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Beech Hall School

for pupils aged 6 months to 16 years

The Griffin Extra

Issue 7/4 - May 2022



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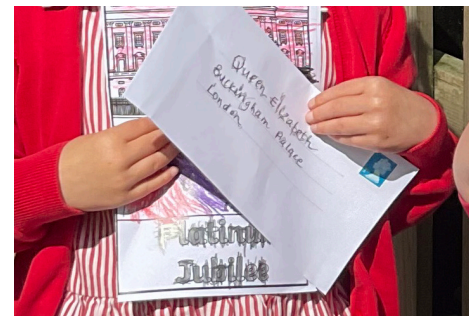
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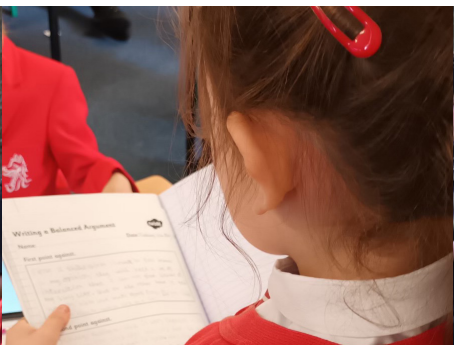
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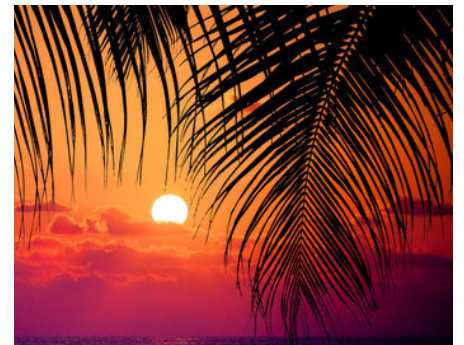
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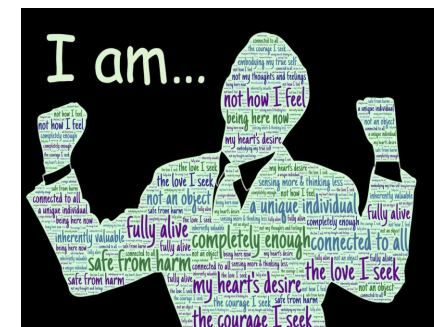
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Back cover

We have somehow and inextricably reached the halfway point in the summer term and now have just five weeks remaining of the academic year. Where has this year gone? And, how good is it to be utterly and absolutely back to normal? We have stopped reporting COVID numbers to Cheshire East. We have stopped sticking that irritating little stick up our noses, and we have stopped flinching every time someone next to us coughs! GCSE examinations are operating for the first time since 2019. The BHPA ran its first Summer Festival for the first time since 2019. Friday Family Swim has returned for the first time since 2019. Last week, we took our first whole-school photograph for the first time since 2019, and our pupils' behaviour was highly praised as the entire activity was completed in less than half an hour.

The school roll has grown to 157, the highest it has been in over a decade, our Food Technology pupils cooked up some outstanding healthy breakfasts (Level 1) and two-course meals (Level 2) for their final assessments, and our swim squad is just five weeks away from their Channel Swim attempt.

This term has seen the transition from winter to summer sports, and our junior sports teams in

particular have enjoyed significant success with a hat-trick of wins in netball, cricket and swimming against Pownall Hall School.

As the BHPA continues to fund raise for the next school project - to provide a permanent lining for the swimming pool - I would like to thank all parents who have helped out, supported and led the return of school events, not least the Summer Festival that was attended by over four hundred people on the hottest day of the year thus far! Not only was it great fun, but it was a fantastic atmosphere of community spirit - a welcome return to utter normality and exactly what Beech Hall is all about.

Children bounced (a lot).

Families swam (a lot).

Parents drank (some a lot!).

And we all enjoyed a thoroughly brilliant afternoon.

A few weeks ago, our 2021 Channel swimmers were presented with the Mayor of Macclesfield's Young Person's Civic Award for their phenomenal efforts not only swimming to France, but also raising £35,000 for Mencap. I am delighted that Edel Harris OBE, Mencap CEO will be joining us as Guest of Honour at this year's Prize

Giving on Friday 1st July.

Another notable change post-Covid has been a return to outdoor trips and we have certainly been making the most of the opportunities available to pupils outside of school. Pupils have camped out for Ukraine (and raised £4,335.10), juniors have enjoyed a performance of the Halle Orchestra at Bridgewater Hall, and specialist Scientists have been to Manchester for the New Scientists Day. Following an inspirational trip to London to see Romeo & Juliet back in October, we returned at Easter with English Literature pupils to once again soak up the atmosphere of Shakespeare's Globe Theatre and an unusual production of Macbeth. Lower Juniors have been to Buxton Opera House to see Billionaire Boy and all of the juniors visited Chester Zoo, thanks to Bentley Williams' day as Headmaster!

In the next half term a large proportion of the school will have the chance to enjoy the Cheshire Show (please no purchase of livestock!), and Enrichment Week will provide residential opportunities on Pony Camp, Duke of Edinburgh expedition in the Peak District, trekking in the Welsh mountains, learning to dive in the local lakes, and soaking up the culture in Budapest.

Of course, we are now able to travel overseas which means a party of thirty pupils and staff heading off to Ecuador and the Galapagos Islands on 11th July. Next year, we have overseas trips planned:

* English and History trip to the Belgian Battlefields in October

* Spanish, Art and Food Technology trip to Barcelona in April

* The return of our family Ski Trip to Italy at Easter

This Griffin Extra will give you an insight into the fun of the fair, as well as celebrating our pupils' efforts and successes in the world of English writing. From animal-themed poetry to passionate persuasive writing, from descriptive writing to empowered poetry, from balanced arguments to competition-winning writing, what is fascinating to see is the progress that pupils make as they move through the school. Well done to every one of the pupils who has contributed to this edition, thank you for your hard work, effort and attitude to learning in English.

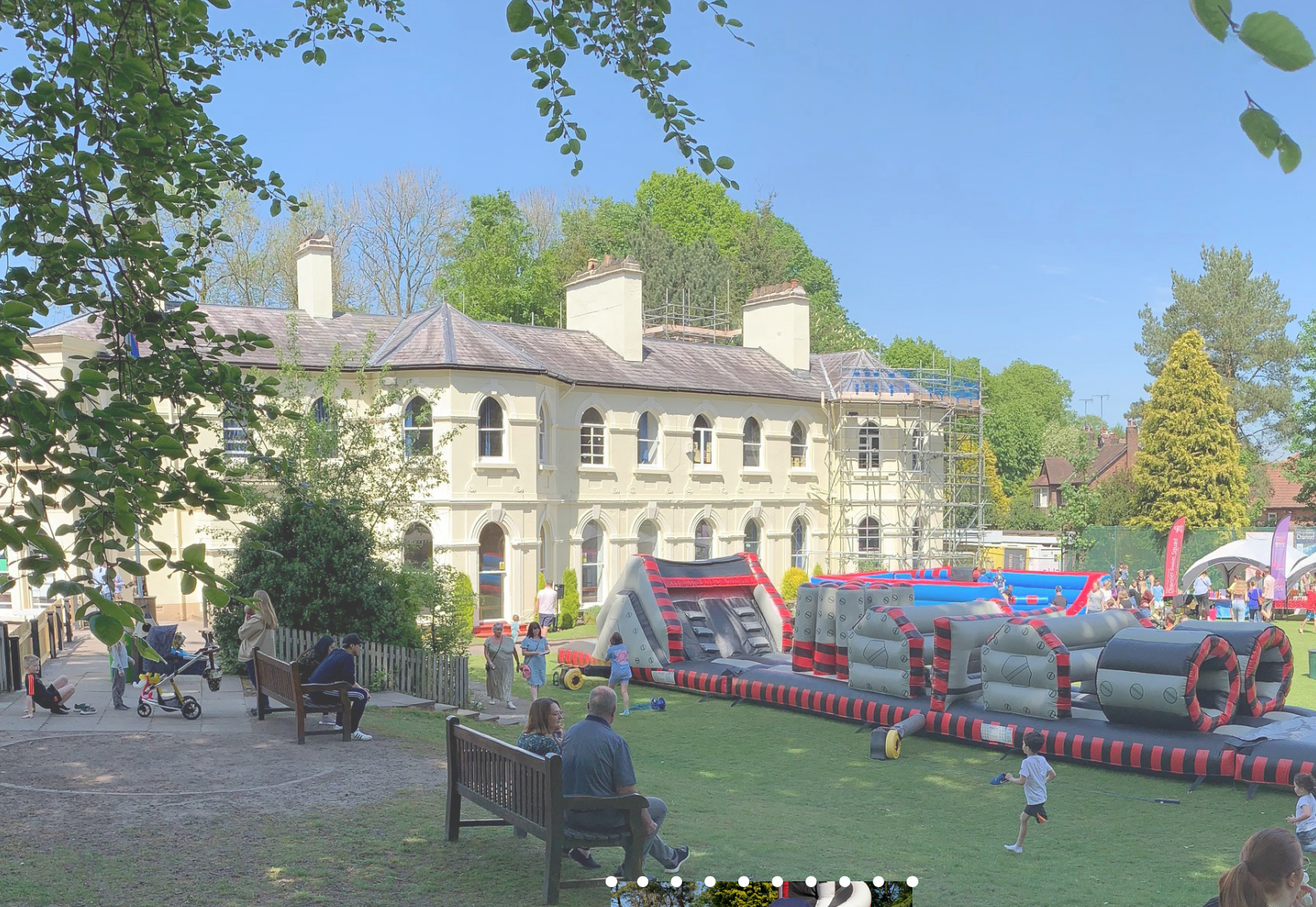
Have a good half term break, and look forward to everything that the final five weeks of the school year has to offer.

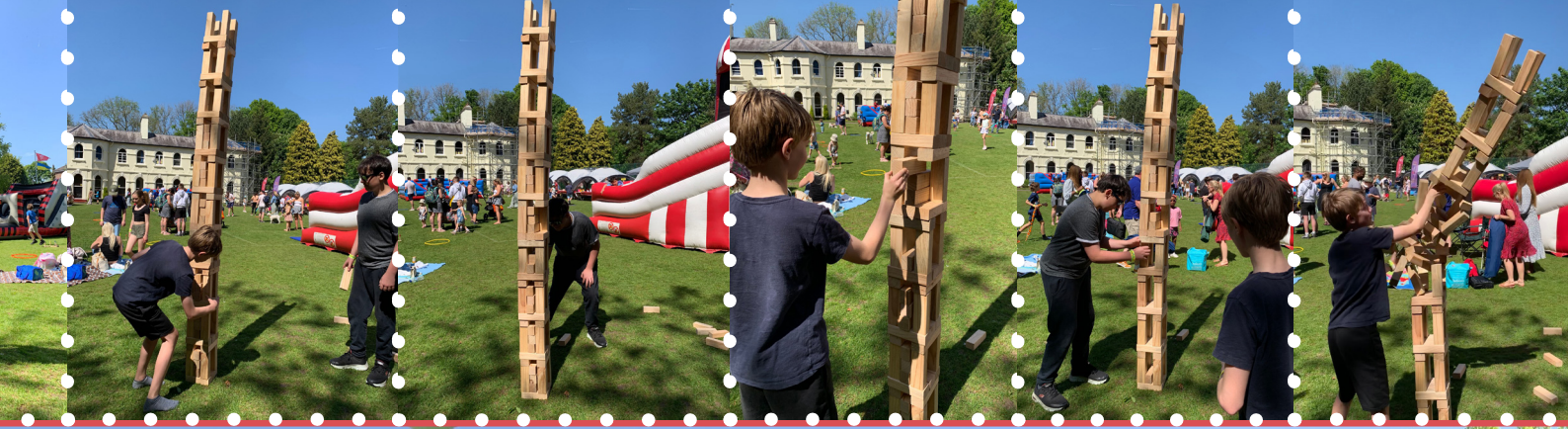


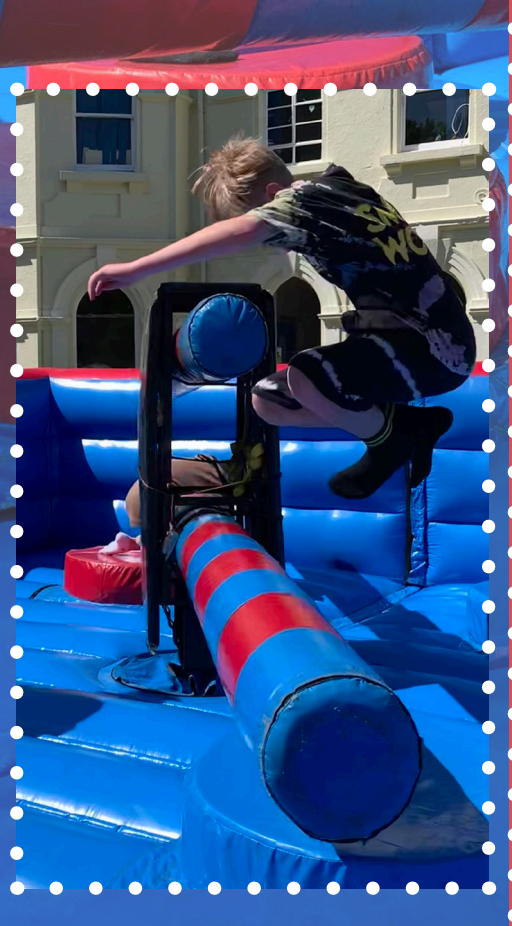
Mr J D Allen
Headmaster















Recently, the Young Writers Organisation has been impressed by Beech Hall pupils' creative writing. Miriam Sanyal of Lower V was already offered a published piece in their Twisted Tales anthology and the following poems are being considered for entry in the Young Writers Empowered creative writing competition.

Pupils from Form III to Lower V were invited to submit their creative pieces, on a topic or theme of their choice. The aim was for pupils to make a difference to readers by composing a passionate piece of powerful poetry.

Here are some of the hopeful entrants, aiming to win one of the five £100 prizes and trophies for Beech Hall.
Mr B Coulbeck [Head of English]

I see the beauty in others

THE FUTURE IS GOOD

Somehow inside all of us is the power to change the world.
- Matilda, Roald Dahl

Nothing is impossible, the word itself says 'I'm possible!'
- Audrey Hepburn

CARING

If I cannot do great things, I can do small things in a great way.
- Martin Luther King Jr.

YOU BECOME

Your Voice Shapes You

EMPOWERED

POETRY COMPETITION FOR 11-18 YEAR-OLDS

Your Voice Shapes You

An Eye for An Eye

Creeping to his cell,
cuffs gnawing at the wrists
Whatever did he do...
To earn a life like this?

He needs no sympathy,
He's not the right kind.
Terrorists are ticking-time bombs,
That eradicate all mankind.

He's only seventeen.
Mummy left when he was three.
Child's been beaten down to bark.
So then, why shouldn't he?

The devil twinkles in his eye,
He's layers of evil incomparable.

Then if your nightlight switched off forever,
your morning never came,
If your identity was extinguished,
Your features went aflame,

Tell me, look me in the eye,
Wouldn't you be the same?

Miriam Sanyal [Lower V]

Real Life

Do you think we get to choose where we are born?

Do you believe we pick the lives we live, like selecting a rose without thorns?

Do you think you suffer when you sleep all night on a comfortable bed, while we rest our heads on rock-hard bricks and lie on stone-cold floors?

Every day one of us never sees the sun again, and do you really believe that you are forlorn?

You go to private schools and learn English, science, and maths, while we are educated to fire a gun or take a never-ending nap.

When was the last time you went to bed hungry?

Do you ever stay up later than your bedtime?

Because every night we go out into the streets and sell food, so we do not start the next day hungry

Daniyal Muhammad [Lower V]

Dear 2045

We are killing the earth and that's not really fun

No one believes us because we are young

Our factories are working and toxins omitting

Our O zones are crumbling and

Global warming is melting the earth

While the penguin and poles are dying

Are we stealing their lives?

We are putting chemicals into the air we are trying to breathe

Our future is stolen and we are the thieves

Don't come to me when your child can't think

Oh what is a tiger? Because they're extinct

Dear 2045 I don't think we are going to survive

If you end up hearing this poem, I just want to apologise

Farrah Cooper-Blair [Lower IV]



The State of Things

Drowning under the knee of oppression
Although this action unsheathe the truth
At the pinnacle of his aggression
alas we stand up and say, I can't breathe

women are repressed into a job
we have no name, just a label of you
told to clean or slave over the gas hob
more and more, we stand up and say me too

egomaniacs raging bloody war
waves of destruction in just one wee plane
running for miles, children starving and sore
we stand up and say I stand with Ukraine

imprisoned in in our own homes like rats
lives taken away in a wooden cask
the deaths of our friends are set into stats
we should stand up and say, just wear a mask

Harold Ghorbanian [Lower V]

You are You

Don't let people change who you are.
You are you and you're a star
People judge about how others look
But don't worry
Look at the goods.
Always zoom in at the do's and the could's
Never let anyone turn them around

Be the person you were born to be.
Don't let others say what you do.
Just be you, what you suit.
Cos' no matter what you want to be.
I'm sure it will be the right thing for you.
As you are you,
And you get to choose.

Joel Wilson [Lower V]

The Country

You make fun of our voices,
We may not be the best.
You make too many noises.

It's so Evil in There.
Always too violent,
Make sure to be aware.

Einri O'Brien [Lower IV]

I Can't Write Poetry

How do you write poetry?
Quite frankly, I do not know
But perhaps I can learn
To be like Rudyard Kipling
Or like Edgar Allen Poe
Or just lay down on my bed
With my computer, alone

Or I could make change now
Not in poetry but like
A film, perhaps, a movie
A heartfelt drama of love
Or a gritty, action noir
I would prefer to do noir
Not a real fan of romance

I could make a change now
Or I could do it later
That's what I usually say
"I'll bring my clothes down later"
Later isn't a time of day
Make the change to see the change
Some famous person said that

Simon Eastmond [Lower V]

Tree

The tree is green and leafy,
The roots grow underground,
The big brown trunk is home to
a skunk,

Sat in a branch was a big
beastly bird,
How absurd!
Small birds nesting in a box,
Away from the fox,

A squirrel is finding acorns to
stow away for winter,
Let's hope he doesn't get a
splinter,
If I was up so high in the leafy
loft,

I'd probably fall off.

Luke Francis [Lower V]

A Pencil and a Pen

The lead of a pencil, the ink of a pen, the power of a pencil and a pen.
The roughness of a pencil, the fullness of a pen, the power of a pencil and a pen
The pencil picks me up, the pen lifts me up, up, up I go...
Floating inspiration: I hope I make a great creation.
Touching the paper, starting to write, I can almost see the light.
The lead of a pencil, the ink of a pen, the power of a pencil and a pen.
Nearly finished, nearly done - but wanting to carry on, the power of a pencil and a pen.
A pencil gives you hope, a pen gives you a dream, writing is mine, I hope I finish on time.
The urge to write is so strong, I don't want to get it wrong.
Coming to the end of the line, and the end of time, follow your dream: I followed mine.
The lead of a pencil, the ink of a pen, the power of a pencil and a pen.

The roughness of a pencil, the fullness of a pen, the power of a pencil and a pen.

Amelia Semp [Lower V]

A Design for Life

Let's build a house
firstly let's lay the foundations
now let's smooth the concrete and
let the excess run off like emotions
overflowing a human.

Next it is time to lay the bricks
and mortar, let's start to build the frame
like building yourself up to do things
lift the wooden frames like our bones
and attach them into the ground

Also let's build the frame for the room
and crane that on the top then start
putting the underlay down for the slate roof
like our skin delicate, hardy
adjoining this is the insulation getting trapped

In before we lay the dry wall to cover
it like we hide anger now we will lay
the dark oak varnished wooden floors
throughout. We will attach our
oak beams in the home then

Add the custom-made windows and
garage doors, bifold doors, front door
and side door making it feel more like a home.
Now we can get plumbing and heating put in
like we have our organs and hearts.

Thane Davenport [Lower IV]

WINNER OF THE PULITZER PRIZE FOR FICTION
FROM THE AUTHOR OF *NO COUNTRY FOR OLD MEN*

NOW A
MAJOR
FILM

Here is a selection of creative writing pieces from pupils in Upper IV. They were given the picture below, taken from the dystopian post-apocalyptic book and film *The Road*. In the style of a GCSE Question 5, they were asked to either:

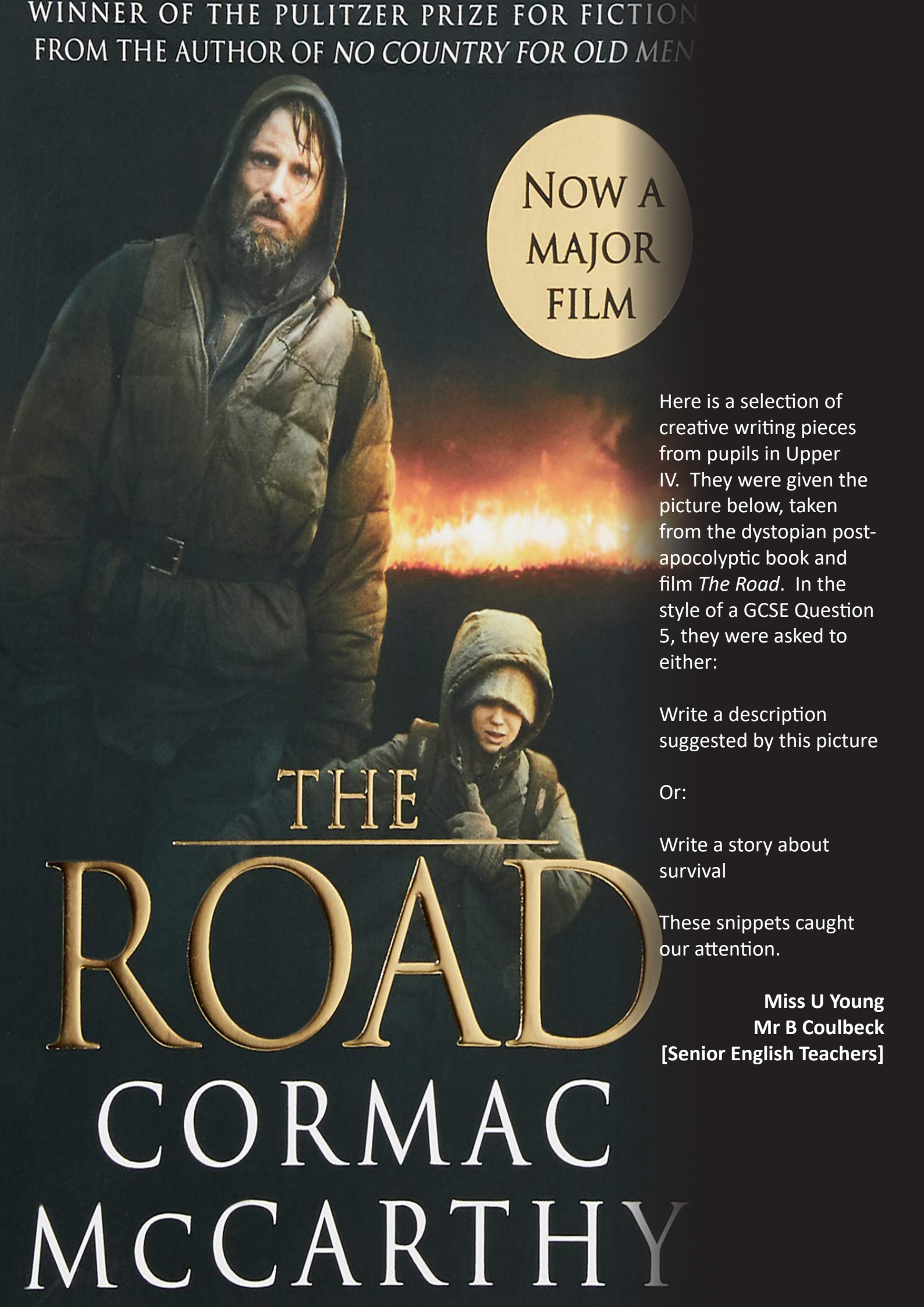
Write a description suggested by this picture

Or:

Write a story about survival

These snippets caught our attention.

Miss U Young
Mr B Coulbeck
[Senior English Teachers]



THE
ROAD
CORMAC
MCCARTHY



With a sigh of relief, I walked through the doorway to loot the remains of the old world.

An hour later, my bag was full. I smiled for the first time in seven years; I walked to where I thought I had come from. Then I heard something, a low pitch growl, then I saw it. At first, I thought I saw a human, but this was far from it. Most of its skin had rotted away, leaving only the tissue visible around the joints; its bones had grown so fast thanks to its mutations that six of its ribs had punctured its flesh; tearing open its chest, its eyes glowed a bloodshot amber colour as its stare was like daggers; its hands had become a sort of claw as the bone had grown at a faster rate, had made the nails tear through the tissue causing even more blood loss; the jaw had expanded so quickly it had unhinged and cracked; half of its skull had caved in leaving the brain vulnerable and the lower part of the left arm had been torn off leaving two spiked bones exposed. I hid behind a fallen bookshelf as the creature patrolled the area.

Then I heard a noise...

Lucas McCulloch

Crunch, the gravel cracks beneath my stolen shoes. The slow, gentle breeze blows against my hood and hair, as if to warn me. I feel shadows breathing down my neck. The all so familiar houses fade to nightmare. The darkness closes in. I reach into my pocket. Gripping the handle, tight. My eyes wander left to right and left again, making sure I'm alone. I sense the wildlife's beam judging me. Snap! A thin branch breaks between the bushes. My eyes glare worryingly. I pause. Deep indigo pearls clash against the green leaves. I attempt to run, but my feet can't carry me far. I fall. The gloomy figure leaps...

That's where my memories fade. And now my heartbeat is the soundtrack to my life. With no new or old thoughts left. Just the piercing eyes that dare to stay. Alone. Silent and alone.

Blake Lyons

The endless road was covered with a blanket of death. The white wind carried the voices of the victims who were viciously mauled by each other. The irritating noise of the squeaking wheel taunts me second by second, minute by minute, slowly killing my hope. Every day a new challenge appears; one that I didn't want to face, but I had to...for the survival of my son. It hurt to glance around and see what ruins the world had come to; the wildlife that once flourished and thrived, burnt to ashes.

The stench of the rodent-infested carcasses everywhere seeps up my nose, sending a tremble throughout my already feeble structure. The fumes still unbearable after years of inhaling and choking.

James Barlow



It is the 5th of June 1944, one day prior to the massive push on Normandy. I sit in the creaking metal battleship harboured in Portsmouth, waiting till early morning. I lie in my bunk bed as this could be one of the last sleeps I get, the slowly rusting ceiling drips water onto my forehead. The screams from downstairs are of the drunk men. Preparing for the day ahead, I start trying to get to sleep; the only way I can is by smothering my ears to drown out the sound...

A matter of hours later, I pick up my rifle and start trudging through the dead bodies, then the blaze is once again targeted at me, I do a strenuous sprint to where there is a hill of sand made by soldiers that are ahead of me. Someone grabs my shoulder, pulling me down to the ground, whispering into my ear, "You have to stick with me if you want to survive". So I listen to him and follow him to another group of shaking cold men, next to the line of barbed wire, out of sight of the machine gun.

Alex Stanley

English in the Early Years incorporates listening, speaking, understanding, attention. These early skills lead to more formal comprehension, word reading and writing. Immersion in role play, quality texts and hands on experiences coupled with individual focus on phonics and storytelling develops confidence in all aspects of Literacy.

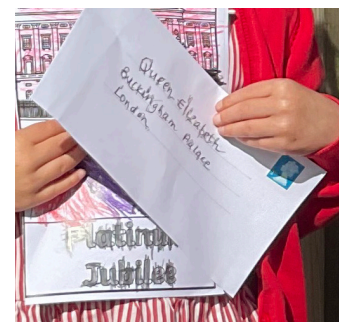
Mrs A Bostock [Reception Teacher]



Dear Queen Elizabeth

I hope you have a wonderful party.

Love from
Felicity



Upper I pupils were given a text which we read as a class. Then they had to highlight the points they thought were important to them in order to write their argument. Using these, they produced two points, including evidence. Finally, they read it to their audience and tried to convince them whether you should keep birds as pets.

Mrs G Morrell [Upper I Teacher]

Henry A argues...

Firstly, in my opinion, birds need a lot of room to burn energy which I don't have a lot of.

Secondly, birds are too clever to be alone hour after hour in their cage without company or things to do.

In conclusion, I would not get a bird but it is up to you to decide whether you still want a bird or not.

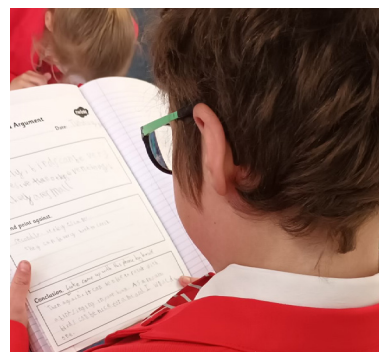
*Mrs Morrell said:
Henry, you have worked hard to produce your argument, well done!*

Luke argues...

Firstly, birds can be very expensive compared to other animals, even though they are small.

Secondly, if they escape, they can be very hard to catch.

Then again, it can be nice to relax with a bird singing in your house. As a result, birds can be nice for a pet and I would have one.



*Mrs Morrell said:
Great effort Luke - you worked hard to come up with ideas for your debate, well done!*

Edith argues...

Many people may not look at keeping a pet bird as a job but it is very expensive and tiring. Keeping a pet bird can cost up to £70 per month just for food and toys. On the upside, if you do have the money, a pet bird could be a good pet. Could you afford a pet bird and yourself?

Despite this, birds can't be used as cage ornaments which means you can't leave them alone for hours as it is not healthy. Birds in the wild live a life of company. If you say you want a pet bird, you need someone to look after them hour after hour, unless you buy two but that would be double the cost. Do you have the right amount of money, space and company?

In conclusion, I have given you a few reasons why keeping a pet bird isn't the way forward, however you decide for yourself. Could you deal with the chaos?

*Mrs Morrell said:
Absolutely fantastic writing: you clearly stated your reasons for not wanting pet birds and made the audience think twice too! Great use of adverbials and conjunctions.*



Penelope argues...

Firstly I think birds shouldn't be pets because, in my opinion, they will need a lot of interaction that I cannot give because of my busy life. But on the other hand, if you're not busy, birds could make good pets. Do you have enough time to have a bird as a pet?

Secondly, keeping a bird is very expensive. It is the same for bird toys and bird food. It costs £70 a month though, if you're rich, you could pay your bills. Could you afford one?

Even though, in my opinion, some people might say that keeping a pet bird is a good thing, I don't have the money or the time to do so. Do you?

*Mrs Morrell said:
Wow Penelope. This is a fabulous piece of writing and I love your questioning to get the audience to think carefully.*

Henry R argues...

Birds shouldn't be kept in cages because they want to be free. They need to fly like a helicopter. Also they need to have a lot of space.

Secondly, if you let them out for exercise, they could make a mess by pooing all over the house. However, birds need exercise but they cannot go outside.

It is alright to have a pet bird if you want one but I wouldn't get a pet bird if I were you.

*Mrs Morrell said:
Well done Henry. You have worked really hard writing your argument and made good points.*

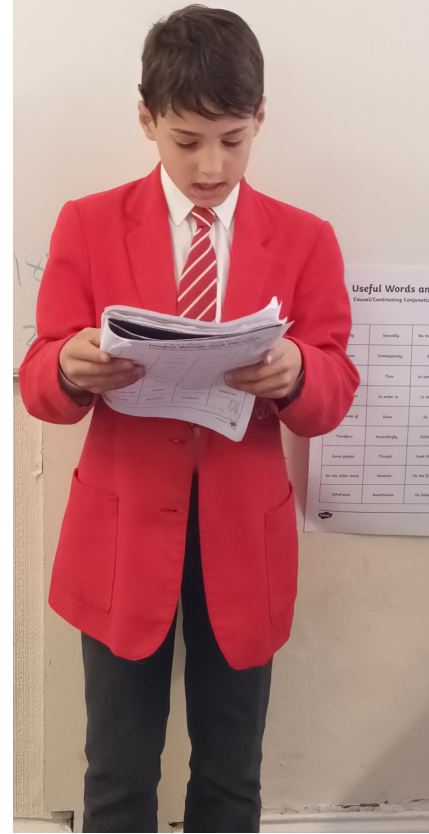
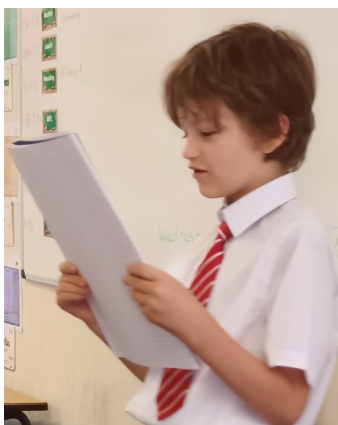
Luca argues...

Some people believe that birds are good pets, well I don't because, however cute or cool they seem, there are downsides! They are expensive, messy and have too much energy.

Secondly, they are not cage ornaments. Birds require a lot of care and attention, therefore you should think twice about buying them.

For these reasons, I think keeping a pet bird is way too hard and time-consuming. So, how would you deal with a bird as a pet?

*Mrs Morrell said:
A fantastic piece of writing Luca - you thought hard about your argument, well done!*



Ethan presents his argument to the audience, but did he convince them?

THE CHEETAH

In the wilds of Africa, there are many creatures
Like the lazing lion or the running antelope
or the speeding wildebeest.

But none are as fast as this one,
A speeding yellow blur, this one is
As fast as light, the cheetah is
No one is fast enough, no one can escape the cheetah.
He takes his prey and leaves as soon as he has come.
His only threats aren't fast enough.
No one can catch a cheetah.

As soon as his prey see this beast, they immediately flee
And hyenas sing with glee.
But at the end all is lost;
The cheetah catches his prey.

When he sees something coming he will strike first.
He is a gun in a sword fight the cheetah will quench its thirst.
For a cheetah runs the wilds and cannot be caught.



Alex Rangayah [Lower IV]

Three Rats

Dozing in the midday sun, in an enclosure strung with rope,
At the height of the bars, a dual hammock hangs.
Three petite balls of silk, two rosy cream, one tawny,
Pool into a pond of fur.

A rustle from external sources fills the air,
Two black pearls float to the top,
A ruby lifts out of the high bed, sniffing the air.
Two radar dishes scan the room and four clawed paws descend upon twine.
Delicately descending, a sudden sound sends her racing for refuge in the treetop bunk,

Not long after, out come three heads.
Twelve feet hasten over plaited rope, a waterfall of thrilled pelts overflow,
Clambering upwards with diamond claws.
Curious snouts sniff the air, shooting around in a flutter of feet.
Glad eyes overlook the scene, feet of quills rummage in woodchip,

Loot well found, a goofy boggle and joyous brux brands a virtuous afternoon.
Fifteen more spunky souls sleep peacefully beneath the ground.



Indigo Platt-Wells [Lower IV]

The Mosquito

I fly low in the sky,
Hovering above the rye.
I see a guy.
I'm hungry, but shy.
He's motionless and dry.
On the grass he lies,
With his hands beside his thighs.
I examine his chest descend then rise.
He hears my buzz, we lock eyes;
He is startled and surprised.
He lunges for the kill,
But my instinct denies,
I'm ducking and weaving to avoid his tries.
He leaps forward, but slips and dies.

Alfie Blank Brown [Lower IV]

The Pac-Man Frog

He grasps his prey with powerful jaws.
He waits throughout the night, he yawns.

With bulbous eyes, he can see,
The forest sleeping peacefully.

With drunken strides he tipples and topples
And migrates to his later lair.
Like Pac-Man, he tears through his prey
With a bottomless belly, they say.

His humid song,
He sings along
From evening
To the day.

Oliver Pinches [Lower IV]

The Red Pandas

Where the bamboo rises in glory,
A crimson army approaches.
They spread around like a virus.
Anyone who didn't run away in time was
guaranteed a dangerous fate,
It was their meal, on their plate.
Chomping away, fury at their teeth.

Is it a bird? A plane? No!
These menaces swing with a smooth flow.
Looking up, they hold another identity.
The red panda, unmasked at once.

Furry, fun, and funny
Their irresistible faces are the moon.
Cute and cuddly, but cunning,
Their sharp moves will make you swoon.

At speed, these creatures dart,
A blur, or a work of art.
Red, white, brown and black,
Colours of fiery pride back to back.

Lucy Wolvin [Lower IV]

The Stallion's Storm

The wind howled like a battle-cry,
Declaring war on the woodland nearby.
The trees were whispering, warning animals to
run,
And warning the forest that a battle has begun.

Suddenly, the first tree fell like a bomb.
The grey horse that was once elegant and calm,
Bolted for the shelter, as fast as a train.
The fierce wind thrashed at the horse's tail and
mane,
It was a beating whip, causing him pain.

His thundering hooves
Pound the ground as he moves.
The rain slashed fiercely at his soaked skin.
The chance that he would make it looked slim.
He ran and ran, but this fast and powerful horse,
Was no match for mighty nature's force

Dulcie Pearson [Lower IV]

Amaan's Advice

When everything seems
to be slipping out of your grasp,
Dreams can be something to clasp,
Remember,

You were born for a reason
And that you mustn't mourn
if you're different
however you may look
or talk isn't treason.

Your family and friends will be with you
Some friends will come and go
But family is forever
Your parents love you,
And you should know.

When others hate you,
don't hate back
Hold your head up high
when things start to crack and crumble
Look ahead and don't let those thoughts
attack you
Because one day they may bite back at
you

Learn to fight back
Because that's what's right
Resist
And learn to assist.

Amaan Mohammed [Lower IV]



Theo's Advice

If you feel like you're drifting,
Drifting away into the abyss,
Like a spaceman lost in space.

Just remember people love you,
Care for you,
And look out for you.

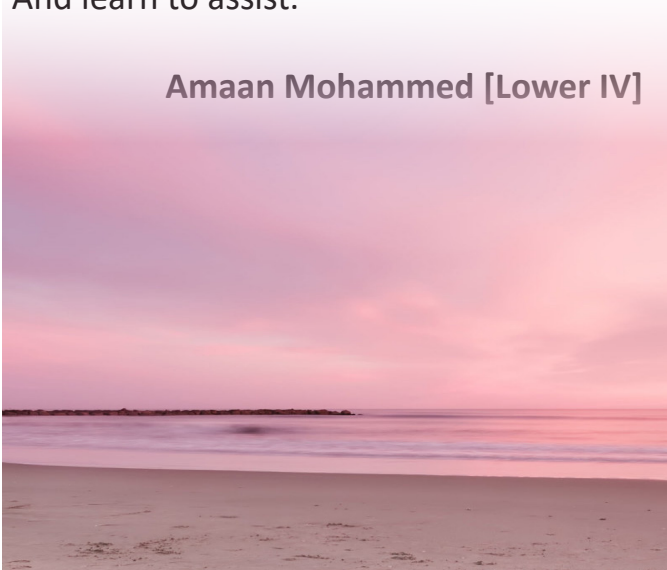
If you feel like you're on the edge of a
cliff,
Rocks falling and your hands trembling,
It feels as if you're being hit with a brick.

Tell someone you can trust,
A parent, a friend will all help,
This helps most people,
And for you, it may just.

Remember who you are,
And what you want to become,
Because time can be short,
So don't leave things undone.

You may feel sorrow,
For people, you don't like
But don't get too close,
They may fill you with dislike.

Theo Naylor [Lower IV]



The towers of trees cast over the dilapidated buildings. Fog spreads over the ruined plains. The building, withered and rotten, stands weakly over the surrounding forest, somewhat calling for people to explore. The moonlight peeks through the arms and hands of trees, seeming to be peeking in, trying to get a glimpse of something it should not find. Shadows creep and hide around corners, behind bushes and trees that stalk the unsuspecting idiot who had the fortune of finding themselves here tonight.

Dancing through the apparitions of the night, my body weaves and flows to the howling of the wind. Did you hear of the one who dances on the graves of the lifeless? That is me. I am your welcoming host. I am the one who welcomes those into eschatology. I am the one who knows your deepest secrets. I am home. I am a friend. I have never spoken to you, yet I know your whole life story. I am the feeling of the shivers down your spine. I am the prickle on the back of your neck. I am the feeling of someone watching you. I am the sound of creaks in the night. I am your worst nightmare.

Maddie Wrench [Upper IV]

The Cemetery

Monday (afternoon)

We all stood looking at his grave, emotionless, pale, thinking and reflecting on life's tormenting conclusion. He was such a young boy, innocent and carefree. We all looked up and held our hands together, while we listened to my uncle, saying words of remembrance for this young boy. The air felt thin and I felt hollow; depressed. A wave of melancholy washed over me as I stared at the engraved name on the gravestone. The whispers from the moon started to call as the sun graciously faded away. I wasn't very fond of cemeteries, they made me feel daunted and sent chills down my spine; the old decaying statues, the empty corpses of lost souls lying still; an eerie place for me even till this day.

I refocused back on the funeral service, and realized it was time to leave. I left a solitary flower next to the grave and turned around getting ready to walk to the gate. I heard birds flying away in the distance, a huge flock of them, gliding at full pelt, this sight was quite unusual especially at this time of day, what were they flying away from? What would have scared them?

I felt the urge to investigate this, so I explored north, walking through the cold whispering wind, looking through the gaps of the old, ancient trees trying to find a sign of anything. Step by step, I was curious, but filled with anxiety, as I wandered further, and further from the gate. I took a big leap over a ditch and felt something wet, slimy, mysteriously smother itself on my shoes, it felt unwelcoming and frigid. I lifted my foot up just reaching it over my knee, and twisted my ankle looking on the edge of my worn out shoe. I saw a red substance dribble down onto my legs, it was bright crimson red, it looked evil. Hyperventilating, in my head I knew what it was, but did not dare to think or tell myself. It was blood... and it wasn't just on my shoe no, no, the leaves were covered in it, there were tracks and trails everywhere. The leaves lost their warming soft brown colour that they once had, now they were angry, and menacing with a wine-red stain. I looked around me but no one was here for me to tell, except for a statue that stood behind me. I remember coming across that statue before but I thought it was way further back than that? And it looked different than before, maybe that was just in my head. I went back to the trail and followed the leaves forward, maybe an animal had been hurt? Or worse, a person.

Sam Allmand-Smith [Upper IV]

AQA



Persuasive Writing with Passion

For their GCSE English Language assessment, Lower V pupils had to write a newspaper article about the theme of

identity. The aim for them all was to create a piece of writing which was engaging, interesting and persuasive. Here are a few snippets which we thought were impressive.

Mr B Coulbeck & Miss U Young [GCSE English Teachers]

PAINTING THE TRUE COLOURS OF IDENTITY

Miriam Sanyal enlightens the public towards appearance...

Black and white is all we ever saw. It is no mystery that fashion in the UK has a certain norm that we are all advised to come under. That hair of yours will have to look a certain way, that dress you're wearing has that particular style that all those other dresses have. And to those who prefer to slip outside the norm; with flashy dyed hair and a face freckled with piercings? They'll become eradicated from the public and labelled as a "freak". Here's why true beauty in the UK is locked away, and why it's an outrage.

Ever since the multi-coloured world of the 80s waved goodbye, the range of make-up, dresses, hair, jeans have been squished to a miserable limit. Girls and boys, men and women are subtly encouraged behind the scenes to look a certain way, keep their sense of fashion in the wardrobes. That colourful, rainbow-streaked wig you've got on? Don't wear it at college, you'll turn yourself into a clown.

Ben Pope shows that he is stronger...

Everybody from time to time finds themselves in a time of despair where all you want to do is hide away from the world. In our day and age, we see too many people locking themselves away in their emotions without any actions behind them.

In today's society, the trend is to follow the crowd in black and white uniforms, with a lack of individuality amongst the crowd. It is time for change, not just in the minds of the people, but also in the expression of the people.

People today are growing stronger, and feel free to express who they are, although some people are frightened, now is the time to show who you are through clothes representing your individuality.

PEELING OFF THE MASK

Daniyal Muhammad discusses your rights to your appearance...

Everyone should have the freedom to decide how they look without being looked upon in contempt by society. Since the dawn of time, we have created ideals of what a person should look like, which is influenced by their gender, sex, and ethnicity. We have always judged people by the image our eyes see: men should have a v-tapered body and gladiatorial muscles, and women should be physically attractive and have wide hips and chest, which leads to the question, in this age of revolution and difference, should we still be criticising and bullying people who fail to meet the false expectations of society?

IS THE FUTURE GOING TO STAY IN THE PAST?

Harold Ghorbanian breaks through the cage of self-expression...

Why should old-fashioned judgements affect the decisions of young millennials and their self-expression? Old men and their opinions have barricaded people's colourful minds for long enough, so why let them drag through to our children? Take a stance, go wear a choker with spikes on it, go buy a pair of knee-high black boots, go make yourself comfortable in your own body.

Firstly, I would like to state that clothing and appearance is subjective to different people, and this might be why certain groups in the public feel judged or even scared of what others might think of them. Our world is just becoming more aware of different identities, which is amazing still, but how long will it be before the generation that had to witness Thatcher (the milk snatcher), realise it? You have the right to your own emotions, and it's time that you showed them.

IT'S TIME TO GROW UP

Izzy Howe asks the tough questions...

How many times can you think of that you have been judged or made fun of simply because of what you're wearing or what you look like? The answer to this just being the times you've actually known about it. Even if it's not been actually said to your face, there are still many ways that you can be judged. The stares from the judgemental mothers with young children while you walked down the street. Or if younger, the people from school, the stares, the whispers that people don't think you can hear about how you cut your hair and dyed it red last Sunday night?

It is time to grow up. Yes I'm addressing, mainly, the adults. The amount of children or teenagers that get a reputation or judged simply for the clothes they wear, the way they do their hair, the colour of their hair, the way they do their makeup. The list goes on. As if being a teen isn't already one of the most hardest things to go through in life, just throw in being judged by a literal adult, as if some of them don't already get 'judged' enough by other teenagers.

LOWER IT'S SENSORY DESCRIPTIONS, WHAT A GREAT FINISH!

As I was about to fall asleep, a vibrant light brought me back from my dreams. In front of me, flying gracefully was a glowing beautiful bird. Suddenly it squawked so loud that lights turned on in the village below. Then, as fast as a blink of an eye, the bird reached out...

Anya Davenport

As I stepped into the humungous dark forest, bright orange foxes were growling loudly. Out of breath, I felt fear running through my scared, terrified body. All of a sudden, my torch ran out of battery. All was silent. Tiny little mice were running away from greedier looking foxes. I could hear birds twittering in the night sky.

Naamah Riley

Mysterious bats and smooth, elegant owls swooped above my head, chirping and squawking noisily. I was exhausted. I found an old tree stump and, without a moment's hesitation, I slumped into my new seat and watched the bushy squirrels play on the ancient tree. A fluffy mouse scurried across the path, a vibrant, orange fox chasing it towards a bright blinding light with a stone and three paths. The stone had an engraving on it...

Louisa Parkes

I kept sprinting for miles and miles until my eyes were glowing as a majestic light came shining at me. I could barely see anything so my eyes squinted and, soon enough, I found myself getting closer and closer to this beautiful glowing light. The only other source of light was the neon-like shining moon.

Isla Heath-Smith

I saw the sleek golden feathers of the firebird. Then I saw the firebird's rock hard beak and fiery red eyes. He had red-orange wings. Although his wings looked hot, if you got a chance to touch them, they were cool and made you feel relaxed and chilled. Curiously, I could smell sweet apples and smoky grass. The taste of ash filled my mouth. In the tree branches, I heard an owl hooting. I saw the most remarkable thing in the air - it was the firebird.

Morgan Partridge

Never in my life had I felt the feeling I was feeling now. All I could hear was the smooth, bushy squirrels scampering up the rough, shady oak tree. The tall trees which were masked by shadows towered over me, almost like they were watching every step. I noticed a bright, vibrant light as we trotted closer, it led us to three wiggly, stony paths. Which one of these treacherous paths should I take now?

Hattie Hicks

The burning pheonix landed gracefully on the elegant, golden apple tree and being proud of his success, he stretched our his almighty wings to show his presence. Gracefully, he raised his bright red scissor-like beak and snatched a precious apple. There, in front of me, I could see his fabulous wavy tail, his beautiful grand wings, his holy plume and his divine, slender body. Silently, I stood in amazement of the phoenix and I took a deep breath as I was surprised it even existed.

Thomas James

