MAGAZINE

PIN OAK

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JOURNALISM

MUSIC

FATHER'S DAY

Oxley
COLLEGE

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PINOAK-IO

Would I lie to you?

Mr Pugh finds us amazingly-true facts from around the world.

Two hundred years ago, if you were of British aristocracy and had enough leisure time, you may have taken a summer holiday in Switzerland. Fresh mountain air, long rambles among alpine flowers and boating on crystal clear lakes may have been on the minds of Percy Shelley and his soon to be wife, Mary. In 1816 though, the chilly rains and damp, muddy tracks kept the Shelleys and their party indoors. Percy suggested a game where everyone made up ghost stories and Mary's story eventually became the horror novel about Doctor Frankenstein and his monster.

Europe and much of the northern hemisphere shivered through what should have been high summer in 1816. Crops failed miserably, leading to famine and high costs of transport as horses starved. All this was caused by what has probably been the largest volcanic eruption for 5000 years: the explosion of Mount Tambora in April 1815. The release of the eruption was so loud that Sir Stamford Raffles recorded hearing what sounded like canon fire near to his post in Java, some 300 km from the volcano. Tambora is on the small Indonesian island of Sumbawa, two islands eastwards from Bali. The violence blew off its top of about 4000 metres elevation to leave a crater rim around two-thirds its original height, throwing masses of material that spread death and destruction to the immediate surrounds, tsunamis through the region and much of the finer aerosol material high into the stratosphere where it caused the terrible weather patterns in 1816 throughout the northern hemisphere. Tambora's effects lingered: the wet and famine caused typhus and cholera outbreaks which, fortuitously, helped to usher in modern medicines and, meanwhile, a form of bicycle was invented to counteract the shortages of horses for transport. And, of course, we wouldn't have had Frankenstein's monster or even the creation of Dracula and other horrors without Mary Shelley and her friends being hunkered down in that cold and wet Swiss summer.

By Michael Pugh

HEADMASTER'S REPORT

Year 7 Camp 2011

Year 12 2016

YEAR 12

It is not so long now before we say goodbye to our wonderful Year 12s. By the time the next Pin Oak is out, you will have already passed through the tunnel we make for you, and out into the world.

I have been so impressed with you all since I began at Oxley two and a half years ago. I actually met Brendan Grice first, as he had a holiday job moving furniture in houses, and he turned up at my house in Sydney. When I found out he was an Oxleyan, I asked him what year he had left, and he told me he was currently in Year 10! I immediately made sure everything was packed a little more neatly. Once I was here at Oxley, I was quickly made welcome by many of you and I recall lots of terrific conversations about everything from moral philosophy to where extra bins should be put.

You grew up fast - speeding your way through the leadership camp (in which you attached me to a fairly terrifying bungee jump style contraption), Outback and then the gruelling trek that is Year 12. And now it is almost over.

We will miss all of you. You are a close knit and protective group who got to know each other so well. You could always all be found on the benches near the canteen - not a group that broke in to cliques or exclusive gangs, but willing to include anyone and everyone. You were the people that the other years looked up to.

You were wonderfully led by Brandon Colby, Cate Patterson, Heidi Bevan and Patrick Newton. As well as starring in a myriad of school activities themselves, they led the Prefects and House Captains to really make a difference around Oxley. They instituted House sports competitions and music lunchtimes. They started up an Instagram page and kept it populated. Brandon gave a wonderful speech about the value of education on Assembly which had far more credibility I suspect than anything a staff member could say. I enjoyed having lunch every few weeks with them in my office - and also seeing what amazing new culinary creation Cate Patterson would bring each time. Indeed, she started bringing spares for those amongst the leadership group who had mere vegemite sandwiches.

There are so many individual talents amongst you that it is hard to know where to start. The following is a very imperfect and incomplete list. There is Alex Bunyan's wonderful cello playing for Music 2. There is GabbyTaylor-Helme (Netball), Harry Sutherland (Football) and Ben Quirico (Equestrian) competing at the very highest level. Meg Thirlwall's captaincy of the first Senior Girls Footballl team which made it to the Finals. Will Lamrock-George for being a wonderful MC at our Open Mornings for prospective parents and also telling poor jokes at the House singing competition. Jamie Binder's work on feminism. Jaime Pryor's unrelenting search to go bigger and deeper on any issue. Patrick Newton and Mia Healey's excellent singing and acting in Pippin and elsewhere. Kaarina Allen's incredibly delicate sculptures. There are many, many more achievements as well. The invidious thing is that if I mention too many, then the exclusion of others becomes more pointed, whereas if I mention none then we are not properly celebrating the achievements of the year. I hope that I have struck a balance for you somewhere in the middle.

So many of you have worked hard at the goal of the HSC. You have used the study centre well. Many times as I came up the stairs, there would be dead silence in the centre, even though there were twenty of you and no teachers in the room. And this was before anyone saw me. (Of course, there were one or two other times where I found the reverse, but we don't need to revisit that). So many of you have gained the respect and the affection of your teachers, who want to see the absolute best for you. We are sending our every thought, prayer, hope and extra HSC practice paper out to you.

We will miss you, but not just yet. For now, enjoy and squeeze everything you can out of each day at Oxley. We want to set you up as well as we can for that next shining stage of your life. We will be excited, intrigued, and sometimes amazed by what you get up to. And of course you will always be welcome to return and share your stories with each and every one of us.

BIG ISSUE

DYSLEXIC BRAIN

Struggle or gain?

Do you remember the 'look cover write check' homework in primary school? What is your experience? I certainly recall those dreadful daily 20 minutes my mum sat me down to try to make me understand how 'can' was spelt or whether 'off' or 'of' was used in the right context. When I thought of a word, I would try to imagine what letters would go where. Let's say 'speech'. I would visualise how letters would form this word. It sounded like it needed an 'e', a 'sp' and a 'sh'... "spesh".

This caused major frustration, both to me and all staff in pastoral care trying to make me understand the puzzle of the English language. Many hours were spent on trying to make sense out of spelling, structure and meaning of, for example 'there – their - they're'. More often than not my brain thought much faster and more creatively than my hands could keep up with. As a consequence, a paragraph seemed to always have a start and an end, but no content in the middle. Definitely no capital letters, commas or full stops. Why stop my brain's rapid thinking with these punctuations? The best part, and understandably most annoying part for those caring for me, was my brain coming up with it's own words. Honestly it was much more sensible; like each day of the week became 'confused day'. It took practice, repetition and extra homework to gain a certain amount of mainstream direction, at a loss of my ideas and creativity.

Do not take a dyslexics' apparent inability to form words or sentences as a weakness! Written assignments, tasks, essays, etc. are not a reflection of a dyslexics' skills, abilities, intelligence. You have an unfair advantage over a person with Dyslexia, which is at first extremely frustrating. Then again you have no access to a world of strength for invention and perception.

A dyslexic's way of processing is based on imagination, creativity and unconventional thinking. More interesting and effective problem solving is done by dyslexics; no need for punctuation. Thomas West, a dyslexic himself, is a researcher, lecturer, consultant, and author of 'In the Mind's Eye'. He researched dyslexia and says; "Within a study of targeted traits among highly successful individuals in business, that the most common trait is, in fact, dyslexia. It would appear that teachers, researchers, and educational planners should find ways to balance their efforts to help these students with both reading, writing, and spelling while teaching entrepreneurial skills." Tiffany Sunday, author and strategist is speaking up about the ignorant lack of interest and education for dyslexic students. She believes the work by Dr Brock Eide, Dr Fernette Eide, Dr Julie Logan, and Thomas West are finally opening the mainstream mind towards the brilliance of dyslexic brains. She says; "These individuals are working hard to shift the focus from the weaknesses of dyslexia to what dyslexics can achieve. I believe it is important for entrepreneurs and inventors, especially dyslexic entrepreneurs, to reach out and encourage dyslexic students. To explain to the students how dealing with adversity in school, bouncing back from failure, and thinking outside the box are invaluable characteristics."

Industrial leaders of this country are expressing favour for dyslexic brains. This means educational institutions should start telling dyslexic students what we CAN DO and not what we CAN'T. Look at these people who are successful, despite having dyslexia; Kerry Packer, Kerry Stockes (AC), Agatha Christie, Albert Einstein, Walt Disney, Muhammad Ali, Steve Jobs, Prof. Elizabeth Blackburn (Nobel Prize Winner), Orlando Bloom, Sir Richard Branson, Tom Cruise, Will Smith! Did I just blow your mind? In Australia the debate is still ongoing if dyslexia is a learning difficulty or disability!

Just because I don't properly or effectively answer questions, or understand what the words are trying to say, doesn't make it right for others to label me 'slow, lazy, dumb, a vegetable, unfocussed, distracted, weird, a loser or stupid'. Stories, ideas and plans are being formulated right now to improve individuals, communities and, yes, human kind. It takes courage, resilience, humour and persistence to be a true dyslexic.

By Oliver Regan (Year 11)

Books
★★★★½

Plain Speaking Jane

By Jane Caro

In her 58 years, Jane Caro has survived being run over (sort of), terrifyingly tall English bathroom stalls, crippling anxiety, debilitating panic attacks and the near-death of her first child. She has tackled the overwhelming sexism in not only her original industry (advertising) but all of media. As she describes it, it's not a glass ceiling but rather an incredibly thick layer of men. When she travelled down to rainy Bowral on Saturday 16 July for this year's Southern Highlands Writing Festival to talk about her recently released biography Plain Speaking Jane she was interviewed by Sarah Macdonald about everything from childhood change to feminism in media.

A true force of nature, she went through the interview with eloquence and relatability. No words but her own can do her inimitable character justice, so do yourself a favour and pick up a copy of Plain Speaking Jane.

By Imogen Hatcher (Year 8)

Music
★★★½

I Wish I Could Stay Here

Basement's first album, after their demo and quietly received EP, 'Songs About The Weather', is a masterpiece. Due to the UK's response to Title Fight, Basement released 'I Wish I Could Stay Here' in 2011. The genres Basement are known for (punk, emo, melodic hardcore, grunge, alt rock and shoegaze) are all prevalent in this album, the first four decidedly so. While working well within the boundaries of punk, emo and melodic hardcore, Basement have created a quietly but well received album.

The standout tracks of the album include 'Canada Square', 'Crickets Throw Their Voice', 'Earl Grey', 'Yoke' and 'Greyscale'. The overall energy thrown into the album is contrasted by the signature, clever use of dynamics that Basement is known for. Andrew Fisher's emotional, strained vocals and Ronan Crix's fluid, harmonic guitar are accompanied by the energetic drums of James Fisher, the reliable bass of Duncan Stewart, and the wall of sound that is Alex Henery's guitar.

'I Wish I Could Stay Here' has strong undertones of a 'Ten' era Pearl Jam, and some touches of the album 'Bleach' by Nirvana, combined with the high energy punk sound/tempo of an early Blink-182. As well as all that, Basement manage to add their own, more emo sound (showcased in 'Earl Grey', 'Canada Square' and 'Ellipses') to it using their ability to change tempo and/or volume extremely quickly, along with their signature drop c guitar tuning.

By Max Lambie (Year 8)

Films
★★★★

The Walk

On 7 August, 1974, the world was introduced to French artist, Philippe Petit. Philippe Petit illegally set up a walking wire between the just finished twin towers and shocked the world by actually crossing it! Robert Zemeckis brought this true story to life by really capturing the seventies feel and French look to the entire film and casting Joseph Gordon-Levitt (10 Things I Hate About You, 50/50) to portray this slightly tempered and spiritual human being. The film was released September 2015 and unfortunately because the twin towers are not there anymore, Zemeckis had to find a way to really make us feel like they were.

A really great and realistic use of computer-generated imagery (CGI) and practical effects didn't make it feel fake but infact, REAL. When watching this film you can literally feel yourself stepping onto the wire with Philippe and you can feel the nerves rushing through your body. I would recommend this movie to anyone of my friends and family. I truly recommend this movie to you.

By Archie Waters (Year 8)

K- 6 NEWS

Head of K-6: Justine Lind

What does it take to be a learning community?

The simple answer is participation and at Oxley we have that in spades.

Last week I spoke to the students in Assembly about being in the driving seat of their own learning – the opposite of sleeping passengers on a train who miss all the wonderful views and learning opportunities passing them by just outside the window. This week there were underage drivers, pilots and ship captains in every classroom recounting their journeys to date and charting their courses ahead.

Our Student Led Conferences align with the Visible Learning research into the elements of the most effective learning environments; High Teacher Expectation and Self Reporting Grades. The first is evidenced in the complexity of the task of leading what Toby in Year 3 called "a round table family bonding session" to outline learning, progress and personal strengths and stretches. The second shows the power of a structured reflection to crystalise each student's awareness of their role in the learning process. The framework and preparation undertaken reveals each child's level of competency and our teacher's immense faith in their students to assume control of this aspect of our reporting process. The feedback seems to suggest that while some parents had reservations, most were pleasantly surprised and found it easy to celebrate their child's achievement to date. This for me is the part of education that truly makes my heart sing; seeing and hearing children empowered by their own capacity for self-determination and recognising their success.

"Mum said she had never heard of the word 'interdependence' when she was eight and there is no way she could have explained what it meant." Ben, Year 3

"It helped me to expand my thinking about my own learning by explaining it to Mum and Dad." Sienna, Year 4

"My Mum and Dad were amazed that in our Unit of Inquiry I am a leader and that I have achieved a balance between doing my work and helping my whole group." Evie, Year 4

"It was great to take the time to talk about our learning with our parents and teacher." Imogen, Year 2

Celebrations have also been occurring on the Sports field and Snowy Mountains. Our HICES Team were successful with four students making representational level to attend the Combined Independent Schools (CIS) carnival. Sophie Dunn, Billy Cameron and Leah Halstead will compete in long jump and Hamish Tregenza in the discus. We wish them every success. Our Cross Country Division 5 female Ski Team, saw Chilli Sparke, Eva Duffy and Emily Rodger qualifying to compete in the Nationals which were held this week.

Weekly Awards:

Students of the Week
K: : Zoe Nonnenmacher
Yr 1: Estelle Beckett
Yr 2: Archie Wallace
Yr 3: Chloe Legge
Yr 4: William Brady
Yr 5: Eleonora Berzins
Yr 6: Baz Bamber

Respect Oxley
K: Charlotte Gordon
Yr 1: Barnaby Jensen
Yr 2: Camille Vild
Yr 3: Hugo Findlay
Yr 4: Xavier Gray
Yr 5: Tyra Beckett
Yr 6: Brianna Grice

Students of the Week
K: Eddie Hunt
Yr 1: Matthew Morschel
Yr 2: Bryce Rodger
Yr 3: Toby Cuddy
Yr 4: Taylor Anstee
Yr 5: Bridget Scherek
Yr6:Bridget de Montemas

Respect Others
K: Anneliese Ewald
Yr 1: Fraser Findlay
Yr 2: Imogen Gair
Yr 3: Luca Colloridi
Yr 4: Emma Scott
Yr 5: Maya Cleary
Yr 6: Isabel Feetham

We look forward to receiving their results. (see recent full story @ https://www.oxley.nsw.edu.au/news-events/in-the-media/)

Last week, our Kindergarten students were delighted to receive enormous T-Shirts that one day will fit perfectly when they become class of 2028. This is a symbolic gesture to mark the student's growth, a visual reminder of their growth each year. (Photo on the front of Pin Oak).

Finally we need to acknowledge our amazing troop of dedicated Mums on BBQ and Banquet tables who provided such a fantastic community event last Friday to celebrate Fathers' day. It is this spirit of a shared experience that enriches everyone and connects learning and living with relevance for each member of the community.

We look forward to the end of Term 3 and the culmination of the House Poetry Competition where more participation, perseverance and presentation bring learning to life for all!

K- 6 GALLERY

E-Books vs Printed Books

A CONTROVERSIAL ISSUE

Books have been a source of entertainment and communication for hundreds of years. Back in ancient times, people would record stories on clay bricks, decorate pots with vivid pictures or use unique alphabets such as hieroglyphics on walls. It wasn't until paper was invented that people started writing these stories as books.

The idea of an e-book or electronic book came out in the 1930s. People thought the idea of "A machine that will allow us to keep up with the vast volume of print available today and be optically pleasing"; would work well. E-Books are basically a book that can be downloaded onto an electronic device. E-books are easy and quick to access because you can download them instantly. They appeal to our modern day desire to get our needs met instantly. E-books are environmentally friendly because trees are not being cut down to create them. They are less bulky and you can carry your full holiday reading list on one device.

E-books can work magically for people with learning differences, such as dyslexia. Dyslexia makes it difficult for people to interpret words or letters. E-Books can be personalised to match the way someone reads. You can increase the size or type of font, change the background colouring or change the back lighting.

In education, the use of e-books for textbooks is revolutionising the way we learn. E-books enable us to learn in a more flexible and interactive way. Unfortunately my school bag isn't getting any lighter but perhaps that will come in the future. According to 'Meanjin', scientific publishing has almost completely stopped being printed. This allows publishing that needs to keep up with the latest information and technology to move more quickly and be kept up to date. No more old textbooks with outdated information!

Despite the many benefits of e-books many fear that they herald the end of the of the paper book as we know it. And e-books are not for everyone. There is some evidence that shows that reading an e-book before sleep can disrupt your sleep patterns. And let's face it snuggling down with an iPad does not have the same romantic connotation as snuggling down with a good book. For book lovers nothing can replace the smell and feel of a book or the experience of browsing in a bookshop or loaning your favorite book with a friend. Personally, I love the smell of old books. I think that the distinct smell of an old book brings a feeling of nostalgia and makes you think

about where the book has been before. Many of us love keeping a particular edition of a book as a possession for life. It's important to us in some way and means something.

Luckily it does not have to be an either/or. Despite being initially worried about the emergence of e-books and the impact on publishing, the latest statistics prove that the Australian public are reading more across the board. A recent poll carried out by Roy Morgan indicated that the proportion of Australians over 14 are reading more books for the first time in several years. They also indicate that we are buying more printed books and more e-books and even people in the older demographic are said to be embracing technology with e-books

"A machine that will allow us to keep up with the vast volume of print available today and be optically pleasing"

Publishing companies have adapted to the challenge and are using e-books in many ways. Momentum publishing was established to try new authors out in the e-book market before printing hard copies. This enables authors that may not have been published to put a book out there and see if they have a market. E-book technology also enables people to self publish relatively cheaply and easily. Publishers and booksellers have had to become smarter and adapt to what the market wants. They have had to quickly become technically literate. Traditional librarians like Mrs Antoniak have moved from having just printed copies available to a variety of different ways to access books. For her, as for the publishing industry it is important to get people reading regardless of how they do it. Interestingly, at the moment the children's book market is one of the strongest markets in the book industry. E-books haven't taken off in this area and people prefer buying printed books for their children. Starting most children's 'book life' with a beloved picture book means there should always be book lovers who treasure the book in it is printed form.

So perhaps we don't need to overthink the difference between e-books and print. In the end the printed book doesn't seem to be going anywhere and we now have access to different ways to read. Don't feel bad if you love to read on a device. It is convenient at times, but keep in mind that a printed book won't run out of battery at the good part.
And as Bill Gates says "Reading off the screen is still vastly inferior to reading off paper…", pioneer of the web lifestyle.

By Savannah Sandilands (Year 9)

LEARNING AND PASTORAL REPORTS

Pastoral:
Peter Ayling

Leadership 2017

Throughout the week our students and staff have voted for our Leaders for 2017. On the last day of this term we will announce leadership positions for 2017. We will hold a Leadership Assembly on Friday 21 October to officially congratulate our incoming leaders and invite parents to attend the assembly and afternoon tea. We have had an outstanding leadership group throughout 2016 and I would like to acknowledge and thank Brandon Colby, Cate Patterson, Pat Newton, Heidi Bevan and the rest of the leadership group for starting some wonderful initiatives and ensuring we take pride in Oxley College.

Brainstorm Productions

On Wednesday 14 September our Year 9 and 10 students will participate in Brainstorm Productions. Brainstorm Productions is educational theatre that tackles the consequences of risk taking and substance abuse. This fast paced one man show is about that split second when we reach a crossroad, make a choice, and possibly change our lives forever. After a lively discussion the audience leaves the venue with a deep understanding of how their choice of friends and their ability to make good decisions has a dramatic and lasting effect on their lives.

Active Kidz

Active Kidz, a fun fitness based school holidays programme run by the trainers of The Shed Fitness and The Oxley College Gym, is aimed at keeping kids active and setting healthy habits. Fun fitness based games are a great alternative to video games and movies during the school holidays.

The programme runs for four hours each day (10.00am - 2.00pm) and for four days in total. (Monday 26 September - Thursday 29 September)

Parents can stay or enjoy 4 child-free hours!

Total cost for all four days - $125

For more info and to register/reserve your spot(s) go to: www.theshedfitness.com.au/activekidz

Learning:
Kate Cunich

As teachers at Oxley we facilitate best practice in education in many ways. We refer often to Visible Learning, the educational meta-analysis compiled by Professor John Hattie. Hattie believes that visible learning occurs when there is an explicit goal, when that goal is appropriately challenging, when both teacher and student seek to ascertain whether the goal is attained, when there is deliberate practice at attaining the mastery of the goal, when feedback is given and sought and when they are active, passionate and engaging people (teacher, student, peers and families) participating in the act of learning.

I believe that we see clear evidence of this regularly at Oxley along the continuum from Kindergarten to Year 12. Just as our senior students hone their skills toward external exams, so too our younger students are being exposed to teaching that will make the most impact on their learning from the very beginning of their educational journey.

A chance stumbling on Year 12 English this week provides a clear picture of what this looks like at Oxley. Students were engaged in a revision task where they needed to find language forms and features (techniques) in the poems of T.S. Elliot. This is what it looked like:

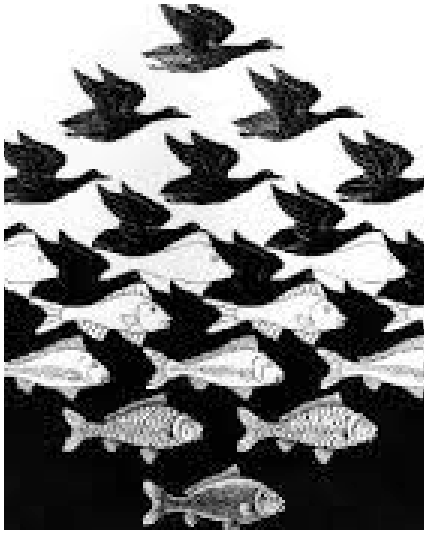
Students listened to jazz music for 6 minutes while they wrote the techniques they found on post-it notes. They then moved onto the next poem . One teacher sat with students completing the task as a student, providing their expertise to each student. The other facilitated the activity and moved constantly around the room, assisting students, providing feedback. The result? Engaged, motivated and on task students who have now collaborated, shared their notes and learning and have a produced a wonderful resource of techniques that has now been turned into a book of study notes for each to use in their HSC. That is what it is visible learning at its best!

This week and last we have facilitated important conversations with parents about the learning in classrooms at Oxley. In the senior school teachers shared evidence of learning through work samples, while in K – 6 students led their own conferences on how they have progressed since the beginning of the year. We thank all teachers and parents for attending these events as the feedback received will be used for all to move our learning and teaching forward.

MUNA

20th National Model United Nations Assembly 2016
Seventy students representing 28 countries. Ethiopia to Venezuela. Teams from as far away as Tasmania. Were we one big group of nations united? Debatable. Things were kept civil to say the least, shoe throwing specifically prohibited.
Representing Nigeria with the prestigious Thomas Hill and the stoic Cameron Baker, we donned our traditional grand BouBous guided by our expert foreign attachés the wise and wordy Ms Rintoul and the smart and scheming Mr Simpson.
From the moment everyone gathered, teams were sizing each other up. It's kill or be killed and you have to show everyone that your team is the A team. Some may view our proposed resolution to move the UN headquarters from New York to Abuja, the capital of Nigeria as imbecilic and plain right dangerous. You'd be right. But it's all about showing people that you're not to be meddled with.
Persuading 27 other nations to support your view on a resolution is really as hard as it seems. Many teams showed their debating prowess, rebutting points from other countries. We did learn, perhaps a little too late, that the key to diplomatic success, in fact, is to negotiate and not to argue. A huge thanks to Rotary for organising the prestigious and wonderful experience that was the 20th MUNA.

By Max Mackevicius (Year 11)



MATHS

In 2012, Richard Wilson and Justin Matthys had the idea of helping young people in a new and unique way. Justin Matthys, a teacher, found there was a flaw in education in mathematics. The thought he came up with along with Richard Wilson, was to do with helping children learn at their own rate and instead of rushing through a topic that they might not understand, learning something thoroughly before moving on. In 2013, they came up with the name 'Maths Pathways' and the prgramme started.

The Year 7s and 8s have recently started this programme at Oxley. Some people found it a bit challenging at the beginning. Some people say they are enjoying maths for the first time. Here are some quotes from some Year 7s to see what they think about it.

Charlotte Greenop: You don't have to hold up other kids when you don't get something. You can just focus on yourself.

Sophie Moore: I like Maths Pathways because it is suited to your level and you can work at your own pace.

By Savannah Sandilands (Year 9)

SARAH FERGUSON

A few weeks ago, Oxley had the pleasure of hosting someone very prominent in the media, Sarah Ferguson. From going undercover in foreign countries to researching the refugee boat crisis to turning the tide of animal cruelty in foreign trade and grilling politicians, Sarah definitely had a something to say.
In the 50 minute session she ran with the Pin Oak editorial team, the desire for truth was at the heart of her message to all of the students with whom she spoke. The need to uncover the answers that plunges you right into the heart of human behaviour. She spoke of what lies at the heart of journalism, and how you must be passionate about your career for it to excel like hers has done.
In the following period, Sarah then spoke to the entire school about some of the experiences she has had throughout her career. The school mottos "to live, to dare, to dream" inspired her speech, allowing her to root her message into values that the students were already aware of. Following her speech a group of debating students shared their own political views in a soap box presentation. This consisted of each student taking turns to stand on a box in front of the school and to speak for a few minutes. Sarah then judged who she thought best conveyed their beliefs. However, they were all so good she could not find a winner, and offered to be all of their mentors if they ever wanted to pursue journalism.
The views of someone beyond Oxley have the power to engage students on a level unattainable by school staff. They don't have to be famous or speak about certain views. If there is an inspiring message to be told, the addition of the unknown will push back the veil of boredom and reveal a wealth of knowledge. Not only does Sarah have a passion for journalism and the pursuit of answers, but she has a voice that entranced every member of Oxley who had the opportunity to hear her.
By Kaarina Allen (Year 12)

Interactive Learning and Explorable Explanations

Today, teachers and students have a plethora of interactive tools at their disposal - geogebra, kahoot, hscstudylab, desmos, geography simulations to determine your carbon footprint, physics simulations to experiment with radioactive sources. These attempt to provide a level of interactivity to allow the student to get a sense of what the lesson is trying to teach and why it is happening, however, quite often these interactive lessons become an impediment to learning. Often these interactive elements don't truly succeed in teaching, but rather obscures the message behind a facade of 'flashy clicky stuff'. These interactive learning devices begin with the right intentions - however fail due to their lack of actual explanation. This missed explanation of course is covered by the teacher's own lesson, but perhaps, rather than creating tools to simulate an example these creators of interactivity should act more as authors, and use this interactivity to promote active reading.

As discussed by Bret Victor (the person who coined the term 'explorable explanation'), an active reader is someone who continuously asks questions, challenges assumptions, considers alternatives and questions the trustworthiness of the author. An active reader will not simply sponge up information but uses the author's perspective and argument as a 'springboard' for critical thought and deep understanding. Victor's argument is that our current reading environments do not promote active reading. Textbooks and websites simply recite the author's argument and nothing else. They do not provide the necessary confirmation to an active reader's questions. They don't allow for the verification of the reader's assumptions or the ability to explore alternatives. 'We blindly trust, or blindly don't, and we miss the deep understanding that comes from dialogue and exploration.'

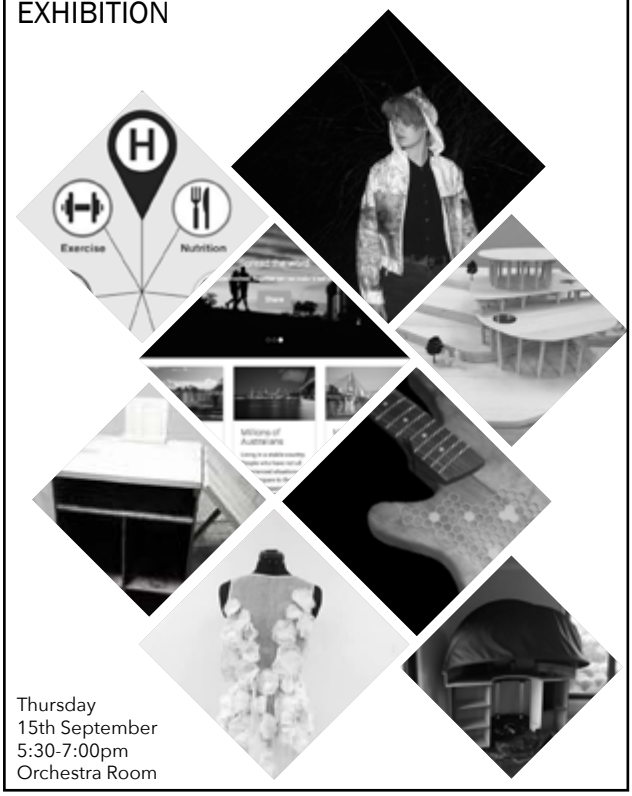
An explorable explanation is an approach to promoting active reading in texts. Where traditionally teachers would provide this interactivity and ability to question, explorable explanations not only allow the reader to sponge in information, but also allow questioning, argument (much like a teacher does) but also the development of intuition. Geogebra (a graphing application) allows for the development of intuition already, for example it can model a parabola through various parametres and the representation provides gives a unique insight to the user. By watching the simulation's response to user experimentation, the student has the ability to develop a deep understanding of how in this scenario how various parameters will effect a parabolas shape. This interactive tool is complemented by teacher explanation. But where does an explorable explanation differ?

It's easy to be amazed by an interactive tool and it ends up obscuring the actual lesson. "The interactivity itself is not really the point" (Victor). Where an interactive tool like geogebra and an explorable explanation differ is that the explanation is integrated in the explorable. It should read like a textbook, yet allow for intuitive development. Vi Hart and Nicky Case's "A Parable of Polygons" (http://ncase.me/polygons/) is an explorable explanation about the very complicated issue of racial bias and segregation. It is based upon Thomas Schelling's Dynamic Models of Segregation and discusses collective bias and how easily segregation of any kind occurs and how to remedy it. In their model this very conceptual topic was incredibly well explained, because interactivity was interwoven with actual explanation. Explorable explanations work on their own - they do not require outside commentary and thus act as a resource in their own right. Most interactive tools simply dumps the toolset on the student and says figure it out yourself - it will inevitably require teacher assistance. Explorable explanations as Victor put it "holds up its end of the conversation". It can be read like a book but assists in explaining a concept and developing intuition without shrouding the lesson.

Perhaps explorable explanations can be a potential tool to convey complex/abstract concepts to students without directly needing teacher explanation. Trying to relearn a concept without direct educator explanation is difficult. Textbooks simply don't provide the necessary ability to explore. This new form of resource has the ability to both explain in detail and promote true, active reading of lesson content.

By Tom Hill (Year 11)

DESIGN & TECHNOLOGY
EXHIBITION



Thursday
15th September
5:30-7:00pm
Orchestra Room

BDAS Bowral Gallery, 1 Short St, Bowral.

SOUTHERN HIGHLANDS
7s
RUGBY

October 1, 2016
Eridge Park
Bowral, NSW

P&F NEWS

Thank you to Susan Bladen and her wonderful team - Catherine Barnett, Tanya Beckett, Sally Kean, Carolina Torregrosa, Paula Wickenden, Kate Gair, Rachel Harman and Meg Wilson who helped to create a fantastic Father's Day Breakfast. This event was a great success and there was a wonderful buzz of fathers and children enjoying themselves. It also raised $688 for the P & F. Thank you to everyone who was involved.

PIN OAK FAIR

DUNKING BOOTH
DUNK – A – TEACHER
RAFFLE

TICKETS
$1 EACH / 10 FOR $5

You may never have this opportunity again!
Don't let it pass you by!

The MORE teachers = the MORE winners!

Tickets on sale Friday lunchtimes, Canteen Area
Raffle drawn Final Assembly for Term 3.

WE NEED 250 - 300ml glass jars for the Pin Oak Fair!!
Please drop off in Student Services.

GALLERY

SEPTEMBER + OCTOBER CALENDAR

The Oxley Shop will be closed during the first week of the holidays. Holiday opening dates/ hours are: Wednesday 5, Thursday 6 and Friday 7 October from 8.30am-4.00pm.

Due to Maximo Ramos' (Year 3) initiative we now have Oxley drink bottles available in the Shop. $5. Well done Maximo.

	Mon 12	Mon 19	Mon 26
	Tue EXC: Yr1 & Yr2 Powerhouse Museum 13	Tue EXC: Selected K-2 Tulip Time Entertainment 20	Tue 27
	Wed SPORT: NSW CIS Aths Carnival (Primary) INC: Yr 9 & Yr10 Brainstorm Productions, PCC 14	Wed SPORT: NSW CIS Aths at SOPAC TBC INC: Yr 11 PDHPE 1st Aid Training PCC Oxley Music Night 21	Wed 28
	Thu HSC: DT Exhibition, 5.30pm 15	Thu 22	Thu TOUR: NEPAL Social Service Tour 29
Fri INC: Yr7 Inquiry Day- Who Owns History 09	Fri 16	Fri K - 6 Cake Stall End Term 3 23	Fri 30
Sat HSC FRENCH EXTENSION MONOLGUE 10	Sat EXC: Tulip Time- Pipe Band Yr 5-Yr11 17	Sat 24	Sat 01
Sun 11	Sun 18	Sun 25	Sun Yr11 Outback Trip 02

Sport

KIARA ROCHAIX

Kiara Rochaix (Year 10) has been selected into high standard football teams - the Oxley community would like to congratulate Kiara on her wonderful sport's achievements recently. I had a quick chat with Kiara to discuss why she plays and loves football.

How long have you played football for?
I have played since I was seven, that makes it nine years.
Why do you play football?
How do I explain that? I just love the sport and it's become such a major part of my life. I really enjoy playing and have made so many great memories over the years.
Discuss your most recent achievements.
I was selected as a part of the Macarthur Rams U17s team. More recently, I have been selected as a member of the NSW All Schools U19s team, along with the U19s Australian team.
Link to an article from SHN about Kiara: https://www.oxley.nsw.edu.au/news-events/in-the-media/
By Ella Moran (Year 11)

SNOWSPORTS

On Tuesday 23 August, 19 Oxley Students competed at the NSW State Interschool Snowsports Championships, in Alpine, Moguls, Skier X, Snowboard, XC freestyle and XC relay.
In Division 1 female (Year 11 and 12) Snowboard GS Jamie Binder placed 11th overall and has qualified to the national competition. Our Division 5 female team of Chilli Sparke (12th), Eva Duffy (19th) and Emily Rodger (30th) have also qualified through to nationals, placing 6th overall in the XC freestyle event and also 6th in the XC relay. Our Division 4 male team of Nicholas Cain, Hugo Manka and Oliver Cain qualified to nationals in 6th place for the XC relay.
For many of our younger competitors, this was the first time they had raced in a XC event, and they all completed the difficult 1.2km sprint course. The races were exciting to watch, and the Oxley competitors should feel very proud of their achievements on the day. They represented Oxley with pride, determination and good sportsmanship.

If you are interested in XC skiing, we hope to have a bigger Oxley team next year. You'll need grit, fitness, good balance, a sense of adventure, and a willingness to represent your school at a state level competition - sometimes in adverse conditions!

For more information visit http://ausinterschools.com.au/cross-country-event-information or ask parents Katrina Sparke or Matt Duffy.

There is a video overview of the event showing the number of competitors (and spills) at https://www.facebook.com/NSWXCSkiTeam/?pnref=story

**Hot of the press: Chilli Sparke placed nineth overall in the Division 5 Girls cross country freestyle skiing at the Nationals yesterday and her team finished seventh in freestyle and sixth in the relay. Congratulations to all members of the Oxley Snowsports team.

7 - 12 ATHLETICS CHAMPIONS

12 Girls
1st Grace Ayling
2nd Julia Parker

12 Boys
1st Jarrod Smith
2nd No runner up

13 Girls
1st Anneliese Wansey
2nd Rose Barnett + Madeleine Sargeant

13 Boys
1st Alex Webb
2nd Joshua Bramley

14 Girls
1st Alicia Brain
2nd Isabella Price

14 Boys
1st Archer Kalde
2nd Bryce Wellman

15 Girls
1st Eleni Connell
2nd Sienna Knowles

15 Boys
1st Ravi Wikramanayake
2nd Zac Wansey

16 Girls
1st Kiara Rochaix
2nd Olivia Davies

16 Boys
1st Louis Connell
2nd Romain Antich

17 Girls
1st Gabby Taylor-Helme
2nd Isabella Knowles

17 Boys
1st Cedric Hely
2nd Charlie Dummer

18-19 Girls
1st Jamie Binder + Heidi Bevan

18-19 Boys
1st Harry Sutherland
2nd Adrien Antich

2016 – Records

Event #27: 17 Boys Discus, Cedric Hely, DOBELL – old record of 33.61m | New Record 33.93m

Event #45: 17 Girls 200m, Gabby Taylor-Helme, FLOREY – old record 28.84s | New Record 27.97s

Event #111: 15 Girls 4x100m Relay, DURACK, old record 59.71 | new record 59.36s

Event #130: 14 Girls Discus, Isabella Price, MONASH, old record 27.72m | new record 29.01m

TEAMS OF THE WEEK

Rugby 13s and 16s were ISA Premiers (the 13s were undefeated all season).