

The Magazine of Wath Academy

Vol. 103 No. 3  
Jan/Feb 2026

# Torch

## MATHS LIVE! at Disneyland Paris

*Also Inside:*  
MFL Ambassadors  
Hepworth Gallery  
Valentine's Day  
Figure Skating  
Time to Talk  
Pancakes



Wath  
Academy

# Torch

Volume 103 Number 3  
January/February 2026

[wathacademy.com/torch](http://wathacademy.com/torch)



*Torch* is Wath Academy's student-produced magazine, published every half term

You can contribute to *Torch* by attending the after-school club on Tuesdays at 2:50 pm in G20 or by emailing articles to [torch@wathacademy.com](mailto:torch@wathacademy.com)

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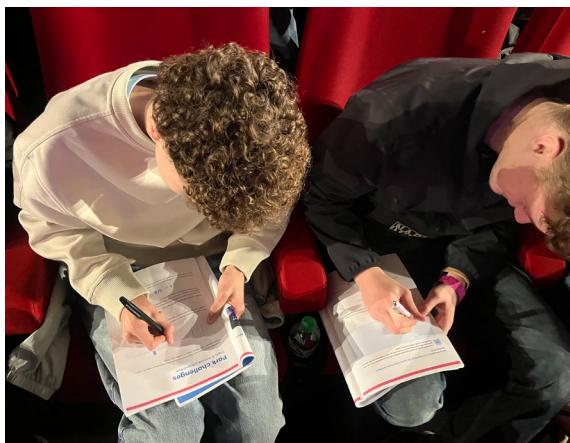
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Academy**

# CONTENTS

- 3** House Update
- 4** Christmas Hampers
- 5** MFL in Morocco
- 6** Meet the Language Ambassadors
- 8** The Hepworth Gallery
- 10** Maths LIVE! at Disneyland Paris
- 12** What Is Time to Talk Day?
- 13** From the Archives
- 14** Figure Skating Championships
- 15** How to Make Tasty Pancakes
- 17** Reviews
- 19** Puzzles



Pages 10–12: Maths LIVE! at Disneyland Paris

# HOUSE UPDATE



This term has been nothing short of remarkable at Wath Academy, with students and staff coming together to excel in house competitions while supporting important causes. The spirit of teamwork and generosity has truly shone through in every event.

Since Christmas, all houses have made a huge push for victories. Our House Football Tournament showed an impressive win by Thebes in Years 7 and 8 and Sparta in Year 9 and 10. Whilst our Christmas term saw the most creative task entries to date!

Students		Staff	
House		House	
Athens		Troy	
Rome		Carthage	
Carthage		Athens	
Sparta		Rome	
Troy		Sparta	
Thebes		Thebes	

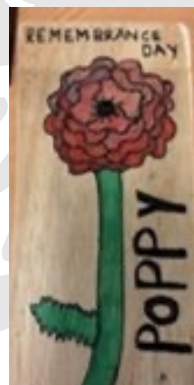
Our first ever House Talent Show showcased some incredible talent from our students and some enthusiasm from staff.

Well done to everyone for an amazing half term of competition, teamwork, and house spirit! Get ready for an exciting next term with hopscotch, octopus games, netball hoops, and Just Dance Friday competitions!

*Mrs Lines • Head of Troy*



House Remembrance Day contributions







# Christmas Hampers

*As part of a long-standing festive tradition, each tutor group at Wath Academy produced a hamper to donate to the local community.*

On Tuesday 16th December, Senior Students and Mrs Cunningham delivered Christmas hampers to vulnerable members of the local community. Each hamper provided locals with winter necessities and some Christmas fun.

Tutor groups each crafted a festive hamper with gifts ranging from chocolate biscuits to fluffy socks, ensuring the needs of the community were catered for.

This Wath Academy tradition has a truly positive impact on the local community, demonstrated clearly by the beaming smiles and words of gratitude from all recipients. The hard work and dedication of the Wath students in organising and delivering over 80 hampers was all made worthwhile as they were met with a genuine display of joy. This was encapsulated by one recipient's kind words: "It was a refreshing to see young students involved in their local community in such a positive manner."

Senior Students are excited to be able to pass on such a meaningful tradition so that Wath Academy can continue having a positive impact on the wider community for years to come.



**Senior Students • Year 13**

# MFL IN MOROCCO

*Our Faculty of Modern Foreign Languages has partnered with a school in Morocco.*

We're delighted to have set up a new partnership with a school in Morocco, offering our pupils the opportunity to connect with their Moroccan peers on a project that celebrates the joy of reading. Through the British Council's UK–Morocco School Partnerships programme, we've teamed up with Wadi el Makhazin Middle School Agadir to collaborate on our language and culture exchange. Together, in this project supported by the National Literacy Trust, we'll explore how reading can broaden horizons, build confidence, and enhance mental wellbeing.

The second day of conference concluded with a visit from Alex Pinfield, the British Ambassador to the Kingdom of Morocco, who spoke about the importance of international collaboration and the long-standing relationship between the British Council and Morocco's education system. The event was even broadcast live on Moroccan television, underlining the significance of the partnership.

Over the past few weeks, a group of our students have been working collaboratively to create a PowerPoint presentation for our partner school in Agadir. Their presentation introduced life at Wath Academy and celebrated one of our core values: a deep love of reading.



The students spoke proudly about our reading culture, our library, and the importance we place on developing confident, enthusiastic readers. The project has been a fantastic opportunity for students to practise communication, teamwork, and cultural exchange.

Now, our students are excited to move on to the next stage of the exchange: preparing and sharing a Culture Box. This special box will give our friends in Agadir a glimpse into life at Wath Academy, our community, and British culture.

## What Would You Put in Our Culture Box?

We'd love suggestions from staff, students, and families! Whether it's an object, a photograph, a symbol of our school values, or something uniquely British, your ideas can help us shape a meaningful exchange.

**Miss Lessells • Teacher of MFL**

# WATH ACADEMY'S NEW VOICE FOR LANGUAGES: MEET THE LANGUAGE AMBASSADORS

*Have you seen students wearing the new Language Ambassadors badges around school? Miss Lessells explains this exciting new role and how you can get involved.*



The inaugural Language Ambassadors

There's a fresh buzz in the corridors of Wath Academy and it's coming from our Modern Foreign Languages Faculty. After weeks of anticipation, applications and interviews, we are thrilled to introduce our very first team of Language Ambassadors – a brand new student leadership initiative designed to celebrate communication, culture and the power of learning languages.

This pioneering group of ten Year 9 students are already making their mark. Wearing their Language Ambassador badges with pride, they have stepped into a role that blends leadership, creativity, and student voice. And they're ready to get to work.

### A New Role With a Big Purpose

So what exactly does it mean to be a Language Ambassador?

Think of them as the bridge between students and the MFL Faculty, a team dedicated to representing all things languages at Wath Academy.

As part of their role, ambassadors will:

- Join regular meetings with the MFL team
- Share honest, thoughtful feedback on how language learning can keep evolving
- Support cultural events, enrichment sessions, and department initiatives
- Promote languages across the year groups and within their own classes
- Inspire others to value the importance of multilingualism in a global world

This initiative isn't just about responsibility, it's about empowerment. It gives students the chance to shape their own learning experience, influence the way languages are taught, and advocate for a subject they genuinely enjoy.

### A Growing Movement

Although our inaugural team comes from Year 9, this is only the beginning. The Languages Ambassador programme is set to expand, with opportunities opening soon for students from all year groups.

*“We are thrilled to introduce our very first team of Language Ambassadors – a brand new student leadership initiative designed to celebrate communication, culture and the power of learning languages.”*

Whether you're a natural communicator, a future linguist, a culture enthusiast, or simply someone who wants to develop leadership skills... this might be the perfect role for you.

### Coming Soon... Could It Be You?

Applications for the next wave of Language Ambassadors will be launching soon. If you've ever wondered what it would be like to shape the future of MFL at Wath Academy, now's your chance.

The future of languages at Wath Academy has never looked brighter.

**Miss Lessells** • Teacher of MFL

# THE HIGHLIGHTS OF THE HEPWORTH GALLERY

*Art students were inspired at The Hepworth in Wakefield.*



We visited The Hepworth art gallery to enhance our current projects and inspire us to step out of our comfort zones to bring new creative levels to our artworks.

We took part in a range of sessions beginning with an artist workshop making our very own hardback sketchbooks with a variety of page colours and textures to add a unique feel to our artwork. We then took a walk around the galleries drawing from paintings, ceramics and sculptures.

The most interesting part of our visit must be the tour of the galleries and witnessing first-hand the huge range of sizes and styles of artwork from small, intricate and delicate pieces to huge, magnificent sculptures – the gallery has it all. This made me discover myself that I can create any piece of art, no matter the size or style.

Overall, this experience really enlightened me and made me want to step out of my comfort zone more to create pieces that I never thought I would be able to produce.



**Neve H • Year 12**



“We  
witnessed  
first-hand  
the huge  
range of  
artwork.”



# MATHS LIVE! AT Disneyland<sup>®</sup> PARIS

*Year 10 students attended a Maths conference.*

The trip started with a thirteen hour coach journey, with the group arriving at Disney's Hotel Cheyenne at approximately 3 pm. We were given two hours to settle in and then made our first trip to Disney Village, a vibrant, bustling place filled with shops and restaurants, before enjoying dinner at Billy Bob's Buffet.

The next morning was the 'Maths LIVE!' conference, where we listened to three motivational mathematicians discuss their journeys through the world of Maths.

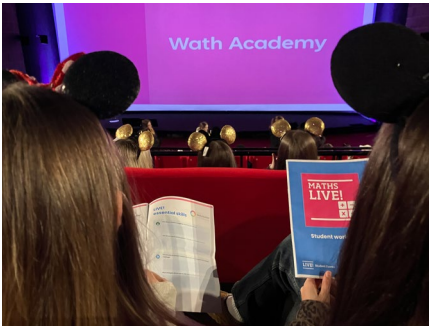
First, there was Alison Kiddle who spoke about using probability to better understand the world around us. This was followed by Professor Nira Chamberlain OBE, who delivered an engaging presentation about why Maths is the best subject in the world. The conference was concluded with an exciting and informative display by magician Dr Matt Pritchard that showed all the ways that Maths is used not only in magic but also in the Disney theme parks themselves. Overall, it was extremely interesting and inspired many students to see maths from a new perspective.

After the conference, we spent the rest of the afternoon in the Disneyland park. This magical park features five lands: Main Street USA, Fantasyland, Adventureland and Discoveryland, each with their own unique theming and rides to enjoy. Popular rides from the main park included Hyperspace Mountain, Indiana Jones and the Temple of Peril and Big Thunder Mountain. In the evening, we all met up before the fireworks. This dazzling spectacle of light and colour featured fireworks, projections and special effects on the magnificent Sleeping Beauty Castle and was a memorable highlight.

On Tuesday, we visited Walt Disney Studios, arriving at 8:30 am. This park features two main areas: the action packed Marvel Avengers Campus and the imaginative Worlds of Pixar. Favourite attractions included The Twilight Zone Tower of Terror, Crush's Coaster and Avengers Assemble: Flight Force.

In conclusion, the 2026 Disneyland Paris trip was an exciting and enjoyable experience and something many students will remember.

**Daisy C • Year 10**





# WHAT IS TIME TO TALK DAY?

*Time to Talk Day took place on 5th February.*

**T**ime to Talk Day is the nation's biggest mental health conversation. It's a day for all of us to come together to talk, listen and change lives.

## Why Is Talking Important?

Talking openly and honestly can be the first step towards better mental health for everyone.

It can reduce stigma and help people feel comfortable enough to seek help when they need it.

## What We Did

We celebrated Time to Talk day with assemblies sharing strategies with students to improve their mental health and a staff social drop in.

**Mrs Pritchard • Associate Assistant Principal**



**NHS**

**WITH ME IN MIND**

Sign up to our FREE app and get direct contact with a With Me In Mind worker. Discuss any mental health related issues using instant messaging on your mobile or tablet.

For further information visit our website: [withmehind.co.uk](http://withmehind.co.uk)  
Or follow us on social media on:   

## Write for Torch!

Attend the after-school club every Tuesday at 2:50 pm in G20! Everyone is welcome!

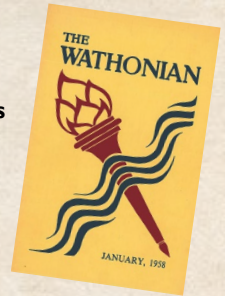
- Valentine's Day Quiz**
1. Eros
  2. Red and pink
  3. Chocolate, flowers, sweets, teddies etc.
  4. Richard Cadbury
  5. Elizabeth Barrett Browning
  6. Parks and Recreation
- Valentine's Day Wordsearch**
- See right.

**Puzzle Solutions**



# From the Archives

Each edition of *Torch*, we reprint an article from Wath Academy's extensive collection of old school magazines (available online at [wathacademy.com/torch](http://wathacademy.com/torch)). This vivid article cleverly reveals how photographs became less formal between the Edwardian Era (1901–1910) and the 1950s, reflecting wider changes in society.



## Family Photographs (1958)

One day, whilst visiting an elderly relative, I began to show him some photographs that had been taken whilst I was on holiday. They were of the casual, informal type and had a clear stamp of the amateur; yet he found great enjoyment in them, and expressed it as his opinion that they were better than the professional ones of his day.

“Oh, you’re joking,” I replied. “Just look, there’s half of my head missing on this one!”

He smiled. “I was not referring to the technique.”

“To what then?”

“Just wait a moment and I’ll show you.”

A moment or two later he returned with a photograph of the very old type which were printed upon stiff card, and were, I believe typical of the Edwardian period.

“Now let’s compare this with your photographs,” he said.

There was indeed great scope for comparison, for his was of a very stiff and orderly-looking family group, who had all obviously been dressed for the occasion in their very smartest turnout. They had been very tastefully arranged, with the two heads of the family sitting on a couch with a leopard skin draped over it, and the younger members of the family standing behind. Not a smile was to be seen lighting the countenance of any

of the solemn group, indeed they looked as though they hardly dared to breathe for fear of spoiling the picture.

“Which do you prefer?”

“Oh, mine,” I answered without delay.

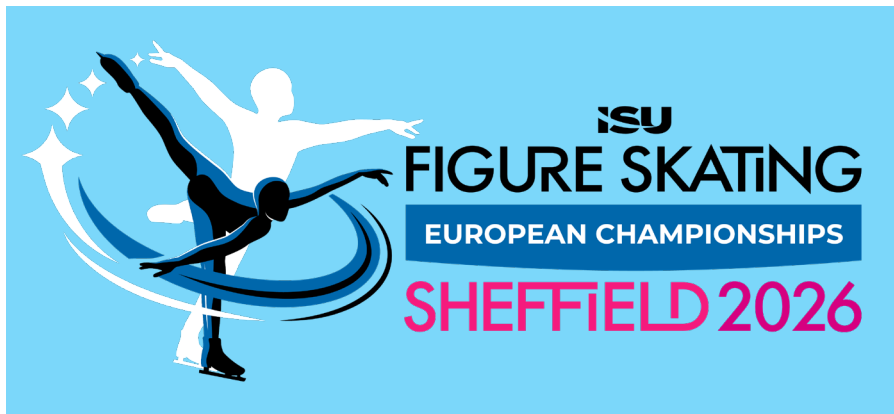
“Why?”

I thought for a while, and then replied that mine were more natural and truthful, they gave a better idea of the character of their subjects.

“Yes, indeed,” he agreed. “Look at great uncle George, that rigid-looking youth leering up from the depths of his collar – one jerk of his head in that stiff collar and he’d never nod again. As for great aunt Sarah, stiff as starch and sour as vinegar, well, you can take it from me that it’s at least a true picture of her. And as for those two shiny-faced cherubs in sailor suits at the front, the camera certainly lied there. I can vouch for that, because I happen to be one, and your great uncle William is the other. A pair of demons there if ever there was one.

“You know,” he went on, “these photographs of yours and mine seem to express the change that has taken place. People were less easy to know and as stiff as the card the photo is printed on, whereas today people are friendlier and easier to get on with. They seem to smile more readily, and really prefer to be photographed that way.”

*Eleanor Smith • 3b*



*The prestigious Figure Skating European Championships came to the UK this year. Keen figure skater Ellie N reports from Sheffield.*

**T**his year, we had started off with a big, exciting event that took place in Sheffield, also known as the City of Steel. If you are into figure skating, then you will know about one of the biggest championships ever: the Europeans.

There was thrilling performances, including acrobats and fire-related entertainment taking part in the opening ceremony. Sheffield had welcomed 163 of the best skaters from 35 different nations of this continent.

Here is some historic events that were performed:

- Nika Egadze was the first Georgian to win the Europeans
- Niina Petrokina defended her title with a personal best of 216.14 granted from the judges just after a surgery!

- Podium finishers involved Loena Hendrickx, who represented Belgium; Matteo Rizzo, an Italian who proudly skated for his country, and Britain's favourites, Lilah Fear and Lewis Gibson placed Bronze in the ice dance category
- The Duke and Duchess of Edinburgh arrived to watch the men's category
- The event was hosted by former British ice dancer Mark Henretty and Molly Lanaghan

This competition is significant because it all leads up to Milano for the Olympic Winter Games 2026.

Thank you for reading and I hope you watch the Europeans next year!

**Ellie N • Year 7**

# How to Make Tasty Pancakes

*Shrove Tuesday is the start of Lent and people make pancakes to get rid of all their unhealthy food for 40 days.*

## Ingredients

- 100g flour
- 300 ml milk
- 2 large eggs
- 1 tablespoon sunflower oil

## Method

1. Put the flour, eggs, milk and sunflower oil into a large bowl then whisk to a smooth batter.
2. Leave for around 30 minutes.
3. Put the batter in a frying pan over a medium heat.
4. When its hot, cook pancakes for one minute each on each side until golden.

## Toppings!

Pancakes can be sweet or savoury, meaning there is a multitude of different toppings. My favourite type of topping is melted chocolate in the middle and fruit placed on the top. However, this is not the only tasty combination you can try. Ice cream and a multitude of different sauces are popular, as well as yogurt, honey, caramel and sugar. This is just for sweet pancakes! For savoury you could consume meats, cheeses, vegetables, spreads and fried eggs.

**Chloe C • Year 7**



Image: Andy Li, CC0, via Wikimedia Commons

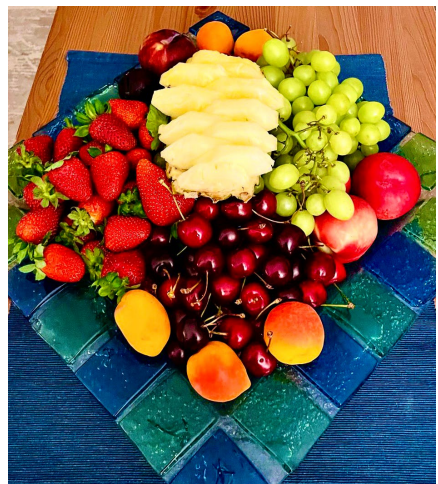
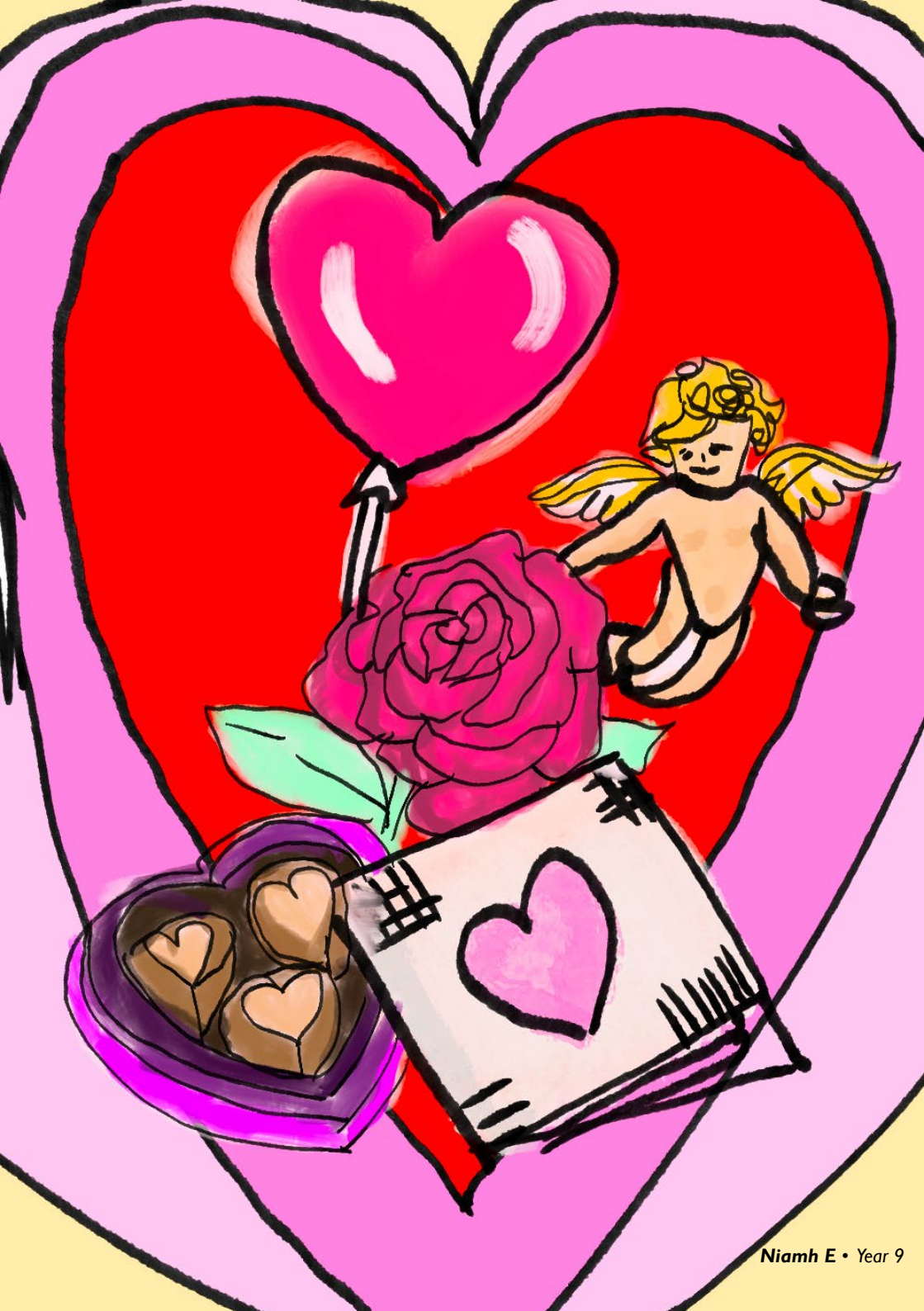


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# REVIEWS

## ***Northern Lights* by Philip Pullman**

*Northern Lights* is the first book in the *His Dark Materials* trilogy by Philip Pullman.

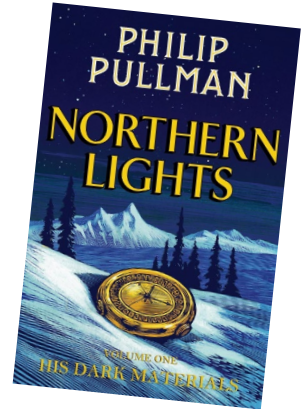
It is about a girl called Lyra Belacqua who thinks her parents are gone. In her world, everyone has an animal who represents part of their soul called a dæmon. She has a friend who gets kidnapped by a strange gang. Her and the Gyptians set off to recover all the missing children.

Lyra and Roger – her friend where she lives (Jordan College) – visit her Uncle Asriel who has been learning about a special sort of Dust that is attracted to adults. He has figured out there are many different worlds and is ready to sacrifice anything to find them.

I would recommend this to anyone who enjoys fantasy/adventure and who like some elements of magic and philosophy.

The other two books in the trilogy are *The Subtle Knife* and *The Amber Spyglass*. Even if you are not into reading, you can enjoy the story on BBC iPlayer.

I really enjoyed this book because of its plot twists and storyline/backstories. The lives of some characters intertwine in many different and surprising ways.



**Chloe C • Year 7**



The *His Dark Materials* trilogy has been adapted into a TV series, available on BBC iPlayer (Image: BBC)



## **Minecraft** (available on virtually all videogame platforms)

When you first get onto *Minecraft*, you have the home page where you can change your character, create your *Minecraft* world and change the settings.

When you click on 'Change Character', you have an option between Alex or Steve. You choose your character and press, 'Save As' and it will make that your character.

When you have chosen your character you go back to the home page and press, create world, then you have to name your world and it will take a little while to create it and then when it has loaded then you can start. I also forgot to mention that

you can change the world difficulty to Hardcore, Creative, Survival and others. If you are on Creative, then you don't have to worry about mobs and you have unlimited resources but if you are on Hardcore or Survival, then you have to mine and find the required materials.

I really like *Minecraft* because it is entertaining and you can build things at your own ability so there is no restrictions about what you build. There a lot of tools that you can make and use. ★★★★★

**Jack C** • Year 7

# PUZZLES

Solutions on  
page 12

## Valentine's Day Wordsearch



CHOCOLATE  
DATE

CRUSH  
ROMANCE

HEART  
SWEETHEART

**Edward R** • Year 7

## Valentine's Day Quiz

- Who is the Greek god of love?
- What colours are related to Valentine's Day?
- What do you usually buy people on Valentine's Day?
- Who created the first heart-shaped box of chocolates?
- Which poet said:  
'How do I love thee, let me count the ways?'
- Galentine's Day is a celebration created in what television show?

**Connie S** • Year 7  
**Ruby B** • Year 8

WATH ACADEMY PRESENTS

# Grease

Tell me  
about  
it Stud

★★★★ SCHOOL ★★★★★  
★★★★ EDITION ★★★★★

Book, Music, and Lyrics by  
Jim Jacobs and Warren Casey

Tuesday 10th March | 6:30 pm

Wednesday 11th March | 6:30 pm

Thursday 12th March | 6:30 pm

Tickets:

£6.00 | Concession

£8.50 | Full Price

"GREASE" is presented through special arrangement  
with and all authorised performance materials  
are supplied by Theatrical Rights Worldwide (TRW)



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