

# SMRCHS GAZETTE

A NEWSPAPER BY STUDENTS, FOR STUDENTS

## Published authors from St Matthew's



The pupils included are:

- ❖ Humphrey E
- ❖ Mi-Ran Kim A
- ❖ Simon O
- ❖ AJ K
- ❖ Chidinma E
- ❖ Lyla F
- ❖ Praise A
- ❖ Daniele V
- ❖ Isiuwa O
- ❖ Temilade A
- ❖ Faigan E
- ❖ Elaine O
- ❖ Najma B
- ❖ Manuela P

St Matthew's are proud to announce that 14 members of our competitive creative writing club will be published authors in 'The Glitch' Young Writers' publication.

Congratulations to everyone who has taken part, we are thrilled that your talent is being celebrated.

The editor described this as a rarity because not all applicants from a single school are usually successful. It is a huge compliment to the talent at St Matthew's.

This also means that our pupils have made it into the final round to be the winner and win a potential £50 cash prize.

Thanks to Mrs Tormey for all her work in promoting, supporting and entering pupils into creative writing competitions.

**The next Young Writers' competition is: Mission Catastrophe**

(more information on p.13)

## The SMRCHS Student Planner

By Joan

The student planner was made at the start of school (2024). It was made because of the upcoming no phones rules. I respect it and expect for it to be strictly followed, for example you can't just walk around school holding a mobile phone. Students should be walking around school with a book as that is a great expectation from all the staff. It doesn't mean you can't bring a phone to school, you can, but you aren't expected to be carrying it about.

### What is in the student planner?

- 1.) Mission statements - This is the "St Matthew's statement."
- 2.) Uniform expectations - "The uniform that represents St Matthew's."
- 3.) Timetable - This is the weekly timetable for part A and B.

Good luck with your organisation this academic year!



## High School life: you are not alone!

By Joan

In all different high schools, there may be times when you feel unhappy or people say unkind things. When this happens, always remember that there is someone here to help you at St Matthew's. Always tell a member of staff what's wrong and discuss any negative parts of high school so they can help you.

High school is a lot of fun: you play with friends, there are lots of places to see and go and learn! In St Matthew's there

are after-school clubs and lunch-time clubs where you can socialise, complete your homework and develop new skills. In lessons you can also learn about many things, like what I learned was about the human body in science: it was fascinating, I saw the lungs! Some people find it disgusting but I find it amazing! Learning is the positive part of high school.

## Culture Day

By Ella

Culture day is a day to celebrate different cultures of people around the world and appreciate all the cultures around the world.

Manchester is a big city full of different cultures, where a lot of people celebrate their cultures and religions. At St Matthew's we had a wonderful celebration of our diversity at our own Culture Day on Thursday 15<sup>th</sup> February and there will be a Day of Diversity on Thursday 28<sup>th</sup> March.

As a student at St Matthew's if you need help and support during a holiday email: [confide@smrchs.com](mailto:confide@smrchs.com)

**Childline** 0800 1111 (24hrs)

Counselling service for young people

**Chat Health** 07507 330 205

Confidential text messaging service with school nurses

**Kooth** [www.kooth.com](http://www.kooth.com)

Online mental wellbeing, safe and anonymous support



## Productivity

By Melody

### When is your most productive time of day?

What is the most productive time of day? Whether you are at school or in a club, the most productive time of day is the time you get the most work done. Productivity is extremely important to set aside goals, a to-do list and to manage your time, so you can be successful and have time to relax.

Writing, exercise, planning and being around your friends could be the most productive time of your day. Productivity is known to be doing a lot of events in a brief period, but it could be getting out of bed on a Saturday morning to shower, even if you did not feel like it that day and wanted to sleep in all day long.



## National Careers Week



Monday 4<sup>th</sup> March saw the launch of National Careers Week. Now in its tenth year, this national event is a celebration of careers guidance and an opportunity to really start thinking about the future beyond school.

At the very start of the week, a screencast introduced the event. Guided reading this week was given over to an article about the value of work. Did you know that on average, you spend 80,000 hours doing your chosen career? That was just one thing that forms discussed. The PSHE bulletin for the week was also themed on National Careers Week, as were several prayers, which focused on vocation. As pupils and staff made their way round the school, they could read the numerous door signs that had appeared on all classroom and office doors outlining previous job roles and education. A special assembly was delivered to each year group that outlined the skills required in all jobs and careers, and encouraged the pupils to consider the way in which the job market has evolved during their lifetime, and will continue to evolve. Each day started with an assembly that was delivered to all year groups.



Curriculum areas also joined in. In the classroom, part of a lesson across all subjects for pupils in Year 7 to 10 was given over to hearing a subject-specific view of careers and how they might use that subject in the future. For example, the History Department asked their pupils to think about the most common career choice for History graduates. MFL

considered demand for languages in the workplace.

English

explored how the skills developed in English lessons could be used in almost situation from applying to college to starting up a business. The PE department explored outdoor education quite literally by leading pupils on a career-related orienteering session within the school grounds.



A variety of speakers were invited into school, among them, a quantity surveyor, nurses, a surgeon and a solicitor. They explained the various routes into careers, how varied they could be, and of course, how much they could expect to earn! Oldham College had a stand in the hall at lunchtime that provided further opportunities to learn about options after school, with all year groups taking a keen interest in what they might do after Year 11.

As National Careers Week drew to a close, we asked pupils to share their views. As a pupil in Year 8 said, a career is a very different thing to a job, and this week provided the opportunity to truly explore what the future could look like for them.



## Prom: Eco fashion and sustainability appeal



**St. Matthew's**  
Roman Catholic High School  
VOLUNTARY ACADEMY

# PROM WEAR APPEAL 2024

We are requesting contributions of prom dresses, suits and accessories to assist families in need around the end of the school year.

## WAYS YOU CAN HELP

- Donate a Prom dress/suit;
- Donate accessories like shoes or shirts;
- Donate your time or a gift voucher to provide hair, make-up or nails; and
- Share this post with your friends, family & local businesses.

[www.smrchs.com](http://www.smrchs.com)



## SPREAD THE WORD!

Anyone who wants to donate please contact Mrs Bunn  
[k.bunn@smrchs.com](mailto:k.bunn@smrchs.com)

## Change for change:

Collect your pennies to support our school charity collection and make a difference to someone's life. Caritas is a Catholic charity in the Salford diocese, supporting thousands of people every day, from hot lunches to family support services, giving dignity to people in need. Their services cost £12,000 a day to run, so every penny helps!

*All students have been given a collection box to help them contribute.*

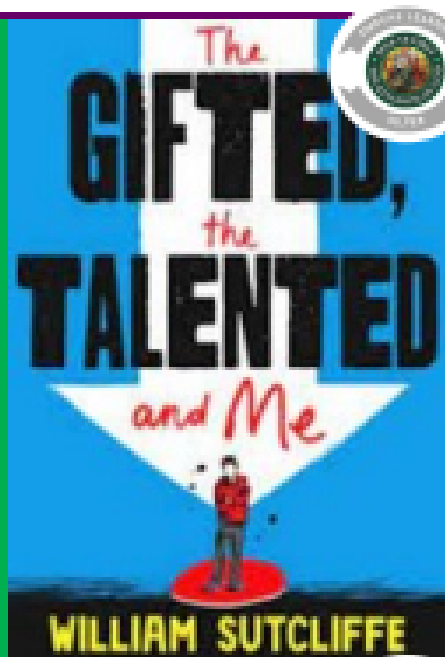


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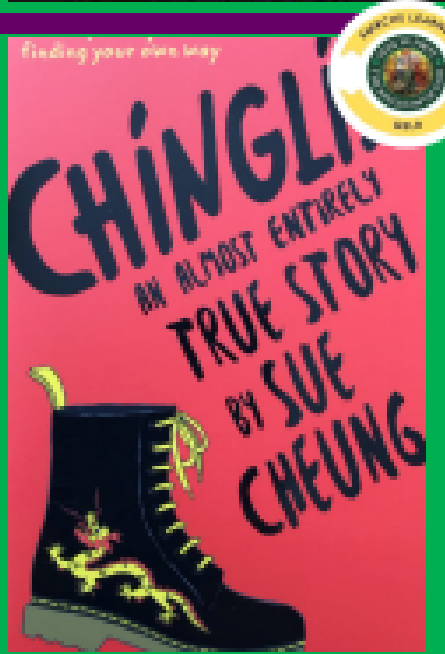
Ultimate Reading List

**YEAR 7**



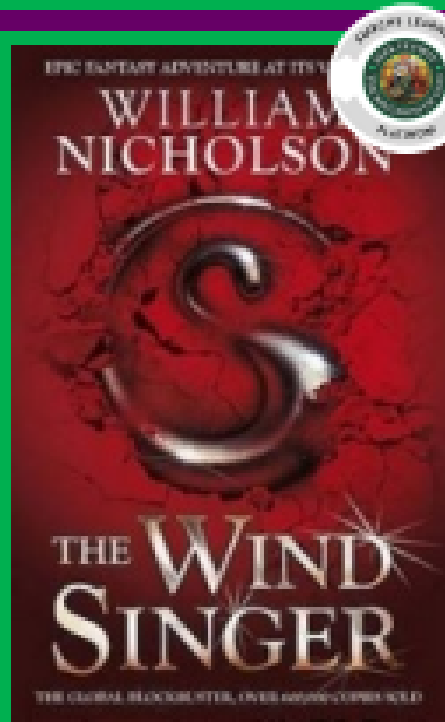
**THE GIFTED, THE TALENTED & ME**  
**Humour / real life**

Fifteen-year-old Sam is not a famous vlogger and he doesn't want to be the Next Big Thing. This wasn't a problem until Dad got rich and Mum made the whole family move to London. Now Sam's off to the North London Academy for the Gifted and Talented, where everyone's busy planning Hollywood domination. Sam knows he'll never belong, even if he wanted to. And that's before he ends up on stage wearing nothing but a fur onesie.



**CHINGLISH, AN ALMOST ENTIRELY TRUE STORY**  
**Humour / friendship / aspiration**

Jo Kwan is a teenager growing up in 1980s Coventry. But unlike the other kids at her new school, Jo lives above her parents' Chinese takeaway. And things can be tough - whether it's unruly customers or the snotty popular girls who bully Jo for being different. Even when she does find a BFF who actually likes Jo for herself, she still has to contend with her erratic dad's behaviour. All Jo dreams of is breaking free and forging a career as an artist.



**THE WIND SINGER**  
**Fantasy / adventure**

In the city of Aramant, the citizens are told to work harder to improve their lives. Only some families, like the Haths, believe more in ideas and dreams than in endless toil. When Kestrel Hath decides she is through with the Aramant work ethic, she escapes Aramant's walls for an adventure. Guided by an archaic map, she knows that if she can find the voice of the Wind Singer, an ancient statue that stands in the centre of Aramant, she can save her people from their dreamless existence.

**X1 BOOK = SMRCHS Learner Awards**  
**\*SILVER \*GOLD \*PLATINUM**

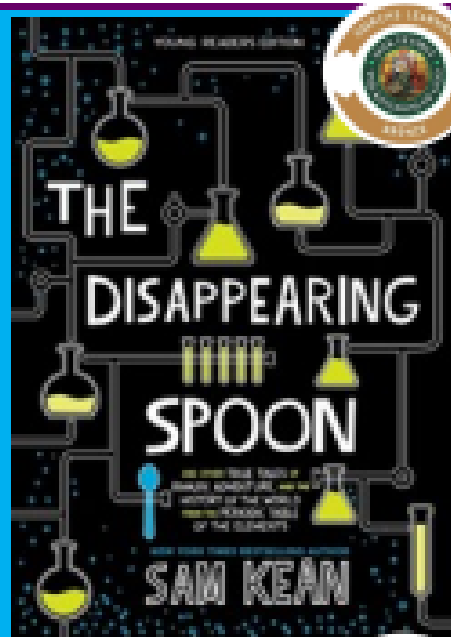


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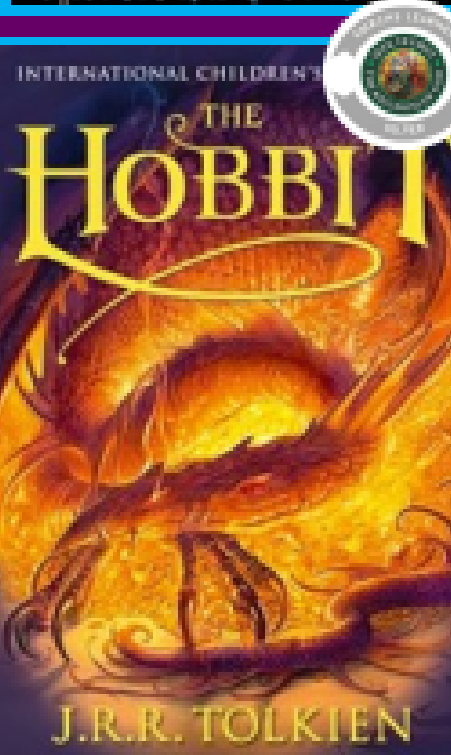
Ultimate Reading List

**YEAR 8**



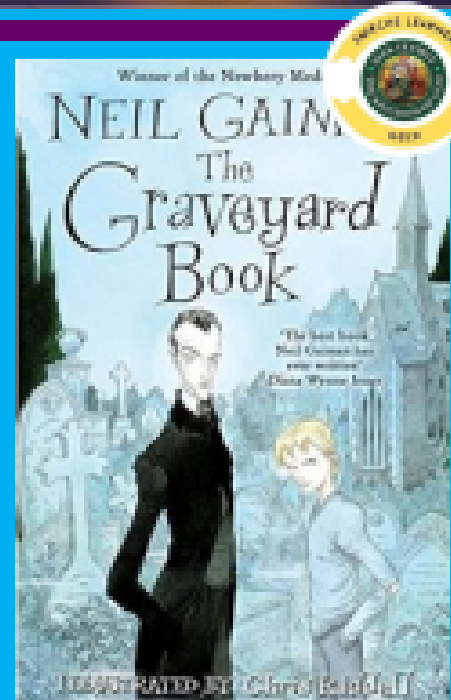
**THE DISAPPEARING SPOON**  
**Non-fiction / science**

The periodic table is one of our crowning scientific achievements, but it's also a treasure trove of passion, adventure, betrayal and obsession. The fascinating tales in *The Disappearing Spoon* follow carbon, neon, silicon, gold and every single element on the table as they play out their parts in human history, finance, mythology, conflict, the arts, medicine and the lives of the (frequently) mad scientists who discovered them.



**THE HOBBIT**  
**Fantasy / classics**

In a hole in the ground there lived a hobbit. Not a nasty, dirty, wet hole, filled with the ends of worms and an oozy smell, nor yet a dry, bare, sandy hole with nothing in it to sit down on or to eat: it was a hobbit-hole, and that means comfort. Now recognized as a timeless classic, this introduction to the hobbit Bilbo Baggins, the wizard Gandalf, Gollum, and the spectacular world of Middle-earth recounts the adventures of a reluctant hero, a powerful and dangerous ring, and the cruel dragon Smaug the Magnificent.



**THE GRAVEYARD BOOK**  
**Ghost story / adventure**

Bod lives in a graveyard and is being raised by ghosts, with a solitary guardian who belongs to neither the world of the living nor the world of the dead. There are many dangers and adventures for Bod in the graveyard but it is in the land of the living that real danger lurks, for it is there that the man Jack lives and he has already killed Bod's family.

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**\*BRONZE \*SILVER \*GOLD**

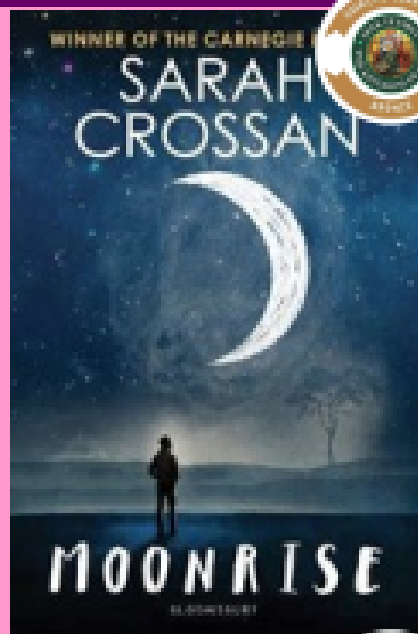


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**YEAR 9**

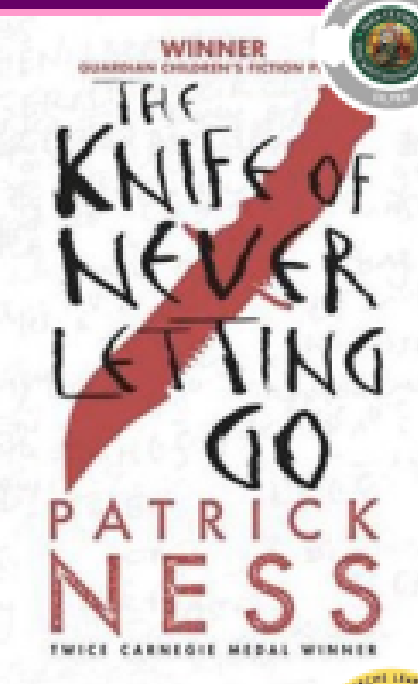


**MOONRISE**

**Poetry / relationships / social issues**

Teenager Joe hasn't seen his big brother for ten years, since Ed's on death row in a Texan prison for a murder for which he's always claimed innocence. Now the date for Ed's execution is set, Joe is determined to spend his last few weeks close by, ever hopeful that they will overturn the execution.

Moonrise is the first-person story of Joe in those last weeks, when the brothers are able to get to know each other properly for the first time in a series of prison visits. Tissues are required.



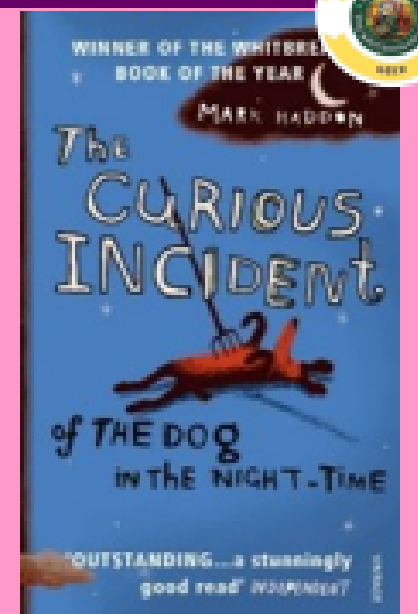
**THE KNIFE OF NEVER LETTING GO**

**Sci-fi / dystopia / coming-of-age**

The story begins in a small town where women have been banished and only men remain. Due to a virus, everyone can hear each other's thoughts, which they call 'Noise'.

One day, Todd Hewitt, is forced to flee through a nearby swamp, where he surprisingly stumbles upon the first girl he has ever seen.

Propelled by Todd's gritty narration, readers are in for a white-knuckle journey in which a boy on the cusp of manhood must unlearn everything he knows in order to figure out who he truly is.



**THE CURIOUS INCIDENT OF THE DOG IN THE NIGHT-TIME**  
**Coming-of-age / adventure / disability**

Seen through the eyes of Christopher, a mathematical genius and Sherlock Holmes fan, who also has Asperger's syndrome, this bestselling novel opens with the discovery of a murdered dog on the neighbour's lawn.

In his search to discover the identity of the killer, Christopher uncovers some disturbing information about his own family, which throws his ordered world into chaos, and he embarks on a journey to London to find the mother he thought was dead.

**X1 BOOK = SMRCHS Learner Awards**  
**\*BRONZE \*SILVER \*GOLD**

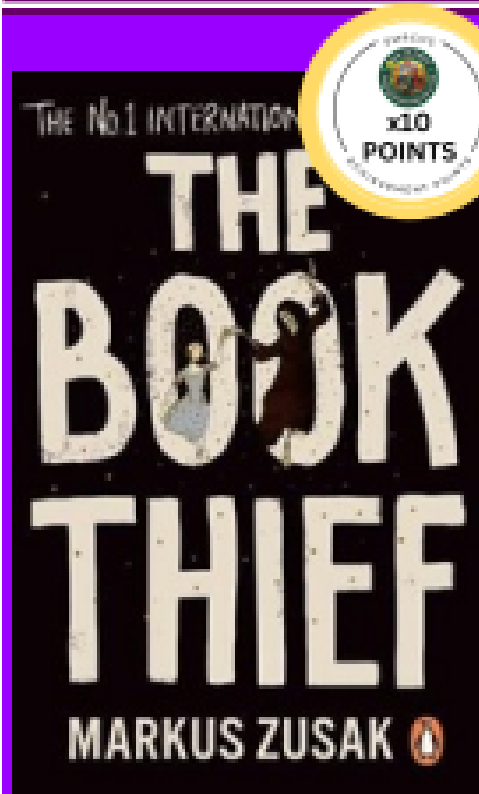


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**YEAR 10**



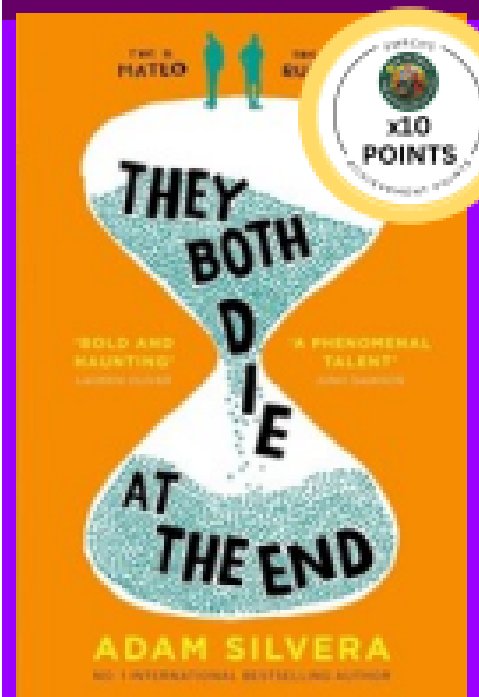
**THE BOOK THIEF**

**Historical fiction / WW2**

It is 1939. In Nazi Germany. Death has never been busier - and will become busier still.

Nine-year-old Liesel's life is changed forever when she picks up a single object, abandoned in the snow. It is The Gravedigger's Handbook, and this is her first act of book thievery. So begins Liesel's love affair with books and words, and soon she is stealing from Nazi book-burnings, the mayor's wife's library... wherever there are books to be found.

But these are dangerous times, and when Liesel's foster family hides a Jew in their basement, nothing will ever be the same again.

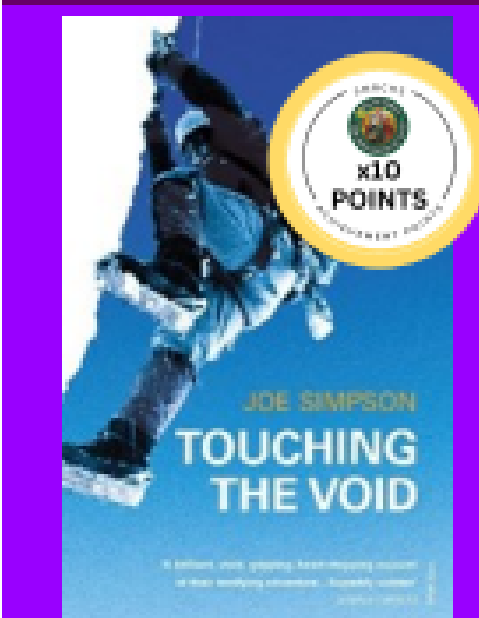


**THEY BOTH DIE AT THE END**

**Romance / LGBTQ+**

On September 5, a little after midnight, Death-Cast calls Mateo Torrez and Rufus Emeterio to give them some bad news: They're going to die today.

Mateo and Rufus are total strangers, but, for different reasons, they're both looking to make a new friend on their End Day. The good news: There's an app for that. It's called the Last Friend, and through it, Rufus and Mateo are about to meet up for one last great adventure - to live a lifetime in a single day.



**TOUCHING THE VOID**

**Non-fiction / sport / survival**

This is the heart-stopping account of Joe Simpson's terrifying adventure in the Peruvian Andes. He and his climbing partner, Simon, reached the summit of the remote Siula Grande. A few days later, Simon staggered into Base Camp, exhausted and frost-bitten, with news that Joe was dead.

This book is an epic tale of survival and friendship when we learn what happened to Joe after Simon was forced to cut the rope.

**\*READ X1 BOOK = X10 ACHIEVEMENT POINTS!**



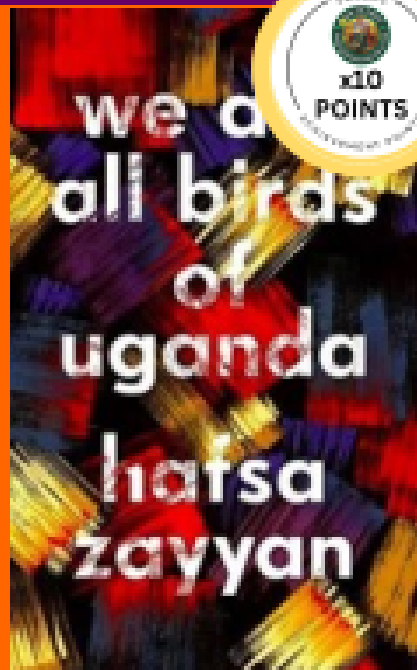


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**YEAR 11**

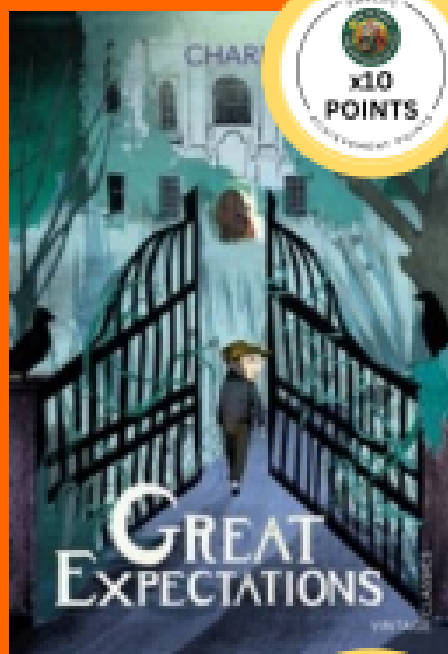


**WE ARE ALL BIRDS**

**Historical fiction / Africa / race**

**1960s UGANDA.** Hasan struggles to keep his family business afloat following the sudden death of his wife. **Present-day LONDON.** Sameer, a young high-flying lawyer, senses an emptiness in what he thought was the life of his dreams.

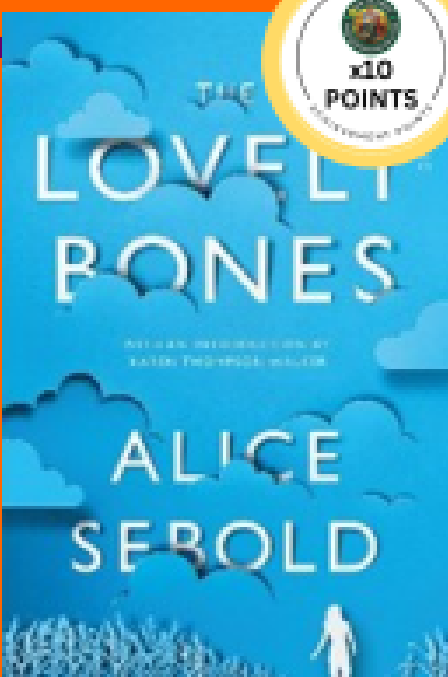
Moving between two continents over a troubled century, *We Are All Birds of Uganda* is an immensely resonant novel that explores racial tensions, generational divides and what it means to belong.



**GREAT EXPECTATIONS**

**Coming-of-age / Classics**

While living with his sister and brother-in-law in a quiet rural life, Pip meets the reclusive heiress Miss Havisham and her adopted daughter, Estella. Pip's fortunes reverse when he receives money from an anonymous benefactor and as a newly-rich Londoner he feels ashamed at his background. Through adventures involving envious adversaries, a criminal Pip once helped, and Pip's friends Joe, Biddy, Herbert and Wemmick, Dickens's Pip learns to disregard pretensions and appreciate loyalty and love, guaranteed not by birth but by one's character.



**THE LOVELY BONES**

**Mystery / thriller**

"My name was Salmon, like the fish; first name, Susie. I was fourteen when I was murdered on December 6, 1973."

So begins the story of Susie Salmon, who is adjusting to her new home in heaven, a place that is not at all what she expected, even as she is watching life on earth continue without her. Out of unspeakable tragedy and loss, *The Lovely Bones* succeeds, miraculously, in building a tale filled with hope, humour, suspense, even joy.

**\*READ X1 BOOK = X10 ACHIEVEMENT POINTS!**

## Opinion pieces

*Journalism is about expressing different opinions. These do not represent the views of all St Matthew's pupils or of the school, but are an opportunity for people to share their thoughts and feelings. Your voice is valid: use it! But remember to listen to other people's opinions too! You don't have to agree to learn something new.*

## Football: Manchester United

By Joshua



The legend footballers

By Joshua

Man United is the legendary best team in the world and better than Man City; they are just a team in their prime. Lucky for Man United, Rashford is the best in the world. I think Spurs are rubbish: we beat them even if they score a goal. They are the best team, they are pro. The best players are Rashford, Antony, and Bruno Fernandes, they make the best team!

## Football: Barcelona

By Confidence

Barcelona is not performing as well as last year, maybe it's because of something. We are not sure for now but we are worried about the players, like if they are getting good enough sleep or eating well. We are counting on the manager to make a change and make the training better so that the players perform better in the next match.

## Beauty Standards

By Sarah

Beauty standards are possibly the most hypocritical thing on this planet: the way a female with fair skin, blonde hair and blue eyes is considered as the only way you are beautiful, which, as a girl, I have always felt ugly because I am a girl with olive skin, dark hair and eyes. But no more! Why should we suffer because of expectations for today's improper standards? All we want is to feel appreciated, but the world makes it too hard. That's why women of colour get so happy when there is a model with colour. Over 40% of females feel uncomfortable in their skin. Over 1/3 of women are ashamed of their bodies. It's time for this to change.

## Let's fight racism

By Dorothy

Black history month/BLM

Black Lives Matter is a political and social movement that seeks to highlight racist discrimination, and racial inequality experienced today. PROMOTE ANTI-RACISM! Tragically we have seen racist brutality, such as George Floyd who was sadly accused of counterfeit and was assaulted to his death by a white police officer named Derek Michael Chauvin. In 1976 Carter G. Woodson started something that people may know now as Black history month, every year from October 1<sup>st</sup> to October the 31<sup>st</sup>, black history month is celebrated. Now people may think that all white people are bad and brutal to all black people but that is not true because some white people helped black people to stand against racism. All races matter!

## Writing competitions

*The Spooktacular fiction competition was incredibly popular and a reminder of the amazing talent we have at St Matthew's, the winning editions were published in the last edition of the SMRCHS Gazette. The Christmas Cheer flash-fiction competition had lots of incredible entries too. Here are the winning entries:*

### First place

#### JOY TO THE WORLD

Father Christmas stood in his workshop at the North Pole, surrounded by a cacophony of whirring machinery, and elves scurrying about like hyperactive mice on a mission. The chaos was palpable as the clock ticked away, counting down to the most critical night of the year - Christmas Eve.

"Gather 'round, my little helpers!" bellowed Father Christmas, his voice cutting through the pandemonium like a crisp winter breeze. The elves, a vibrant mix of characters with pointy ears, and rosy cheeks, huddled together, eager for their orders.

"Now, listen up, my festive friends. We've got a mountain of gifts to prepare, and time is slipping away faster than Rudolph on roller skates!" Father Christmas declared, his eyes twinkling with a sense of urgency.

The workshop buzzed with activity as the elves darted between towering stacks of toys, wrapping paper, and tinsel. Jingle Bells played in the background, but the atmosphere was far from merry. It was organized chaos, a symphony of festive frenzy.

Amidst the whirlwind of festive preparations, a mischievous elf named Jingleberry accidentally spilled a vat of glitter, turning the workshop into a twinkling wonderland of chaos.

"Blimey, Jingleberry! What in the tinsel-covered world have you done?" Father Christmas exclaimed, his round face a mix of surprise and amusement.

The mischievous elf shrugged, "Well, Father Christmas, they do say a bit of sparkle adds to the magic, don't they?"

With a hearty laugh, Father Christmas decided to embrace the unintended glitter explosion. Soon, the entire workshop sparkled like a snow globe gone wild, creating an enchanting ambiance that even the grumpiest of grinchers couldn't resist.

As the elves continued their chaotic yet coordinated efforts, Father Christmas couldn't help but reflect on the true spirit of Christmas. It wasn't about the perfectly wrapped presents or flawless decorations; it was about the joy and warmth that the holiday brought.

Amidst the festive mayhem, an elf named Tinseltop approached Father Christmas with a concerned expression. "Sir, the toy-making machine is acting a bit wonky. It's

**Christmas Cheer**  
**FLASH FICTION RULES**

- Word Count 300-1000
- Happy Ending
- Two uses of dialogue
- No Real Names
- Christmas Song Title
- Type Up Stories

	THIS	THAT	OR	OTHER
Protagonist				
Mood				
Plot				
Setting				

Include your full name and form group  
**DEADLINE: FRIDAY 1st DECEMBER**  
**EMAIL ENTRIES TO: N.Tormey@smrchs.com**

churning out toy trains that sing opera instead of jingle bells!"

Father Christmas scratched his snowy beard and chuckled, "Well, a touch of culture never hurt anyone. Let's just label them as 'operatic express trains' and send them on their merry way. Christmas surprises, you see!"

The elves nodded, their commitment unwavering, despite the chaos. In the midst of the festive disarray, a familiar tune started playing on the workshop's loudspeakers – "Joy to the World" Father Christmas, sensing the need for a musical distraction, began a lively dance, encouraging the elves to join in.

The workshop turned into a winter carnival, complete with spinning elves, glittery confetti, and joyous laughter. Even the mischievous Jingleberry couldn't resist tapping his tiny feet to the infectious rhythm.

As the clock struck midnight on Christmas Eve, the chaos began to subside. The last gift was wrapped, the final decoration hung, and the operatic express trains were packed and ready for delivery.

With a satisfied smile, Father Christmas surveyed the transformed workshop. The glitter, the laughter, the unexpected mishaps – it all contributed to a Christmas Eve like no other. The elves, tired but content, gathered around their leader for a moment of reflection.

"Remember, my dear elves, it's not about the perfection of the presents, but the joy they bring. Christmas is about spreading love and laughter, even if it means a bit of chaos along the way," Father Christmas said, his eyes twinkling with wisdom.

As the sleigh soared into the starry night, pulled by reindeer with jingle bells ringing, the North Pole workshop faded into the distance. The operatic express trains belted out their unique tunes, adding an unexpected charm to the festive night.

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## Second place

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### CHRISTMAS JOY

Once upon a time, in the charming town of Evergreen, there was a young girl named Emily. Emily loved Christmas more than anything in the world. The twinkling lights, the scent of freshly baked cookies, and the joyous laughter of family and friends filled her heart with warmth.

Every year, Emily's family would decorate their house with colourful lights, ornaments, and a beautifully adorned Christmas tree. But this year, something was different. Emily's parents had to work extra hours and couldn't afford to buy presents for Christmas.

Emily understood their situation, but she couldn't help feeling a little sad. She wanted to make this Christmas special, not just for herself, but for her parents too. Determined to bring joy to her family, Emily came up with a plan.

Secretly, she started making handmade gifts for her parents. She spent hours crafting a photo album filled with cherished memories, knitting cosy scarves, and painting a beautiful landscape that reminded her parents of their favourite vacation spot.

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## Third place

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### ELMOR'S CHRISTMAS

The mist engulfed the warehouse with a ferocious thrust, seeming to have no end. However, during this moment the only thing which could be heard was pandemonium.

Erupting in noise the warehouse was filled with screams, groans and... snoring? Two people with peculiar ears each sat in chairs, sweat was dripping across their faces, and their breathing pattern escalating by the second.

"When do you think, we will stop working these long hours?" exclaimed one of the people with blonde hair.

"I don't know but-"

"HEY GUYS! CAN YOU PLEASE HELP ME?" yelled a high-pitched voice, from behind an emerald door.

A heavy sigh emitted from someone's mouth, and a laugh from another.

"It's him again!" sighed one.

"Who? I know everyone!" questioned the other.

"Elmon Rofir ...he's the new guy in here." panted the elf, having to take a pause, while continuously wiping sweat from his face.

Like a leaf carried by the wind, the door was barged open with a small figure remaining on the floor.

"I have to be more careful next time!" laughed the figure on the floor.

Suddenly a voice was heard over a speaker with wreaths surrounding it. "ELMON ROFIR COME TO MY

On Christmas Eve, as Emily placed the gifts under the tree, she couldn't help but feel a sense of excitement. She knew that the love and effort she put into these presents would mean more to her parents than anything money could buy.

The next morning, Emily's parents woke up to find the heartfelt gifts. Tears welled up in their eyes as they realized the depth of their daughter's love. They hugged Emily tightly, grateful for the beautiful surprise.

But the magic of Christmas didn't end there. As Emily and her parents sat by the fireplace, a knock came at the door. When they opened it, they were greeted by their neighbours and friends, each holding a present.

The community had heard about Emily's selfless act and wanted to show their appreciation. They had come together, pooling their resources, to ensure that no family in Evergreen would go without gifts that Christmas.

The living room was soon filled with laughter and joy as everyone exchanged presents. The spirit of giving had spread throughout the town, and the happiness was contagious.

From that day forward, the people of Evergreen made it a tradition to come together every Christmas, not just to exchange gifts, but to celebrate the true meaning of the holiday - love, kindness, and community.

As the years went by, Emily grew up to be a kind-hearted woman who continued to spread joy and cheer. She carried the spirit of Christmas with her all year round, reminding others of the power of love and giving.

WORKING PLACE NOW" emitted the intimidating voice.

"Yes, Saint Nicholas Sir, what do you need? I'm sure I didn't do anything wrong!" questioned Elmon, shyly, with a small giggle.

Tables were struck with a fist so hard that nations had their ear drums ruptured.

"Here at the centre of The North Pole elven folk and saints alike take pride in making presents for the nations of the world... All of us put blood, sweat and tears into these inventions as our motto is 'It is more blessed to give than receive' stated St. Nicholas; his beard was like a layer of snow flowing as a breeze flowed by.

"However over two Christmases your mischief has led to over 3,000 presents being unsuitable; it is truly a shame to others like Kenia Yinwarinrty and Ithronel Ravaven just to mention a couple." continued the saint, his cheeks growing red with boiling anger.

"So, after having a stern thought about your misconduct I have decided that for you to keep making presents again you must live among the humans, not get caught, and most importantly of all bring them... JOY!" exclaimed Nicholas with a gaping grin on his face before immediately wiping it away.

"L-live w-ith HUMANS!?" questioned Elmon with a half grin, half frown face. "YES, FINALLY I CAN MEET LOTS OF PEOPLE AND HAVE FUN!" proclaimed Elmon, his smile as bright as the sun.

"This is something I wasn't expecting; hop on my sleigh

young Rofir!” laughed the saint, as he and Elmon rode the ruby sled to a faraway city.

Elmon walked into a room, and his eyes were met with multiple children around the same age as him. “Class listen up, today we have a new student so you must welcome him kindly. Would you please introduce yourself?” announced the teacher, while she smiled at the class.

“My name is Elm-. Suddenly, Elmon had a flashback about what St. Nicholas said to him. “Don’t use your real name it will be suspicious!” stated Nicholas.

Elmon, proceeded to say “My name is Ryan Levyiona! Nice to see you all!” publicised Elmon, while also trying to see if his fake name was believable.

After those series of events, Elmon now known as Ryan took his seat next to a boy and girl who were undoubtedly siblings. However, there was strange aura or feeling of some kind around them. Elmon noticed it was sadness. Elmon thought long and hard in his pea-sized head and came up with a conclusion to bring them joy...

During lunch, Elmon approached the siblings and sat next to them asking to be their friend. To Elmon’s surprise they immediately said yes in unison.

“Why do you guys look like a pair of thunderclouds?” questioned Elmon, with a giggle in between his words.

“Listen here Ryan, the reason we are sad is due to the fact Christmas is coming up.” spoke the girl.

“Why are you sad because Christmas is coming?” yelled Elmon, getting stares from across the canteen.

“Well long story short, our parents don’t have enough money to buy us presents, and others around us always get some.” said the boy, before mentioning their names were Lucas and Lacey.

“Listen here Lucy and Lucas, I’ll show you what these twenty-four days before Christmas are about, and what Christmas really is.” promised Elmon walking away from the canteen heading to his class.

Six tiring hours later, school had finally ended, and Elmon was dragging Lucas and Lucy to a park he spotted during his sleigh ride with Nicholas. The wind sent ferocious punches at the trio, causing leaves around them to twirl like a ballerina.

“This is where our 24 days of fun start!” vocalized Elmon, a flow of happiness surging through his veins. After some time, Lucy and Lucas became less gloomy and started smiling more and bringing positivity close by. Rumours spread that it was their doppelgänger, and

they had been replaced. This only made the trio laugh for days on end, their presence could never be mistaken.

A blonde elf was seen destroying over a thousand presents, the Elfenfolk, and Nicholas erupted in anger as Christmas was only two nights away. Meanwhile, the trio were walking when without caution Elmon dragged them into an alley.

“Why did you bring us here Ryan?” uttered the siblings in unison their pupils creepily fixated on him.

Elmon took his hat off to reveal his ears and muttered “I’m an elf.” Many screams later the situation was calm, and he explained the present situation.

A red sleigh showed up taking the trio to the centre of the North Pole. With no time for introductions, they got to work trying to alter the disastrous effects. Minutes before Christmas night, it was finally done and dusted.

“I’m proud of you Elmor!” exclaimed St. Nicholas bringing him into a hug. He continued “Even you two!” he laughed, bringing the trio into one big hug. Joy was prevalent that Christmas for sure!

## ADVENTURE AWAITS

### Flash Fiction

DEADLINE: Monday 8th April

Each 300 words will cost you one point.

Using 1 point  
pick one location



Magical Forest



Space



High Seas



Desert

Using 1 point  
pick a story type



Save a loved one



Hunt for a mythical creature



Search for treasure



Escape



Find what is lost.

Any features you put  
in costs 2 points.



Map



Rope ladder



Rope bridge



Booby Trap



Cliff



Unicorn



Troll

Send entries to: [N.Tormey@smrchs.com](mailto:N.Tormey@smrchs.com)

## Long Read

By Daniella

### THE NEWEST PANDEMIC: VAPING!

In the past year or two, our world has become surged by e-cigarettes, better known as: vapes. This stealthy disease has spread rapidly among youth and teens especially, slowly but surely stealing the lives of innocent and naive children, leaving their poor families in mourning. Did you know that vapes contain nicotine which is highly addictive? About 76,000 people die per year in England from vape-related incidents, and even more shocking, 65,000 people die from second-hand smoke inhalation each year. How atrocious! Not only are you endangering yourself by vaping but you are also putting others at risk of this addictive disease.

On the This Morning show, 12-year-old Sarah Williams admitted that she was seriously addicted to vaping and was left fighting for her life in a medically induced coma. The doctors said that vaping exacerbated her asthma. Following her traumatic experience, Sarah hopes to warn others about the dangers of vaping. Sarah delves into detail about how she started vaping, “I was out with a friend, me and my younger sister. (I was 9 and my sister was 7); I had a friend who lived at the bottom of my street who was 13 at the time; she had been vaping and said to me that I should try it and I tried it but then I completely forgot about it. In my first year of high school, I picked up the habit of vaping”.

Sarah stated that she began vaping because she wanted to fit in; she was so addicted that she did about 4,000 puff vapes every couple of days.

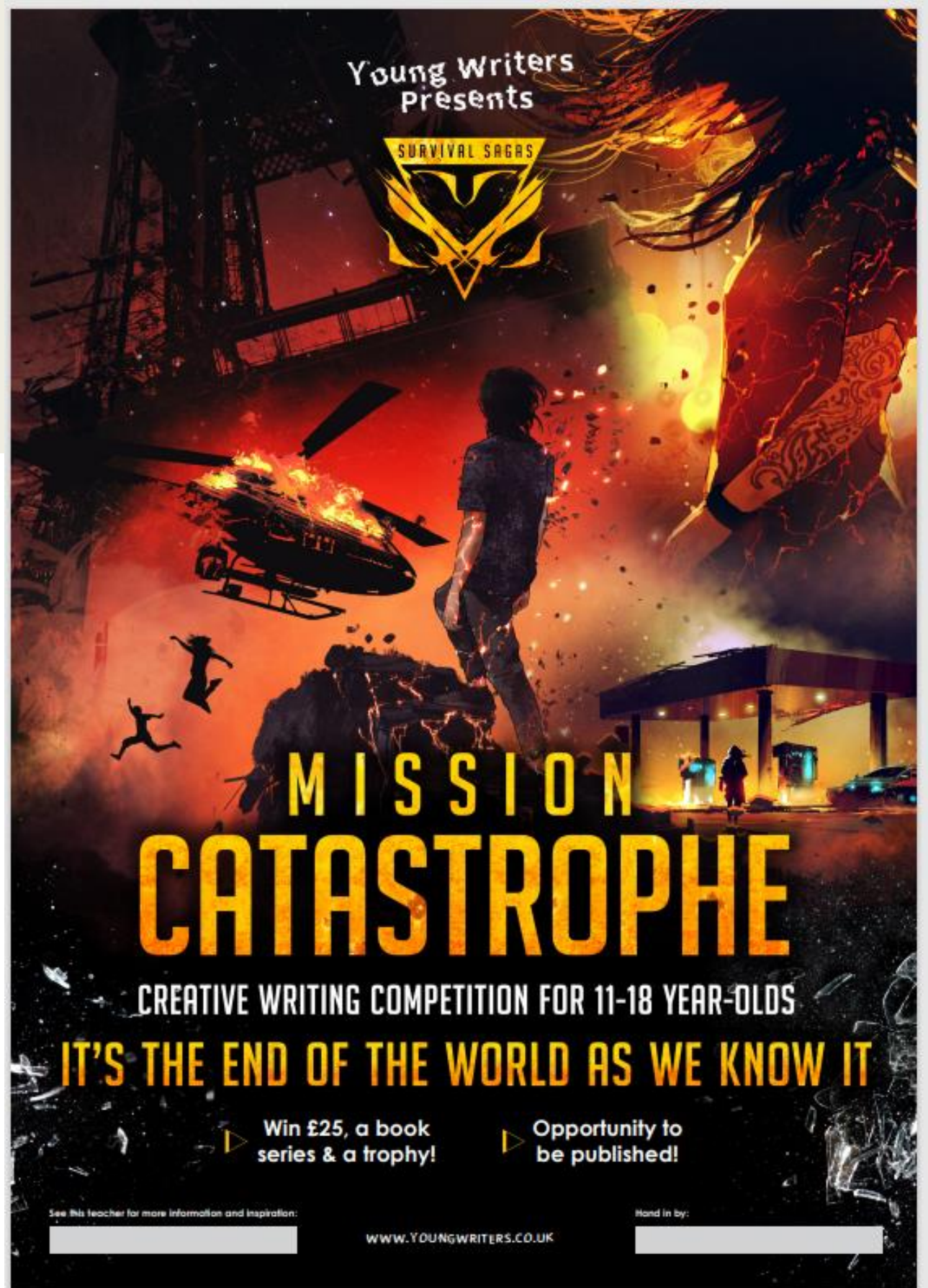
After a year of secretly vaping, Sarah fell ill and struggled with breathing – she was then hospitalised and her doctors discovered that one of her lungs was so badly damaged that she had to be put into an induced coma. Suffering from the effects of vaping, Sarah’s lungs are now permanently damaged and cannot work at 100%. Sarah's advice is to stop vaping because it doesn't make you cool.

According to Professor Nick Hopkinson, vaping is less harmful for adult smokers (which was its intended function) and children need to stay away from vapes as growing lungs need to breathe clean air; vaping could seriously deplete your life expectancy.

The independent British Vape trade association approves that vaping is a substantially safer alternative for adult smokers, however, no vape retailer should be selling illegal vape products to underage children.

### HOW TO STOP VAPING:

1. Find your triggers and get rid of them.
2. Get rid of all your vapes.
3. Get an accountability partner (ask your friends/family to help you).
4. Distract yourself from the cravings.
5. Connect with teen online resources such as: [nicorette.co.uk](http://nicorette.co.uk).



## Year Seven school trip

The school trip.

Finally! A break from school when we all get to go out and get to know each other. My name is Emmanuella and I am a student at St. Matthew's RC high school. This trip will give everyone a chance to get to know each other and be friends. Also, the school trip will be in Savio house. I myself cannot wait for the trip and am excited to go: yay!



**St. Matthew's**  
Roman Catholic High School  
VOLUNTARY ACADEMY

### Y7 Savio House Retreat



**Last week of the year:  
Monday 15th July to  
Wednesday 17th July**

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**Fun**

**Friendship**



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