



Inspire
Achieve
Celebrate



WOODRUSH
STAR

Issue 41 Summer 2021



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Woodrushstar
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Welcome to our Summer edition of our Woodrush Star which enables our school community to share some of the learning opportunities which take place during the term/ year.

Writing the editorial to 'The Star' each time, offers me the chance to reflect on the previous term and year and at the end of an exceptionally challenging and unprecedented year, we still have lots to celebrate our students' achievements! I cannot thank my staff at Woodrush enough for the way in which they have continued to support our young people and how they have been determined to make sure that our students had enjoyable and enriching experiences, both remotely and back in school. Under such challenging and unpredictable circumstances for us all; our staff commitment to our young people, never ceases to amaze me. Likewise, the resilience and positivity our students have demonstrated throughout the year, is remarkable and this edition of The Star, demonstrates just a small reflection of the positive work which has taken place in the last few months.

In just the last few weeks of term, students have had the chance to take part and vote in our 'Woodrush's Got Talent' competition, the Sixth Form student leader campaigns and virtual voting, which gave all students the chance to have their say on voting for their KS5 leaders. I was delighted that a group of Miss Capaldi's Year 11 D of E students had the chance to gain their Bronze D of E award. They received the highest feedback from the course assessors who were so incredibly impressed by their teamwork and resilience during the two days. Within our Sports and Arts festivals, (led by Ms Holtom-Brown, Mrs Coughlin and Mr Maidment) students had the opportunity to get involved but also support and celebrate their peer's achievements and both took an enormous amount of commitment and enthusiasm from students and staff, for which they should be justifiably proud. Indeed, one parent described watching the Summer Arts Festival as "uplifting, humbling and moving," which was wonderful to read.

This year, we have supported our local community and forged exciting links with our wider communities with two notable projects which have begun this year. Under Mr Reece's lead, a group of students and TA have spent time tidying and caring for the area, which is enabling us to develop our students, give back to the local community and encourage wildlife, in the process. Our second community project has involved a team of 'Eco-Champions' guided by Mr Barber and Miss Whittaker and has seen the team develop links with several schools as part of the British Council's 'Global Classrooms' initiative, where schools in our local area are connecting with schools in Sierra Leone, in order to develop students from within all the participating schools. This is an exciting project which has already begun to take effect and promises to have a positive impact on our community, Woodrush students and crucially, the students we are connecting with.

I am delighted to inform you that the school successfully obtained three SSAT 'Leading Edge' awards this year which are awarded for schools who demonstrate the highest standards in meeting the 'Framework for exceptional Education' with Woodrush gaining the 'Transforming in Variety of teaching approaches', 'Transforming in Leadership through moral purpose', and for 'Transforming practice in Professional Learning awards. Thank you to Mr Barber and the staff involved gaining the awards as they reflect the quality and provision which takes place every day at Woodrush. Finally, thank you to our parents/carers who have taken part in our parent forums and parent surveys and consultations- your contributions are very much valued and appreciated.

I hope you enjoy this summer edition of The Star and enjoy celebrating just some of the wonderful things which have taken place in school with our students in the last few months. Under 'normal' circumstances, we would be proud, however under the unique circumstances of the past year, there is even more reason to celebrate. I am so proud of all our students, staff and community for the positive way in which we have continued to work together to create life chances and opportunities for our young people.

From all of us at Woodrush, we hope you have a safe and restful summer.

Ms N. Rancins

Goodbye Mrs Lawson



This summer, I will be leaving Woodrush after 15 years and I feel lucky to have made so many fantastic memories during my time here. I joined as Second in English in 2006 and was quickly made Head of English, before being promoted to Lead Practitioner and then Assistant Headteacher in 2011, which has enabled me to continue to learn and grow as both a teacher, leader and person.

I will certainly miss all our Woodrush students and have so many fond memories students over the years. In my teaching, I have strived to help students not only develop their skills in English, and leave the year gaining the highest grades possible, or securing that crucial C grade/4 at GCSE, but to enjoy (and, hopefully, love) the subject in the process! Even though I've taught some texts many times over the years, each time I have experienced a text with a class, it has taught me something new and inspired me to see the text through my students' eyes! It's been an absolute joy to be a part of my students' education and share this learning experience together. I am so proud of the students I have taught and have even started to see some come back to train to teach here, which has been a particular privilege but also made me feel very old too! I have loved working with the amazing staff at Woodrush and have particularly enjoyed supporting the development of middle leaders, senior leaders, and early career teachers, as part of my leadership in school and within the Teaching School, as this has given me an enormous sense of pride in seeing staff develop and helped me to continue to grow in the process!

After 15 years, there is no doubt in my mind that Woodrush is an incredible school, full of talented and hardworking staff and fantastic students, all within a wonderful community. I have felt incredibly lucky to be a part of it and can look back over my time here with pride and gratitude of the experiences and the opportunities I have had, the friends I have made, and the students I have taught and met.

I will be joining Ark Kings Academy as Vice Principal: Academic, from September, where I am excited to start this new chapter! However, I will always be proud to be a member of the Woodrush staff alumni and part of students' memories of their time at Woodrush.

I send all our Woodrush families, students and staff, past and present, good wishes for the future and hope our paths cross again!

Mrs Lawson



Goodbye Mrs Hursey

I have very much enjoyed working at Woodrush High School for the last 3 years and managing the English team.

It has been fantastic to teach Woodrush students. I have really enjoyed their enthusiasm for learning. A highlight for me was taking a group of year 10 students on a residential writers' retreat and having a theatre company into school to perform Shakespeare to all year groups.

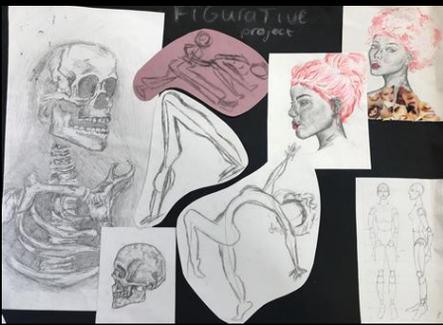
I am moving on to be an Assistant Head at the new school, Christchurch Secondary School, opening in Yardley Wood in September.

A favourite Literary quotation:

From *On the Road* by Jack Kerouac

"The only people for me are the mad ones, the ones who are mad to live, mad to talk, mad to be saved, desirous of everything at the same time, the ones who never yawn or say a commonplace thing, but burn, burn, burn like fabulous yellow roman candles exploding like spiders across the stars."

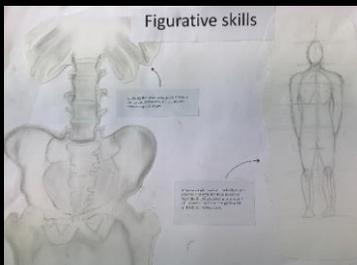
ART



Every year, we are constantly amazed by the outstanding talent our GCSE Art students produce – they design, they experiment, they create, they problem solve, they reflect, they refine and they persevere in bucket loads!

This year more than most, they have worked so hard independently, and here is just a small selection of the wonderful work our Year 11 Art and Photography students have created!

Well Done Art/Photography Class of 2021!



Dance

BTEC Dancers participated in a dance workshop on June 10th with a professional dancer from the Black Country Dance Hub. All students were off timetable for the day and had to work alongside the dancer as part of their final piece for their practical dance. The dancers had to learn a professional piece of choreography which they will be assessed on. The piece that was chosen was 'Cry Me a River' - Andrew Winghart and is a fusion of Street and Contemporary Dance. The day is very hard mentally as well as physically and Mrs Bridgen was very proud of how well the students worked for the duration of the workshop. Woodrush have worked with a dancer from the Black Country Dance Hub in previous years and the students always gain a lot out of it and really enjoyed the day.



Celebrating World Book Day, on 4th March was a little bit different this year, but working remotely meant that everyone had the opportunity to get involved. For the first time ever, all students were able to take part in our annual inter-house quiz which took place in form time. Extra house points were awarded in the exciting art and creative writing competitions which were open to all students and staff. There were some great entries across the whole school, with book token prizes being awarded to students from year 7 to year 11.

Throughout the day, members of staff read from *Under the Skin* by Catherine MacPhail. If you would like to listen to this story of one immigrant's experience of life in the UK, the videos are available here.

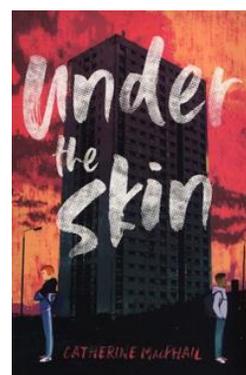


Reading 1 - <https://youtu.be/sNw88kco4U8>

Reading 2 - <https://youtu.be/exqGV-ek224>

Reading 3 - <https://youtu.be/TU2CJ5WbdJk>

Reading 4 - <https://youtu.be/Dfe-Fe0t9TY>

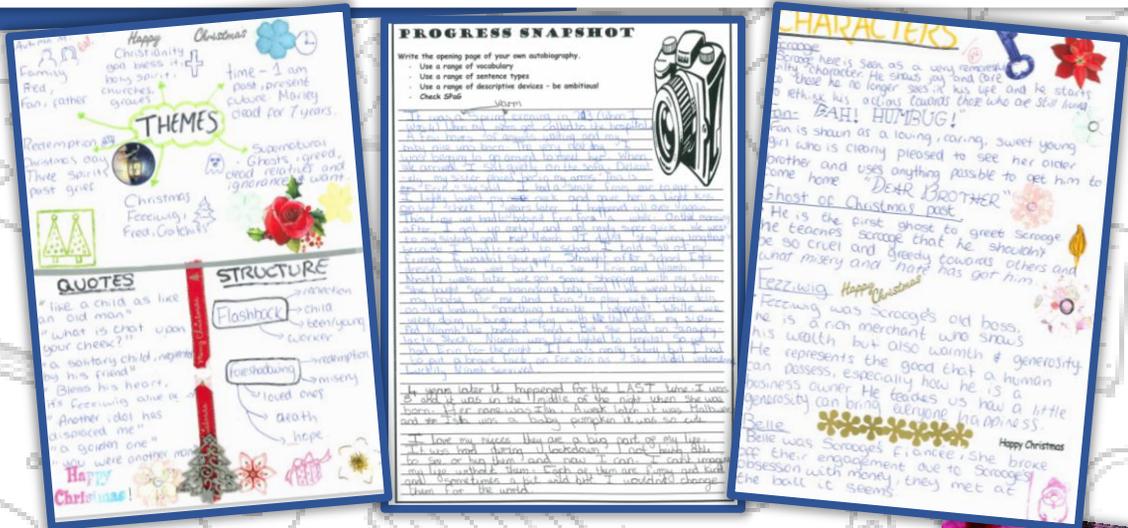


This is Smaug the dragon from The Hobbit.

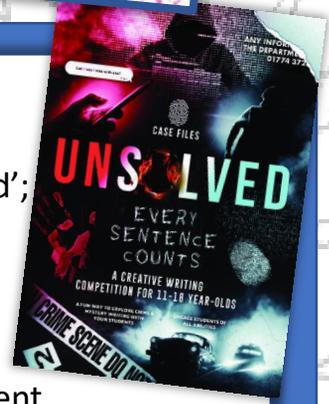


Well Done Everyone!

After a challenging and unpredictable year, everyone in English would like to say well done to all of our students from Year 7-13. One of the main things we all love about our subject is the opportunity to work collaboratively and to get out of our seats to bring texts to life. Even though we haven't been able to do that this year, students have still managed to produce some outstanding work and should be very proud of their achievements. Keep reading and enjoy the summer break!



During lockdown some year 9 students had the chance to write a mini saga and submit their writing for 'The Young Writers' competition. The challenge was to write a saga entitled 'Unsolved'; however, they had the extra-challenge of only being able to use 100 words!



Although we didn't have a winning entry this time, we had 17 students work published in a book, which is a fantastic achievement which I hope encourages students to carry on writing in the future. They should feel so proud of their creative and dramatic writing, especially as the competition was launched remotely and their work was also completed and submitted during our second lockdown.

Well done to all the students who submitted entries, but, in particular, a special mention goes to: Miles P, Matthew K, Sophie W, Ben M, Isabel H, Sophie L, Jamie S, Freya H, Doug H, Ella H, Dylianna R, Lacey D, Felicity U, Charlotte V, Marianna S, Jessica M, Millie S for being published in the 'Young Writers' book.

For more information about future competitions, and a chance to join in, speak to your English teacher or have a look at the 'Young writers' website: <https://www.youngwriters.co.uk/competitions> - Mrs Lawson



Our Year 9 Mandarin students are about to embark on an exciting virtual study tour of China. After their first year of studying GCSE Chinese, students will enjoy a well-deserved fortnight of virtual tours, visits and learning experiences. The Mandarin Excellence Programme has collaborated with fourteen prestigious universities in China to bring students an authentic, exciting learning experience. The visit begins with an opening ceremony on Monday 5th July. Activities during the fortnight include:

- A visit to a Chinese family home
- Live tours around famous cultural and tourist attractions, including the locations for the Winter Olympics in 2022
- Opportunities to speak with Chinese students
- Interactive lessons with Chinese teachers, including games and tasks with Chinese students
- A virtual visit to a panda zoo and a live panel discussion with people who work with pandas
- A virtual visit to a local school to find out about daily school life in China
- A panel session with experts in renewable energy and environmental volunteers

Each afternoon, students will have the opportunity to reflect on their visits and respond to the people they have met through video diaries, podcasts and blogs.

We wish our Year 9 Mandarin students a fantastic two weeks!

Mandarin

You've worked hard all year.
You deserve a reward.

Get ready for...

VIRTUAL CHINA

An exclusive study tour of
China designed especially
for Year 9 MEP students

Monday 5th -
Friday 16th July 2021



Spanish



KS4 students have used Memrise this year to support their studies in Spanish. Memrise is a brilliant language learning app which effectively improves students long term memory of vocabulary.

The following students have regularly been at the top of their class leader board. Well done!

Year 9

Matthew T, Owen, Phoebe, Sophie L, Sophie W, Megan C, Shayna, Paige, Erin, Ralph, Daisy and Rebecca C.

Year 10

Kuganu, Nishani, Ryan A, Gabby, Tyler, Lilly, Miriam,
Emily C, Tom B, Elijah, Kerri, Joe M, Olivia and Tom M.

Thank you Ruby!!!



This term we have been lucky enough to have Ruby visit the Sixth Form every Wednesday 3pm – 4pm. Ruby has been instrumental in helping our students relax and briefly step away from their studies. So far they have taught Ruby new tricks and painted with her.



Ruby is always pleased to see them and they all agree she really does help reduce the stress of the week – **Thank you RUBY!!**

¿En qué sector te gustaría trabajar? Which sector would you like to work in?

En colegio me apasionan la música y el español porque me interesan y son más emocionantes que las matemáticas y las ciencias. Diría que la música es muy fascinante y el español es útil.

El sector que me interesa es la música y la ley porque son realmente importante para mí. Sin embargo creo que no soy ni sociable ni independiente pero soy bien organizada y creativa. Por eso, no quiero trabajar en la medicina porque es bastante duro. Además, mi padre es hombre de negocios y pienso que este empleo es bien pagado.

Nishani (Year 10)



Year 7 Top Achievers Event

My experience from the achievement event was an amazing opportunity and was very enjoyable. I would definitely go again. We could bring snacks and had drinks and the moments were unforgettable. The hard work everyone put in definitely paid off! –
Eva L – Year 7

Sport

Ella B in year 10 has been signed up by Aston Villa after successful trials! Ella was very busy over the half term break attending football trials for Aston Villa and Birmingham City. After attending a third session with Aston Villa she received a phone call from the u16s coach complimenting Ella on how hard she worked, and they offered her a contract! Ella is absolutely over the moon as Aston Villa was her first choice to move to after being at WBA for a few years. The facilities and opportunities that Villa offer are exceptional, and she cannot wait to get started. This is fantastic news for Ella, and we wish her all the best at her new club! Well done.



Duke of Edinburgh Award



It's has been great to see our Year 11 Bronze DofE students out on their expedition this week. Students have navigated a route over two days and spent one night camping at Blackwell Court. Students have cooked their own meals and put up their own tents and have all done so successfully. A big thank you to Miss Capaldi for organising the students and Mr Maidment for supporting the students on camp. Let's hope they navigate their way back today and avoid any wet weather! Well done all!

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Email: wtc@woodrush.org**

PHOTOGRAPHY

On Wednesday the 9th June, some of our Year 10, GCSE Photography students had the amazing opportunity to visit Cadbury College and use their photography studio and equipment. The aim of the day was for them to produce a series of – pre planned – portrait shots that could then be edited further back in school.

The students worked creatively and professionally and produced some excellent shots.

Further to this, students then completed a digital editing workshop, with the Cadbury College tutors, on Thursday the 10th June, developing their images using Photoshop.

These will then be edited further, over the coming weeks, using our Graphics Tablets to create magazine cover images, that will be printed and displayed in the Cadbury College and Woodrush end of Year exhibitions.

Students had a great time, learnt many new skills and have really added to their GCSE Photography Portfolios!







Woodrush students have been very busy down at Wythall Train Station this term as our adoption of the station got into full swing. Students have been learning about different plant varieties and which types suit different planting locations/conditions. Plants have been selected from the local garden centre and then planted at Wythall station in both large box planters and as shrubs directly into the ground. Most plants have been chosen to attract insects and bees particularly, this is supported by the installation of a 'Bee Post' near the station platform to encourage overwintering insects.

We have also been working on cutting back some of the overhanging trees and shrubs to ensure that the platforms and walkways are light and bright and a safe place to be.

Back at school, we are currently working on 2 art installations which will reflect the local heritage of Wythall village from over 100 years ago. These are due to be installed over the summer. Keep your eyes peeled!

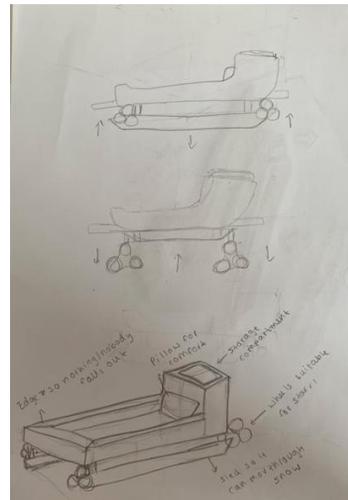
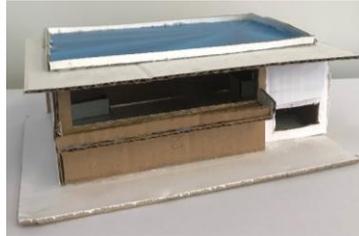
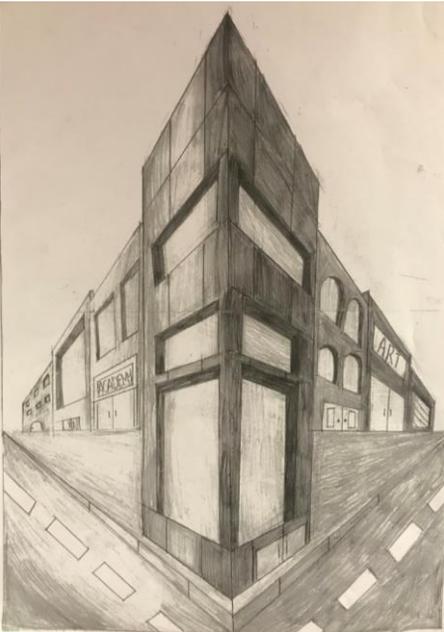
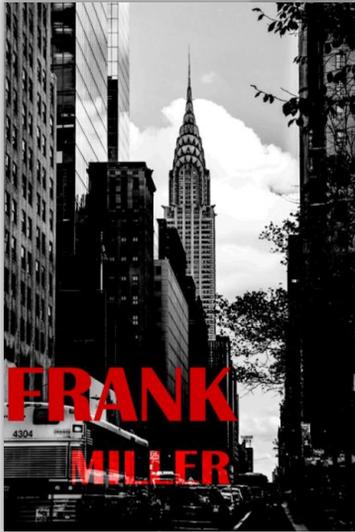
Students continue to attend site regularly to water and maintain the planting as well as keeping the platforms tidy and a nice place to be.

If you are interested in helping out at the station as a community volunteer please do get in touch with Mr Reece via school reception or directly via email at areece@woodrush.org



KS4 Product Design and Graphics

All pupils across year 9, 10 and 11 have worked extremely hard this year. They have completed some outstanding remote learning work as well as completing some fantastic work in class! We would like to say a huge well done to all pupils. Here are just some of the amazing examples of work produced by pupils in KS4 in all areas of DT.



Woodrush String Group



We are excited to have launched a new group in the Music Department, Woodrush String Group, which involves fourteen year 7 students learning a string instrument together and playing as an ensemble. The students are taking on the challenge to learn a brand new instrument - either the violin, viola or cello, and are rehearsing after school every Tuesday until the end of term. They are currently working towards learning their first piece of music. The group will continue into the next academic year and we are hoping to perform our first concert as an ensemble at Christmas. Watch this space!



This summer term the business students in year 9 have been creating a “Make School Better” product. The products aim to improve students experience within Woodrush and in schools around the world. Students have been able to get creative and come up with ideas such as interactive classroom desks, hologram watches and pens with calculators built in.

The students have been tasked with designing the product, exploring who their competition is, at what price they will sell the product and where they will sell their products.

After 4 weeks of planning the students will be pitching their ideas to the “Woodrush Dragons” to judge which product they would invest in. The top 3 products will all receive a prize.

A Year 9 student said “this is a great topic where we get to have fun creating a futuristic but helpful product, I’m really looking forward to pitching my ideas to the Dragons”.



Woodrush Sixth Form is Career Ready!

This year our Sixth Form has linked with the national charity CareerReady, founded in 2002 by leading business figures with a mission to boost social mobility by empowering young people and giving their talents a platform to flourish.

The link-up has brought noticeable benefits across our Sixth Form. Six of our Year 12 students are currently working with CareerReady mentors and some of the group will be undertaking internships in July, facilitated by CareerReady, with local companies such as Phoenix in Wythall and Turner and Townsend in Birmingham.

We are also fortunate to be able to take part in a number of masterclasses and virtual workplace visits arranged by CareerReady. The first of the masterclasses was delivered in May by Ofwat and focused on 'success at interviews'. In June a second masterclass was led by Citi Bank on the theme of 'preparing for work'. We are hoping that a virtual workplace visit will also take place with The Wates Group, a leading UK construction, residential development and property services company before the end of term.

So far, our partnership with CareerReady has been an outstanding success with further events and student placements planned for the future!

Mr. Cooper

“So far, the Career Ready programme has been a great experience. We have had the opportunity to take part in loads of great things like masterclasses and an online internship. The internship has definitely been my favourite aspect so far as I feel like we all have gained a lot of new skills and experiences from it, like going into Phoenix's Wythall office for a day. We have also all been assigned a mentor, which I personally have found really helpful to discuss my future plans with. I would definitely recommend!!” – Scarlett T

GOOD BYE & GOOD LUCK!

Year 13s last day was really a mix of emotions. We were all sad to see them leave, but so happy and proud that they persevered through difficult times to become exceptional young people ready to tackle their next career destination. The class of 2021 have had a challenging experience in the Sixth Form, not being in school for periods of time or able to enjoy our normal extracurricular activities. Having said this, we have been very pleased to see our young people being creative to maintain healthy relationships with their peers online, and managing to stay motivated and focused to achieve subject success.

We aimed to make the last day as special as possible, whilst maintaining all restrictions. Students embraced the fancy dress theme of TV and film characters and all came together to take part in the 'ultimate quiz'.

We ended the day with some special mentions, so once again congratulations to Megan Sewell for receiving 'student of year', a well-deserved award for all her hard work during lessons, supporting her peers and the sixth form.

Thank you to, to Amy Hall, Morgan Harley and Holly Smith, our student leadership team for all their hard work over the last two years.

Congratulations and Good Luck to Year 13, we look forward to hearing your stories of success in years to come.

Thank you to all my teachers, Mr Cook and Mr James in particular – have really shaped who I am. Will miss you all. - Etta



Young people from across the county are invited to take part in the Young Poet Laureate competition each year which is run jointly by Severn Arts and Worcestershire County Council. The competition is open to children and young people aged 8 to 18. Participants submit two poems for consideration. The winner for the 16-18 age group was our very own sixth form pupil Abbie-Lou Cox. Abbie-Lou received a certificate, £25 voucher and will have one of her poems published online and in print. Well done Abbie-Lou! Below is a poem Abbie-Lou has written especially for this Woodrush Star edition and is inspired by what we have all experienced over the last year and a half.

Apocalypse

The apocalypse beat us all till we bled.

**Cheeks bruising, knuckles scabbed and
the red sun waxing biblical prophecies,
we clawed our way to foretold normalcy
despite the dirt under our fingernails
and the scorching pressure on our skin.**

**Muscles aching, wounds bandaged and
the pale sun rising upon the horizon,
we arrived as one to the new normalcy
where the lake bed cradled our weary heads
and cleansed our burns with holy water.**

**Eyes brightening, scars healed and
the pure sun glittering gold promises,
we savoured the taste of returning normalcy
crumb by crumb, knowing that our future
would be even sweeter than the past.**

The apocalypse bled us all. But we survived.

We survive



Connecting Classrooms

- Our global learning collaborative between schools in Sierra Leone & the UK -



Woodrush High School links with Sierra Leone to prepare students for life and work in today's world.

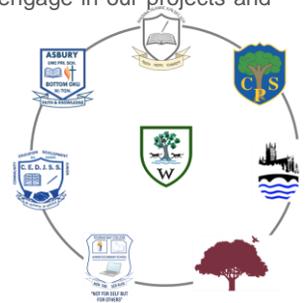
We are delighted that we have successfully forged a new school link with **Fourah Bay Junior Secondary School in Mount Aureol, Sierra Leone** as part of Connecting Classrooms through Global Learning, a unique global education programme.

Connecting Classrooms is run in over 30 countries by the British Council in partnership with the Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office. It works with schools across the globe to help young people develop the knowledge, skills and attitudes to make a positive contribution to their world.

Woodrush has forged a partnership of **eight schools in the UK and Sierra Leone** to share curriculum learning projects that promote global collaborative learning centred on the UN Sustainable Development Goals.

Our collaboration of schools will open up opportunities for over 6,000 students to engage in our projects and benefit from international links for every subject. Our partnership schools are:

- Christopher Whitehead Language College, Worcester, UK**
- Coppice Primary School, Birmingham, UK**
- Oldbury Primary School, Worcester, UK**
- Asbury UMC Primary School, Freetown, Sierra Leone**
- Community Education Development Junior Secondary School, Allen Town, Sierra Leone**
- Madina Islamic Junior Secondary School, Freetown, Sierra Leone**
- Fourah Bay College Junior Secondary School, Mount Aureol, Sierra Leone**



On hearing the news that Woodrush has successfully applied to take part in the Connecting Classrooms through Global Learning programme, Sir Ciarán Devane, CEO of the British Council, said:

"I am delighted that Woodrush High School is taking on this excellent opportunity to develop their professional practice by collaborating with teachers from Sierra Leone and the UK. Their shared commitment, together with the other schools in their collaborative, to equip our young people with skills and understanding for life and work in an increasingly global economy is commendable."

Over the next few months, staff and students are working with their counterparts in Sierra Leone and the UK on three exciting projects learning about sustainable environments, quality education and equality and children's rights. I wish Woodrush students and staff and all those in their collaborative many successes and enjoyment."

So far, students at Woodrush have:

- ✓ Learnt about the history and geography of Sierra Leone
- ✓ Compared life in the UK with Sierra Leone
- ✓ Sent a series of questions to Sierra Leone to establish a dialogue of inquiry between year groups
- ✓ Learnt about young Sierra Leonean entrepreneurs
- ✓ Launched an eco-champion group of over 40 students to work on our first sustainability project
- ✓ Started a ground-work development for an eco-pond, hedgehog hotels eco-wall of wild plants to encourage bio-diversity



Connecting Classrooms through Global Learning is a global education programme brought to schools by the British Council in partnership with the Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office

By developing and networking with thousands of teachers across the world, the British Council aims to help young people develop the knowledge, skills and values to live and work in a globalised economy.

This project is part-funded with UK aid from the British people. The Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (FCDO) pursues our national interests and projects the UK as a force for good in the world. We promote the interests of British citizens, safeguard the UK's security, defend our values, reduce poverty and tackle global challenges with our international partners.



CONNECTING CLASSROOMS

Summary of our three Global Learning Projects:

| Project | Global themes | Sustainable Development Goal | Expected outcomes |
|---|--|---|---|
| <p>PROJECT 1</p> <p><i>'Be Responsible'</i></p> <p>(June/July)</p> |   Environment, Sustainable Environment, Responsible Citizenship, Stewardship | SDG6. Clean water and sanitation; SDG11. Sustainable cities and communities; SDG14. Life below water; SDG15. Life on land | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students will conduct local investigations into species and environments in need of close protection and care. Culminating in an advocate piece of work that recommends positive responsible actions that can be taken to protect that aspect of the environment |
| <p>PROJECT 2</p> <p><i>'Be Proud'</i></p> <p>(July/September)</p> |  Learning, Education, Diversity | SDG4. Quality Education | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students will apply reflection, self-reflective and communication skills to express their own identity, skills and qualities. They will gain an appreciation of lifelong learning and appreciation of everyone's own uniqueness. For older students, a personal profile of youth skills will be forged. |
| <p>PROJECT 3</p> <p><i>'Be Inspired'</i></p> <p>(October/November)</p> |   Equality, Justice, Education | SDG4. Quality Education; SDG5. Gender Equality; SDG10. Reduced inequalities; SDG16. Peace, justice and strong institutions | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students will gain and express their knowledge and understanding of concepts of equality and inequalities. Recognition of the importance of gender and equal opportunities through a study of an inspirational female from the UK, Sierra Leone or an influential global female figure. |



Project 1 Planning and Eco-Champions for Woodrush Eco-pond, Hedgehog & Bug hotels

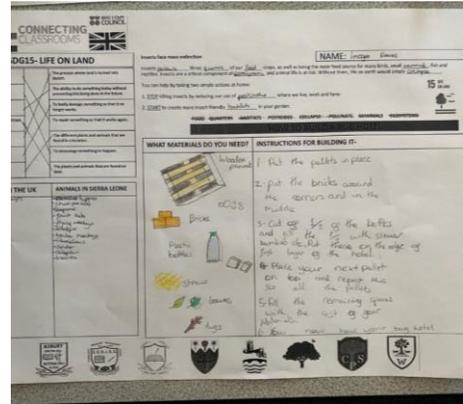


CONNECTING CLASSROOMS





Project 1 Student planning, Bug Hotels & Flower beds planting at Coppice, Christopher Whitehead & Oldbury Primary School



CONNECTING CLASSROOMS





Project 1 Planting, tidying-up and planning meetings at Fourah Bay College and Asbury Primary School, Sierra Leone



CONNECTING CLASSROOMS





Project 1 Tree planting at Community Education Development School & Madina Islamic School, Sierra Leone



CONNECTING CLASSROOMS

The results are in! At the beginning of February, selected Year 9 students took part in the Intermediate Maths Challenge paper organised by the UK Maths Trust. The papers are designed to stimulate mathematical problem solving, encourage learners to think outside-the-box and apply mathematical skills learnt in lessons to sophisticated conundrums



12 Year 9 students were entered, and although the scores were fantastic, no one earned themselves a Bronze, Silver or Gold certificate this time around. Phoebe L and Joseph F (9A) were only 5 points off a Bronze though – excellent work. Selected KS4 pupils will have chance to take part again next year.

Junior Maths Challenge

The Junior Maths Challenge is very similar to the intermediate one, in that it promotes mathematical reasoning and logical thinking; except this time, it is aimed at year 7 & 8 students. At the end of April, 30 year 7 and 8 students sat the paper.

Congratulations to the following students for winning certificates:

Bronze

Year 7

Freya C
Ben M

Year 8

James A
Joshua C
Katie E
Joel F
Ayla G

Gold

Year 7

Leila W

A special mention must go to Leila who not only scored best in school, but qualified for the “Kangaroo” follow-up round; an invitation only competition for some of the best young mathematicians in the country! Well done Leila!!!

Here is an example Kangaroo question for you all to try:

2. Lily pours 296 litres of water into the top of the pipework shown in the diagram. Each time a pipe forks, half the water flows to one side and half to the other. How many litres of water will reach container Y?

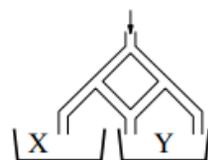
A 210

B 213

C 222

D 225

E 231



Mathematical art contest

Announced during tutor time numeracy, the maths department challenged students to produce mathematical art (pictured opposite). We have had some really amazing entries. With the KS3 winner being: Bhavneet in 7C2 and the KS4 winner: Alice B in 10G. Well done both! Your prize will be delivered to you during tutor!



Sumdog

As many parents will know we have access to Sumdog- an online website that allows students to practise their maths by answering questions and playing games! Sumdog regularly hold online competitions that allow students in lots of different schools to compete against each other.

This year we have achieved the following...

In the March 2021 Worcestershire Contest:

2 Top 10 Students – Naomi M & Bhavneet V

2 of the 7 daily class winners – 7A and 7F

January 2021 Worcestershire Contest:

SIX Top 10 students – Abbie G, Naomi M, Isabella S, Dylan S, Bhavneet V and Megan H. Wow!!

Daily Winner – 7D

And overall winner of the whole contest – 7A. Fantastic effort from all who took part, we were so impressed!



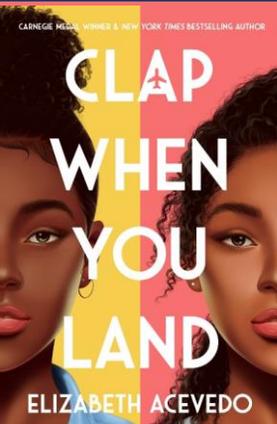
parallel
by Simon Singh



Another website that we have seen great success with has been parallel.org. This website was launched to run parallel to the curriculum and has had students solving the problem from Good Will Hunting, The Seven Bridges of Konigsberg and how to add up infinite series! Lots of students have engaged fantastically with these, and have really enjoyed thinking about new and challenging maths they would not have encountered in a normal lesson!

Parallel

Each year the Carnegie medal is awarded to an outstanding book for young people. The shadowing scheme engages young people to read and review the eight shortlisted books which, rather than offering formulaic teen fiction, often address challenging, thought provoking and sometimes traumatic subjects. This year's Woodrush Readers have been particularly enthusiastic, devouring the books and sharing their opinions. The following reviews have been written by Emily, Gracie and Leila in year 7 who have read all of the titles.

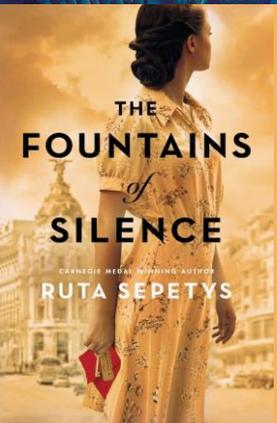


Clap When You Land is an amazing novel, told from the perspective of two girls, exactly the same in every way, but completely different all together. The two girls are sisters, who didn't know each other existed, until their father tragically died in a plane crash. They travel on an amazing journey, individually, and together. Yahaira learns how to survive in a place she does not know, and Camino learns, that she doesn't always have to do everything alone, and she can rely on other people. This book was very interesting and gripping, and I couldn't put it down. My favourite part of the book was when Yahaira and Camino found out that they were sisters and started getting to know one and another. This book was an amazing tale, and I would really like to congratulate the author. I adored this book, and I would read another book by the author. - Gracie



Echo Mountain is a great tale, of a girl named Ellie who moves to the mountains with her family. Her father has a terrible accident, and she has to fend for herself. She finds an old woman named Cate at the top of the mountain, who is injured, and now, Ellie has to help Cate, to help her father. I find this book very inspiring, because it just shows, that someone as hurt and a lonely as Ellie, can still push through, and help others to help herself. I would definitely read another book by this author, I think it was very interesting.

Gracie



Most of the story is set in 1957 (18 years after the Spanish Civil War). The book is about an American boy called Daniel who is on holiday in Spain trying to capture the story of Madrid. Ana, his assistant in the hotel, is suffering under the dictatorship of Francisco Franco and keeping silent is one of the things she must do. Daniel is desperate to find the truth and along the way finds that everyone, including himself, has a secret or two. The plot is extremely engaging from the first chapter and full of mystery. The book makes you feel as if you are watching the characters on their journey towards the truth. It feels like you are with them throughout the entire book. I like how persistent Daniel is when trying to capture the real story of Spain – not the one everyone shows. Different chapters are focused on the lives of different people. Some of the characters have different opinions on General Franco and the way Spain is run but everyone must keep silent. It is set after the Spanish Civil War and mainly focuses on how the lives of working people were affected and that if anyone lost their job they wouldn't get enough food to survive. I would definitely recommend this book to 12+ who enjoy reading historical fiction as it is highly engaging and has a sense of mystery which makes you want to keep reading the book. I would read another book by the same author and I have never read anything like it before. The author makes the book informative and highly enthralling. - Leila

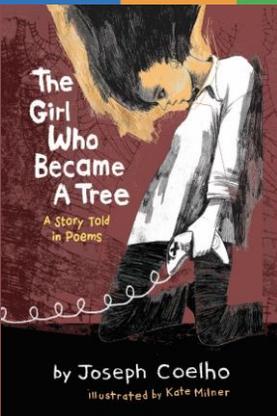


This is a mysterious book, that has you guessing from the start, and when the secret/mystery is revealed it was quite obvious, you just didn't see it coming. It is an unusual book, and very clever the way it is planned out. I like this book, but it isn't one I would read again because you know what happens, so all the mystery and guessing is gone. Tip: If you want to read this book, and understand what's happening in it, you have to read a book called the House with Chicken Legs, and then the middle of it will make a lot more sense.

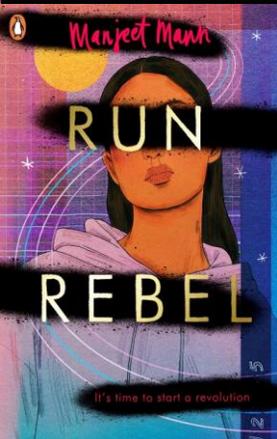
Gracie



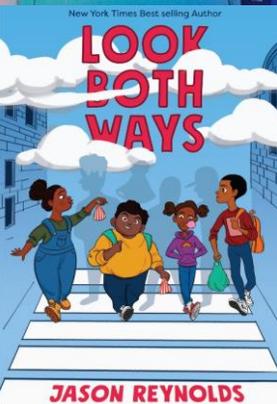
The CILIP Carnegie & Kate Greenaway Children's Book Awards



The Girl Who Became a Tree was a very interesting read, full of metaphors and fascinating insights into the psychology of grief. It was written very cleverly using verse and had layer upon layer of meaning in each poem. In the story, we follow Daphne, who is grieving her father and battling with guilt. Everything she does is somehow connected to trees, clearly representing the fact that her father, a tree surgeon, is always on her mind. At first, the story was quite difficult to understand but eventually, I learnt to enjoy puzzling out the meaning of it all. The story itself wasn't really for me but I learnt to appreciate all of the hidden meanings and how beautifully it was all written. I would recommend this book to poetry lovers for the way the story is written, however it's not really something I would read again for the story itself. - Emily



Run Rebel is such an emotional book. The story, written in verse, says so much with so little - you can feel your own heart racing whenever Amber's, the main character, is. In the story, we follow Amber, a young girl, who just wants to have all the rights she is entitled to but who is torn away from her dreams by her illiterate and abusive father. She describes her life in the poems and tells us of her and her mother's attempts to break free of her father after an inspiring lesson on the stages of Revolution. I really loved this book and was truly gripped all the way through; I felt I could connect to Amber, which I struggle to do in many other books written in verse. Additionally, I was fascinated in the range of feelings and emotions written so powerfully about. This book is beautifully written and has such an inspiring message. - Emily

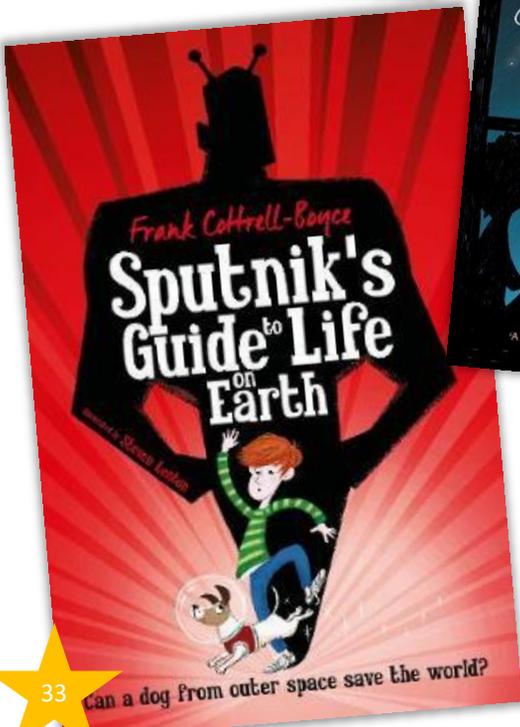
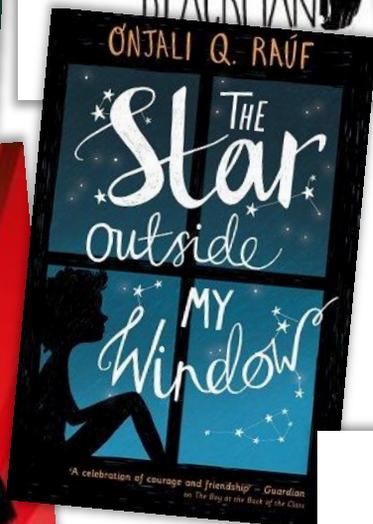
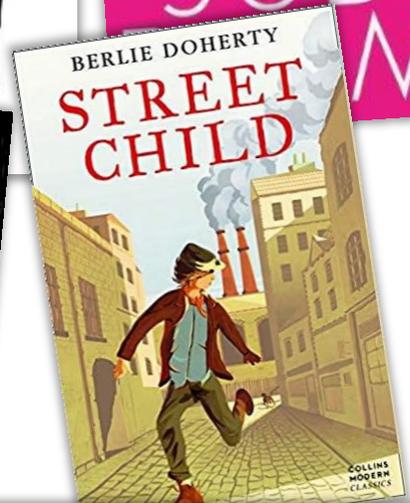
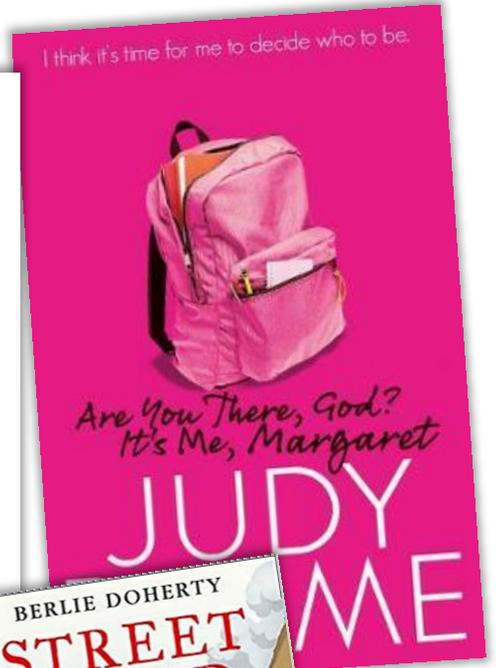
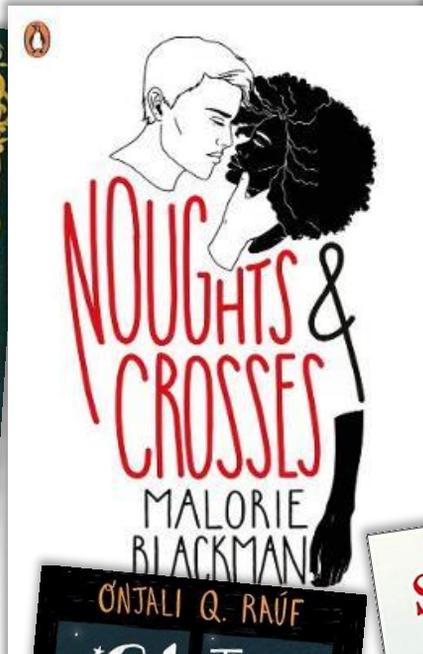
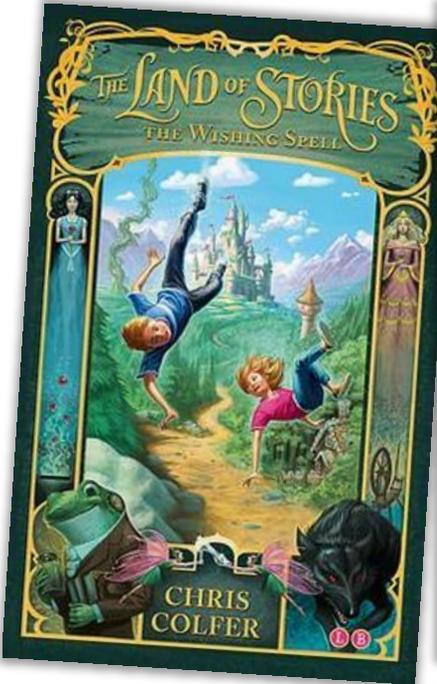


Look both ways is a heart-melting book told in 10 stories, all overlapping each other but all going in a different direction (literally too). Each story is unique to the rest and each journey home is as inspiring as the last. So much is said in so little. I truly felt like the book had devoured me and I was walking along-side the characters. Every character evoked such deep and meaningful thoughts in my head, everyone starts off fine at first but as time goes on we get to see what's on the inside of them. I could connect to each story so easily and just adored how it is almost like one story but told from each character's perspectives. I would recommend this book to people of any age, no-matter what genres they like. It's a book I think everyone I know would love. - Emily



This book was set in the stifling summer of 1976 in Ireland and told from the perspective of two teenagers Emer and Gus. For me it was a definite page-turner as it was full of excitement and surprises. The story is about two rivaling towns fighting over an unexpected visitor that turns up in Carrig Cove. When people flock from far and wide to see the new arrival, Emer and her friends Fee, Kit and Dog take to swimming with it at midnight when the crowds have subsided. Eventually, the situation gets out of hand when the two towns fight over the dolphin that has taken a liking to Carrig Cove. The writing makes you feel as though you were there in the blazing summer to witness all of the events. It really makes you sympathise with the characters. I would definitely recommend this book to everyone who loves adventure and books full of surprises. I would willingly read another book by the same author as this one was brilliant. - Leila

Empathy Day, which takes place annually in June, focuses on understanding each other better. This year's theme, walking in someone else's shoes, encouraged us to think about how other people feel, rather than only about how we feel. Having a better understanding of people who are different from ourselves makes it easier for us to get along with each other. During Accelerated Readers lessons groups of year 7 students marked Empathy Day by reading, discussing and recommending books that build empathy. Reading allow us to 'live' many different experiences in the shoes of all sorts of different characters, it instinctively builds empathy in the reader. We would like to introduce to some of the characters that our students met. You can share their experiences by reading the books in which they appear.



Empathy Encounters**Introducing...**

Aniyah. Her mother has just died and she has been sent to a foster mother who dotes on her and her brother Noah. They heard their mother turning into a star and go to all lengths to give the star the right name. Along the way they discover a secret that everyone kept from them.

Title: *The Star Outside my Window*

Author: Onjali Q. Rauf

Introduced by Leila

Empathy Encounters**Introducing...**

Jim. A young Victorian boy who is sent to the workhouse when his poorly mom dies. Eventually he escapes the workhouse but lives homeless until he is rescued by Dr Barnardo.

Title: *Street Child*

Author: Berlie Doherty

Introduced by Leo

Empathy Encounters**Introducing...**

Margaret. A girl who wants to be like everyone else, a reckless mess. She wants to be silly and careless. She doesn't want to be organised or well-behaved. She wants to be a rebel. Which will she choose?

Title: *Are You There God? It's Me Margaret?*

Author: Judy Blume

Introduced by Sophie

Empathy Encounters**Introducing...**

Prez. He's had a hard life. He now lives on a farm with a new family when a dog/person arrives with terrible news. Can Prez and Sputnik find 10 good things about Earth to stop it from being destroyed?

Title: *Sputnik's guide to Life on Earth*

Author: Frank Cottrell Boyce

Introduced by Stephan

Empathy Encounters**Introducing...**

Callum. A white skinned nought, never judged on beliefs or personality, just the first glance at the colour of his skin. Join him as he finds out that love has no boundaries. Feel his grief, his anguish, his pain. But above all his love.

Title: *Noughts and Crosses*

Author: Malorie Blackman

Introduced by Ben

Empathy Encounters**Introducing...**

Alex. A normal twelve year old girl, who along with her brother is grieving the loss of her father. When her grandmother visits and gives them a book full of fairy tales that their father read, they find themselves in a different realm. Soon they are uncovering family secrets, defending the land of stories and coming to terms with all that's happened to them.

Title: *Land of Stories (series)*

Author: Chris Colfer

Introduced by Emily



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