

# LIBRARY

## NEWSLETTER



ST BERNARD'S  
HIGH SCHOOL

ISSUE 01 12/24

## LIBRARY

# NEWS

Season's greetings from the Library Team and best wishes to you all for a happy, healthy, and joyous holiday season!



A very warm welcome to the first library newsletter.

The first term in the school academic year is always a busy one and it's no exception here in the library. With the arrival of our new year 7s, library lessons and the Accelerated Reader programme have been reintroduced to promote reading and enhance comprehension. Book Buzz has also been rolled out to encourage our younger readers' reading for pleasure.

Our Reading Leader scheme is underway with our newly trained Year 9 reading leaders actively supporting our Year 7 readers and we've welcomed on board a whole new Reading Scholar team this year. Our online Lexia literacy programme successfully continues to assist some of our younger readers to further develop their reading and comprehension skills.

In honour of National Poetry Day in October this month's special feature is an interview with Sylvan, St Bernard's very own international poet prize-winner, and a poem on starting secondary school written by Year 7 student, Maizah.

We also celebrated Libraries Week in October with this year's focus on being greener and a hobbies and leisure-themed Non-Fiction November.

A selection of festive reads awaits you in the library, along with the chance to participate in our Christmas Bingo competition over the holidays.

We have many more exciting events on the literacy calendar to look forward to next term, including International Book Giving and World Book Days. And updated recommended reading lists, so watch this space. Happy reading all!



Sylvan Restarick, Year 13, recently won The Wells Young Poet's Prize, hosted by Wells Festival of Literature and open to entrants from all over the world, aged 16-22. Interview by Izzy Wise (Yr 7).

**Q.1:** Who has been the biggest influence on your life as a poet?

A: I would say the poet who has the most influence on my life would most likely be Richard Siken. I find that most people now days tend to like more modern style. I also love Chuck Palahniuk.

**Q.2:** Have you always loved poetry, or is it something that has grown?

A: Well, I have been writing poems for 8 years now, so I would say I have always had a love for poetry. I have realised that as I have gotten older, my seriousness for poetry has grown. I now write for the love of art.

**Q.3:** How did you find your love for poetry?

A: I started off reading regular books, but poetry has always appealed to me more. I love Shakespeare's work; I am intrigued by the elegance of his poems. I've started writing 2 books, but I've had to abandon them.

**Q.4:** How do you get inspiration when writing a poem?

A: I would probably say the world around me. When you start writing, you sort of develop a sixth sense. The more you write, the more things strike and inspire you.

**Q.5:** How would you encourage others to love poetry?

A: Develop a great appreciation for the world and the people in it. You'll start to understand poetry more and more as time goes on.

**Q.6:** Do you have a favourite poem, or poet?

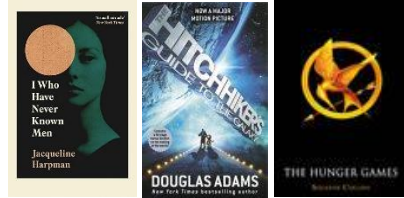
A: My favourite poem of all time is probably "A Primer for the Small Weird Loves." It's about love, desire, but also hate. I enjoy the space that the poem creates.

**Q.7:** Lastly, what are your top tips for a budding poet?

A: I'd say don't focus on being perfect. Focus more on actually writing things down, than it being perfect. It's okay if it's not the best you've done, just keep writing and don't stop.

# BOOK REVIEW

## FIND YOUR NEXT FAVOURITE BOOK WITH STUDENTS' RECOMMENDED READS



### **I Who Have Never Known Men** by Jacqueline Harpman reviewed by Effie Doherty (9C, Reading Leader)

The book 'I Who Have Never Known Men' is a heartbreaking dystopian novel. The Protagonist is a girl who has been living underground for as long as she remembers, she has only ever known captivity and the way of life that comes with it. She shares this bunker with 39 women and the only males in her life are the silent, speechless guards. The girl is the only one of the prisoners who has no memory of the outside world; none of them know why they are being held prisoner, or why there is one child among thirty-nine adults. I really enjoyed this book because it is a sad but powerful book in the way it explores the concepts of humanity and community placed within a dystopian story. It makes the reader think about life and how we conduct ourselves in social situations. Overall, I would recommend this book to ages 15 and up as it is difficult to read and quite sad.

### **A Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy** by Douglas Adams reviewed by Leila Oni (9M, Reading Leader)

A very good book, with many interesting characters, it kept me entertained and pulled me back into my love of reading. It made me burst into hysterics and was extremely funny with lots of jokes. It starts off with a man called Arthur Dent who has just found his house being demolished. He lies down in the front garden with his friend who is acting strangely and keeps looking up at the sky. We find that he is an alien who came to earth to investigate about people on earth.

The plot in this story is that earth is ending for a new hyperspace express route, and they must wait for the spaceship to come and pick up Arthur and his friend Ford Prefect (the alien). They end up navigating through space and through a very hostile universe with lots of other funny characters, who keep the book even more interesting, and they are all living in a spaceship called the Heart of Gold.

It ends with them living on the spaceship and then deciding where to go and eat and decide on the 'Restaurant at the end of the universe' which leads onto the next book in the series.

I would have to give it a ★★★★★

Such a good book and is so addictive to read.

### **Hunger Games** by Suzanne Collins reviewed by Emily Lynch (12F)

The Hunger Games is a young adult dystopian novel series written by Suzanne Collins. It is set in a country known as Panem (implied to be a post-apocalyptic version of the USA), which is separated into twelve (formerly thirteen) districts all ruled by President Snow the rich Capitol. Every year, two children from each district, aged between 12 and 18, are selected to fight to the death in a televised competition known as The Hunger Games, where we follow 16-year-old Katniss Everdeen who volunteers herself to compete in place of her 12-year-old sister Prim alongside Peeta Mellark all the way up to the bitter end of her journey.

The way Suzanne Collins came up with the idea for this series is ingenious: she says that she was tired and was simply surfing the channels on her TV one day, when she landed on a channel where people were competing on a reality show. She then switched to another channel, where they were airing coverage of the war in Iraq that was going on at the time. According to a quote from Collins, the two channels 'began to blur in this very unsettling way', and thus Hunger Games was born. Suspense plays a big role in this book. The book is all written from Katniss' perspective, and written in the present tense which makes you root for Katniss even more, as it makes you feel her fear, her anger, her grief, as though you are right there with her. Katniss is effective as the protagonist because she is by no means perfect: she can be cynical, quick to anger and impulsive and her redeeming qualities (her bravery, her resilience, and her never-ending care for those she holds dear) are even more appreciated.

When you buy a physical book from LoveReading4kids.com, 25% of the cover price will be given to a school of your choice.



### **'New Chapter' written by Maizah, a Year 7 Reading Scholar**

A new chapter, dreams to chase, friends to make.  
Each day is a chance to grow, St Bernard's is a world full of adventures.  
Be brave and kind and the world will be right, this is where my chapter begins!!

It's time to dust off all those cobwebs.  
New buildings, new teachers and new books and pens to hold.  
New challenges will come our way during this journey  
You can always face a challenge even if it is hard.

#### STAFF PICKS:

Miss. Alexander is currently reading the Book of Dust by Philip Pullman. The book follows the character Lyra twenty years after Volume one and around seven years after her adventures in the trilogy 'His Dark Materials'. There remains a focus on the connection people have with their souls or 'daemons' as well as the struggle between religion and scientific research.