

# THE ACADEMY

Student Newspaper, Volume 8 (March 2026)



Dear all,

Welcome to Volume 8 of The Academy newspaper. As with previous editions, none of this publication would be possible without the enthusiasm and effort of the English Subject Champions. They have not only contributed to the success of this paper but also aided in the launching and judging of our Valentines competition – with all winning entries contained within. I must thank each and every one of our students for their continued efforts in promoting a love of English across the Academy.

Best wishes and happy reading,

Miss Hurk



## Summer

By Lily (Year 8)

Days like these make me feel so free,  
Let down my hair and let me be me,  
Dancing through hours that slip by with ease,  
Catching the rhythm that lives in the breeze.

Music up loud till it drowns out the past,  
Singing along as the miles rush fast,  
Driving towards nothing, yet somehow it feels right,  
Finding myself in the fall of the light.

Heat on the pavement, the seasons reset,  
Friends drifting closer like sunsets we met,  
Troubles drift off like they're caught in the breeze,  
Floating away with such gentle ease.



When I woke, my vision was blurred but I could make out splodges of colours. Bright, unnatural colours. My head was throbbing and all I could remember from the past couple hours was dizziness and a strange something had pulled and pushed me around. As my vision cleared, I was finally able to see what the splodges were - fluorescent pink trees, brightly coloured rocks and that smell...

GINGERBREAD? That sweet aroma couldn't have been anything else; it was then that I realised that the pink 'trees' were actually candyfloss and the 'rocks' were actually colourful gumdrops. But in what world is the environment made of sweets? Where am I?

By Hazel (Year 8)



## ENGLISH SUBJECT CHAMPIONS GROUP PROJECT

For this volume, I tasked the English Subject champions to come together as a group to craft an acrostic poem that represents what English means to them. It was a joy to observe their creative process and see these ideas unfold. I hope in the finished pieces below, you see their passion for English.

English is enjoyable because...

No answer is wrong,

Great stories are told:

Long and Short,

Imagination thrives through

Stories old, and new,

Happy memories are made, here in English.



## VALENTINES COMPETITION

At the end of February, the English Subject Champions launched a competition for students across the Academy to write a poem about something or someone they love. Two year 10 students, Bethany and Niamh, were chosen as the winners of the competition, and you can find their winning entries below. Featured also are the Subject Champions' entries...

Soulmates aren't just love

My soulmates live in my friends

Their love makes me, me.

Their laughter lifts me  
My friends make joy bloom in me  
Their jokes warm my soul.

Their kindness shapes me  
They carry such gentle hearts  
Their warmth steadies me.

My friends anchor me  
Their care lifts the weight I bear  
They keep me grounded.

By Lily (Year 8)



### Summer Evenings

I love summer evenings  
And how the sun forgets to leave  
The way my hair dances  
In the temporary breeze.  
Crickets start their murmuring  
And the streetlights flicker on,  
BBQ smoke still in the air,  
As the day lingers on  
The light loosens its last hold  
As evening deepens, close and near  
The day at its quiet ending  
And the night almost here.  
Now night has taken over  
The stars settling into place  
The day released without a sound  
The light gone without a trace.  
I love summer evenings  
And how they make me feel,  
I look forward to when they come  
And hate it when they leave.

By Edith (Year 7)



### Lighthouse

'A presence like a lighthouse,  
Steady against the shifting tide.  
Though heavy waves may douse me,  
You remain a place to hide.

Your light a strong but gentle glow,  
You beckon and call me,  
A sure place to go,  
When lost in thought or lost at sea.

Finally, I step inside,

Engulfed by security,  
From crashing waves, I safely hide,  
In love and light and purity.'

By Liv (Year 12)



### "Love?"

I think of you now  
and a haze of emotions entertain themselves in my mind  
shame and guilt and worry and care and intrigue and  
reminiscence

But nothing as intense as the  
love

It's an inarticulable love  
Not of flowers  
or cards  
or valentines  
or anything of show

It's not a romantic love  
but I wouldn't call it "platonic" either  
nothing seems to quite fit

Apart from warmth

I think of us together lonesome  
engrossed in the company of one  
another  
waiting for one to talk  
reading  
in an unspoken spoken connection

By Jamie



There's lots of things I love  
Books, music, family, friends  
Yes, lots of 'stuff'  
They are always ready to lend  
A helping hand  
Through a fantasy escape or unconditional love  
I just can't  
Stress how much I care for this 'stuff'  
They are my safety net  
Always willing to provide me with support  
And I bet  
It's always going to be like that

By Hazel



## Oil and Water

I wish we were closer.  
I wish we could be together.  
But you don't like me.  
We are like water and oil.  
You're pure, while I'm contaminated.  
We can be close, but never fuse.  
To you, we're just friends.  
To me, we had a connection  
If you could be my valentine,  
We could be hand in hand.

By Niamh (Year 10) – **Competition winner**

They say a girl's first love is her dad  
The man to buy her flowers no strings attached  
The man who will hold her through rough times  
The man who carries her to bed after long car rides  
He's the man she'll complain to about boys  
The one she'll put makeup on while playing with toys  
He's the one who'll protect her from the monsters under her bed  
The one who gives her nicknames like princess or butthead  
So, a girl's first love is probably her dad  
And she better grow up always knowing that

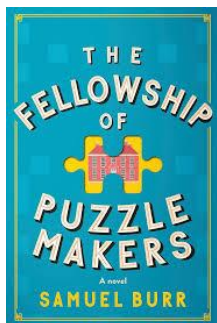
By Bethany (Year 10) – **Competition winner**



## BOOK REVIEWS

### The Fellowship of Puzzlemakers by Samuel Burr

Rating: ★★★★★



This book changes date and point of view each chapter, one of which belongs to Pippa Allsbrook, a puzzle-loving woman who forms a little society connected by people's love for puzzles. She helps it grow, with everyone in the Fellowship eventually living under the same (very large, manor-sized) roof, where they make their own business, selling various puzzles, all handmade by the different residents. The other point of view follows a man called Clayton, who was abandoned by his mother at the Fellowship as a baby. Pippa raises him as her own but, after her death, Clayton begins to want more knowledge about his origin. Little does he know, Pippa left him one last puzzle which leads him to explore places outside of the Fellowship, meeting new people and even discovering who his birth parents

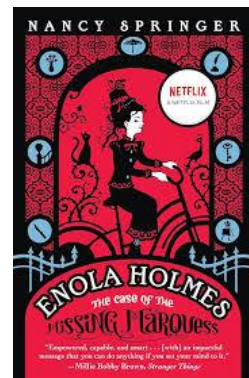
were. I would recommend this to basically anyone, especially to those who enjoy calm, slow-paced books, lots of unexpected twists and even hints of romance.

By Hazel (Year 8)

### Enola Holmes: The Case of the Missing Marquess by Nancy Springer

Rating: ★★★★★

I really enjoyed this book because it has loads of exciting twists and surprises in every chapter. The story is about a clever girl called Enola Holmes, Sherlock Holmes's younger sister. On her fourteenth birthday, her mum suddenly disappears, and Enola decides to find her. She follows the clues her mum left behind and tries to solve the mystery herself.



I liked Enola because she is brave, smart and very independent. Even though people don't always take her seriously because she is a young girl, she still keeps going and doesn't give up. There were some parts where I felt really nervous for her, especially when some suspicious characters appeared. It made me feel nervous because I wanted her to be safe.

The mystery keeps you interested and makes you keep guessing what is going to happen next. I also think the book shows that you shouldn't let other people decide who you are just because of what they believe.

I would recommend this book to anyone who likes detective stories and strong main characters. When I finished it, it made me want to start the next book straight away because I wanted to know what happens next. I hope you like it as much as I did.

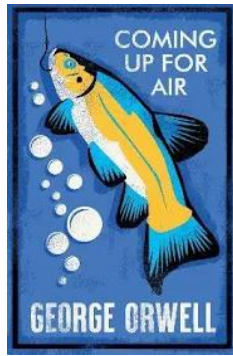
By Darcey (Year 7)

### Coming Up For Air by George Orwell

Rating: ★★★★★

*Coming Up For Air* is the book that got me to love literature. I remember I bought it in the midst of a long, dreary holiday, only half intending to read it. I remember waiting for my parents to return from wherever they had gone, and I sat and read the first chapter. It wasn't exactly the most enchanting thing I had ever consumed, but it was reflective, honest, and exceptionally ordinary. Ordinary in the sense that it encapsulated the many contradictions and mutterings of the everyday.

It is often called the precursor to *Animal Farm* and *1984*, not only in the sense that it was written before them, but in that it was their thematic predecessor. But I don't view it through that lens. For me, *Animal Farm* and *1984* are brilliant, successors to *Coming Up For Air*. Whilst they talk of the dystopia of the future, or of a "farm" (albeit a farm very similar to Soviet Russia), *Coming Up For Air* details the dystopic beauty of the everyday.



I finished the book in about two days, reading under trees and on the borderlines of lakes. And I think that is the most appropriate way to read the text - in the vast, beautiful viridescence. For the book both touches on disillusionment with the modern world and the enchanting nature of our surroundings.

I would call *Coming Up For Air* my favourite book, not because of its language or its imaginative world, but because of its normalcy, because of the fascinating and somewhat agonising details of the everyday world which it so fittingly describes. Although it was written in 1939, I still find it deeply relevant, and I would encourage anyone who loves reading to pick it up and give it a try. Reflective readers and fans of character-driven fiction will certainly appreciate it.

By Jamie (Year 12)



## YEAR 12 WORK EXPERIENCE IN ENGLISH

### *Work Experience*

There is a myriad of different ways that English has impacted on my work experience. In this short article, I hope to display some of the skills that I utilised to help support this process, before considering where studying English can take someone in the future.

First, I used language skills to aid my communication with students throughout the work experience placement. For example, it was pivotal that I altered the tone of my voice when speaking to different students. If someone was distracted, I changed my tone to express that they should focus, but if people weren't then I could soften my tone to make work easier. Furthermore, knowing how to speak clearly from English Language was important since it aided communication with teachers and students.

During literature lessons, it was incredibly helpful that I had studied most of the texts already, so that I had an insight into the texts in comparison to the students, so that I could effectively help them. Some lessons were fast

paced, so answering questions from students effectively and quickly was a useful skill to have. It also meant I had time to answer more questions and help, ultimately being more productive.

*Where can English take you in the future?*

There are many skills that English can offer with most of being transferable to a multitude of different careers and settings. To start with, there are obviously English teachers and jobs located within the education system, both locally and nationally. English is a vital subject if you wish to get into writing and/or teaching, or indeed with publishing or media.

Outside of this, transferable skills such as communication can help you with customer service, improve relationships with colleagues and boosting productivity, and remain key to getting a job – it would be hard to get a job if you can't communicate with your employer! English also improves critical thinking and allows people to formulate meaningful answers, allowing them to effectively evaluate tasks. Finally, English also develops creativity, allowing you to come up with more solutions to problems faced in the workplace.

By Isaac (Year 12)



### INTERESTED IN JOINING THE ENGLISH SUBJECT CHAMPIONS?

We meet every other week (**Red Week**) on a Wednesday, during **Break 2** in **C110**.

These meetings are a chance to plan and share ideas for upcoming competitions, as well as work on writing for the next issue of the newspaper.

All are welcome, so just come along if you are interested!

Have a great Easter!

