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EDITOR'S NOTE

WRITTEN BY MATILDA G

As I write this note, I am so excited to introduce myself as the new editor of the mark! Having previously written for The Mark, I am looking forward to this new role, particularly working alongside The Mark's many talented journalists. It is my goal to make every edition of The Mark accessible, engaging and reflective of the many voices and opinions within our school community.

It has been great to be able to read all the articles written by our talented journalists, with a range of opinion pieces, interviews and stories. From an account of Medway Matters' school visit to Sky A's amazing collection of poetry and Lizzy K's review on the National Theatre's 'Othello', I am confident that this edition has something for every reader to enjoy.

I particularly enjoyed Daniel K's well-researched portrayal of the life and work of Barbara Hepworth, especially his recollection of experiencing first hand her sculpture garden, and Isla B's fascinating examination into the moral responsibility of the extremely wealthy, asking if it is more important to preserve the right of individuals or to prioritise alleviating suffering?

This publication also marks the first editions of the "Department Spotlight" and "Teacher Spotlight" columns, closer examinations into the staff and departments within our community. It has been so insightful to hear about their passion for their subject and students, particularly interesting hearing about Ms Murphy's path to discovering her love for English Language. Each edition will focus on a new teacher and department so make sure to look out for these in the future!

As always, I encourage any readers to submit any work to Mrs Starr (Istarr@rmet.org). Whether a story, poem, review or piece of art, it is great to receive any work to showcase the voices of our talented student body.

Happy Reading and Happy New Year!

THE MARK MEETS WITH MEDWAY MATTERS

Students from Years 7–13 gained a behind-the-scenes insight into journalism during an engaging talk with journalists from Medway Matters. The session revealed how writing, editing and design work together, while highlighting the real-world responsibilities and excitement of a career in journalism.

On 11th December, students from Years 7 to 13 with an interest in journalism, The Mark, and A-level English were invited to an inspiring talk with journalists from Medway Matters, the Medway Council magazine. The event offered students a valuable opportunity to explore the realities of working in journalism and the opportunities beyond writing articles.

Our visitors, Carly, Kelly and Chris, spoke in detail about the three key sectors involved in producing a publication: journalism, editing and graphic design. Through their talk, students discovered just how collaborative and complex the publishing process is, learning that journalism is very much a team effort rather than a solitary task.

The journalists gave students an honest look into the industry, sharing stories from their own careers, including a few memorable celebrity encounters, which really captured students' attention. Particularly fascinating was the discussion around how closely journalism is linked to the law and the police. Students were introduced to the concept of jigsaw identification and learned why



protecting sources and handling information responsibly is such a vital part of ethical journalism.

Editing was another key focus of the session. Students were told how an article moves from first draft to final publication, involving rewriting, checking facts, refining language and ensuring accuracy throughout. This reinforced the importance of careful proofreading and attention to detail; skills that are essential not only in journalism,

but across all forms of writing and academic study.

Students also learned more about the role Medway Matters plays in the local community, from sharing news and events to promoting events such as the Dickensian Christmas Weekend through a combination of print and social media. This highlighted how modern journalism must be adaptable and multimedia-focused.

Overall, the talk was a brilliant and engaging experience that left students inspired and eager to learn more about journalism. Look to the next page to see testimonials from the event!

“Overall, I loved the event, and I felt it provided a lot of insight into the career path that leads to becoming a journalist... The personal stories from the team were extremely exciting and intriguing and have made me consider potentially becoming a journalist in the future.” - Lois N

“From this experience, I have been inspired to experiment with making my writing broader... so it can be accessible to and understood by a wide range of audiences.” - Teniola L

“I believe that the most useful advice I was given was to step outside of my comfort zone when writing... and the easiest way to do this is through reading more to develop a greater understanding of the wider world.” - Maria A

“I was interested in the media law regarding criminal investigations, and the impact of political bias on controversial articles... The restrictions that come with using AI were also interesting to learn about.” - Scarlett B

“I liked hearing about the different sectors, not just the writing side of journalism... It was interesting to hear about their individual experiences and how they got into the jobs they are in now... I liked that they spoke about working with other sectors and sources to help with articles.” - Pepper M

“Personally, I was unaware of how much legal knowledge you must have to become a journalist... Chris demonstrated his skills of shorthand, which I found thoroughly interesting, as it is much harder than I thought... It is used in court to ensure all notes are taken accurately.” - Emma D

“I am not interested in pursuing a career in journalism; however, from this experience, I learned that after producing a piece of writing, you should reread your work some time after first producing it.” - Oyin D

“I really enjoyed listening to the journalists from Medway Matters, especially hearing about how the journalism industry has changed since they started out and how it will continue to change with the introduction of tools such as artificial intelligence.” - Gurcharan B

“Some advice I have taken from this event is to do what you enjoy doing... There are lots of different ways to be part of a newspaper, such as graphic design and editing, without having to write.” - Holly D



“I will take this event as an opportunity to find out more about the different jobs involved in journalism and work this into my career path.” - Daniel K

“The part of the talk I found most interesting was that Medway Council had Tom Cruise’s helicopter land on the roof during the filming of one of his films!” - Erin N

“I also found it interesting how closely linked Medway Matters is to Medway Council... for example, the graphic designer from the team who visited RMGS is responsible for almost all council-created design in Medway, from the new leisure centre to the train station.” - Dylan S

WRITTEN BY STUDENTS WHO
ATTENDED THE EVENT

BARBARA HEPWORTH: SCULPTURE, LIFE AND ST IVES

Written by Daniel K, Year 8, this article explores the life, art, and legacy of Barbara Hepworth, celebrating her innovative sculptures and inspiring journey. Discover the beauty of her work and the captivating atmosphere of the Barbara Hepworth Museum and Sculpture Garden.

In October, my family visited Cornwall and we saw the Barbara Hepworth Museum and Sculpture Garden as part of the holiday. It inspired me to write an insight into the life and endeavours of Barbara Hepworth, and the Sculpture Garden itself.

Her Life

Born on 10 January 1903 in Wakefield, Yorkshire, Barbara Hepworth was the first child of Gertrude and Herbert Hepworth. She attended Wakefield Girls' High School and won a scholarship to attend Leeds School of Art, where she met her future friendly rival, the sculptor Henry Moore. In 1924, after attaining the diploma of the Royal College of Art following three years of study, Hepworth took a travel scholarship to

Florence, Italy. Here, she won silver at the Prix de Rome. After travelling with the winner, John Skeaping, to Rome and Siena, Hepworth married Skeaping in 1925 in Florence. During her time in Italy, she learned marble carving from the sculptor Giovanni Ardini.

Hepworth and Skeaping returned to their London flats in 1926 and exhibited their respective works from there. They had a son, Paul, in 1929. Hepworth later met and fell in love with the abstract painter Ben

Nicholson, although both were married at the time. The year 1931 marked the first time that Hepworth carved her iconic pierced figures, which would lead the way towards modernism in sculpture. After divorcing Skeaping in 1933, Hepworth travelled with

Nicholson to France and visited the studios of Jean Arp, Pablo Picasso and Constantin Brancusi. As part of her efforts to raise awareness of European artists among the British public, she later designed the layout of the book *Circle: An International Survey of Constructivist Art*.

She gave birth to Rachel, Sarah and Sam in 1934 and, unusually for the time, found ways to continue producing art while raising her triplets. Hepworth married Nicholson in November 1938 at



Hampstead Register Office in North London.

Hepworth and her family moved to St Ives, a wartime refuge for many artists, after the outbreak of the Second World War in 1939. She later lived in Trewyn Studios from 1949 onwards. She described finding the studio as "a sort of magic" and mentioned "a studio, a yard, and a garden where I could work in open air and space".

A skilled draughtsperson (someone who makes concept drawings), Hepworth struck up a close friendship with the surgeon Norman Carpenter in 1944 after Sarah had been hospitalised. She accepted invitations to view several of his procedures between 1947 and 1949, which gave her the opportunity to produce around 80 drawings of operating rooms in chalk, ink, and pencil. Hepworth spoke of a “close affinity between the work of both physicians and surgeons and painters and sculptors”.



Her works were exhibited alongside those of Matthew Smith and John Constable at the British Pavilion of the 25th Venice Biennale in 1950. Two early public commissions, *Contrapuntal Forms* and *Turning Forms*, were shown at the Festival of Britain in 1951. Hepworth and Nicholson divorced the same year, and Hepworth began to work with bronze and clay, using her garden in St Ives to view large scale bronzes.

Paul, her eldest son, died in an RAF plane crash over Thailand in February 1953. Exhausted, partly from grief, Hepworth travelled to Athens, Delhi and the Aegean Islands in 1954 with her friend Margaret Gardiner. On her return to England, Hepworth found that Gardiner had sent her a 17 tonne trunk of Nigerian guarea hardwood, from which she carved six pieces between 1954 and 1956. Many of these, such as *Corinthos* and *Curved Form (Delphi)*, were inspired by her trip to Greece.

Hepworth attempted to establish sales in America, initially approaching Curt Valentin of the Buchholz Gallery in New York. Despite some limited success, and intervention from friends, Valentin refused to hold substantial stock of her work. The Martha Jackson Gallery gave her the opportunity to show her works alongside those of William Scott and Francis Bacon in 1955. However, when the gallery failed to arrange her desired solo exhibition of sculptures and drawings, Hepworth moved to Galerie Chalette in 1957. After the gallery fulfilled its promise of an exhibition, she made her first trip to New York for the opening, although she kept press contact to a minimum and returned home as soon as possible. Three years later, after securing the Dag Hammarskjold Memorial Commission (*Single Form*), she left Chalette for the larger Marlborough Gerson and Marlborough Fine Art, finding herself torn between personal loyalties and professional ambitions.

In 1960, Hepworth purchased the Palais de Danse, a former dance hall and cinema across the road from Trewyn, to work on large scale commissions. She experimented with lithography in her later career, producing two lithographic suites with the Curwen Gallery, one of which, *The Aegean Suite* (1971), was inspired by her earlier travels. She also produced a set of lithographs entitled *Opposing Forms* (1970) with Marlborough Fine Art in London.

Hepworth died on 20 May 1975, aged 72, after an accidental house fire at Trewyn Studios. Since 1980, her studios have been



managed by Tate as the Barbara Hepworth Museum and Sculpture Garden.

The Garden

On my visit to the garden, I found a fascinating world of colour, form and life. The plants provided a perfect backdrop. The bamboo *Phyllostachys nigra* f. *Henonis* uses the wind to produce a natural soundtrack for the garden. Its majestic canes and patterns form a backdrop to *Conversation with Magic Stones* (1973). Adding a touch of colour, the bright red pelargoniums enliven the autumn scenery, providing contrast with the dominant green tones of the garden. The *Phormium tenax*, or New Zealand flax, stands against the curving forms of the sculptures with its sword like foliage and has historically been used by the Maori people to make robust baskets and rope.

As for the sculptures, several caught my

attention. *Four Square (Walk Through)* (1966) consists of two parallel pairs of pierced bronze slabs, stacked at perpendicular angles on a bronze base. The sculpture stemmed from a sense of urgency after Hepworth's cancer diagnosis in 1965 and invites the viewer to pass through its centre and interact with its form. It replaced a rose bed that once occupied the same position. *Sphere with Inner Form* (1963) evokes "a nut in its shell or a child in the womb", as Hepworth said. It can also be interpreted as a metaphor for the creation of sculpture or as a symbol of nurture or protection. A major collection of sculptures, *Conversation with Magic Stones* (1973), was Hepworth's last major bronze. The vertical elements suggest human figures, while the stones represent mysterious forces. The grouping has been interpreted as a metaphor for human interaction and echoes the standing stones found near St



Ives. A stone work, *Image* (1951 to 1952), represents a generalised identity. Hepworth likened the figure to the ancient monoliths of West Cornwall, “powerfully rooted” and giving an impression of “growth and expansion, an image or symbol of the span of time”. Finally, *Corymb* (1959), named after a type of flower cluster where buds rise from a single stalk to form a flat head, appears only loosely connected to its title. The name simply conjures floral imagery. The piece is appropriately placed among the foliage and blossoms.

In Conclusion

The life and works of Barbara Hepworth have left me with a sense of awe and inspiration, as well as a deeper appreciation for simple shapes. I would recommend the Sculpture Garden to anyone interested in art and creative culture. You should also look up *The Family of Man*. It is quite a good sculpture.

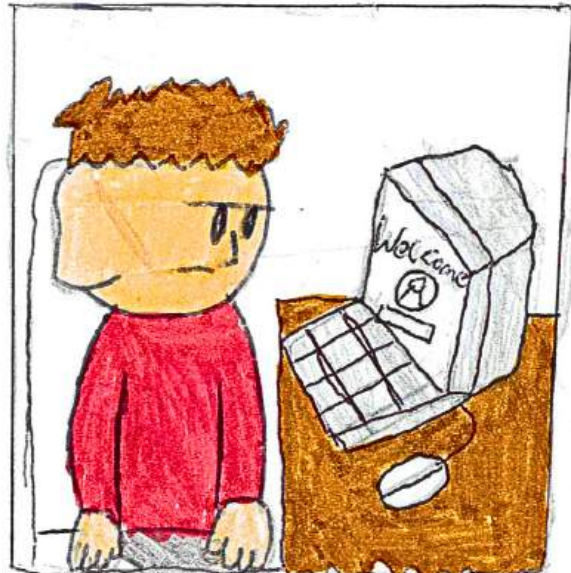
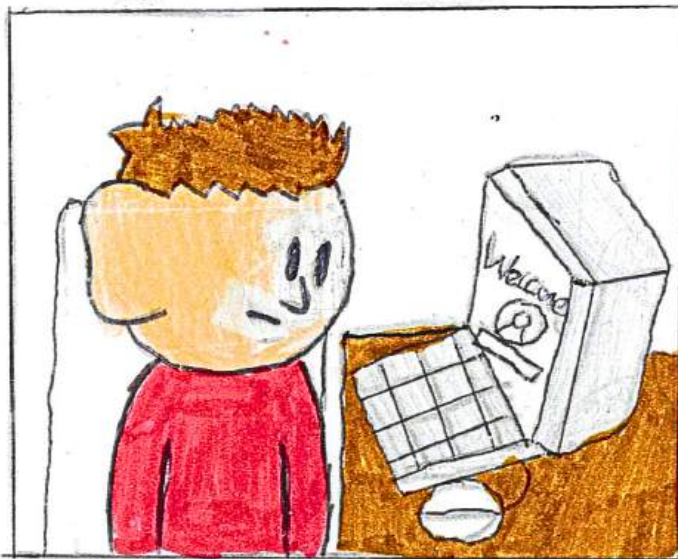
WRITTEN BY DANIEL K
YEAR 8

**WRITERS
WANTED!
WEDNESDAY
LUNCH IN L6**

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AT LSTARR@RMET.ORG

**the
Mark**

NO LIMITS



RMGS UNITES IN A MOVING AND RESPECTFUL REMEMBRANCE DAY SERVICE

Written by Thomas W in Year 10, this article describes how the RMGS community came together for a thoughtful and respectful Remembrance Day service. It highlights the powerful speeches, the two-minute silence and the contributions of students who helped make the event especially meaningful.



On Tuesday 11 November, the entire RMGS community gathered on the tennis courts to honour the fallen soldiers. The two-minute silence was observed with the utmost respect, reflecting RMGS's core values.

Many of us felt that this year's commemoration was particularly meaningful and dignified. In addition to the two-minute silence, two thoughtful speeches were delivered: Josh in Year 10 spoke about the importance and symbolism of the poppy and why we choose to wear it; and Scarlett in Year 8 read 'For the Fallen' by Laurence Binyon. Both students addressed the whole school with clarity, confidence and maturity.

Following the silence, cadets from various organisations, as well as Girl Guides and Scouts, marched from the tennis courts in parade. It was inspiring to see so many students volunteer to take part, demonstrating kindness, respect, and a deep sense of remembrance.

I would also like to express my gratitude to everyone involved in creating the poppy arch. It was a beautiful piece of artwork to see on Remembrance Day. Many of us believe that this event not only embodied RMGS's values and spirit, but also touched the hearts of all who attended.

WRITTEN BY THOMAS W
YEAR 10

ISAAC NEWTON AND THE LAWS OF MOTION

Written by Ethan A in Year 7, this article explores the life and achievements of Isaac Newton. It explains his three famous Laws of Motion and highlights the lasting impact of his scientific work.

Isaac Newton was a British polymath and physicist who is most commonly known for establishing the laws of gravity, and greatly influencing the development of physics. He was born on 4 January 1643, according to the Gregorian calendar, at Woolsthorpe by Colsterworth, and died on 31 March 1727 at the age of eighty four in Kensington.

A common story is that an apple fell on his head and he immediately developed the theory of gravity. This is not accurate. He observed an apple falling from a tree, and from this observation he began to form his ideas about the laws of motion.

These are his three laws:

1) A body remains at rest or in motion at a constant speed in a straight line unless

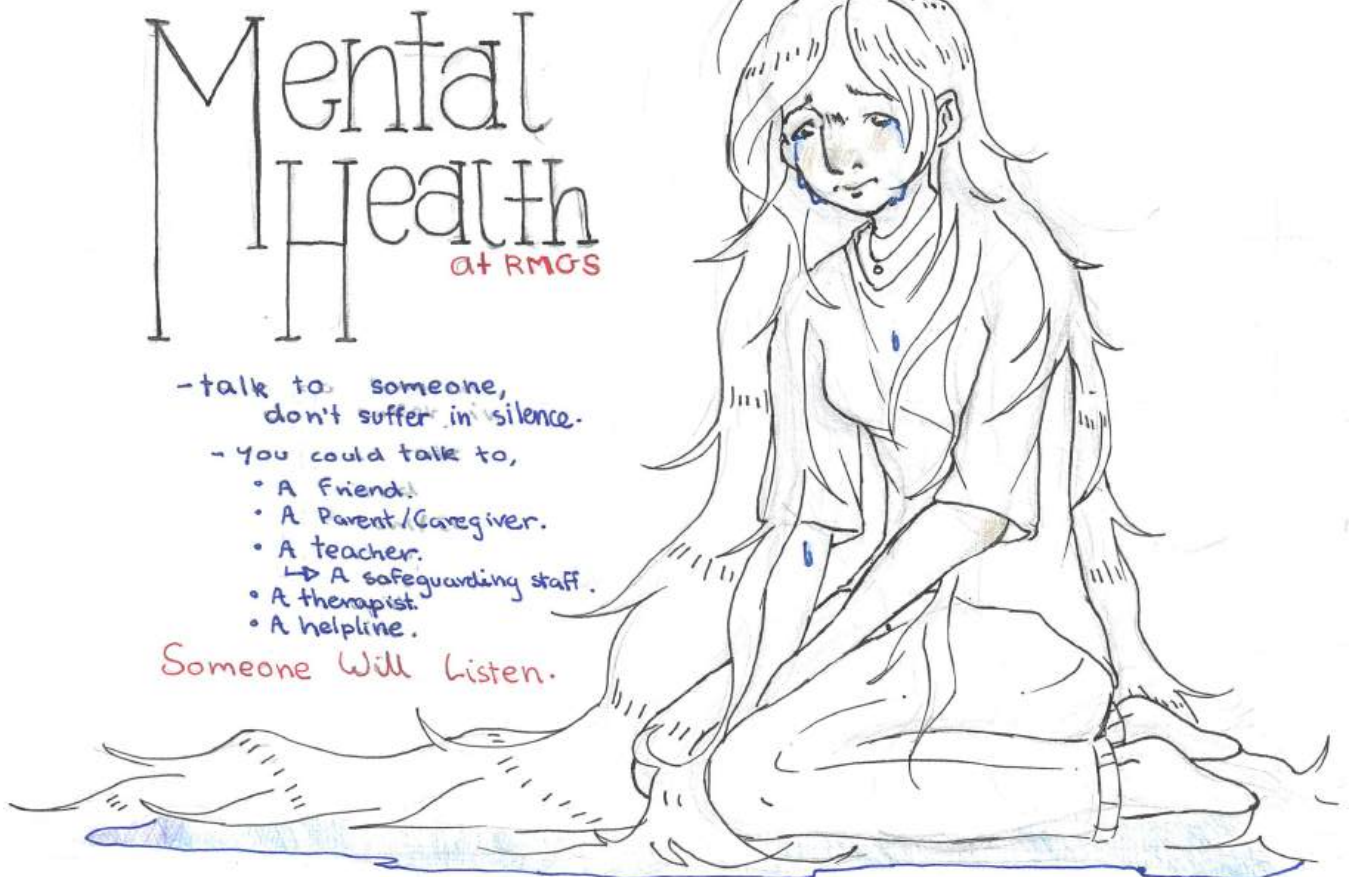
it is acted upon by a force.

2) At any moment in time, the net force on a body is equal to the body's acceleration multiplied by its mass, or, alternatively, the rate at which the body's momentum changes over time.

3) If two bodies exert forces on each other, the forces have the same magnitude but act in opposite directions.

Throughout his life, his work as a mathematician, astronomer, alchemist, theologian, author and inventor was widely admired. Even centuries later, his achievements continue to be recognised, and his legacy remains influential today.

WRITTEN BY ETHAN A
YEAR 7



DIVERSITY TEAM'S BADGE COMPETITION

Following their badge competition, Matilda G interviewed the school's Diversity Team on their aims, upcoming events, and the importance of celebrating individuality and diversity.



Recently, I was able to sit down with the Diversity Team to discuss their badge competition, overall work throughout the school community, and the importance of celebrating diversity.

What is this competition?

The Diversity Team has invited the student body to submit their badge designs on the theme of belonging and inclusion. The winner will have their design reproduced onto badges that will be available for all students and will have this design displayed in school, plus will win an R5.

Why did you decide to run a competition like this?

Overall, the Diversity Team stresses the importance of increasing awareness for diversity in the school, which this

competition strives to do, getting as many students as possible involved, and sharing their creativity-“We’d love to hear more people’s ideas and be able to further branch out in the community”. They feel that it is important to showcase the talent of our students and recognise the significance of wearing a badge designed by a member of our school.

The Diversity Team has already received many submissions for this competition, and the winner will be announced in the next issue of The Mark.

What work have you completed this year, and do you have any upcoming events to look forward to?

This year, the Diversity Team have carried out assemblies for Black History

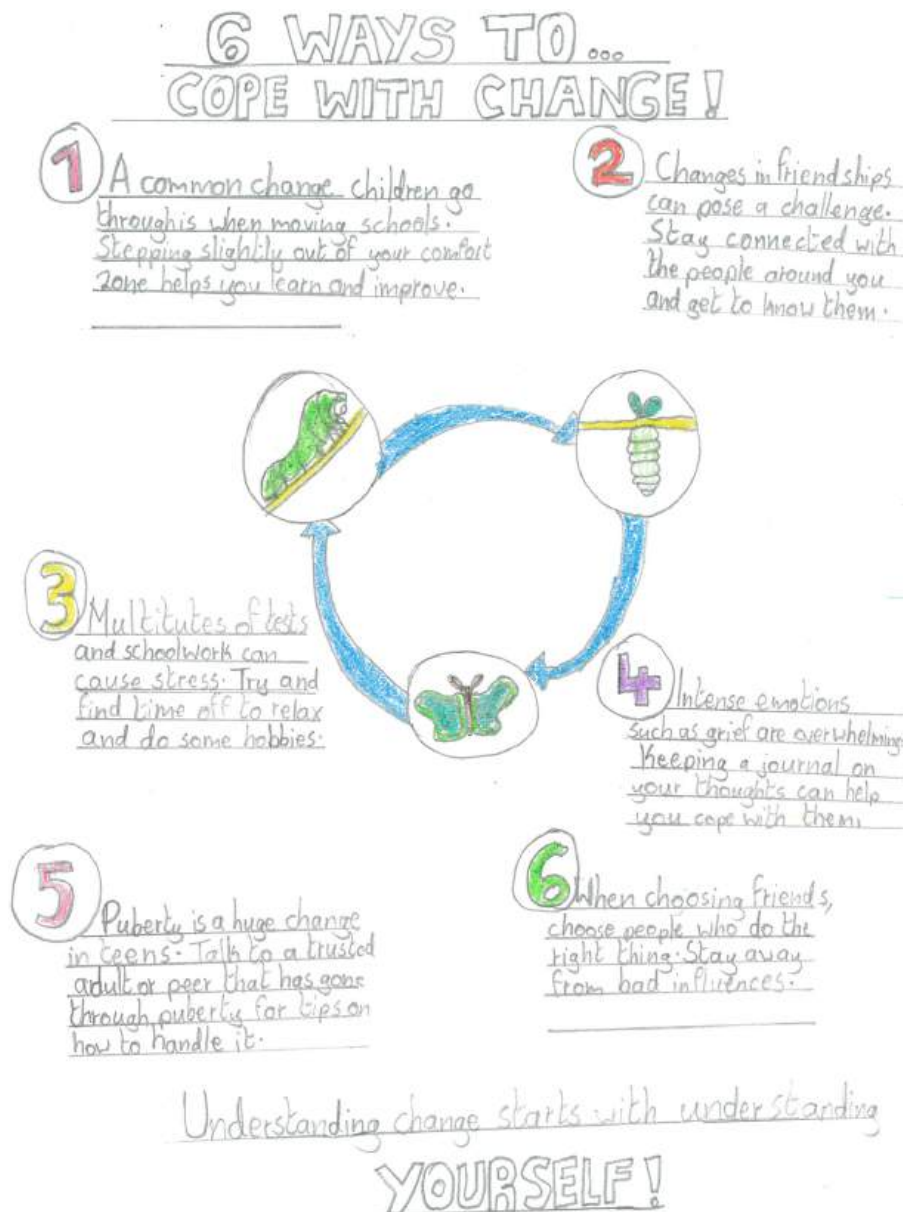
Month and Diwali, created and presented by members of the team. Next term, the Diversity Team will be celebrating LGBTQ history month, delivering assemblies on the theme of 'Science and Innovation', stating the importance of bringing diversity to the curriculum, and telling often unheard history. The Diversity Team emphasise the importance of promoting "representation", "education" and ultimately bringing the voices of minorities into general consciousness. Later in the year, students can also take part in Culture Day, Rainbow Friday, and International Women's Day.

individual, the Diversity Team hopes that "everyone feels safe and accommodated to", creating a positive and diverse foundation for students to flourish from: "As someone who joined in year 7, it's nice to see traditions being made, and creating a foundation of diversity that can continue". Through celebrating events, educating the student body, and raising awareness, the Diversity Team aim for every student to be able to recognise and celebrate uniqueness and diversity.

Open to any new members, ideas or suggestions, the Diversity Team meets every Friday in C4.

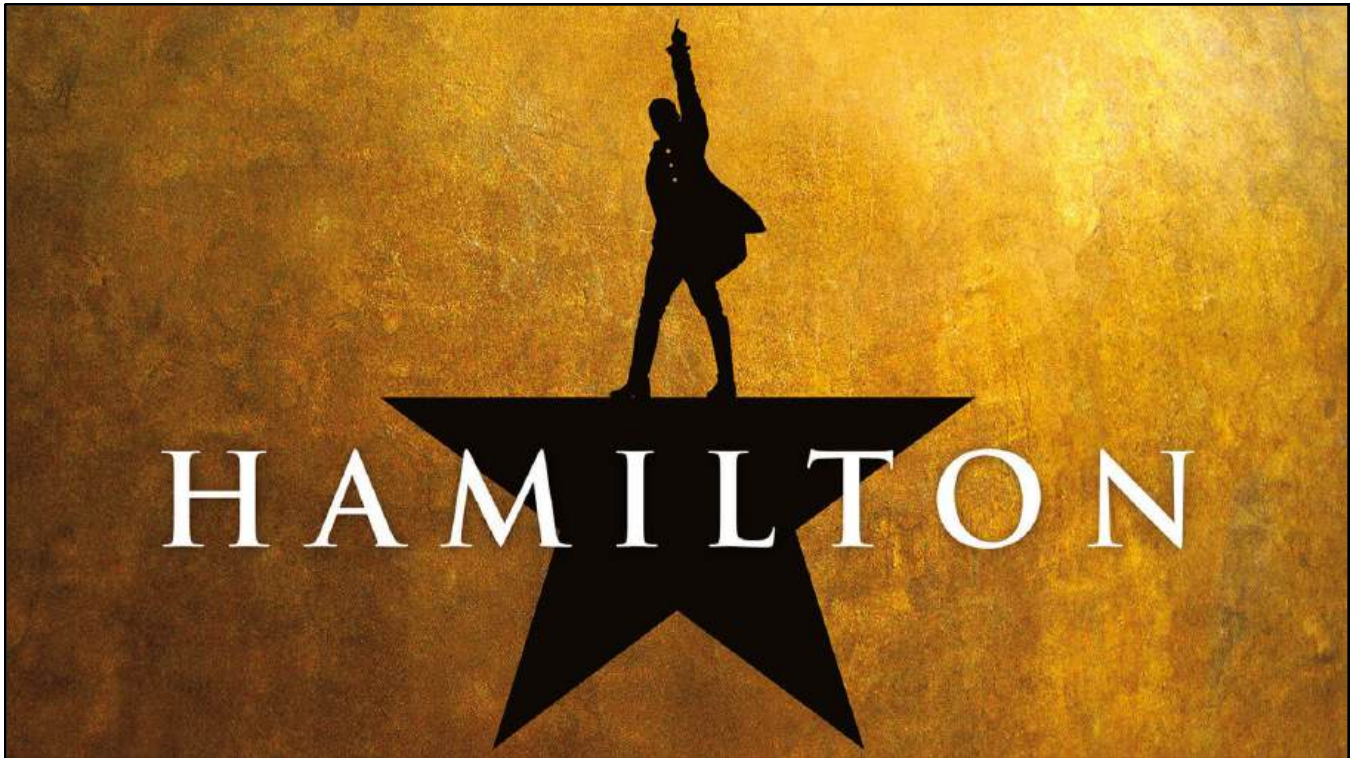
Why is it important to celebrate diversity?
Specifically, within a school environment, where each student is completely

WRITTEN BY MATILDA G
YEAR 12



“WHO LIVES WHO DIES WHO TELLS YOUR STORY”

Written by Lilly S in Year 10, this article explores how Hamilton reimagines the life of Alexander Hamilton through powerful hip hop storytelling, turning a once overlooked founding father into a symbol of ambition and resilience. It highlights how Lin Manuel Miranda’s musical transforms history into something vivid and relevant, inspiring audiences to recognise their own potential to shape the world.



Imagine rewriting the story of America’s founding fathers, but this time it is told through rap battles and epic hip hop melodies. This is exactly what Lin Manuel Miranda did with Hamilton. When Miranda first proposed the idea of this musical, he was ridiculed. Who would want to see a show where the founders of America rap? Now, every day, thousands of people go to see the musical in theatres all over the world. Since its debut in 2015, Hamilton has transformed modern theatre. The musical helps viewers see the story of Alexander Hamilton, an immigrant revolutionary, in a whole new light. To its devoted fans, Hamilton has become more than a musical; it is a cultural movement that has changed how we think about history. Lin Manuel Miranda used the story of a historical figure to teach valuable lessons that resonate with audiences everywhere.

The musical begins by showing the struggles Hamilton faced throughout his childhood. Act One tells the story of an underdog and shows his early life and ambition. As a poor, orphaned immigrant, his rise to power was unlikely. Hamilton meets his future frenemy, Aaron Burr. After becoming one of George Washington’s most trusted aides, Hamilton marries Elizabeth Schuyler and, while she is pregnant with their first child, he helps win the war and gain independence for America. Act Two begins with Hamilton as Secretary of the Treasury. He immediately clashes with James Madison and Thomas Jefferson over the direction of their new nation. Hamilton’s affair with Maria Reynolds leads him to publish the Reynolds Pamphlet to defend himself against accusations of political and financial corruption.

Soon after, Hamilton's eldest son, Philip, dies while defending his father's honour. Hamilton's political power fades when Washington dies, and he focuses on rebuilding his relationship with his wife. Hamilton endorses Jefferson instead of Burr, and Burr feels betrayed, so he challenges Hamilton to a duel. Alexander Hamilton aims at the sky instead of shooting Burr and is killed. His wife finishes the musical by reflecting on his life and work. She outlives Hamilton by fifty years and lives to be ninety seven. Schuyler spends the rest of her life telling his story and the stories of others, while also helping the country grow by establishing charities.

Hamilton's story is one of ambition, legacy and resilience, qualities that can easily be lost in the ever changing modern world full of technology. By choosing a figure like Alexander Hamilton to tell this story, Miranda helps his audience realise that ordinary people can inspire change. Hamilton established the national bank and created a financial

system that is still used today. He wrote the majority of the Federalist Papers, which defended the United States Constitution. He was a member of the original central government, and the same system is still used today. His feud with Thomas Jefferson led to the first political party system in America. Hamilton's actions helped America to grow, and without him, modern America would be very different.

Lin Manuel Miranda took the story of a forgotten founding father and turned it into a living reflection of America today. Hamilton reminds us that history is not irrelevant or unimportant, but something we learn from every day. History is not distant and unchangeable, but something we are writing every day, and this is what Hamilton is about. We can all take Hamilton's words to heart: "I am not throwing away my shot," because, like him, we each have the power to shape our own story and help change the world.

WRITTEN BY LILLY S
YEAR 10

THE ADVENTURES OF FIDDLESTICKS THE ELF: ELF ON THE SHELF 2025

Last year, I wrote about the chaos caused by our school Elf on the Shelf, whose mischievous pranks kept everyone guessing. This year, he has returned with even more confidence, leaving photocopies of his face around the school and popping up in unexpected places.

Students and teachers are already comparing his new tricks to last year's antics, proving how memorable his first visit was. If anything, his return shows that a little festive mischief brings the whole school together, and we cannot wait to see what he does next.



MENTAL HEALTH

HOW TO MAKE IT?

- Be kind to yourself
- Spend time with people you love
- get help if you need it
- be mindful of what you say to others
- get enough sleep
- have a healthy diet, and stay hydrated
- do activities you enjoy.



WHERE TO GET HELP:

- Pastoral support
- your teacher/tutor
- trusted adult
- friends/siblings
- websites/call lines
- Child line - 0800 111

BE POSITIVE!

HAVE FUN!

BE KIND!

ENJOY WHAT YOU DO!

'WILLOW, WILLOW, WILLOW...' - A REVIEW OF OTHELLO AT THE THEATRE ROYAL HAYMARKET

Written by Lizzy K, Year 12, this review explores David Harewood's powerful return as Othello at the Theatre Royal Haymarket, highlighting the standout performances, particularly of Harewood, Toby Jones, and Vinette Robinson. The article also praises the visually stunning production and subtle directorial choices while noting a few underused elements that could have enhanced the play.



David Harewood first played Othello in 1997, at which time he was the National Theatre's first Black actor to play the role. He is now reprising his role at the Theatre Royal Haymarket alongside Toby Jones as Iago and Caitlin Fitzgerald as Desdemona in a visually rich production of Shakespeare's tragedy, directed by Tom Morris.

Harewood as Othello leads this production as the titular character with great skill and tact. His Othello begins as a noble man, full of grace and charming smiles, still glowing in the early stages of married life. By the end of the show, he is a wreck. This psychological train crash was, as an audience member, fascinating to watch. You could almost see each doubt creep into his mind one by one, poisoning it. The orchestrator of this downfall is Iago. Toby Jones's portrayal

is another highlight, as he shifts with frightening ease between the facade of a loyal friend and his insidious true nature. This two faced quality was the source of much laughter from the audience, as Morris's production does not shy away from the absurdity of everyone's trust in Iago.

However, the heart of this production, at least for me, was the women. The plot may centre on Othello and Iago, but there was a refreshing emphasis on the victims of both men, their wives, which I felt other productions have lacked. Caitlin Fitzgerald's young, naïve, and loving Desdemona finds an unlikely friend in Vinette Robinson's jaded, anxious Emilia. Nothing is stated outright, but it is strongly implied that Iago is an abusive husband to her. The two shine especially

at the end of the play, as they lament how they have been wronged by their husbands and sing together, almost in the knowledge that their own stories will end as tragically as the song they perform. Robinson was my favourite performer in the play, and her visceral reaction to finding Desdemona dead at the end made the hairs on my neck stand on end.



Visually, this production is equally impressive. Ti Green's set moves like a well oiled machine between scenes, automated rather than reliant on stagehands, which adds to the clean aesthetic of the play, and her costume designs fit the world well. The colours in the early scenes are rich, decadent shades of emerald, ruby, and gold. The luxury of Venice is then juxtaposed with the khakis and greys of the military barracks. A little colour remains and becomes significant when it appears. Desdemona's green dress and delicately embroidered handkerchief are the clearest examples. Kate Waters's fight choreography is as impressive as always and ensures that every conflict moves

with brilliant fluidity. Only a few elements failed to impress me. The ensemble is heavily underused in many scenes and would have added some much needed energy to the sometimes depressingly bare sets. Othello's story does not exist in the vacuum that Morris seems to suggest. It is a world in which he does not feel able to speak to anyone but Iago about his doubts. The reason he feels like this is not made clear enough to the audience, as his interactions with lower ranked soldiers are very limited. Nina Dunn's projections also failed to impress. They appeared to be an attempt to follow current theatrical trends without any of the purpose that those productions give to their use of video. A simple, well placed cyclorama would have been an improvement, as the projections were positioned too far above the action to be noticed even from a circle seat, and they were cast across mesh screens that made them difficult to interpret.

Nevertheless, this production was utterly captivating, and its subtlety allows the audience to lose themselves in the world of the play as they search for the significance of every small action, even if this subtlety may at first appear to be a lack of depth. The chance to see David Harewood and Toby Jones, two masters of their craft, inhabit the stage was wonderful, and it was equally exciting to discover new actors who were just as talented.

WRITTEN BY LIZZY K
YEAR 12

**WRITE REVIEWS
FOR THE MARK!**

**CONTACT MRS STARR
WITH ANY ENQUIRIES AT
LSTARR@RMET.ORG**



THE MARK OF THOUGHT

Introducing “The Mark of Thought”, a new column in The Mark showcasing essays by Isla B, inspired by her A-Level Philosophy studies. Each edition will explore intriguing ideas, challenge assumptions, and invite readers to think deeply about the big questions that shape our world.

ARE THE WEALTHY MORALLY OBLIGATED TO GIVE AWAY THEIR WEALTH?

This debate raises issues of justice, fairness and the role of individual freedom in society. While some argue that immense wealth carries a moral duty to redistribute resources, others defend the right of individuals to retain and use their property as they see fit.



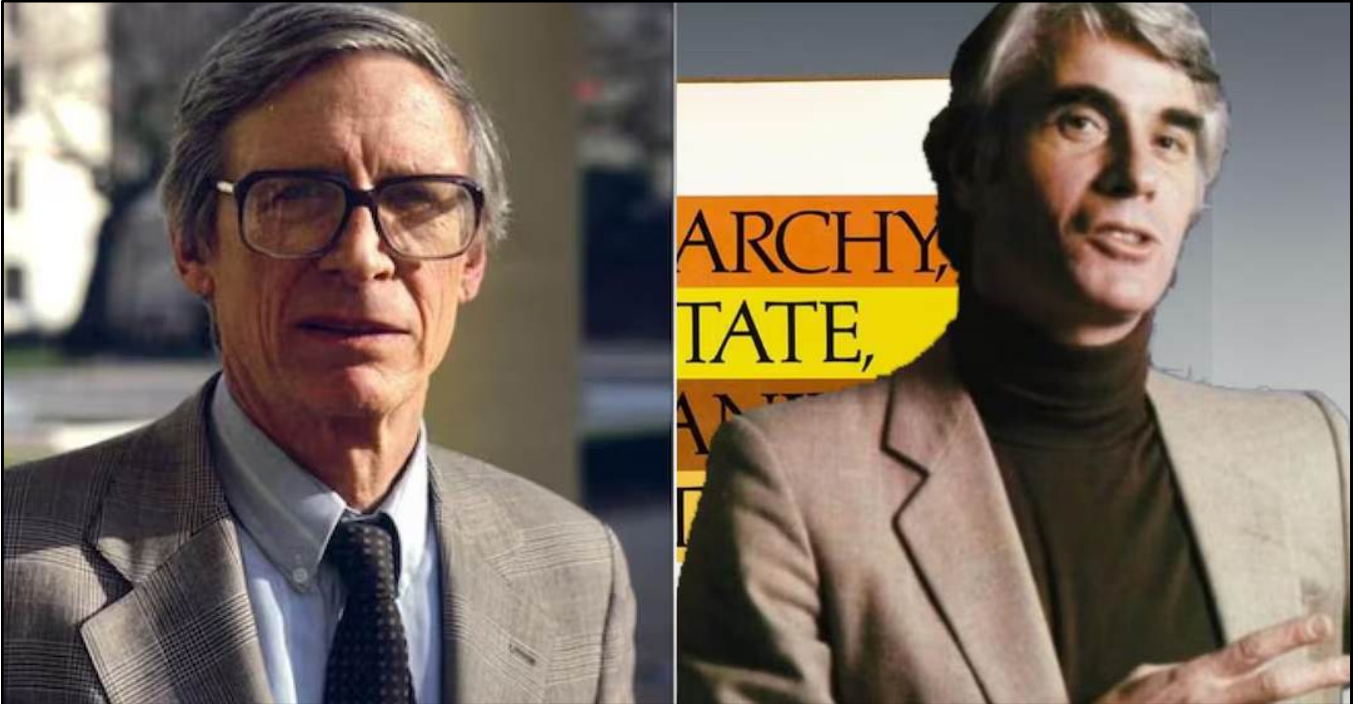
Elon Musk, Jeff Bezos and Mark Zuckerberg, 3 of the most wealthy men in the world

The Case for Moral Obligation

Some philosophers, such as Peter Singer, argue that if one can prevent suffering without sacrificing something of comparable moral importance, one is obligated to do so. In his famous analogy, if a person can save a drowning child at the cost of ruining their clothes, it would be immoral not to act. By extension, the wealthy, who often have far more than they need for a comfortable life, should direct their surplus wealth towards alleviating poverty, hunger and disease.

Similarly, John Rawls suggested that inequalities are justifiable only if they benefit the least advantaged members of society. From this standpoint, excessive wealth hoarded or used solely for personal luxury undermines justice. The moral obligation of the rich, therefore, is to ensure that their wealth contributes to improving conditions for others.

This idea seems sensible because extreme poverty and preventable suffering exist while wealth is concentrated in the hands



Robert Nozick was a 20th-century American philosopher

of a few. Wealth often arises within social systems that depend on shared infrastructure, labour and opportunities, which suggests that the wealthy owe something back to society. Alleviating suffering creates a fairer and more stable world that benefits everyone in the long run, so it could be argued that the wealthy do have a moral obligation to donate their wealth.

The Case Against Moral Obligation

On the other side, defenders of individual liberty such as Robert Nozick argue that if wealth is acquired justly, through voluntary exchanges and without coercion, individuals have no moral obligation to redistribute it. Nozick emphasises property rights and the entitlement theory of justice. If wealth is obtained fairly, its owner is free to keep or use it as they wish. Redistribution, from this perspective, is morally problematic because it infringes upon individual rights. Some also argue that enforced moral obligations undermine personal freedom and initiative. If wealth must be given away, either through social pressure or taxation, individuals lose the right to decide what to do with the fruits of their labour.

Moreover, philanthropy can be seen as a voluntary virtue rather than an enforceable duty. It could be argued that property rights are fundamental to individual liberty and that coercing redistribution erodes freedom. Wealth used for investment, entrepreneurship or consumption can stimulate economic growth and benefit society indirectly, so perhaps the wealthy choosing not to donate their wealth is also beneficial to society. Making generosity obligatory removes its moral value, since charity must be chosen rather than compelled. Are the wealthy morally obligated to give away their wealth? The debate ultimately turns on competing values: compassion and fairness on one side and liberty and property rights on the other. Singer and Rawls highlight the pressing moral need to reduce suffering and inequality, while Nozick and others caution against undermining individual rights. Perhaps the resolution lies not in absolute obligation or absolute freedom, but in recognising that great wealth carries not only opportunity but also responsibility.

WRITTEN BY ISLA B
YEAR 13

TEACHER SPOTLIGHT

MS MURPHY

Written by Lilly Smith, this article introduces Ms Murphy, a new English teacher at RMGS whose creativity, passion and dedication have already made a strong impression on her students. It highlights her journey into teaching, her love of literature and language, and the artistic hobbies that shape her life both inside and outside the classroom.

New to RMGS since September 2025, Ms Murphy is an English teacher. She has been teaching for twelve years, and this term we are proud to shine our spotlight on her as we learn about her life as a teacher and her interests beyond English.

When Ms Murphy was in school, she says she was better at maths and science but struggled to enjoy English because she had many different English teachers. However, her

passion for English was sparked by one particular teacher. Ms Murphy's biggest inspiration to become a teacher was her own English teacher, saying, "I really liked my English teacher, and I just wanted to be her." Ms Murphy hopes that much of what she learned from her teacher remains part of who she is today. Personally, since having Ms Murphy as my English teacher this year, my love for English has been reignited and I now look forward to every lesson.

Before working at RMGS, Ms Murphy worked at a school in Gravesend called Saint George's. She says that the main difference between the two schools is that students at our school are more confident than those at her previous school, which has allowed her to move through the curriculum more quickly than before.



Ms Murphy loves how much she can get through here, but she misses having students who invest more quickly, saying that "relationship building here is a bit harder." She does not have a favourite between the two schools but is still getting used to being here.

Ms Murphy's favourite thing about teaching English is the creativity, and she loves listening to people figure things out and watching the process unfold.

Some of her favourite literature topics to teach include Macbeth and poetry. However, she says that teaching language is where her heart lies, so she is very excited that Rainham Mark is offering A Level English Language from this year.

One interesting thing about Ms Murphy is that she is quite artistic. In her free time, she is interested in all things art and has a particular interest in fan fiction and fan art. She loves seeing other people's interpretations of stories and especially enjoys seeing things recreated in the style of Tim Burton. She also enjoys crocheting, particularly making hats for her dogs.

As Ms Murphy continues to find her place within the RMGS community, it is clear that her creativity, passion, and dedication are already leaving a mark on her students.

DEPARTMENT SPOTLIGHT

ENGLISH

Introducing “Department Spotlight”, a new column in The Mark, taking a closer look at different departments within our school community. In this edition, Ethan A was able to sit down with the English department to hear how English stands out as a subject, their best advice for students, and even their favourite topics to teach.

Recently, I had the privilege of interviewing the English Department for The Mark and asking them questions relating to what they love about English, and what they want students to aim for. This is what they said:

What do you think makes your department stand out from others in the school?

According to Ms Murphy, the English department stands out for its connection with its students, formed through the exploration of challenging texts “It’s because we have to deal with difficult topics, and it helps us to get to know our students better” whereas Mr Coker points out the importance of students expressing themselves creatively, a skill sometimes neglected in other core subjects “You can be creative with your words in English, but you can’t do the same with Maths or Science”.

How do you try to make your lessons engaging and enjoyable for students?

The department agreed that their lessons are made engaging through a variety of texts, and a curriculum that is frequently reviewed. Selecting texts that “are based on student interests”, and attempting to “make topics more varied for different classes”, the department emphasises how their lessons are catered to students, particularly speaking on the importance



of students sharing their voices “We try to make lessons interesting by allowing students to get involved and share their opinion about things and also letting them discuss and debate about topics”. Overall, English lessons remain engaging, revolving around student interests and promoting critical thinking around an ever-changing curriculum.

What skills or values do you hope students take away

from studying your subject?

Mr Holmes, (the head of English) stated the importance of “Empathy, so that students can make the world a better place”, whereas Mr Coker stressed “Mutual respect, through talking in discussions and listening to each other”. Overall, English encourages ARCH values and the importance of the opinions of others.

Can you share a recent project, trip or achievement that the department is particularly proud of?

The English Department are collectively proud of the trip to Poetry Live, a great opportunity where year 11 students were able to listen to famous poets and ask questions about their poems which feature on the English Literature GCSE.

Continue reading on the next page.

What advice would you give to students who want to excel in your subject?

According to Ms Murphy, it is important to “read lots of different genres of texts and books”, Mr Lawrence says to “know that your opinions and ideas are valued” and Mr Holmes encourages students to “Work hard, and don’t give up”.

If your department was a person, what kind of personality would they have?

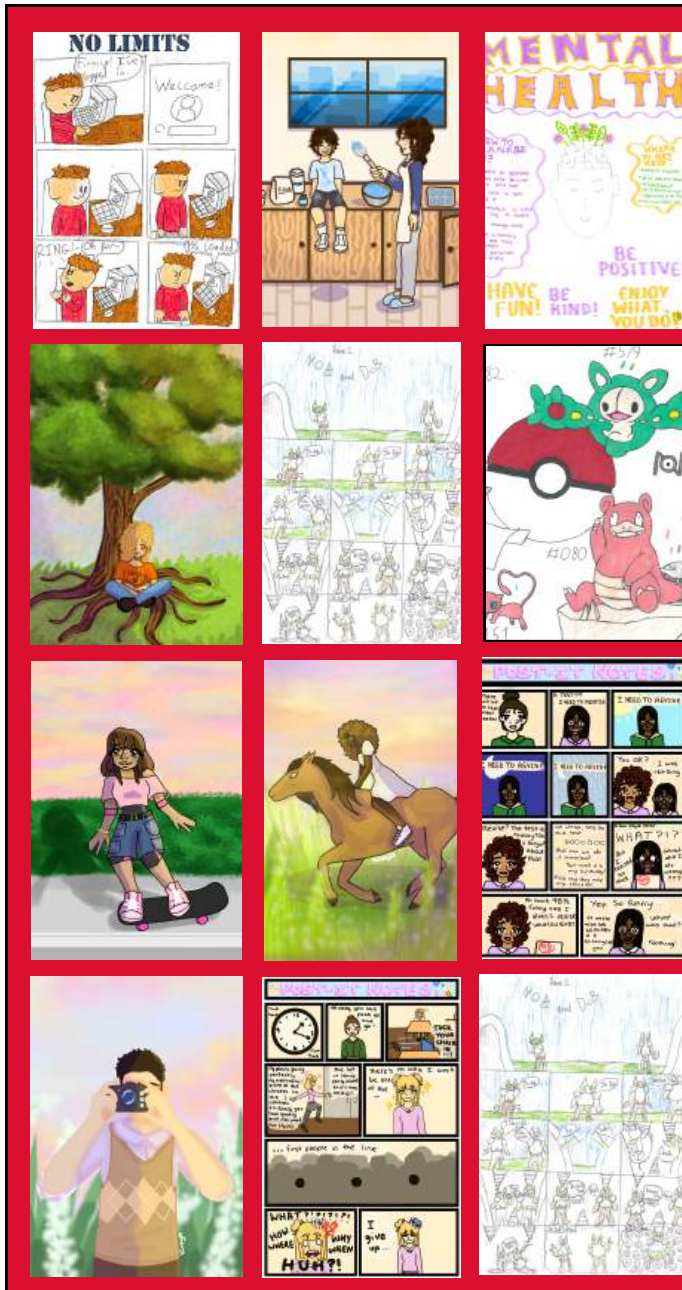
The English Department agreed that the person would be fair, fun, supportive and humorous.

And finally, which topic do you love teaching most in your department?

“A Christmas Carol”— Mr Lawrence, “The Kite Runner”— Mr Holmes, “Fahrenheit 451”— Ms Murphy, “A View from the Bridge”— Ms Starr, “Animal Farm”— Ms Davies, “Anything from Shakespeare, especially Macbeth”— Mr Coker

In conclusion, having spent a fabulous lunchtime with the English Department, I believe they are a great department. Look out for the next issue to see which department is spotlighted next!

WRITTEN BY ETHAN A
YEAR 7



ARTISTS WANTED!

WEDNESDAY LUNCH IN L6
WE ARE LOOKING FOR ARTISTS TO CREATE:

COMIC BOOK STRIPS
COVER IMAGES
LANDSCAPES
IMAGES OF THE SCHOOL
IMAGES OF SCHOOL LIFE

CONTACT MRS STARR WITH ANY ENQUIRIES AT LSTARR@RMET.ORG

MOBILE PHONES IN SCHOOL

This article explores the debate around mobile phones in schools, weighing up their benefits for learning and safety against the distractions they can cause in lessons. It was written by Ibraheem M in Year 7.



The question of whether phones should be allowed in school is a big one, especially as almost every student has one. Some people think phones help with learning, while others believe they cause more trouble than they are worth.

Why phones should be allowed

Many students argue that phones can make learning easier. You can quickly look up facts, use apps for homework and take photos of notes so nothing gets lost. Phones also help with safety. If something goes wrong on the way home, you can contact your parents instantly. In addition, some teachers use phones for quizzes and research tasks, which makes lessons more interesting.

Why phones should not be allowed

Phones should not be allowed in school because they can be a major distraction from learning. When students have access to their devices, they are more likely to text, scroll through social media, or play

games instead of focusing on lessons and engaging with their teachers. This not only affects their ability to absorb important information but also disrupts the learning environment. A well known study from the London School of Economics found that schools that banned phones saw test scores increase by six per cent.

Conclusion

Both sides make strong points. Phones can be helpful tools, but they can also reduce focus and cause problems. Perhaps the best solution is a middle ground, allowing phones only during certain times or in specific lessons. That way, students can benefit from technology without the distractions.

WRITTEN BY IBRAHEEM M
YEAR 7

RE-MARK-ABLE READS

Welcome to Remarkable Reads, the section that celebrates the boundless imagination and talent of our student writers! This space is dedicated to showcasing the creative works of RMGS pupils, from captivating short stories to evocative poetry.

BLOSSOM TO YOU

“Blossom to You” uses the image of a flower far from home to explore how people can feel isolated or out of place, yet still strive to grow and stay true to who they are. It highlights themes of individuality, resilience and self-belief, suggesting that authenticity enables a person to blossom even in difficult circumstances.



A single flower cannot blossom on its own,
especially when it's so far from home.
Where we are strangers, ourselves we are not.
Who we are should not be forgot.

And yes, the flower still rises and doesn't fall.
In its ear, from home, is a silent call.
Trying to find it is like arguing with a wall.
You may think there's no point at all.

And yet it still tries.
Staying true to itself, it begins to rise.
Individuality is important, so don't be afraid just to be you.
To yourself you should always be true.

WRITTEN BY ANONYMOUS

A COLLECTION OF POEMS BY SKY A

Blending heartfelt imagery with reflective ideas, these poems consider both the thrill of affection and the mysteries of existence. They are the work of talented student writer Sky A.

LOVESICK

Your Elegance and your grace
Shown by the expression on your face
A beauty like you must possess divine powers
to keep me lost in your eyes for hours.

I apologise if I stare a while
But there's something different about the dimples in your smile
Unable to talk to you in fear, my knees will go weak
And I will be embarrassed by the fluster on my cheek.

The way your hair falls, your personality and charm.
I know I am safe from any harm
Except for the pain, when permanently apart...
that one could suffer from a broken heart
from under the table, a gentle kick
My heart skips a beat as you make me

LOVESICK

THROUGHOUT LIFE

throughout life, we are left to wander
What it is that lies yonder?
Is it such a dull, dreary space?
Or is it a beauty we cannot replace?
Questions like this are left to you and me
However, between the lines, we cannot see

And so throughout life, we must figure it out
Uncover the truth, the secrets that the world is about.
What is after this? The answer we must learn
Yet we are unsure until our time comes to burn.

On the other plane, swarmed by Ghouls
(the truth lies) not to be found by fools
Throughout life I wish for the answers to be mine
Yet, while alive, the search is a waste of time.

The seed of knowledge in our minds was planted
This deceit, this trickery makes us take life for granted.

A COLLECTION OF POEMS BY SKY A CONTINUED

THE SOUND OF MUSIC

For most, music is therapy, the reason for so many memories.
It has been for many centuries.

We all seek joy, relief, in the harmony and the rhythm.
As such, we'll never reach the real world's algorithm.
When we're in a bad mood and we're feeling down,
turn on some music; get lost in the sound.

For others, however, music is full of chaos and confusion.
Music can take you to 'another world,' but it's just an illusion.
Or maybe you don't see the appeal
because you know that world isn't real.
Perhaps you still listen, even as a distraction
as an escape from all of the action.

But in the end, it doesn't matter what music does for you.
Just because you're unsure on what style you're into,
you don't have to choose right now.
It's not like you're married - you haven't read a vow.
For me, it isn't the sound but the lyrics inside.
It's the one place where feelings can't hide.

WHERE ONCE THERE WAS A GIRL

There was once a girl who was born innocent and pure.
There was once a girl starting school-age and somewhat unsure.
There was once a girl where none of life's struggles entered her mind.
There is a girl, desperately trying to rewind.

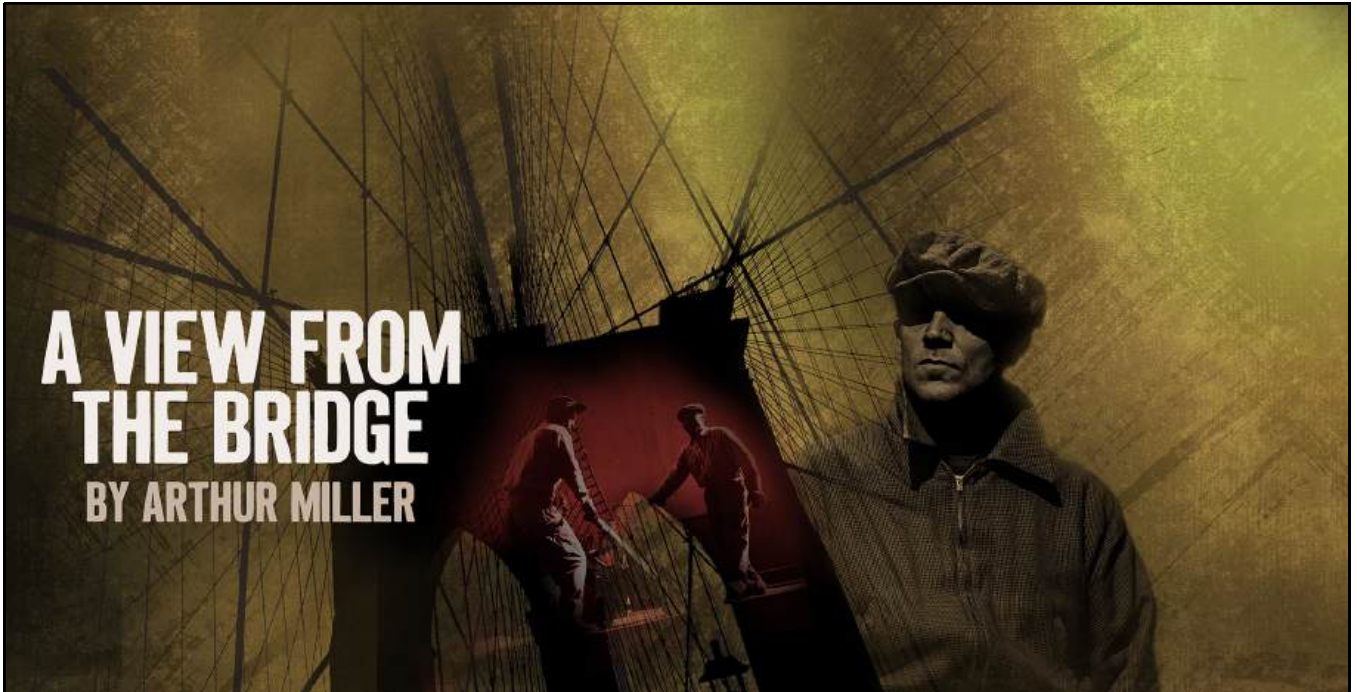
There was once a girl who loved times tables, rock stars.
There was once a girl who, on her way to school, identified different brands of cars.
There was once a girl who knew who she was deep within.
There is a girl, struggling to fit in.

There was once a girl taking her GCSEs; about exams, she was worrying.
There was once a girl hoping she could sort out her life - yet she was scared of rushing.
There was once a girl who was born innocent and pure.
There is a girl who's very unsure.

WRITTEN BY SKY A
YEAR 10

I KNEW

This poem, written by Sophie R in Year 9, adopts the reflective and foreboding voice of Alfieri, the lawyer-narrator from *A View from the Bridge*. Through his perspective, the poem explores his growing fear and helplessness as he watches Eddie Carbone's tragic path unfold.



“I want him to be happy.”
 The smile wavering on her face.
 She doesn't realise yet that it's already too late.
 He won't change. The look in his eyes is proof.
 I know I cannot stop them;
 their life is theirs to live.

On December 27th I saw him next.
 I dreaded what he would do when he left.
 Regret,
 sorrow,
 anger,
 empathy.
 I knew what was coming next.
 Eyes like tunnels.
 I looked in his eyes more than I listened.
 He would have no one when this ended.

She brought him in,
 but it's not her fault.
 She needs to understand that it's not her fault.
 It's none of their faults but his.
 It's been an issue from the start;
 it was always going to end.
 To his father I made a promise:
 “Protection.”
 I wish this wasn't how it had to end.

WRITTEN BY SOPHIE R
 YEAR 9

THE MARK OF MURDER

Written by Holly D in Year 10, this thrilling murder mystery will keep readers guessing all year long in the 2025–2026 editions of The Mark. Each issue reveals a brand-new perspective on the same shocking crime and with every twist, you'll get closer to uncovering the real killer.

EMILY



I ran down the stairs as I had never run before, throwing open the door and sprinting to my friend's body.

"Alan?" I grabbed his shoulders and tried shaking him, ignoring the pool of blood beside him. On him. On me. I felt for his pulse, but I already knew it would not be there. He was pale and cold in a way he should not have been. Not if he had only just fallen.

I desperately felt for a pulse and held my breath.

Please, please, please.

There was nothing. No thump of a beating heart, no warmth of his body.

He was gone.

The cold wind slapped my face, and I did not realise I was crying until the tears fell from my cheeks.

I could not cry, not when Triston was like this. Not when Leah could barely breathe. Not when they needed me.

So when Ezra appeared next to me, my face was dry and composed. "Have you phoned an ambulance?" I asked, keeping the hysteria from my voice and meeting his panicked eyes.

"I cannot find any phones," he gasped, and I felt my blood run cold.

"What do you mean?"

"They are just not there." Ezra's eyes were glued to Alan's body, glazed with unshed tears.

"Ezra, this is not a good time to lose your phone," I said, panicking now, and still he stared at Alan.

“He has not lost his phone,” Leah’s raspy voice cut through our tense silence. “We cannot find any phones.”

I jumped at her sudden appearance, surprised she had recovered enough to come downstairs. She was staring at the trees beyond, staring at the sky, staring back at the house. Anywhere but at Alan.

Alan.

“What do we do?” Ezra’s voice cracked, and suddenly the whole situation crashed into me.

“We are all going back inside, right now.” I ushered them through the door towards the living room where Triston was wrapped in blankets and held tightly by Audrey. She looked up at me as I entered, and shame erupted in my chest.

Later. Right now, Alan.

“Ambulance?” Triston whispered numbly. Leah sat beside him and took his hand.

“It is all right, we will sort it out,” she tried to comfort him.

The gentle atmosphere of the room was in complete contrast to my overwhelmed mind. The fire crackled softly as the wood was devoured by the deceivingly beautiful flames. Leah’s art was still on the floor, supplies scattered around it. Oils and paintbrushes had been left clumsily in the middle of the room with a bottle of half-filled paint thinner beside them.

Just a few hours ago, we were all in here.

Just a few hours ago, Alan was here.

“Ezra, double check for phones. Mine is by my bed, go and get it.”

I grabbed the car keys as I watched my friend race up the stairs. “Look after Triston,” I demanded as I once again left the house.

“What are you doing?” Audrey asked.

I gave her a sad smile. “I am going to get help.”

I swept from the room, not letting them see the tears fall from my eyes.

They could not know.

They could not know what I had done.

Get help.

A twenty minute drive to the nearest town. Twenty minutes to get help.

I sat in the car and turned the key, begging my mind not to drift back to the horrific thought.

Alan had been dead long before he fell. A body could not lose heat that quickly.

But if that was true, then the fall could not have killed him.

They could never know.

WRITTEN BY HOLLY D
YEAR 10



ARTISTS WANTED!

The Mark

RMGS ARCHIVES

Welcome to RMGS Archives – your window into the rich history of Rainham Mark Grammar School. Each issue, we'll journey through old photos, stories, and memories to celebrate the people and moments that shaped RMGS.

RMGS PLANNERS

Recently, Ms Atlee shared with me a box of RMGS student planners from years past and I was instantly curious. RMGS has a proud history of displaying student artwork on the front of the student planner. Below is an image of a selection of planners that are in the Art Department.

In the past, RMGS have organised competitions for students to submit their artwork in hopes of being featured on the front of the student planner. The planners featured below are just a small sample of what you can view in the Art department. If you are interested in looking at a piece of RMGS history, you can kindly ask Ms Atlee to view these planners!



Christmas Word Search

P R E S E N T S K E P A
 U I D T W F A B L U E P
 J G C I K N Y P T Z B L
 L H V B T J V Y I E E K
 R I P A X I T P C H L Q
 S I N K H E H K I P L L
 F L I G L O O E T G P I
 O G O R A I L S I C E T
 H A P R B I L T P E O A
 P N L A A M Y Y H R S T
 B E L T E C D O V E B U
 E V O L R A T S O G E L
 Y A F L T R Y P P A H E
 J R O V K D E P F K A E
 E L T Q N S M X P R I P
 F A M I L Y R O U N I O
 J R B S P A H V M C X H

PRESENTS	CARDS	HAPPY
SANTA	LOVE	HOPE
CAROLS	IGLOO	FAMILY
BELL	HOLLY	





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CRITICS

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FROM ALL YEAR GROUPS

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WEDNESDAY LUNCH.