAYING ACADEMY FOOTBALL

Mia Colledge (Yr8) interviewed by Amelia Rogers (Yr8)

How old were you when you first showed interest in football?

I first showed interest in football when I was 6 years old.

What positions do you/ have you played?

I have played in many positions including: midfield, winger and striker. Currently I play central midfielder.

How did you first get into playing for an academy?

I got into a Brighton and Hove Albion Academy by getting accepted to trial for the Under 13s team. I was in year 7 and there were loads of people there. It was pretty scary, but also exciting because it was such a good experience. I then got offered a place for the season.

How often do you train?

I train twice a week in Brighton on Tuesdays and Thursdays after school for two a half hours, and it takes 1 hour 20 minutes to get to the club. We also play matches on Sundays against the boys' team, which makes us faster.

What are your hopes for the future?

I hope to play football professionally, earn a contract for a professional club and have a successful footballing career.

Are there any professional footballers who have inspired you throughout your journey?

I am inspired by the England women's team because they are brilliant footballers who have won lots of trophies and inspired lots of young footballers.

How do you think the rest of your football journey will go?

I think the rest of my football journey will go well and successfully if I perform well for myself and for my team.



CYPRUS CATERING TRIP

By James Reader and Luke Ricketts (Yr11)

In the Easter holiday we went for 5 days to the Greek-Turkish island of Cyprus for a catering trip. It was a brilliant experience and we're really grateful to Mrs Vince for arranging it all.

On the first day we went to Aphrodite's Rock, the house of Dionysus and the city of Pathos. It was really hot but the beach was amazing and lots of people showed off their rock skipping skills (Maksim!) On day 2, we visited a halloumi-making farm with lots of goats. We got to watch the cheese being made, try it out and also hold some young goats. Mrs Wrighton absolutely loved this!

During the last couple of days, we tested our culinary skills by making burgers and moussaka at a hotel and we went to a vineyard (we weren't allowed to try the wine). We also visited a monastery in a beautiful village in the mountains; the village was very traditional but had some modern shops in it. Every night we played football on the beach (year 11 vs the others - we won with the help of Mr Aldridge!) and relaxed at the hotel.

It was really amazing to experience a different culture and see how things are done differently in another country, due to its location. We would highly recommend a visit to Cyprus, but also going on these kinds of trips overseas as it was a such an enjoyable trip.



CYPRUS CATERING TRIP

More photos from this amazing trip!



How to Cut a Pomegranate (2006)

Poem by Imtiaz Dharker

Never,' said my father,
'Never cut a pomegranate
through the heart. It will weep blood.
Treat it delicately, with respect.

Just slit the upper skin across four quarters.
This is a magic fruit,
so when you split it open, be prepared
for the jewels of the world to tumble out,
more precious than garnets,
more lustrous than rubies,
lit as if from inside.
Each jewel contains a living seed.
Separate one crystal.
Hold it up to catch the light.
Inside is a whole universe.
No common jewel can give you this.'

Afterwards, I tried to make necklaces
of pomegranate seeds.
The juice spurted out, bright crimson,
and stained my fingers, then my mouth.

I didn't mind. The juice tasted of gardens
I had never seen, voluptuous
with myrtle, lemon, jasmine,
and alive with parrots' wings.

The pomegranate reminded me
that somewhere I had another home.

