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Dear Readers,

In recent weeks, a new 'challenge' has flooded social media: the 10 Year Challenge. The social media movement encourages that we reflect over images of ourselves ten years ago compared to the present day. A decade has shown many of us to grow, prosper in our learning and develop skills to survive in the ever changing future.

Yet, alarmingly looking back at then and now images of our environment reveals shrinking glaciers, emaciated polar bears and rapid deforestation. While this is disturbing, what can be said to be more distressing is the growing level of plastic discarded on land and in our oceans.

Without the intervention of recycling and proper waste management, plastic can take up to 1000 years to decompose.

In this issue there are a number of articles promoting environmental awareness and is reflective of the growing concerns of HAMD students regarding the use of single-use plastic. HAMD students are choosing to act now with their requests for visible recycling on site, reduction and removal of single use plastics and attendance at Geography’s Eco Club and Science’s STEM Club.

Enjoy reading this edition and remember Howard Zinn’s words of comfort that 'Small acts, when multiplied by millions of people, can transform the world.'

Best wishes,

Miss Catanzaro
Director of English and Advocate for Environmental Awareness.
Two years ago, we were introduced to our new teacher, Mr Murphy, and we were just starting our GCSE Drama course that we believed would be a ‘walk in the park’... and then, suddenly, it was our Year 11 GCSE Performance Examination day.

The rehearsal day had only just begun when we were hit with the famous ‘pressure-talk’ by Mr Murphy, who explained that it was “now or never” and to go all out on our exam performance. Straight away, we presented our piece and were given a great deal of harsh critique on how to fix it in a few hours - so the intense rehearsal day began!

After practicing for over four hours, everybody was exhausted and bored of doing the same thing repetitively and yet we all still had four more to go. We were all tense and extremely stressed. The time until our exam was rapidly decreasing and then suddenly it was 4pm, when everybody was changing into their costumes. It was all so chaotic! Cheyanne and I remember sitting in front of the mirror alongside the majority of our classmates doing our extravagant (Berkoff style) makeup and hearing complaints of frustration about the difficulty of it. The time was ticking.

Before the performances, we were all placed into our Drama Studio (across from where we would be performing in a short 30 minutes). The spacious classroom felt cramped with all the nervous energy coming from everyone and then, abruptly, it was just our group waiting to go in and perform first.

Another one of Mr Murphy’s signature ‘pressure-talks’ came, just moments before we were all going to be on stage. Of course, it made us feel even worse! Walking into the hall, it was filled with countless heads surrounding the stage. Knowing we would be on it, we began to shake with fear. Standing in front of the camera was honestly the worst part of the day - the time had come to do our exam.

The performance actually went quite quickly. We were on the stage giving it our all and then it was over and we were in the audience watching everyone else. The stress and ‘pressure-talks’ were worth it in the end, as we both achieved our goal of a full marked performance! Now we can only wait for Component 2 performances in March.
SCHOOL THEATRE TRIP: A CHRISTMAS CAROL

By Isra Kidwai B3

Recently, I went to see ‘A Christmas Carol’, along with other KS4 students from Harris Academy Morden. Many people know the tale of Ebenezer Scrooge, perhaps from reading the book, or from watching one of the many film adaptations, which quite possibly may be the animated adaptation, starring Jim Carrey as the ‘cold-hearted’ main character.

Jacob Marley, Ebenezer Scrooge’s deceased business partner, is played by the highly accomplished actor, James Hyland. Marley, now a chained and persecuted ghost, is doomed to wander the Earth forever as punishment for his selfishness and greed when he was alive. The show is performed solely by Hyland, as the famous tale is told from Marley’s own perspective. With the dimming of the lights, the audience could sense the presence of Jacob Marley. A door swings open slowly, and you can actually hear the howling of all those in Hell, as you are met with the chained spirit. There is tension in the atmosphere before a single word is even spoken. Every movement is carefully thought out and executed.

Hyland tells the story by physically transforming into each character, with separate traits and voices. The changes between characters are fast and convincing, communicating height, personality and levels of physicality. The personality, emotions and nature of every character is perfectly mimicked so extraordinarily that there is no blurred line from the transition from one personage to the other – rather it flows with the narrative from Jacob Marley, moving the plot on smoothly.

The set is not complicated at all: a simple chair is used, which Hyland adapts throughout the performance and constantly returns to. The (extremely) minimalist set keeps the audience engaged and interested throughout and more focused on the plot itself.

Overall, the performance was very entertaining, due to the impressive storytelling from only a solo actor. I would personally recommend it to those who are looking for a unique adaptation of the meaningful and morally-inclined novel.
The Art department has been a hive of activity this autumn, and our students have been busy producing some seriously beautiful work. As you can see from this small selection, there is a wide variety of style, technique and medium being used in many interesting ways. The students are not afraid to experiment and learn from mistakes which is a great way to work. We have had a big push on ceramic sculpture this term and have bought in some new glazes for the finishing touches. We look forward to displaying the work in the new year. Make sure to pop by!

In other news, a group of year 11 students went on a school trip to the Tate Britain. To see so many great works of Art in the flesh and not just as a print in a book was fantastic. These students are now ready to get stuck into their exam projects in January full of inspiration. The coursework produced this year is looking great. We wish our year 11 students the very best for the Art exam period and hope they do just as amazing as last year’s students.
ELITE CHOIR
By Shashana Salmon B2

There is a thriving music scene at Harris Academy Morden. On any given evening the corridors of the Performing Arts block are virtually full to the point of bursting with the sound of singing, drama and musical instruments. Students can take part in a wide-range of music clubs, which not only gives them a specific skill but also helps build those crucial ‘soft skills’ such as team-work and communication. In this article, Shashana Salmon gives us a glimpse into the world of one such club – Elite Choir.

HAMD: Summer ‘Seasons of Love’ Festival 2018

For those who don’t know what Elite Choir is, Elite Choir is a place full of music, happiness and team-spirit! It’s also a place where people can share their ideas about songs; learn to communicate with others; get to express themselves and show-off a talent. Mostly you just do what you love, which in my case is singing. When I hear the words ‘Elite Choir’, I just feel like singing. I always feel like that.

I joined Elite Choir in year 7 and I love it so much. I feel like I never want to quit! Each time I go, I learn something new and get better and better. I have now been in Elite Choir for three years and I have had the best experiences ever. Highlights include: going to the Royal Albert Hall; singing at Morden Civic Centre for Remembrance Day; singing at Harris Federation events and singing for the Mayor of Merton – the list goes on! My favourite has to be singing in the Royal Albert Hall because of the big crowd. It felt really nice and it was wonderful to also sing with other schools.

If you love singing and want to express yourself more, please join so you can communicate with others and do what you love.
For my first assignment, I was asked to interview Miss Catanzaro. Here is what we talked about:

Renee: What did you read over the Christmas break?
Miss Catanzaro: *Circe* by Madeline Miller ("A brilliantly strange work of mythic science fiction, as effortlessly expressive within the palaces of gods as it is about the world below … Superb … This is both a fabulous novel and a fascinating retelling; the best compliment, perhaps, that any myth could hope for" – *Daily Telegraph*) and *Why I’m No Longer Talking to White People About Race* ("A wake-up call to a nation in denial about the structural and institutional racisms occurring in our homes, offices and communities" – *Observer*).

Renee: What are your English department goals for this academic year?
Miss Catanzaro: For this month the goals are to encourage more students to read for pleasure, in particular KS4 students as KS3 students still have relatively high levels of engagement plus a HAMD Reading Lesson every week. For the year, the goal is to ensure that Year 11 match, or even exceed last year’s GCSE pass rates. Overall, as always, the aim of every English teacher is to encourage a love and appreciation for English.

Renee: What are your new year’s resolutions?
Miss Catanzaro: My new year’s resolutions are to maintain a vegetarian diet and promote the ethos of recycling and looking after the environment.

Renee: As I’m a student in your class, I’ve noticed that you like to discuss recycling and reducing plastic usage. Do you have any tips on how we can make sure we aren’t wasting a lot of plastic?
Miss Catanzaro: As a school we can start by saying “no” to single use plastics such as cutlery, straws and plastic water bottles given to Year 11 students during intervention. The fast food sold by Sodexo in the canteen, such as pizzas and sausage rolls, are handed out with plastic sheets. Instead, these should be handed out on plastic plates, much like those used for the school dinners. Class teachers should also take responsibility to minimise energy use by turning off interactive whiteboards and classroom lights when not in use and by providing a recycling and waste paper bin in their classrooms.

Renee: Why is this important?
Miss Catanzaro: This is important because we are taking Earth for granted. We must act now to save our planet.

Renee: What do you do to reduce plastic use?
Miss Catanzaro: To reduce plastic use I don’t use hair products in plastic bottles. Instead, I use ‘Beauty Kubes’, which come in recycled boxes and I remove my makeup using a cloth called ‘It’s Magic!’ I also take 3 minute showers to reduce water consumption and create my own cleaning products.

Renee: What do you do to try and spread the word about plastic?
Miss Catanzaro: I use social media to promote cutting down plastic and recycling. I also challenge restaurants and supermarkets and enquire about their recycling policy.

Renee: Any words of encouragement for those people who feel like they can’t cut down on their plastic usage?
Miss Catanzaro: Each one of us can make a difference. Together we make change.
...A WORD ABOUT THE INTERVIEWER

Earlier this year, students were invited to apply for the position of Student Reporter & Interviewer on Morden Mail. A number of students applied and Renee’s application was judged the best. In making this application, Renee embodies the spirit of our school motto: courage, challenge, success.

As can be seen from a copy of her application letter below, Renee aspires to be a political journalist and we wish her well and will do all we can to help her realise this ambition.

Dear Mr Kille,

I would like to nominate myself for the position of student reporter due to wanting to delve into the world of journalism, specifically political journalism.

The reporter role that has been advertised is a perfect match for my skill-set. I think I am the right person to be selected, as I am already a prefect and a member of the Student Council. I am an excellent role model for any student ranging from Year seven to eleven.

If you were to ask my friends, they would say that this role is perfect for me because I give an unbiased opinion and tend to put myself in their shoes when looking at a particular situation.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely,

Renee Miller.

Have something to say? Interested in a career in journalism?

Think: Morden Mail.
GREAT EXPECTATIONS
By Ricardo Levy Y4 & Rita Gobo Y3

This year the Year 9s have been studying a new text. Charles Dickens’ *Great Expectations* is a demanding, brilliant and inspiring work of literature that we know will prepare the students well for their future GCSE studies, where they will study *A Christmas Carol* as part of their English Literature course.

For homework, students were invited to write to their teacher expressing their views on whether this book *should* be studied in year 9 and why. A selection of the student responses are found below (and I promise these are genuine!).

**Dear teacher,**

I am writing in relation to the argument on whether *Great Expectations* should be taught in Year 9. In my opinion I think it should be.

Firstly, I think it should be taught because it is a great way to introduce Year 9’s to intelligent authors such as Charles Dickens. It also introduces us to gothic fiction and detailed descriptions. It is good practice for our GCSE course and the study of it also helps build our language analysis skills.

It will also increase your brain activity, as it is very hard (especially the complex techniques). It will challenge us, make us work harder, help us concentrate and give us higher grades in assessments.

Thanks for reading this,

Rita Gobo.

**Dear teacher,**

Hope you are having a spectacular day because today I am writing this letter to convince you why the book called *Great Expectations* should be taught in Year 9. There are so many reasons why it should be taught but I am just going to give a few.

Firstly, this 19th century fiction book (and the 13th written by Dickens) should be taught because Year 9 is the year when kids start preparing for their GCSEs. By reading *Great Expectations*, which is a book of over 400 pages, students get into the habit of reading – a skill that is essential.

Secondly, it should be studied because *Great Expectations* is a book that creates cognitive engagement that improves many things including: vocabulary, thinking skills and concentration skills. It also can affect empathy, social perception, and emotional intelligence, the sum of which helps people stay on the planet longer.

Your student,

Ricardo Levy.
DO YOU KNOW YOUR YEAR 9 AND GCSE SET TEXTS?
DROWNING IN SINGLE-USE PLASTIC

By Tony-Junior Bryant Y9

In today’s world of convenience people do not tend to worry about what happens to their plastic bags or straws once they are thrown away. Shockingly, once disposed of, these single-use plastic items are causing severe damage to the world’s oceans.

Currently, nearly 12.7 million tons of plastic is emptied into the ocean every year. Have you done the calculations? That equates to one truckload a minute - and that’s set to double by 2034! This has a dire impact on the world’s sea life with 100,000 marine mammals and one million sea birds killed by plastic pollution every year. Plastics are strong and resilient, nevertheless, that is also their fundamental weakness, as when they are dumped into the ocean it takes 450 years to break down into microscopic pieces. Plastics never truly go away.

Some people are indifferent to these statistics, as they believe it does not affect them, although the harsh truth is it affects everyone. Plastic does not just affect the animals that live in the ocean, but also the marine plants. Well, it turns out that 70 percent of the world’s oxygen comes from marine plants so without them there will be a lot less oxygen for us. Surprisingly, 1 in 3 fish that are caught have plastic inside of them, which when eaten will be inside of us! As a result of plastic now being part of the food chain, health issues such as endocrine disruption and the development of several cancers are on the rise.

If the issue is that serious, surely the world’s governments should try to scoop out some of the plastic to stop the issue? Unfortunately, it isn’t as simple as that. The only way to stop this epidemic is to ban the use of single use plastic once and for all.

So, next time you decide to throw away a piece of plastic think: *How will this affect the world now and in the future?*
STEM CLuB

By Kallum Lynn R4

STEM Club is a fascinating, dynamic and creative club for anyone who is interested in Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths. This term we have been discussing the importance of recycling our waste. Many of you will be aware of the disastrous effects our rubbish has on the planet. Plastic in particular is harmful to plants and wildlife and destroys essential resources on a massive scale.

In response to this, STEM Club are building a greenhouse on the school grounds so that we can grow our own crops. The building will be constructed from recycled materials and we need your help! Please help us by collecting and donating any plastic bottles you have. Every little helps as we will need around 2000 bottles to complete the project, so don’t throw them away! Look out for our collection bags around the school and place your used plastic bottles in these.

In addition to the plastic bottles, we will be sourcing additional materials through donation, such as wood and timber planks for the frame and even sticks to form the “nails” through which the bottles will be “strung” to prevent them toppling.

At STEM Club, we have also been looking into Green Chemistry, and investigating how everyday items, such as soaps and shampoos, could be made with eco-friendly chemicals and packaged using more ecological materials.

Sustainability is everyone’s concern and we would like to hear your thoughts and views on how we can make the school more sustainable and environmentally-friendly. We will be distributing questionnaires to staff and students to hear what you have to say on the matter.

We hope that you will get involved and support us with these exciting efforts to become a more sustainable school.
Year 7-10 Merton Borough X-Country finals

In October, some of our year 7-10 students competed in the x-country event at Morden Park. The event is planned as a qualifier to select Merton’s top athletes to represent the borough at the Surrey school Cross Country Championships in January.

The course was a challenging one. Windy conditions coupled with steep hills tested the strength, agility and endurance of the young athletes. However, despite the challenges, both young and more seasoned athletes performed superbly, tackling either the 1.5km or 3km course. By the end of the event, seven students qualified for the Surrey Championships with impressive time runs.

Below are the qualifiers for the Surrey championships in January 2019.

- Alfie Edgeworth (Yr 7) – 3.25
- Noah Nzuzi (Yr 7) – 3.42
- Bruno Ye (Yr 7) – 3.45
- Jamal James (Yr 9) – 3.15
- Tyrese Walters (Yr 8) – 3.17
- Alfie Barnett (Yr 10) – 7.13 (3km)
- Janzib Safi (Yr 10) – 7.16 (3km)
Year 7 Girls Merton Borough netball tournament

In their quest to make their mark on the netball scene, our year 7 girls competed in the annual Merton borough netball tournament at Ricards Lodge School in November. With teams from Ricards Lodge, Harris Wimbledon, Ursuline and St Marks School, the girls knew there was strong opposition and the competition would be tough. Despite a slow start, and fading light, our girls performed brilliantly, securing wins against Harris Wimbledon and St Mark’s School. The win placed them in a good position for the semi-finals against a strong Ricards Lodge team. Although they were defeated in the semi-finals, their performance in the tournament has sent a strong signal to the other teams: team HAMD is fierce, strong and hungry for victory. The tournament ended with HAMD finishing in 3rd place out of the 6 schools competing. Congratulations to our Bronze medallists: Denisa Lungu, Tyla Stewart, Harmony Buckley-Temple, Natasha Simonds, Chelsey Litley, Hannah Nunes, Frankie-Sue Allen, Lindsey Mhirimo for their excellent effort and for being ambassadors for the Academy.
The U14 Merton Basketball tournament was a great experience, as we were able to compete against other schools in the borough. The journey there was lively; we were feeling confident about ourselves. We were taken by Mr Thomas and Mr Ward and we listened to the radio singing along to any of the songs we could. As we were approaching the venue, we were given the great honour to wear our school’s basketball kit.

We arrived at Raynes Park, where the tournament was hosted, and then the nerves we thought would never come finally kicked in. We started going through the game plan. Tense to say the least, we walked in. There were already two teams playing who we analysed. All of us chose who we wanted to guard, and we made it clear how we were going to do it. Our eyes were glued to the game, studying our opponents’ each and every move. Finally, the game was over and Mr Thomas had established the starting 5.

Our first game was Harris Morden v Raynes Park. All our nerves were gone, as soon as the ball had been thrown in the air for tip-off. We started shakily, but when we found our rhythm, we were unstoppable. Bucket after bucket. Raynes Park could not stop us. Harris Morden were the victors of the half, but before we knew it, we were on again. This time we were versing Harris Merton (against the great coach Shamar). The opposition played well but not well enough to match our great chemistry, skill and most importantly the love for the game. Harris Morden once again dominated in both offense and defense. We were once again matched with Raynes Park who had a new tactic, which the whole team acknowledged. Raynes Park’s new tactic was efficient but so predictable at the same time. We were able to break down their tactic and use it to our own advantage. Raynes Park was still unmatched for Harris Morden and we ended the match with 33-19 victory. After a 1 game break, we were set to verse Harris Merton again. The closest they came to us was a single point. Our offense was going wrong and we were allowing easy buckets. We all knew what we had to do - stretch out the lead. Skillfully, we tired out the opposition, which meant that they were sloppy on defense, which then lead to many easy buckets for us, which helped us win the final game 41-21. This meant that we were champions!

Being crowned champions was an honorable moment, because we were representing our beloved school, which has given us so many opportunities. This was the only way we thought we could give back to our devoted school, that we relish. We shook hands with all the schools and told them good game. This was really a good tournament.