



MARDEN NEWS

December 2023 End of Term Edition



Featuring

Computing

English & Media

RE

Message from
The Headteacher

Design &
Technology

Geography

Science

Literacy at Marden

Drama

PE



Thursday 21st December 2023

Dear All

It has been a long and successful term with many and varied successes. I have much enjoyed talking to the students these past few weeks whilst giving out my weekly Headteacher's Work of the Week Awards, and many speak about taking new opportunities this term, and about having enjoyed the process of learning and developing their skills as they work with their peers and their teachers. You can read some of the great activities that students have been getting involved with in this newsletter. Our assemblies last week celebrated the achievements of the four Houses, Alnwick, Bamburgh, Dunstanburgh and Warkworth, and of the students' attendance. There have been so many students with 100% attendance this term that there has not always been time to announce them all. There have also been several house competitions this term where students have been able to work towards house points and it has been good to see so many of our students learn the value of hard work by working hard. Congratulations to Warkworth for being top of the league at the end of this term. The totals, however, are very close, so it's still all to play for next term.

Students studying for GCSEs need to be strong enough readers to understand their course textbooks and comprehend exam questions. Ensuring that all young people have the literacy skills they need to access their education, is essential to giving them the opportunity to succeed both academically and in wider life. In addition to developing these skills, we recognise that our children's reading must be supported throughout their time at school, not only so they can access the curriculum, but so they can get into the habit of reading for pleasure. The correlation between children who have developed this habit, and their personal economic well-being and achievement later in life is a strong one. It is good therefore to see the number of books being used in the Learning Resource Centre is on the increase. We will continue to have a focus on strengthening our children's literacy, including through regular and frequent activities woven into the fabric of lessons in all subjects, to develop these skills. At home too, children can be supported by being encouraged to develop the daily habit of reading, at times aloud to a parent or carer, and writing letters, reports or stories, and the Christmas period brings great opportunities to enjoy some extended reading time.

The School of Sanctuary Club visited the St Vincent De Paul Centre in Newcastle recently. The students delivered in excess of 50 gifts which had been kindly donated by the school community. These gifts will be donated to vulnerable families, who might otherwise receive no gifts at this time of year. The club had a thorough tour of the centre and found out all about the work the St Vincent De Paul does with those seeking sanctuary.

Year 10 pupils recently attended an Animal Science conference at Newcastle University. They got a taste of university life, attending lectures on different aspects of animal welfare including; Selective breeding in dogs, Rhino poaching and Pig welfare in pork production. Pupils were a credit to the school, respectfully listening to the presentations and asking relevant questions.

We have had a great response to The Bay Foodbank appeal, and it has been humbling to hear students explain their understanding of inequality and why foodbanks exist. It is our hope that as our young people grow up and become the decision makers of the future, their approach to societal wellbeing will see the need for foodbanks diminish.

As you may be aware, we have a tradition of Year 11 students travelling to Mexico most summer holidays with the M10 Mission. Summer 2024 will see the next cohort of volunteers travelling to Mexico with the M10 charity to work with local people to build and repair houses for people who find themselves in difficult financial and social circumstances. To fund this journey students have to raise money through sponsorship, and in this spirit some of our Year 11 students will be holding a Christmas coffee morning on Friday 22nd December between 10am - 11:30am at St George's church hall in Cullercoats. The students are looking forward to seeing lots of people there.

I hope that everyone has a good break over the Christmas period.



Mr M. Snape
Head Teacher



It's mid December and families everywhere are getting ready for Christmas and enjoying the festive period. However, according to the BBC News, millions are having to borrow money to pay key bills and buy presents this Christmas, the main concern being energy bills are set to rise again in the New Year. Citizens Advice said it was seeing more people falling behind on



energy bills as winter began, owing an average of £1,841 to their supplier. Charities say some families face paying off loans, adding to the financial strain as they cut back on basics. Debt charity StepChange estimated that 2.6 million UK adults used credit to pay for essential household bills in the last three months. Nearly half of those with existing debt faced difficulty keeping up with household bills and credit commitments.

Why is this important? What does this have to do with GCSE Business? Our GCSE Business students study the economy and in particular the impact interest rates and inflation have on businesses and consumers alike. They learn to understand key terms such as 'economic climate', 'recession' and 'inflation'. All phrases that we can hear and see in the news, especially in our current circumstances.

Year 11 are currently looking at Business Growth, in particular how a business needs to adapt its Marketing Mix as it grows and expands. Year 10 is about to start studying aims & objectives and calculating profit and loss.

It is so important that our GCSE Business students spend time on a regular basis watching the news, listening to the headlines and absorbing the stories of what is happening. And in a time like now, it's a perfect time to do so.

Miss D Parker



We have had a fantastic start to the year in Technology!

Students have completed a full rotation in KS3 with some excellent examples of resilience, creativity and problem solving resulting in some outstanding outcomes of work, whether it be in Food Prep & Nutrition or Design and Technology projects, as seen in some of the examples below.

Meanwhile in Key Stage 4 students have also been making excellent progress, Year 10 have made a steady start in the options, developing skills and knowledge that will support them in completing exams and Non-Exam Assessments as well as everyday life skills and the world of work. Year 11 in particular have shown fantastic work-ethic and maturity towards their studies, with many choosing to attend additional sessions to revise, catch up on homework or have support from staff.

We encourage all students within our subject areas to speak to staff about such sessions to ensure they're taking opportunities to reach their full potential.

Year 7 Pewter Casting:

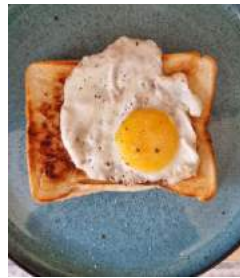


Year 8 Clocks:



Key Stage 3 Food outcomes:

YR7 Croque Madame



YR9 Bread and Shortbread



KS4 Scones



Mighty Mussels and Fish Hero Programme



Extra-Curricular Clubs:

First Lego League

September saw a new group of Year 8's form a team to compete once again in the First Lego League competition this coming February. This year's theme is focused on the Arts with a huge variety of tasks to complete within the time limit. The competition sees students design their own robot using Lego which is then programmed to complete a series of tasks, from pulling or pushing on levers to move Lego pieces, to relocating parts to certain areas of the board. To date the students have worked well in preparing for the competition in building the different pieces of Lego that are used in the challenge and have now begun planning their robot design and strategies for completing as many tasks as possible and gaining as many points as possible within the time limit. To succeed they not only need good programming but efficient and reliable planning to strategise their way around the many challenges.



Vex Robotics

This year's VEX Robotics competition is due to take place in January and our new team are in full swing with their design and the making of their Robot - Keanu III. Under Over is this year's competition which sees 2 alliance robots competing to score tri-balls into goals, defending their own zones and finishing with an end game where robots must be raised as high from the ground as possible. This is proving to be a fabulous challenge for this year's team and we can't wait to see how well they perform in the upcoming regional competition at Nissan in January.



Girls Get Set STEM Initiative

We have 2 groups of girls taking part in this year's Girls Get Set STEM Initiative. We have our 11 Year 10 students who are returning to complete their Silver Cadet Award and 10 new Year 8 students beginning their journey with their Bronze Cadet Award. There's a lot of excitement from the girls who are taking part in a variety of workshops led by different professionals within the Baker Hughes team offering insight into the differing roles that are on offer in engineering companies. So far the students have taken part in a masterclass on oil and also a career spotlight from insightful women who work for Baker Hughes and how their passions and school lives led them to the jobs they have now. In the new year each of the team will find out their challenges for them to research and begin a presentation back to senior members of the Baker Hughes team, showing off their confidence and teamwork skills as they go.




Food for Thought

KS3 students have participated in lunchtime sessions once a week to gain awareness and skills that can help prevent impacts on the environment through food choice. They have been thinking about how food production can also impact the planet as a whole. There have been discussions based around how to prevent environmental impacts through food choice and dishes can be created with less food miles.



Students have researched this topic to increase their awareness with a focus on how using locally sourced produce can enable small but significant changes to take effect environmentally.

Students will create a recipe book based on Food for Thought through recipe practice using local and ethical produce.



INGREDIENTS

- 250g Spelt Organic Flour
- 40g Ground Almonds
- 20g Baking Powder
- 100g Pitted Dates
- 275g Banana (overripe if possible)
- 80ml Rapeseed Oil
- 80ml Almond Milk
- 115g Soft Light Brown Sugar
- 1 Med Large Banana for decoration

Red cabbage soup

- 400g red cabbage
- 1 onion
- 2 large vegetables of choice
- 150ml vegetable stock
- 2 tsp Pinch of salt
- 100ml water
- 50ml soy or oat cream, for cooking



Quorn loaf in the hole

- 1 pack Quorn Meat Free Chunks
- 300g of mixed root vegetables, washed & sliced
- 120ml cream, stirred
- 2 tbsp oil
- 6 heaped tbsp of plain flour (50g)
- 3 large eggs
- 200ml skimmed milk
- 2 tsp baking powder



Ms K Nicholls



Welcome to Drama!

We're glad to see that our Year 7 students have settled into Drama lessons very well and have been producing some imaginative work in response to poetry; 'Timothy Winters' and 'The Identification'. Students have explored basic skills such as hot seating, still image, slow motion movement and thought tracking. We're looking forward to developing our skills further next term with the delights of William Shakespeare!

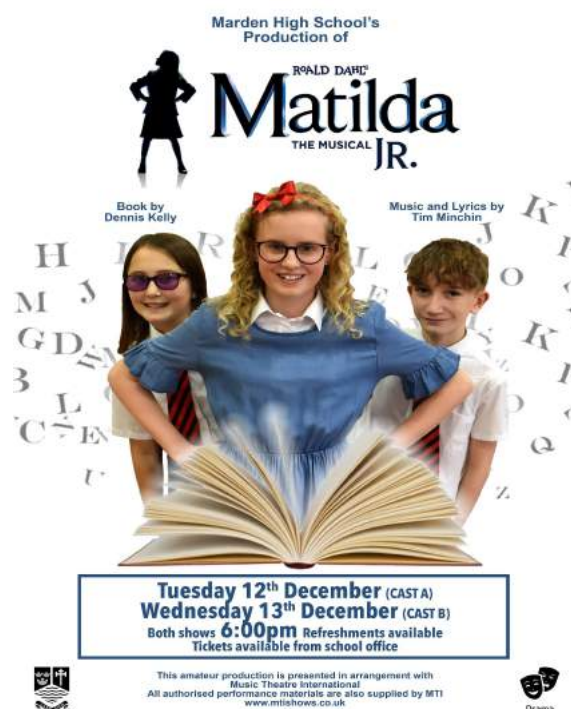
Year 8 students have been building upon their knowledge and skills through exploration of 'Aberfan'. Students have enjoyed working together as part of an ensemble as well as learning about events from the past. Next term we will begin our off-text exploration of 'Blood Brothers'.

In Year 9, we have been developing ideas for their own devised plays. It's been great to see such an imaginative selection of pieces. In the Spring we will be exploring the topic of Diversity.

Key Stage 4 students are as busy as always; Year 10 students have been working on preparation for the written exam and are starting to develop ideas for their mock performance in January. Year 11 have completed their mock exam and will embark on their final performance exam scheduled for March/April.



Once again we are encouraging students to access Digital Theatre Plus. More information about this can be found on Google Classroom. Students can enjoy watching and reviewing extracts from productions and it's a great way to develop knowledge and understanding of the performing arts. Students can access the website at any time which could be fun for the whole family!



Finally, as we approach the end of term we would like to express our gratitude to all who supported our recent school production 'Matilda Jr.' There were a huge number of students involved, meaning we had two completely different casts. We are very proud of their achievements and wish everyone a restful Christmas break.

Mrs S Berriman



The Be All: An English Podcast

This term the English department has started their very own Podcast! So far there have been a variety of different episodes ranging from Year 11 exam focused discussions around wellbeing, motivation and revision strategies, to the popular Halloween special featuring Mr Horn live from the Priory Castle. We have had a range of very special guests including head of Year 11: Mr Prytherch with motivational tips for his year group, and ex student Belle Hutchins who is currently studying A Levels at WBHS. In the last few weeks before Christmas Mr Horn has used each episode to read the five staves of A Christmas Carol to get students (and staff) into the festive spirit! After the Christmas break we will be having discussions around exam preparation, interviews with students, more special guests, book recommendations and much more! All are available on the [English Subject Cloud](#) available on our website.

Gothic Writing

Year 7 have got their first term of Marden English off to a superb, but spooky start by exploring the key theme of 'Gothic' through the central texts *The Woman in Black* by Susan Hill and *Cirque du Freak* by Darren Shan. As part of this unit, the students aren't just exploring these texts critically, but are also taking inspiration from these for their own eerie and exciting Gothic tales showing off their excellent creative talents. This will culminate in our annual Gothic writing competition whereby our top stories will be published in our very own Marden High School *Gothic Tales* collection, with the theme for 2023 being 'A Dark Christmas'. We can already tell we will have a challenging job on our hands choosing our winners this year! Here are some extracts from this year's entries:

Robert, without opening his eyes, woke up. The joyful and merry songs of winter birds filled the cold, crisp air, accompanied with the soft rustling of trees in the gently blowing wind. Though the noises would seem to be out of place in an average city home like his, these noises fell upon his ears, soothing his mind (which bore a severe headache from his drinking). When the pain in his head became too burdensome, he stood up from his slumber and tentatively opened his eyes. The surroundings he saw were joyful, with grand evergreens, spindly but tall trees and snow fluttering across the ivory-streaked sky, like dancers blissfully skipping through the bushes and branches. The sight of this seemed to lift his discomfort from his weary brow, causing him to sigh in relief. Then, realisation came to his mind, causing him to jump up in surprise. The sight of the forest that brought him comfort and relief suddenly turned more menacing, bringing a more violent picture to his mind. The grand trees that stood boldly, like brave soldiers enduring the wilderness, suddenly became malevolent, with branches attempting to smother Robert into an eternal slumber. The snow, that had now settled peacefully on his well-kept beard, was altered by his deceiving eyes into a harsh blizzard, creating a wall of white to misdirect and trick him. This was too much for him to bear, and with a cry of dismay, he stumbled wildly into the heart of the forest, sealing his doom and opening a door for his horrible end.

Mason

Picture this, a jovial boarding school full of joyful children celebrating the Christmas of 1889. It was Christmas Eve and the corridors were decorated beautifully for that brilliant time of the year... well for most. Holly covered the walls, lights lit the grande school and gifts filled the space under the gargantuan, brightly lit Christmas tree. But that school isn't like this anymore. On that day all the children disappeared and nobody knows how or why.

On that same day 100 years later, through the dark, overgrown, majestic woods. 4 boys stood. Not knowing why they were there or where. The trees towering, looming over them. Desperately searching for shelter at this cold, dark time of year... they had to keep walking.

Isla

He had arrived. The manor was on a hill, surrounded by a perpetual forest. The ambience was cold and eerie, it was now dark. He had to get inside and find some light: if there was any. The inside of the manor was empty and messy, it wasn't hiding the fact it was abandoned. At the back of his head, James couldn't stop thinking why such a place was abandoned, it must have been very luxurious. Wandering around the ground floor, he found pots and pans strawn across the ground in the huge kitchen. The hall was overall a mess, lights cracked or broken, paper and dirt across the ground. This house was long past its glory.

Jake

Theatre Trip

Back in October the English department took a group of 40 year 10 & 11 students to the Northern Stage Theatre, Newcastle to watch an English Tour Theatre production of Shakespeare's *Macbeth*. This was an incredibly powerful performance, with a key focus being on the superb staging, developed in a Frons Scenae style, meaning the audience were immersed in a grand backdrop framing the stage creating a 'building within a building' feel moving through multiple locations with a large screen above showcasing more intimate moments. Whilst the staging, costume and props had been modernised, the language was true to Shakespeare, allowing our students to be intrigued by the adaptation alongside hearing words they are hopefully familiar with, therefore animating their study further. Highlights of the evening were one of our students being questioned by the Porter character who 'broke the fourth wall', and Mr Horn being taken up onto the stage to be part of the pivotal banquet scene (see below!). This was a brilliant and thought provoking evening; a memorable event for all involved.



Reading for Pleasure

Each class in Key Stage 3 (years 7-9) has a dedicated *Reading for Pleasure* lesson alongside their normal English lessons once per fortnight, students use this time to explore new books, read extracts from their own novels, explore a class novel and create projects on their most memorable reading experiences. Here are some images from some fantastic reading projects completed by students so far this year:



Here is what your English & media teachers have on their Winter Reading List:

Mr Horn: *The Winter Spirits: Ghostly Tales for Frosty Nights* by Various

Mrs Cathcart: *Elektra* by Jennifer Saint

Miss Laing: *Shakespeare: The Man who Pays the Rent* by Judi Dench

Miss Boyle: *Small Pleasures* by The School of Life

Mr Ranson: *My Year of Rest and Relaxation* by Ottessa Moshfegh

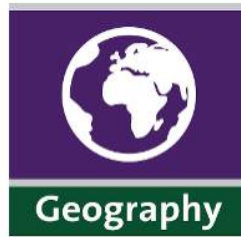
Ms Taylor: *Disorientation* by Elaine Hsieh Chou

Miss Lees: *The Bluest Eye* by Toni Morrison

Mrs Eastlake: *A Gypsy in Auschwitz* by Otto Rosenberg



Mrs E Cathcart



Year 11 students have had a busy term completing their mock exams. The dedication and preparation the students have shown for these assessments has been exemplary and puts them in an excellent position for their summer exams, keep up the hard work! The students should use these assessments to highlight areas to focus on for their revision in the upcoming months.

Year 10 students have been studying the Paper 1 Topic Living World and Paper 2 Resources. The topic of Resources has been particularly interesting for students to link our classroom based learning to issues in the news, for example the energy crisis. They have taken a mature approach to their studies by completing revision resources as homework at the end of each topic and this has been rewarded with excellent assessment grades.

Students in Year 9 have been studying the topics Superpowers and Conflict. We have been exploring topical issues such as ivory poaching, child soldiers, piracy and conflicts with Russia. This has allowed students to develop their cultural capital and increase their empathy towards international situations.

Year 8 students have been studying Natural Hazards and Megacities this term. They have looked at recent examples of tectonic hazards and the impacts of these on people and the environment. This half term students have given excellent presentations on a megacity of their choice. It was great to see students develop their research skills and build their confidence.

ROBOTS

Paro pet



The PARO is a therapeutic robot that looks like a seal. It responds to voice and touch, and has multiple sensors on its body. It's a cute device, but it costs £4,000.

Having a pet makes people less stressed but when you get older it is difficult to look after them. This robot is easy to care for and only requires charging



Students in Year 7 have made an excellent start to their geography journey at Marden. They have been studying Fantastic Places and Population this term. During the population topic students have demonstrated their excellent teamwork and leadership skills by designing and presenting a product to aid countries with an ageing population. A number of students have asked to take pictures of Geography work that they are proud of and upload them to their Globalbridge profiles. It is great to see students looking through their books and recognising their own achievements.

Enjoy a well earned Christmas break and we look forward to seeing everyone again in the New Year.

Miss C Robson



The beginning of this academic year brought a welcome change to the PE team, with two new members of staff joining the department. We welcomed Mr Devlin and Miss Gray-Renfrew into the team and both have proved to be very good additions to our already successful department.

Extracurricular activities

Pupils have enjoyed a full programme of extracurricular activities this term, with clubs being run in a variety of sports . Pupils have had the opportunity to take part in football, netball, rugby, badminton, table tennis, volleyball, and cross country running. The popularity of these clubs has proved to be huge, with students engaging in team practices and fun recreation activities before school, lunchtimes and after school. We in the PE department are proud of the effort and commitment shown by the pupils that take part in these clubs, and we welcome anyone else that would like to join in.

Netball

During the autumn term we have seen an excellent turn out at the netball extra curricular clubs for years 7-11. The clubs have been full of excitement, laughter and fantastic teamwork. As well as the netball club at school, the North Tyneside netball season started at the end of September. The netball teams have dominated the league tables and have put in some wonderful performances. The Year 7 netball team continue to go from strength to strength and develop holistically as a team where new friendships are developed weekly. The Year 8 netball team have a fantastic team spirit when they are playing and have had lots of victories so far this Year. Year 9 have continued where they left off last year dominating the league table with some fantastic performances. The team went to play in the North East competition against some of the top private schools, finishing 4th overall. The Year 10 and 11 team have been fantastic, both on and off the court, offering help and support to the younger teams when they train.



Football

After a very successful season last year, the Marden High football teams had a lot to live up to this year. Thankfully they have picked up where they left off last year and started in great form. All Year groups have taken part in the North Tyneside Schools leagues and have enjoyed success in these games. Both the boys and girls teams have performed brilliantly with many victories earned so far.

Monday and Wednesday nights have seen our teams take part in Central Venue League 7-a-side competitions held at John Spence. The pupils have enjoyed these small sided games, even though some were played in fairly extreme weather conditions!

Finally, the teams have all played in their respective County Cup competitions this term, with the Year 9 boys team progressing to the Quarter Finals to be held in the new year. The Year 8 boys team are also still in their competition and we wish both teams every success in their next round fixtures.



Rugby

The Year 8 and 9 rugby teams have competed in the County Cup competition this term, with the Year 9 boys team progressing to the Shield Semi Finals. The Year 9 girls also had a taste of success with three wins from three in their tournament. Both teams will progress through to the next round of competition to be held in the new year. For some of the players, this was their first taste of competitive rugby, but by the smiles on their faces at the end of the games, it is safe to say they loved it!



Basketball

The Year 9 and the Year 10/11 basketball teams have been in action this term, competing in the North Tyneside Schools competitions. Both teams have performed tremendously well and qualified for the County finals in the new year. A fantastic achievement and we wish them both the best of luck.

Cross country

Before half term, all pupils in Marden completed the cross country event in their PE lessons. The top performing pupils were selected to represent the school at the North Tyneside championships held at Monkseaton High School in November. Alas, the weather was not playing ball and the competition had to be postponed twice. A new date will be finalised for this in the new year.

Badminton and Volleyball

Also this term, the Yr 9 and Yr 10 girls had their Central Venue League badminton competitions, with both teams doing fantastically well, qualifying for the county finals just before Christmas. The Yr 9 and Yr 10 boys teams battled hard, finishing 4th and 5th in their respective competitions.

The KS3 and KS4 Volleyball teams have also been in action in their Central Venue League this term, with the boys having played two competitions and the girls one. The KS3 and KS4 boys teams won their competitions, and the KS3 girls also victorious in their tournament. Volleyball is a fairly new sport to most of the players, but they have learned quickly and developed a great team mentality.

House Competitions 2024

And finally, the PE team are pleased to announce that there will be House sports competitions starting after school next term. Each Monday and Wednesday there will be a tournament between the houses in a variety of sports. Please watch out for the posters around school and on social media for information of what is coming up.

Mr G Smith



Personal Development

This half term, Year 9 students have been involved in a 'Respect Day' as part of their personal development. The aim was to enable students to explore the importance of respecting themselves and having positive relationships with those around them. The day began with a talk from Chris Hemmings about healthy masculinity and how social expectations placed on young men can be damaging to both men and women. The students engaged extremely well, with some thought provoking and insightful questions asked at the end by our students. Students then moved into workshops delivered by a variety of external speakers, including an empathy workshop delivered by Chris. Show Racism the Red Card delivered sessions on unconscious bias and how to be an ally while speakers from the Blue Sky Trust explored the concept of self respect.

Year 7 students have had a similar experience but with the theme of 'Safety'. They have been able to attend sessions from the police, fire service and ended the day with a theatre performance about road safety. Alongside this students were able to explore what being safe within relations and online looks like.

Students have already identified both of these events as really positive experiences and gave some brilliant feedback.

Mrs C MacLeod



Animal Science Conference



Year 10 pupils attended an Animal science conference at Newcastle university. They got a taste of university life, attending lectures on different aspects of animal welfare. Presentations included;

- Selective breeding in dogs
- Rhino poaching
- Pig welfare in pork production

The pupils were a credit to the school, respectfully listening to the presentations and asking relevant questions.



Students and teachers made science themed cakes and biscuits for our charity bake sale!



Kielder Observatory Planetarium(Year 9 and 11) and ‘Is there such a thing as Aliens’ talk?(Year 10)

Two astronomers brought an inflatable planetarium and their extensive knowledge of space to provide year 9 and year 11 students, as well as STEM club and Astronomy club with an exciting opportunity to learn more about the night sky we see was given to our year 9, year 11 separate scientists and our STEM and astronomy club students. Students were highly engaged in the sessions with some excellent and intriguing questions being asked to the astronomers.

Alongside the planetarium sessions, one of the physicists explored the question: ‘Do Aliens really exist?’ and provided a fascinating insight into the research and findings from the various explorations of distant galaxies and similar planets to ours. Although a definitive answer is still unknown, it seems likely that we are not alone in the Universe (cue Doctor Who music!)

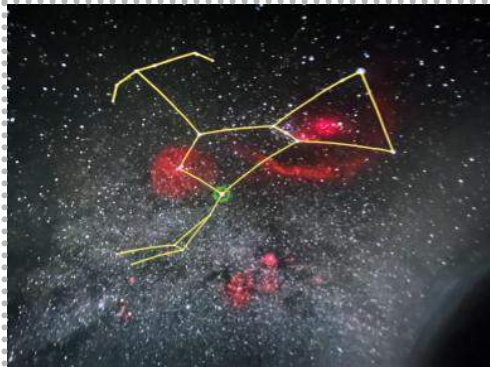


(Above)Year 11 students enjoying their time in the inflatable planetarium

(Top right) The mythical stories behind the constellations

(Bottom right) The constellations as we see them in the night sky.

Photos taken by ARu



STEM Club are working towards completing a CREST award. They are investigating how Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths are used to make amazing movies

STEM Club 2023/24

A foley artist is a person who creates sounds for movies. We have written stories and recorded sounds to enhance the performance. We have used a range of techniques to manipulate the sounds.



Have you ever thought about how a stunt person stays safe when they fall from a tall building? We made air bags that helped to cushion the fall of an egg.

Following training by NTLT STEM Hub and NUSTEM, a group of Year 8, 9 and 10 students are developing their scientific investigation and presentation skills as our new Science Ambassadors.

Science Ambassadors



They will be delivering science activities to local primary schools next year.

What's happening in science lessons?

Science lessons have taken place to incorporate literacy and language development. Some of the staff have observed each others lessons as part of their professional development and have discussed the varying techniques used in biology, chemistry and physics to encourage students to read and highlight concepts in lessons. This will continue throughout the year as it is a focus of the curriculum development plan for the academic year. The aim is to explore the etymology of the words we use in science and give students a deeper understanding of their meanings.

Mrs C Atkinson



The Library Book of the Week: Winter Term Reads

Each week the *Library Club* selects a book for students to read an extract from together in form time. Literacy Leaders lead the discussion and it offers the opportunity to explore the books we have on offer in the library. Here are all the recommendations that we have had for the Winter Term!



Literacy Winter Competitions

Literacy Leaders have two creative writing competitions for students to get involved in over the festive period. They can send their poems and stories to the Literacy Cloud for publication and house points! The Library Club has also given us two festive reading recommendations for the holidays, too.



Literacy Winter Competitions

Option 1
Write a poem about the Winter season. Be as creative as possible!

Option 2:
Write a short story that begins with one of these sentences:

A snowball in the face is surely the perfect beginning to a lasting friendship.

or

In the night the snow came.

1st place: 150 house points
2nd place: 100 house points
3rd place: 50 house points

Each entry gets 50 house points!

Marden Literacy Leaders



Winter Reading Recommendations

The UK's top Young Adult authors join together in this collection of new stories and poems on the theme of home.

Touching, hilarious and filled with festive cheer, the magic of the holiday season shines on these three interconnected tales of love and romance. The perfect book for a cold winter's night for any fan of *The Fault in Their Stars*.

Marden Literacy Leaders





Remembrance Day Poetry

We had some impressive poems written for Remembrance Day this year, inspired by the quotation from Anne Frank 'How wonderful it is that nobody need wait a single moment before starting to improve the world'. Here is the winning response from Erin.

Remembrance Day 2023



ERIN SHIPPEY

The wind ruffled my feathers,
 The cold air stung my eyes,
 I could taste the death in my mouth.
 I collected their souls, one by one.
 Some were more reluctant to come with me than others.
 Some painfully young, some painfully frail, all deserving of a better fate.
 How is it that a favour is never returned?
 The only gratitude for their sacrifice are the poppies that grow above them,
 The poppies that live their lives for them.
 Every last breath, every missed opportunity, every final look to the sky,
 Remembered by the flowers that grow,
 The flowers that stop us forgetting,
 Just how much everyone of those soldiers changed the world,
 How every one of them marched towards their death,
 With only the hope of protecting those back at home.
 Nobody need wait a single moment to change the world,
 For it does not take tremendous effort to be kind,
 In memory of those who gave tremendous effort,
 So that people could still be kind.
 That is my one message to the souls I have not yet collected,
 War is ugly,
 The only beauty you find in it is in the faces of soldiers,
 Who ensured the beauty of life today.
 Do not forget them, for they are the true shapers of today,
 The true changers of the world.

"How wonderful it is that nobody need wait a single moment before starting to improve the world"



Halloween Stories

In celebration of Halloween this year, students had to write a short story or poem entitled 'The Door'. Here are a selection of the spine-chilling entries!

Halloween 2023



LEILA MANNAN

The Door

She needs to escape.
 Not only is she stuck within these four walls, she's trapped in her own mind with a friend called madness.
 Waiting, waiting for that door to open and free her. But she's losing patience. How long had it been since she'd last seen daylight? She can't remember. Every now and then she'd reach out as if trying to touch the door, just to make sure this is reality. Just a small brush of her fingers against that door to remind her it's possible to escape, if only she knew how.
 She's getting weaker and she knows it. Malnutrition isn't great for her or anyone's health. She'd be grateful if they finally busted down the door and gave her a quick death. It'd be kinder than the slow suffering, wallowing in her own misery.
 But deep down, she knew she'd been forgotten. Nothing more than a wisp of a memory remained of her out there.
 Like she never existed.



Halloween 2023



LILY MCLEOD

The Door

The thrashes of thunder and the ghastly noises became louder. I checked all the doors and the windows were locked,the wind was rattling in their old window frames,it was so dark out you couldn't even see the dense trees that surround the house but the noise of their crisp Autumn leaves rattling in the moon was relentless they were scratching the window like spiny witches fingers. Mum and dad told me they were going to be back tonight. My phone rang,it was my mum. She told me the trains were delayed due to the leaves on the track and they would have to stay at London .I said I would be fine trying to be convincing. I felt thankful that I had my black cat Luna for company.

Suddenly, there was a big bang. I looked outside. I could feel my heart racing in my chest,the lights flickered into a plunge of darkness. I felt my way along the walls to the light switch. Clicked it on and off several times but nothing happened. A fallen tree in the storm must have taken out the power lines. I felt the walls once again to find the drawer under the sink. Mum told me to light the candle if the power goes out. The dim warm glow of the candle made me feel safe. I took it into the living room and set it down on the coffee table and wrapped up in a blanket Luna quickly jumped on me. I decided to stay there until morning as I was too afraid to go upstairs. I watched the candle flicker. I noticed the candle was flickering at a 45 degree angle. Thought to myself that it is strange the only draft from the window to my right. Surely the candle should be moving in the opposite direction.

I stood up, Luna jumped to the ground stretching grumpily at being disturbed. I used the candle to look around the room. Whichever way I turn the candle leans in the same direction.I noticed a sliver of gold light along the skirting board on the wall opposite the window. I carefully walked over to the window. The candle flickered away from it. I crouched down and put the palm of my hand to the light. An icy breeze sended a shiver down my hands to my spine.

I stood up and jumped as Luna curled herself around my leg. In the dim light. I could see the shape of a door behind the old flowery wallpaper. I peeled it off revealing an old wooden door. The door creaked as I opened the door. Luna ran down the steps. I followed her. There was an old light switch. I flicked it. It worked. I could see Luna standing next to me. I heard the noise of the door slamming...

Halloween 2023



ERIN SHIPPEY

The Door

The door creaked open, he hesitated as he quietly shuffled across the floor boards, flinching at every sound. What was behind the door, he really didn't want to know. He wanted to run as fast as he could in the other direction and just forget everything. He could feel eyes on him, cold breath on the back of his neck. He abruptly turned around, but no-one was there. No-one, only him and whatever was behind the door. No witnesses, although it couldn't be guaranteed the neighbours wouldn't be disturbed by his frightful screams. The silence was deafening, the emptiness screamed at him. What had once been a short, simple passageway had transformed into the talk of the town, a famous landmark ever since that girl had gone missing 30 years ago. He shivered, such a stupid dare, but he couldn't say no, his only reward would be fame, but I don't personally think it was worth it, not considering the out-weighing consequences. This was starting to become too much, what had been a joke had turned into something he couldn't bear. Overwhelmed by fear and strong temptation to leave, he gave in and started slowly staggering backwards. It all happened so fast; an icy hand on his wrist, tingling in his spine, those big red eyes. I sheepishly waddled towards the scene, holding my quivering hands out to accept his soul. My master had recently been generous, he got the body, I got the soul. What a feast, even if it was only on stupid kids.



The Glitch: A National Creative Writing Competition!

Students have been entering their short stories into a new creative writing competition from *Young Writers*. The winning authors will have the opportunity to get their writing published in a real book! We are looking forward to hearing the results. Here are a few of the entries.



GABRIEL KENNEDY

Normal is never the same

My world is different to me because I am what used to be normal.

I am human, my eyes a complex pair, my heart beats like it used to, but I can't say the same for everyone else. Their skin is slimy green, their hair pulses with a blue energy and their heart moves at the speed of light. They are faster than me, stronger than me and I'm simply paraded around as humanity's pre-evolution failure. One thing I find is that no matter what bodies we're in we always have violence, poverty and we will always be a plague on any planet.



I was sure I would get tired of watching the Earth from up here. I didn't expect it to become the only thing keeping me sane. I can't bear to look back at all the others; better to forget they exist than to lose three friends. It was a human error that started this - somewhere out there is a lazy programmer, a tired boss, a faulty computer. It's funny to think that those irrelevant variables are about to cost four lives. Looking back at glitching monitors and flashing red lights isn't going to fix anything. Instead, I look out at millions of glittering stars.

ALICE BAIN



The Great Glitch

The whole world was plunged into a deep darkness. There were broken electronics on almost every street. It was so quiet that it seemed like I was the only living human left. After the great glitch occurred we had nothing left to defend ourselves with as the powersource it corrupted was the only thing keeping the wall protecting our city operative. It stood only twelve hours and 45 minutes exactly after the source went out, I had kept count. Now instead of happy civilians crowding the streets there was only the great plague of darkness that consumed all but me.

VIOLET WILSON



The Weekly Literacy Challenge

Each week the Weekly Literacy Challenge is released, offering students the opportunity to respond creatively to the Theme of the Week, become published on the [Literacy Cloud](#), and win some extra house points! Here are a few of the creations shared by students so far this half term.

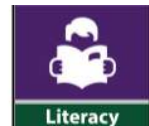
Every Monday we release the...

Weekly Literacy Challenge!

The challenge will be connected to the Theme of the Week...

Be creative and use your imagination!

- ★ Write poems, songs, stories, articles, speeches...
- ★ Draw, design, collage, sculpture, paint...
- ★ Dance, video, sing, play an instrument...
- ★ Bake!



All entries will be published on the **Literacy Cloud** and receive **50 house-points!**

Email your creations to literacycloud@mardenhigh.net



The Smallest Act of *Kindness*

The smallest act of kindness

Sometimes it's just the smallest act of kindness that can make your day.

From giving someone a compliment to just holding the door open for a stranger, the smallest things in life often make the biggest impact.

A young girl was having a rough day. Things in her life just weren't going to plan. Izzy was sitting alone eating lunch when someone came over. Although this other girl had many other friends she decided to come over and that just made Izzy's day. "Are you ok", she said " I saw you sitting alone". "Not really" said Izzy. The girl made Izzy feel comforted and complimented her hair, clothes and more. Suddenly Izzy started to feel not so sad and was actually very happy. Well you see the smallest act of kindness really can make someone's day.

ISLA MACKENZIE



Creative Writing!



Refuge

In a world torn by chaos, a refugee named Sarah found safety in the most unexpected place—a forgotten library deep within a forest. Abandoned by society, she found refuge in the quiet embrace of knowledge, surrounded by books that whispered stories of hope. With each page turned, she discovered strength in the words of authors who'd faced adversity. In the library's quiet refuge, Sarah pieced together a new life, transforming her past pain into a new life. And, in the pages of her own story, she found the courage to face an uncertain future, ready to write her own ending. She knows who she is in this cruel world.

A 'REFUGE' PIECE
JOSHUA DOWDELL





Creative Writing!



I think everyone makes a mistake at least once in their life. The important thing is that you learn from it. If I could show you I would, but it would be beyond your comprehension. Not a single living organism on this planet is perfect, but for some reason you get this urge, this desperateness, this craving to be flawless. I don't understand. Amongst everything, humans seem to be the most complex. You create societies with standards no one can meet, fictional characters constructed by your fantasies. All I can say is: mistakes build achievements, so why are you embarrassed?

'MISTAKES'
ERIN SHIPPEY

Creative Writing!



Love of Learning
I think everyone makes a mistake at least once in their life. The important thing is what you learn from it." That's what I reluctantly said to myself as I sat down on my bed after losing the big football cup final. As I sat there with the tears rolling down my eyes the moment I put the game losing penalty over the bar was repeating in my small maturing brain. I knew it wasn't all my fault but lying right there on my bed, I knew I was a failure. I was trying to think that it wasn't my fault but I knew whose fault it was 100%. Mine...

A PIECE WRITTEN BY
JOSHUA DOWDELL



The Literacy Cloud

The Literacy Cloud is the place to visit for tips and strategies, reading recommendations and links and creative challenges to get involved in. It is also where all of our students' winning writing and artwork is published. Take a look over the holiday.

Get published on the Literacy Cloud!

If you would like to be featured on the [Literacy Cloud](#) then share your reading recommendations and reviews; original creative writing; artwork inspired by your reading; enter competitions and



challenges...
literacycloud@mardenhigh.net.
 Each entry wins 50 house points!



LITERACY @ MARDEN

CONTENTS

READING WRITING ORACY

BBC NEWS
Weekly Literacy Mini Challenge!

Kindness and Empathy Creative Challenge

CHALLENGE: Create something to inspire empathy and encourage kindness.

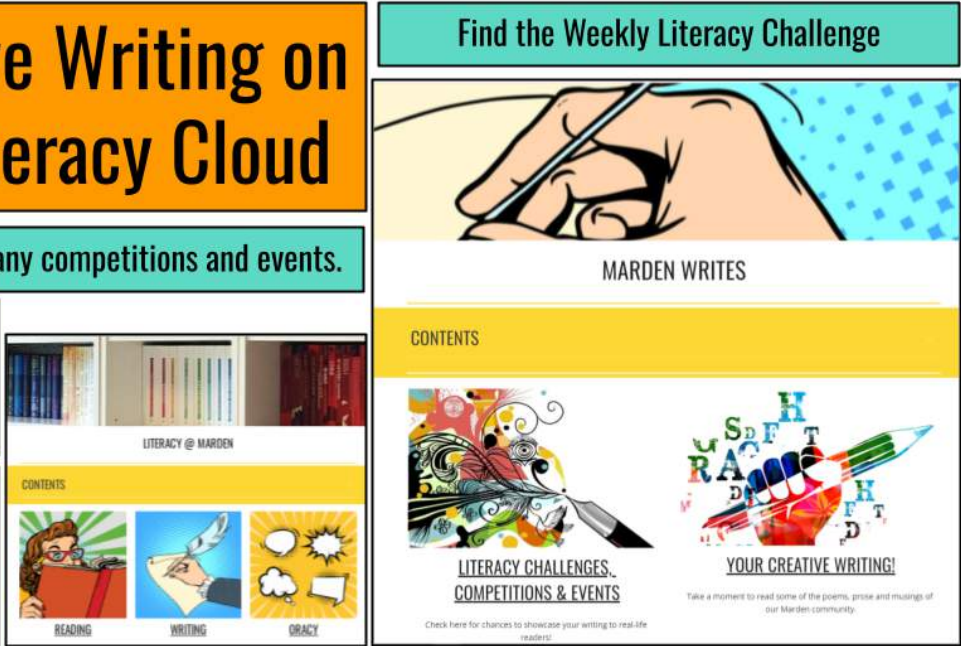
Send your creation to literacycloud@mardenhigh.net for a chance to be featured on the Literacy Cloud and receive 50 house points!

Creative Writing on the Literacy Cloud

Check here for any competitions and events.

Visit the "Writing" section of the [Literacy Cloud](#) to see all of your creative writing!

Send any of your creative writing to literacycloud@mardenhigh.net. Each entry wins 50 house points!



Find the Weekly Literacy Challenge

MARDEN WRITES

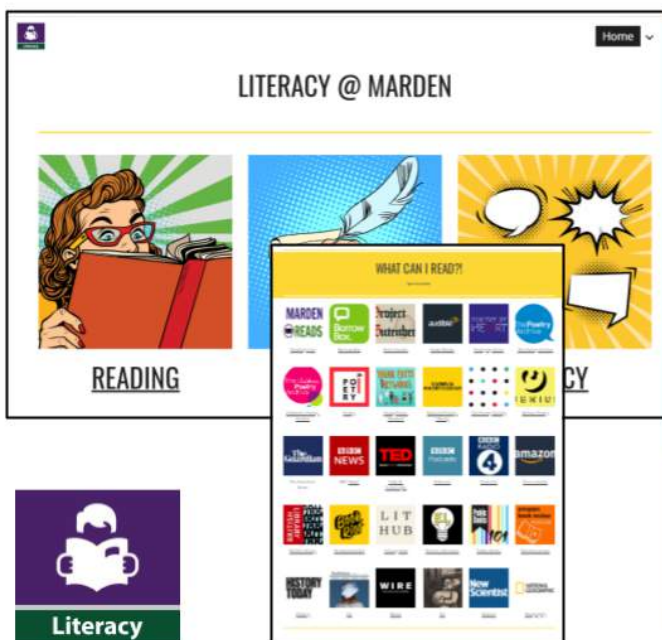
CONTENTS

LITERACY CHALLENGES, COMPETITIONS & EVENTS

YOUR CREATIVE WRITING!

Check here for chances to showcase your writing to real-life readers!

Take a moment to read some of the poems, prose and musings of our Marden community.



Looking for things to read alongside your books?

Visit the "Reading" section of the [Literacy Cloud](#) and find lots of links to explore!

The Library is also open every day!



OPEN EVERY LUNCHTIME & AFTER SCHOOL.

Browse the shelves.

Take a look on Oliver (the Library website) to check what books we have.

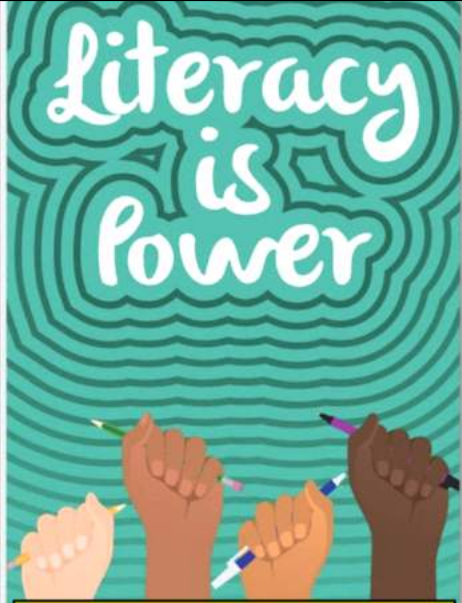
Take a comfy seat and read!

If you have a book you would like to see on the shelves then let the Library Club know! Send them an email libraryclub@mardenhigh.net or leave a note in the box on the LRC desk.



Check out the subject specific sections. Interested in art, music or sport - see what books we recommend!

THE LIBRARY CLUB WILL BE HERE EVERY LUNCHTIME TO HELP WITH RECOMMENDATIONS, SUGGESTIONS OR QUESTIONS! COME AND CHAT TO US!

Literacy

Marden Literacy Leaders

We need Literacy Leaders to come up with ways to encourage writers, inspire readers and empower voices!

Are you a voracious reader, a brilliant writer, a superb public speaker? Would you love to be involved in planning events, activities and competitions?

- Mentor younger students
- Create & run literacy events & competitions across the school to get other students interested in reading & writing!
- Create engaging displays.
- Develop the library website!
- Run activities & competitions.
- Develop the Literacy Cloud
- Create reading lists, books of the week & books of the month.
- Run the library & come up with ways to develop the library & make it an exciting place to be!
- Decide on new books for the LRC!

Interested in becoming a Literacy Leader?
Email Ms Taylor a.taylor@mardenhigh.net

Ms A Taylor
Literacy Coordinator



MARDEN

READS

Reading List

Here are some suggestions of books you might want to read over year 7.

(You should be trying to read at least

- The Enemy - *Charlie Higson*
- Cosmic - *Frank Cottrell Boyce*
- Wonder - *R.J Palacio*
- Treasure Island - *R.L Stevenson*
- The Adventure Series *Lee Tony*
- The Adventure of Huckleberry Finn - *Mark Twain*
- Blitzcat - *Robert Westall*
- Holes - *Louis Sachar*
- Stormbreaker - *Anthony Horowitz*
- The Hobbit - *J R R Tolkien*
- Madame Doubtfire - *Anne Fine*
- The Edge - *Alan Gibbons*
- Millions - *Frank Cottrell Boyce*

Want a challenge?

- War Horse - *Michael Morpurgo*
- Great Expectations - *Charles Dickens*
- The Lord of the Rings Trilogy - *JRR Tolkien*
- The Book Thief - *Marcus Zusak*
- The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes - *Sir Arthur Conan Doyle*

Reading List

Here are some suggestions of books you might want to read over year 8.

(You should be trying to read at least one of these per half-term)

- The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes - *Sir Arthur Conan Doyle*
- The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy - *Douglas Adams*
- The Hunger Games - *Suzanne Collins*
- After the First Death - *Robert Cormier*
- The Universe Versus Alex Woods - *Gavin Extance*
- The Enemy - *Charlie Higson*
- Cosmic - *Frank Cottrell Boyce*
- Carrie's War - *Nina Bawden*
- The Foreshadowing - *Marcus Sedgewick*
- The Northern Lights series - *Philip Pullman*
- Noughts and Crosses - *Malorie Blackman*
- Treasure Island - *R.L Stevenson*
- Martyn Pig - *Kevin Brooks*
- The Ruby in the Smoke - *Philip Pullman*
- Small Steps - *Louis Sachar*

Want a challenge?

- The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time - *Mark Haddon*
- Life of Pi - *Yann Martel*
- The Help - *Kathryn Stockett*
- Animal Farm - *George Orwell*
- Jane Eyre - *Charlotte Bronte*



MARDEN



READS

Reading List

Here are some suggestions of books you might want to read over year 9.

(You should be trying to read at least

Animal Farm - George Orwell

The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time - Mark Haddon

Of Mice and Men - John Steinbeck

The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian - Sherman Alexie

Looking for Alaska - John Green

Lord of the Flies - William Golding

The Help - Kathryn Stockett

Life of Pi - Yann Martel

Want a challenge?

Wuthering Heights - Emily Bronte

Junk - Melvin Burgess

1984 - George Orwell

The Catcher in the Rye - J.D. Salinger

The Great Gatsby - F.Scott Fitzgerald

Reading List

Here are some suggestions of books you might want to read over year 10 & 11.

(You should be trying to read at least

Tip! Try to get into the habit of reading newspapers too! This will help for your

1984 - George Orwell

Animal Farm - George Orwell

A Room with a View - E.M. Forster

The Book Thief - Markus Zusak

Brighton Rock - Graham Greene

Catch 22 - Joseph Heller

The Catcher in the Rye - J.D. Salinger

The Color Purple - Alice Walker

The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time - Mark Haddon

David Copperfield - Charles Dickens

East of Eden - John Steinbeck

Frankenstein - Mary Shelley

The Grapes of Wrath - John Steinbeck

The Great Gatsby - F.Scott Fitzgerald

The Help - Kathryn Stockett

I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings - Maya Angelou