

# READING IS POWER

March 2019  
Issue 10

READ UP SPEAK UP CHANGE THE WORLD



**Pictured: Librarian Anja with her artwork for World Book Day and International Women's Day**

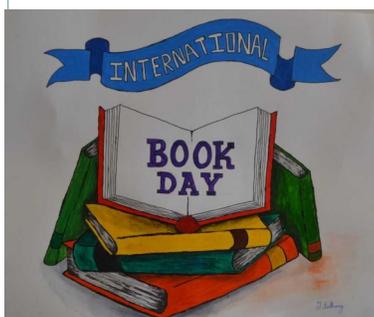
With two important occasions to be marked, on two consecutive days during the month of **March: World Book Day** on Thursday, 7th and **International Women's Day** on Friday 8th, we decided that this year, we would combine the two—celebrating the importance of reading, through storytelling, encouraging students to harness the power of reading, with the World Book Day **Reading is Power Manifesto**, while promoting a diverse range of books that empower young women, all of which are written by and feature women.

**The English Department** held an event that was the first of its kind—an audiobook party, during which students listened to extracts from the audiobook versions of books by women such as Michelle Obama, Angie Thomas, Maya Angelou and Suzanne Collins.

To celebrate **International Women's Day**, we promoted and displayed an extensive selection of both fiction and non-fiction books—written by women, as well as books focusing on the women's movement. In the **LRC**, students took part in quizzes whose questions were based around influential women. We also created two displays for **International Women's Day** featuring reviews from some of our junior librarians, with information about inventions by women, profiles of well-known women in **STEM**, as well as female authors, whose books can be found in the LRC, such as **Nicole Yoon, Michaela DePrince, Sheryl Sandberg, Jane Austen, Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie, Isabel**

**Allende and Randa Abdel-Fattah.**

One of our junior librarians also created two outstanding pieces of art: one for **World Book Day (on the left)** and one for **International Women's Day (on the right)**.





## WHAT DOES READING MEAN TO URSULINE STUDENTS?

This year, the **World Book Day** charity released a **manifesto**, titled **Reading is Power**, designed to empower young people to talk passionately and confidently about the books that inspire them.

Drawing on this idea, we asked some of our students to write their own their own manifestos, some of which can be found below:

**Charlotte, Year 10:** *"To me, reading is a way to go on adventures without ever leaving home. It is a way to discover new people and cultures. It is a way to find myself and then to lose myself in another book. But above all reading is a way to connect with others; characters and real people alike. This is why I read. But why should you read? Well, there are many reasons such as : reading expands your vocabulary and mind. You also grow as a person, moreover, it makes you happy. Furthermore, it helps you think about the world around you and your relationship with it. Through reading, you gain new perspectives and a new understanding of the world. Reading helps you temporarily escape reality and fuels your imagination. Overall , just because you can read anything at any time. To us, it might not seem like a big thing but in some countries, people are restricted on what they can and can't read. So don't think of reading as a boring thing to do but as a right to empower yourself. J.K.Rowling said this about reading: "I do believe something very magical can happen when you read a book".*

**Sweedle, Year 12:** *Reading is power because it allows you to expand your brain to new ideas and knowledge. I read because it takes me to different places, to see the perspective of someone else and visually imager their world. Reading is important because it promotes creativity and imagination.*

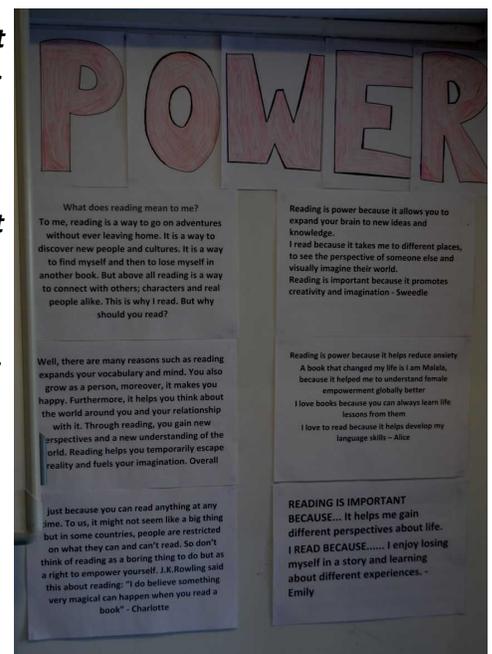
**Emily, Year 12:** *"Reading is important because... it helps me gain different perspectives about life. I READ BECAUSE... I enjoy losing myself in a story and learning about different experiences "*

**Yasmin, Year 8:** *"Reading is important because it helps you improve your vocabulary.*

*I read because I love it, because it makes me live the story.*

*My favourite book is 'Love, Lucas ' because it is kind of based on a true story and I enjoy books that are based on a true story.*

**Phoebe, Year 7:** *"Reading is important because it helps me improve my writing, English and vocabulary.*





**Alexandra, Year 7:** *"I read because it helps me improve my vocabulary, writing and new words to learn.*

*I read to entertain myself, to improve my English, to bond with the writer and to learn new things.*

*I love to read because I enjoy it. I jump into a new story with the reader every time.*

*A book that changed my view of the world is "A Series of Unfortunate Events" because what the children have been through is horrid and a really good book at the same time."*

**Mikaela, Year 8:** *"Reading is important because it helps with our vocabulary and grammar. Furthermore, you spend less time on your device.*

*I love to read because you discover new words.*

*My favourite author is Stephen King because he makes the book more fun and interesting by adding suspending events".*

**Alice, Year 9:** *"Reading is power because it helps reduce anxiety*

*A book that changed my life is I am Malala, because it helped me to understand female empowerment globally better. I love books because you can always learn life lessons from them. I love to read because it helps develop my language skills ."*

**Layla, Year 9:** *"I love to read because it brings me into a world of fantasy and takes me away from reality.*

*Reading is important because it expands your knowledge and is also a good way to de-stress and unwind."*

**Sophie, Year 9:** *"Reading is important because it helps develop your learning and knowledge*



Replace with new photo

*I read because it gives me a chance to escape reality for a bit.. Reading is power because it inspires people*

*I love to read because it interests me and expands my learning. I read to expand my imagination and to learn about other cultures. I read to learn about other countries."*

**Isabelle, Year 9:** “*Reading is important because it helps widen your knowledge and expand your vocabulary.*

*Reading is powerful because it allows you to relax and escape reality through a different world*

*I read because I love to escape reality and enter other people’s minds through their books*

*A book that changed my view about life is ‘Everything, Everything’ because it showed me that we are so lucky and should not take our life for granted and to live in the moment.”*

**Aleena, Year 9:** “*Reading is power because it’s an escape.*

*Reading is essential because it increases knowledge which no one can ever take away from you*

*Reading is important because it explores different cultures*

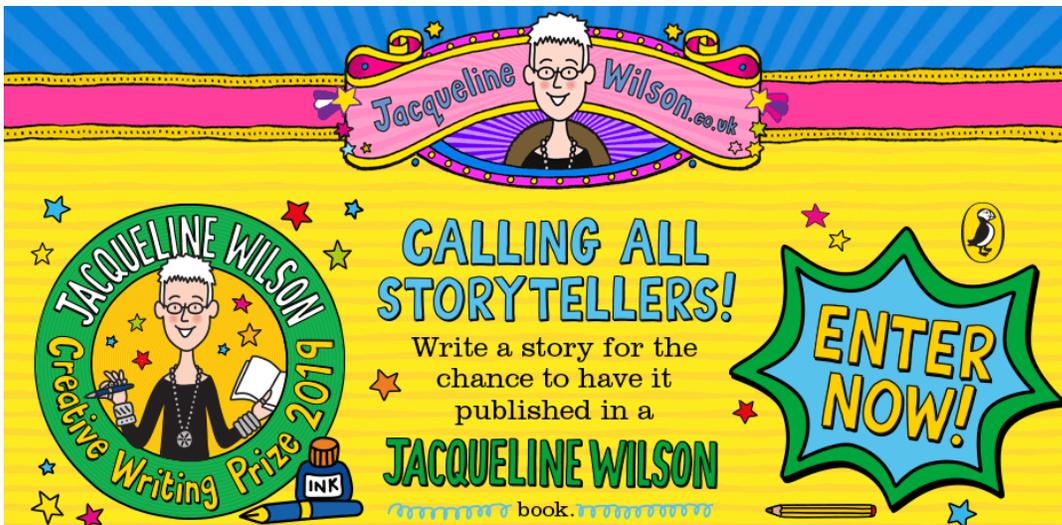
*Reading increases imagination.”*

**Alisha, Year 8:** “*Reading is important because it helps me to improve my vocabulary. I read because it helps me to imagine a new world* “

**Anja, Year 10 :** “*For me, reading is a way to have a further understanding about our surrounding.*

*But not only that, reading is a way for me to escape from the harsh reality of life, it is cool being able to relate to what an author writes, I always get the feeling that I am not alone in what I may be enduring. This is how I feel about reading and why it is important to me.”*

## COMPETITION TIME!



Year 8 students promoting the Jacqueline Wilson competition

We have not one, but two exciting competitions to promote:

The first is only open to Year Seven students as participants must be 12 and under at the time of the deadline—**September 2nd**. The deadline may seem far away, but September will come around quickly, so it is best to get your entries in **BEFORE** the summer holidays.

### What do you have to do?

Participants must write a story between **750 words and 1000 words**, and **NO MORE THAN 1000 words**. Some of you have already entered the **BBC Radio 2 500 words competition**. Given that it is much more difficult to write a good story in just **500 words**, this should be a doddle! The winner will win the following: A visit to their school from Jacqueline Wilson herself, **£100**, book vouchers, books for their school and have their story published in Jacqueline’s latest book. Even more exciting is that **500 Runners Up** will also get their names published in her latest book, so this is very much worth entering. To enter—simply go to Jacqueline Wilson’s website : <https://www.jacquelinewilson.co.uk>. Scroll down the page and click on the big banner at the bottom of the page on the right hand side, with the heading “**CALLING ALL STORYTELLERS!**”

**Good luck!!**



**Author Taran**

# AUTHOR TALK



As part of our **World Book Day** celebrations, a number of our junior librarians visited **Kings College School** to hear a talk by fantasy author **Taran Matharu**.

**Taran** started writing at the age of **22**, with his book **‘The Novice’** and went on to become a **New York Times bestselling author** with his **‘Summoner Series’**.

He gave a very informative talk to students from **Kings College School** and **Ursuline High School**, during which he spoke about the **books/films that provided the inspiration for his writing** (Harry Potter, Lord of the Rings, World of Warcraft, Pokemon and Assassin’s Creed).

He spoke about his writing journey and how he came to be a published author: **he began writing** and publishing his ideas to the app **Wattpad**, which allows users to publish their own stories and receive feedback from others. He also participated in **NaNoWriMo**, otherwise known as **National Novel Writing Month**, a writing challenge that encourages participants

to write a story of up to **50,000** words during the month of November. (It was through **Wattpad** that he was discovered and the rights to his book were bought by **Hachette**.)

**Taran also spoke about the perks associated with being a young adult fiction writer** – having the opportunity to attend events, visit schools

and talk to young people, which he greatly enjoys, as well as be flown out to countries such as Dubai and Canada for glamorous events.



**Some of our librarian team with fantasy author Taran Matharu at Kings College School**

He then went on to answer a series of wide-ranging questions from the audience, rewarding those who asked the most interesting questions with a free, signed copy of one of his books (of which several went to our girls).

He answered questions about how he chooses names for his characters - he looks at obituaries and gravestones (just as **Harry Potter** author **J K Rowling** does) to get ideas for character names; to combat writer’s block, he advised the students to trick themselves into writing by rewarding themselves with a break after writing a few lines– by which time, he has found, **“you are usually on a roll”**, and don’t want to stop writing.

He explained that his desire to become a writer stemmed from a love of reading - he read a lot as a child, reading all of the books in his school library,

***“once you’ve read a lot, you’ll start to get ideas for books that you’d like to see, and as they don’t yet exist, the only way is to write the story yourself”.***

It was a highly engaging talk, with plenty of good advice and impressive questions being asked from both KCS and UHS.

Many thanks to **Kings College School** and **KCS librarian Barbara Ferramosca** for hosting the event – our students very much enjoyed it, as can be seen below:

***‘I really enjoyed learning about Wattpad, I think I may use it as a tool for my writing’*** – Alice, Year 9

***“I liked that we got to know how to write a book as well as some top tips on how to write a story. He gave us a website that we could use to post stories and maybe get discovered by a company. We also got to get our books signed”.*** – Victoria, Year 7



***“Personally, I really enjoyed going to Taran Matharu’s talk as I found his tips on writing really useful. I liked how he explained that anyone could be a writer. He recommended an app called Wattpad which allows you to write or read books that others have written.”*** – Sophie, Year 9

***“In my opinion, the presentation by Taran Matharu was very useful because it gave me an insight into the world of an author. Moreover, it inspired me to start using Wattpad to read different genres of books. In addition, it gave me tips on how to start writing your own book as well***

***as making me realise that you can be any age to start writing a book. Overall the experience was very enjoyable and motivated me to start writing.”*** – Aleena, Year 9



If you want to know more about Taran and his books, check out his website here:

<https://authortaran-matharu.com/>

For information about Wattpad, go to their website, here: <https://www.wattpad.com/>

# #BALANCEFORBETTER



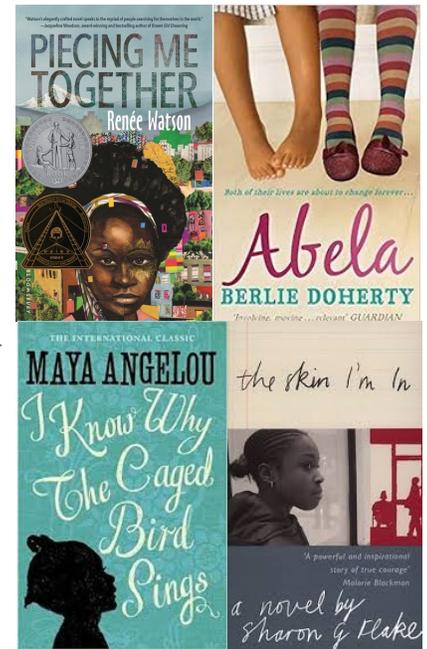
**International Women's Day** is a global celebration, observed on **8<sup>th</sup> March** each year, and aims to draw attention to the **social, political, economic and cultural achievements of women**, while providing an opportunity to reflect on the progress that has been made.

This year's theme was **Balance for Better**—a call for gender equality, and a call to build a more gender-balanced world.

To highlight and celebrate women, we promoted the following

books in the LRC:

- Fiction books by women
- Non-fiction books by women
- Books which focus on women's rights



A full list of these books can be found on the LRC

page of the school website: <https://www.ursulinehigh.merton.sch.uk/about-us/lrc/> and includes books such as **Becoming**—Michelle Obama

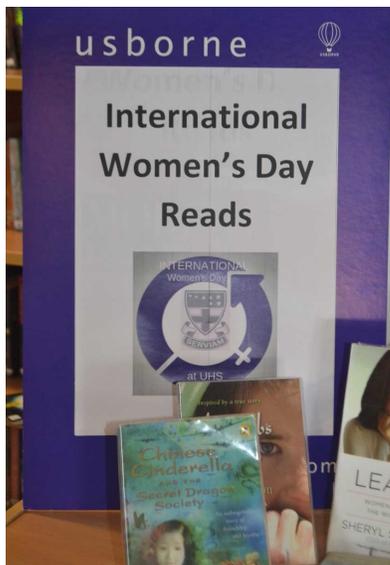
**The Girl from Aleppo**—Nujeen Mustafa **Hope in a Ballet Shoe**—Michaela DePrince, **The Girl From Aleppo**—Nujeen Mustafa, **The Skin I'm In**—Sharon G. Flake, **Piecing Me Together**—Renee Watson, **I Know Why The Caged Bird Sings**—Maya Angelou, **Abela**—Berlie Doherty and **Lean In**—Sharon Sandburg

During break time, we ran a quiz, with questions on various inspiring women and girls, such as **Malala Yousafzai**, **Madie Ziegler**, **Ada Lovelace**, and the three women who inspired **Hidden Figures**—**Katherine Coleman Goble Johnson**, **Mary Jackson** and **Dorothy Vaughan**, among many others.

The book collections were complemented by reviews from our student librarians, book lists, profiles of significant women in **STEM** fields such as **Rosalind Franklin**, **Mae Jemison**, **Tu Youyou**, **Gladys West**, **Cynthia Breazeal**, **Juliana Rotich** and **Dr Hayat Sindi**, as well as inventions by **Nancy Johnson** (ice cream freezer, **Ada Lovelace**—computer algorithm, **Elizabeth Magie**—Monopoly and **Dr Maria Telkes**—residential solar heating).

They books will remain on display for another few weeks, so please take a look at the collections.

**One of our International Women's Day displays**





Students commemorating International Women's Day on Friday 8th March, in the LRC, with #balanceforbetter pledges

## Competition Time - Part 2 Can you write a female villain?

<https://bournvillebookfest.com/blog/story-writing-competition>

### WRITING COMPETITION

Are you a fan of the Murder Most Unladylike series? Think you could create a female villain as bad as Bellatrix Lestrange, the Queen of Hearts and the Ice Queen?

In order to win a full set of Murder Most Unladylike series signed by the author herself AND a book voucher, all you have to do is write a story about or featuring a female villain.

Make sure she's unique!

If you are 12 and under – your story will need to contain no more than 600 words)

If you are between 13 and 15 - you can write a maximum of 1000 words

The competition deadline is 12am on Monday April 29, 2019.

To enter – follow the link in the email sent by Ms Spencer.

A parent/guardian will have to submit the story for you.

Good Luck!

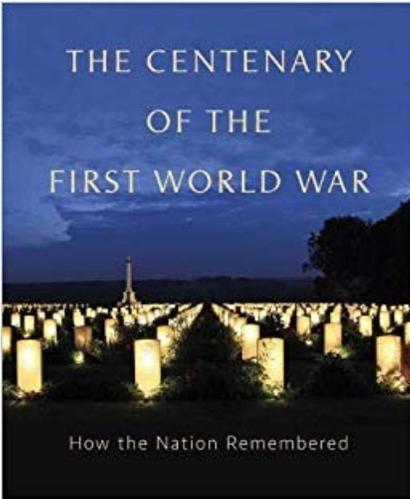


To enter, you can also follow this link: <https://bournvillebookfest.com/blog/story-writing-competition> .

**You have until the end of the Easter holidays to get it done!**

**Good Luck!!!**

## New Book Alert



We recently received a beautifully crafted copy of **The Centenary of the First World War—How the Nation Remembered**, from the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, which takes a look at the various commemoration events that took place between **August 2014** and **November 2018**, to mark the **First World War Centenary**.

Complemented by more than **450** photographs of the celebrations that were held in England, France, Belgium, India, Scotland, and Wales, *The Centenary of the First World War* covers a whole host of events such as:

**14—18 Now : Lights Out**—marked the start of Britain’s involvement in WW1, when it declared war on Germany on 4th August 2014.

The art installation—**The Blood Swept Lands and Seas of Red** by artist **Paul Cummins** and designer **Tom Piper**—one of the most eye-catching of the commemorative events— comprised of **888,426** hand-made ceramic red poppies, each representing a British and Colonial life lost at the Western Front in the First World War—and installed in the moat of the **Tower of London**.

**June 30th 2016’s Service and Vigil for the Centenary of the Battle of the Somme** held at Westminster Abbey and the 2018 Service to mark the centenary of the Armistice at Westminster Abbey .

**14—18 NOW: Pages of the Sea**—which saw large-scale portraits, designed by sand artists, Sand In Your Eye, were drawn into the sand, to honour the men and women who left their home shores during the First World War.

## Recommended Read **Ghost Boys**—**Jewell Parker Rhodes**

Reminiscent both of Angie Thomas’ **The Hate U Give** and Jacqueline Wilson’s **Vicky Angel**, **Ghost Boys** is an important book that deals with issues of **historical racism, white privilege, bullying and grief**.

Much like **Khalil** in **The Hate U Give**, who dies after being shot by a police officer who mistakenly thought that he had a gun, in **Ghost Boys**, twelve-year-old **Jerome** is also shot and killed by a white police officer when he is seen with his friend’s toy gun.

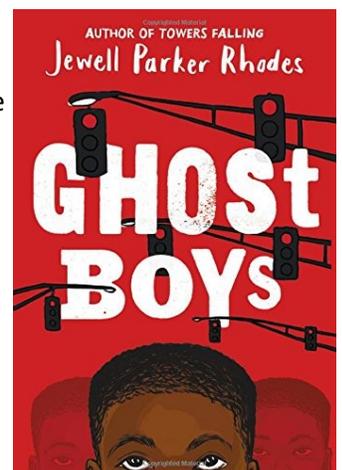
The earlier chapters alternate between the days and hours leading up to his death and the days, weeks and months following the tragedy, as Jerome finds himself unable to move on to a higher plain, - stuck between the land of the living and the land of the dead, observing his family as they adapt to a new life without him. He watches his funeral and his family grieving, the various hearings that played out in the courts and which saw the police officer be acquitted.

Multiple copies of **Ghost Boys** were gratuitously sent to us from the charity **BookTrust** and it the book has turned out to be one of our most-borrowed books this term.

If you enjoyed this book, then Angie Thomas’ **The Hate U Give** will likely be of interest, as could Dashka Slater’s **The 57 Bus**.

For those of you who have read **Ghost Boys**—the following two-page article may be of interest, as it explains how the author’s background and experiences provided the motive for writing **Ghost Boys** and other books for young people. Well worth a read!!! <https://www.hachetteschools.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/GHOST-BOYS-Personal-Connections-.pdf>

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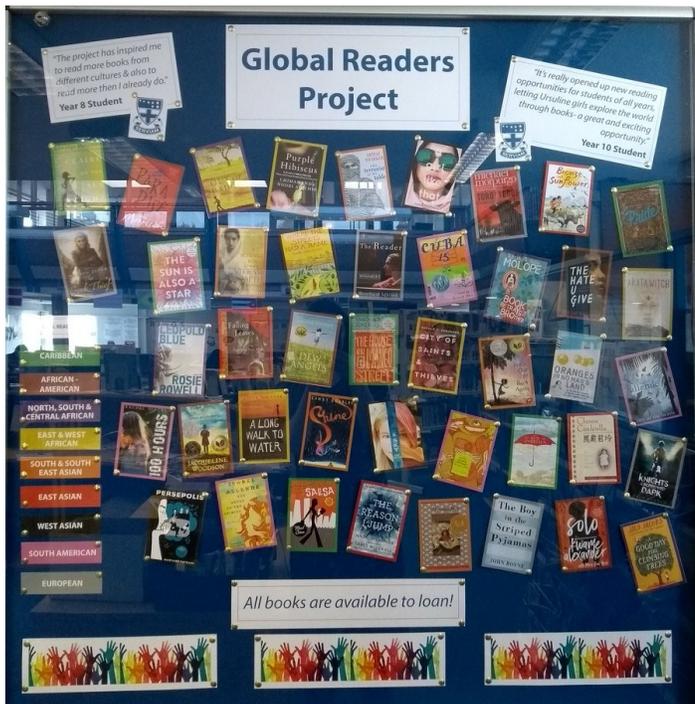


# GLOBAL READS—REGION OF THE MONTH

Each month, we focus on a different world region, promoting the books that we have that are set in that region.

This month, our focus has been on South and South East Asia—and we have promoted and displayed all of the books that fit in to this category, from Khaled Hosseini's **A Thousand Splendid Suns** and Tanaz Bathena's **A Girl Like That**, to Kamila Shamsie's **Home Fire** and Candy Gourlay's **Shin**

Next month, we will focus on books set in East and West Africa or books by East and West African authors.



## New Display

Ms Smedley, our Marketing and Communications Officer has made a wonderful display for our Global Reading Initiative.

It can be seen on the wall outside of Mr Donegan's office.



## GLOBAL READS MAP DISPLAY

With the help of some of our student librarian team and one of our library volunteers, our Global Reads map display is finally finished.

This display shows where in the world each of our Global Reads is set, and as you can see, most countries of the world are represented.