

Friday 28th March 2025

King James's School Newsletter

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Home School Communication

King James's School recognises the importance of effective and timely communication between school and parents/carers, and the part this plays in supporting positive relationships. Detailed information regarding home to school communication, including timeframes in responding to parental queries, can be found [here](#), in the Home School Communications Policy.

In summary:

- Please use the Contact Us form on the website for non-urgent matters.
- If your query is urgent, please call the main reception.
- If parents would like to schedule a meeting, please email admin@king-james.co.uk or call the school to make an appointment. We will try to schedule all meetings within 5 working days of the request. Due to staff having other commitments before and after school, parents should not arrive at school without an appointment and expect to see a member of staff immediately.

As always, thank you for your support.

Uniform reminder

Over the past week, we have noticed an increasing number of students wearing trainers to school that are not in line with our uniform policy. As per the policy, all students are expected to wear formal school shoes or plain black, leather, flat-soled trainers. To provide clarity, we have attached an image outlining the acceptable trainer style and those that do not meet our uniform requirements. Please kindly remind your child that they must wear appropriate footwear in line with the policy. Your support in maintaining our uniform standards is greatly appreciated.



Mobile Phones and Sleep

You have the power!

As much as your child might like to think their phone is theirs, in most cases it is paid for by the adult, which means that you have a right to control what happens with that phone. We all know how easy it is for young people to become completely distracted with their phones but when it comes to bedtime, help take the control away from them by placing the phone on downtime.



Doom scrolling becomes a habit and before we know it hours have passed, and for your child this can include missing out on vital sleep. This can lead to being late for school, not being able to concentrate in school or your child not coming into school at all as they are too exhausted. By using the parental control functions on your child's phone, you can help take that distraction away.

Here are some useful tips from internetmatters.org:

<https://www.internetmatters.org/resources/smartphones-dumb-phones-guide>

[Tips to consider when using screen time tools | Internet Matters](#)



Harrogate Competitive Festival for Music, Speech & Drama

Stellan C, one of our Year 9 students, played piano at the Harrogate Festival and won his section, playing beautifully. Well done Stellan.



Comic Relief

Thank you again for your generous donations to Comic Relief. We raised a grand total of £1540.00, a fantastic amount, which will make such a difference to many worthwhile causes.



Drama News

Congratulations to Year 13 A Level and Year 11 GCSE Drama students who both had their practical exam performances in the last couple of weeks to a visiting examiner and did exceptionally well. We are so proud of them all.

Hockey Success

One of our Year 7 students, Ivy Reed, gained a place in the North Yorkshire Field Hockey Team and the Indoor Mentors Team U13s. A fantastic achievement, congratulations Ivy!

Figure Skating Success

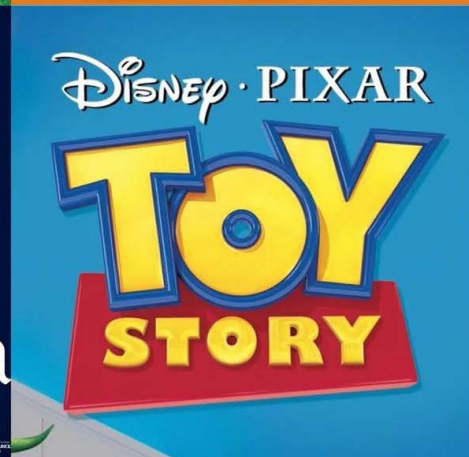
Emily K, one of our Year 8 students, achieved 2nd place in the Platinum level, under 13s, figure skating competition, held at Bradford Ice Arena.

Many congratulations Emily.



House Drama

- AIREDALE PRESENTS 'TANGLED'.
- WHARFEDALE PRESENTS 'TOY STORY'.
- SWALEDALE PRESENTS 'THE LORAX'.
- NIDDERDALE PRESENTS 'MATILDA'.



The Week Ahead: 31st March 2025

Day	Session	Year	Time	Location
Mon				
Tue	House Drama auditions	All	3.30pm	In school
Wed	Year 12 Parents Evening	12	4.30-7.30pm	Online
Thur	House Drama auditions	All	3.30pm	In school
Fri	SPRING TERM ENDS			

North of England Brass Band Championships

Following their recent local success last week, several KJS brass players (Ella G, Alicia M, Dan H, Sam O-H and Josh T) have been out in force once again this weekend, this time at the Gala Theatre in Durham, competing with Knaresborough Silver Band in the Fourth Section of the North of England regional Brass Band Championships.

The band were up against some keen competition but managed to win their section playing Andrea Price's original work for brass band entitled "I, Daedalus" (a musical retelling of the Greek myth of Icarus, who flew too close to the sun). Nationally renowned brass adjudicator Duncan Beckley commented that their win was "thoroughly deserved" and he was very impressed by the conduct and participation of the many young people in the band.

The band, and its student members, are now looking forward to their preparations for the National Finals of the National Brass Band Championship competition, which they will contest in September at Cheltenham Racecourse.

If anyone from the KJS community (students, parents, staff) is interested in learning to play a brass instrument please get in touch with Miss Meadows for further information.



Active Citizenship

In PSHCE, for the Learning Cycle 3 Assessment, students are asked to complete an act of Citizenship to support their local community. Tyger H in year 9 decided to have her hair cut and donate it to The Little Princess Trust, who make wigs for children and young people who have lost their hair due to cancer and other conditions. Tyger thought this was a lovely way to help others. She had it cut the night before her birthday this week and has donated 18 inches!

She also took part in the Twilight Walk on Saturday night from King James to raise money for St Michaels Hospice and so far, she raised just over £100 in sponsorship. We are sure you will agree that this is an outstanding act of effort and consideration. Well done Tyger.



Assemblies

Mr Gordon's assemblies, which focus on protected characteristics and the importance of promoting inclusion, respect and fairness in school and society continue into next week. These assemblies aim to inspire students to respect diversity, challenge prejudice and help create a welcoming environment for all.



Careers Fair

A reminder about our Careers Fair, which will take place on Wednesday 23rd April. We will be welcoming employers, trainers, colleges and universities into school to meet with our students and parents and we look forward to welcoming you to this event.

Day session, students only (10am-3pm): During the day, students will spend time interacting with our visitors, asking questions and researching the choices open to them after school.

The event will help students understand their Post 16-18 choices and to think about their next steps.

Early Evening, parents and students (4pm-6.30pm): the event will be open for parents and students, and our Year 11 and Year 13 students are welcome to attend this session.

Careers Work Experience



1. Law Work Experience

Magic Circle Law Firm Linklaters, the worlds biggest Immigration Law Firm Fragomen and the UK's leading Law University, ULaw are offering students a whole day of legal knowledge, workshops and insights to the sector for aspiring lawyers. This will be an immersive one day experience online via Zoom where students will get the chance to learn more about law, what it takes to make your way to the top in a law firm and take part in some legal case workshops to really put your skills to the test as a commercial lawyer.

Key Details:

- Law Work Experience during the Easter Holidays
- Tuesday 15th April 10am - 3pm
- Employers involved are; Linklaters, Fragomen and University of Law
- An opportunity to take part in legal workshops, hear from two international law firms as well as the UK's biggest university offering law degrees
- Networking opportunities in the virtual booths
- Certificate of completion sent out to all students who take part in the day

If you would like to secure your place, please apply on the below link.

Application Link: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/YP-GetintoLaw-WEx>



2. Business & Finance Work Experience:

Four big firms KPMG, BDO, Grant Thornton, S&W and CIMA are offering practical workshops to show you what it's really like working in the industry and how you could grow your career as a successful accountant, consultant or tax adviser. You will have the opportunity to work on business projects, conduct a profit and loss on a company, work on a consulting project as well as getting the chance to pitch your ideas and work to the professionals across the day.

On top of this there will be dedicated workshop / networking booths so you can have 1-1 conversations with people from these companies to get your questions answered and find out about all the key programmes on offer, deadlines to apply as well as summer work experience opportunities along with graduate and apprenticeship programmes.

Key Details:

- Business & Accounting Work Experience during the Easter Holidays
- Thursday 17th April 10am - 3pm
- Employers involved are; KPMG, BDO, Grant Thornton, S&W, CIMA and the University of Law Business School
- An opportunity to take part in business and accounting workshops, hear from 5 international firms as well as the UK's biggest university offering business degrees
- Networking opportunities in the virtual booths
- Certificate of completion sent out to all students who take part in the day

If you would like to secure your place, please apply on the below link.

Application Link: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/Business-Finance-Easter>

Oxbridge Roadshow 2025

On Thursday afternoon a group of our YR12 students joined other Sixth Form students from schools across the Harrogate area to find out more about what it's like to study at the universities of Oxford and Cambridge.

The event, which took place at St Aidan's High School, consisted of a Q&A style information session with academics from the universities and 9 current Oxbridge undergraduates representing multiple subject areas and disciplines.

The YR12s had the opportunity to speak to the undergraduates studying in the subject areas that they are considering and picked up tips about applications and university life.

We hope this is the first step towards another group of KJS Sixth Form students making very aspirational applications in the future.



Year 10 Oxbridge Event

On Thursday, a group of year 10 students were lucky enough to attend an Oxbridge University meeting, hosted at Harrogate Grammar School.

As one student said, "It was an amazing experience, and really interesting". Everyone there was lovely, and it was great to be able to ask questions to current and past students. One of the speakers even went to King James's school themselves, so it was really good to be able to speak with them and see how it really is possible to achieve big things in higher education.

Aidan L, Year 10

Teachers' Talk Part 2 – Building Positive Habits

Following the success of our first Teachers' Talk video, which focused on small, everyday habits that help staff manage their well-being, we are excited to launch Teachers' Talk Part 2. This time, we're showcasing the hobbies and activities our staff love to do outside of school that help them unwind, recharge, and take care of their mental health.

In our latest video, we've had some fantastic contributions from staff:

- Mr. Wray shared strategies for managing stress and staying calm under pressure.
- Miss Key discussed the importance of relationships and connections, both in and out of school.
- Mr. Garside focused on the power of routines and how they can create stability and success.
- Mrs. Haughton talked about mindset and how a positive outlook can make all the difference.

<https://youtu.be/L-hQyWEIFrc?feature=shared>

As part of this, students took part in a form-time task that included a video of teachers talking about their hobbies and self-care routines. I think it's important for students to reflect on their own hobbies and passions, as doing things we love has a massive impact on our well-being.

During the session, students worked through a well-being toolkit, thinking about small and manageable changes they could add to their daily lives to improve their own mental health. The aim was to encourage them to develop positive habits that will support them not just in school, but in life beyond KJS.

A huge thank you to all the staff who got involved in this project. Your insight and openness have been invaluable, and it's so important for students to see their teachers speaking honestly about well-being and sharing personal experiences of how they manage it. These discussions help normalise conversations around mental health and show students that taking care of ourselves is something we all have to work on.

At KJS, we're committed to creating a culture where well-being is a priority for both staff and students. We hope Teachers' Talk Part 2 continues to spark important conversations and encourages everyone to take small but meaningful steps toward self-care.



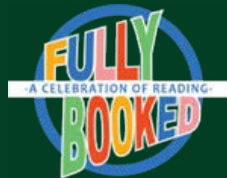


National Reading Champions Quiz

An enthusiastic team of Year 7 and Year 8 students took part in the Yorkshire heat of the National Reading Champions Quiz 2025. Competing online against 23 teams from 14 different schools, the students were challenged with eight rounds of questions testing their knowledge of book characters, cover designs, authors and illustrators. It was a closely fought contest in which our team almost made it to the podium. Their passion for books as well as demonstrating commitment and support for all the contestants did not go unnoticed, and they were selected as winners of the 'Participation Award.' We are immensely proud of our team's performance and would like to congratulate Aimée O (Y8), Hazel B (Y7), Joseph T (Y7) and Bethany W (Y7).



The results are in for all the competitions on offer throughout our literary festival - Fully Booked! A Celebration of Reading:



Winner of the Staff Treasure Hunt:

Year 7 student, Darnte W, successfully identified 26 book characters who members of staff were dressed up as.

Winners of the 'Dress Your Potato' competition judged by Mr Thomas (Head of Art):

- 1st: Abbi M (Y10)
- 2nd: Aimee O (Y8)
- 3rd: Elodie C and Evie H (Y7)



Class Prize: Learning Support Department



The Skrentny Creative Writing Competition

Our annual short story competition was set up in 2017 in honour of Barnabas Skrentny who provides generous sponsorship. A law graduate from UCL, Barnabas went on to study theology at Regent College, Vancouver, receiving a Master of Christian Studies degree. He is currently a full time Pastor with City Gates Church, London and a philanthropist. Barnabas also owns, and runs, The Orchard Club in Knaresborough alongside his charity team members.

This year's theme was 'Dear Diary', and students and staff were asked to submit no than 1,000 words either as a poem, short story, monologue, graphic novel, diary entry or even song lyrics. The competition is always hugely popular and our judge, Claire Margerison (Content Lead at Cambridge University Press and Assessment) had the difficult job of selecting three winners and a special commendation. We would like to thank everyone who entered and many congratulations to the winners. Here are the judge's comments and the stories are available for you to read at the end of this newsletter:

KS3/4 - Eva A - 'I thought this story told so much in such a short amount of time. It left me with lots of questions and wanting to read more. I also really liked the way Eva imagined how someone might feel during "lockdown" during the Spanish Flu!'

KS5 - Faith H - 'This story felt like it was a perfectly dark comedy. It immediately made me want to know more, and I felt the main character's voice was really strong. I also like that it was set in 2004, as that definitely makes sense that the internet and blogs weren't as popular then, so it may be easier to share recipes/confessions!'

Staff - Lucy Navier - 'This short piece perfectly captured the feeling of the monotony of life but the ways in which you can find joy/hope in them. I loved this piece'.

A special commendation was awarded to Year 13 student Leonie S - 'This piece was really inventive in the way that it interpreted the prompt of "dear diary" and the descriptions of an imagined decaying world were horrifying and fantastic!'



Winners of the Graphic Novel Bookmark Competition

Winning House: Swaledale

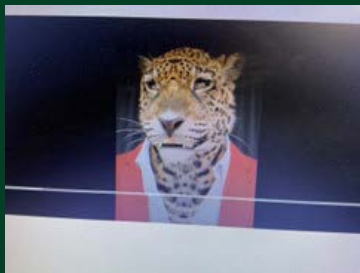
1st: Lucie N (Y9)

2nd: Hazel B (Y7)



The Masked Reader

Throughout our 'Fully Booked' week, students watched 2-3 videos of staff in hidden identities reading book extracts. The challenge was for students to guess who was behind the mask and the book they were reading. On World Book Day, the masked teachers revealed themselves and the winning house was:

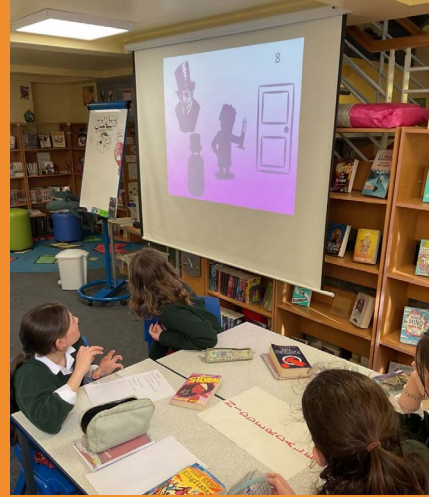


Wharfedale with 294 points!

A big thank you to Mr Phillips for making this such a fun and exciting event!

Pageturners Competition:

Overall Winner: Sabrina H (Y7) holding her diorama of Refugee Boy by Benjamin Zephaniah.



Accelerated Reader House 'Mega Book Quiz' Competition:

1st: Swaledale (151 points)
2nd: Nidderdale (140 points)
3rd: Airedale (135 points)

SPECIAL ARTS AWARD NOMINATIONS

A little extra support to realise creative ambition!

Knaresborough Town Council received £1000 as a thank you from the film company who recently visited our town, and we'd like to use this money to give back and support creativity in Knaresborough by awarding 10 individuals or projects with a Special Arts Award of £100.

We are asking residents to nominate people or projects and organisations that would benefit from or deserve a gift of £100 Special Arts Award. Please fill in the nomination form and send it to the Town Clerk.

FILL IN THE NOMINATION FORM NOW

For more Information:

☎ 01423 864 080

@ clerke@knaresboroughtowncouncil.gov.uk

🌐 www.knaresboroughtowncouncil.gov.uk



NOMINATIONS TO BE SUBMITTED BY:
THURSDAY 1ST MAY 2025



TOWN CLERK WITH ACTOR
KEEPER SUTHERLAND

Leonie S - Skrentny Student Winner

*"Day two-hundred and sixty-eight:
It's all the same anyway."*

A set of grimy, once-purple Doc Martens gingerly step over a growing pool of crimson on the concrete. She twitches as a fly hums by her ear, its buzzing emulating the rapid beating of her heart; she appears more bothered by its presence than the decaying creature by her feet, than the bulging veins and the empty eyes that once belonged to a person. A son, a brother, even a father... reduced to nothing but a yellowing husk, left to melt into the floor of a petrol station. She swallows down the growing lump in her throat.

"It's near November, I think. It's all frosty outside, like, my fingers are bright red. 'Guess you can't see that, though... no snow or anything, but, like, when's it ever snow in England anyways?"

In one stripy-gloved, pale hand is clutched a scraped audiotape, the red recording indicator struggling to light up in step with her stumbled words. She never was much of a public speaker- perhaps it's a positive



that there's no-one to hear her mindless, makeshift attempt at a final diary. Her tiny imprint on what's left of the world. A flick of her head- frizzy, brown curls lapping at her eyelashes with the motion- and

she turns toward the garage connected to the station, crunching broken glass beneath her shoes with a swing over the shattered window. A satisfying sound, all considering.

"Means it's almost Christmas. Maybe I could find decorations in someone's attic, or something... maybe the explosion didn't reach the North Pole, y'know? ... Sorry- this is stupid. Sorry. I'm gonna- I'm getting food and, lighters, and stuff. Business as usual."

The greying walls are no respite from the cold. Her boots reverberate heavy steps through the aisles- adorned with spilled packets and smashed jars underfoot, ones she darts around as if she's reliving the night of the eruption. As if people are still relentlessly writhing at her feet, bleeding from every orifice biologically possible, tears becoming rivers of red. The incessant hacking coughs and pained screams ring and echo even now. Two-hundred and sixty-eight days- or, close enough.

Brown eyes hazily blink herself out of the memory and flutter between shelves- noting the distinct lack of cans and in-date best-before's with furrowing brows. The tape spins aimlessly, reminding her of her silence with the incessant buzzing of the motor. She gathers the few cans left behind into her coat pockets, wiping her nose with the back of her layered sleeve. A deep, grounding breath:

"Hi, sorry. Don't wanna waste the tape- 'was a lucky find. I could write an actual diary, I guess, but this is how people do it in the movies, right? Or, just in case the person who finds this happens to be blind or, I dunno, illiterate. If there is... someone. I hope so."

Her nose twitches, not dissimilarly to a meerkat, head perking upwards toward the door in response to the whistling wind. Each small sound spikes her heart rate, nowadays. But in the battle of fight or flight, her instinct is freeze, and standing still is about as effective to the gurgling, lunging things that were once human as trying to talk it out would be. A small exhale and flare of her nostrils lets her muscles relax once more. Nothing's there.

She exits through the door this time. A sense of ... normality, even despite the full-body strength it takes her to barely pull it open.

"So, basically, the shops closer to me are all out- I think I said yesterday. It's almost the same out here. Everything's spilled or out of date or stuff I'd never eat, ever ... which is a lot of stuff, annoyingly. Maybe my grandma was right when she kept saying I was too picky ... whatever. I cleared out the cans, but I dunno. 'Might have to leave."

A small, pitiful laugh. The brutish creature is emitting the rotting smell she blocked out before as she wanders past it again. Her eyes lock onto it, staring aimlessly. A rat scurries over her boots- leaving behind bright purple claw prints where the dust is smeared away in the rush, a detail oddly comforting. There are still living things among her. It's not only her and them- but her and the bats, the mice, the rats. The creatures everyone else discarded; the creatures that, until now, had noses upturned to them.

Maybe she does belong here. Maybe she always did. If only she noticed it earlier.

"It's funny, I always wanted to leave, and then when

I actually could, I put it off. My plan was to pass my GCSEs, then my A-Levels, and then fly to New York and be a writer, but I think everyone in New York is a writer, so that's stupid. Sorry. Staying close was prob'ly more realistic, but I don't even like England, so. It's- a little better without the people, I guess?"

Rambling as she wanders the road home, squelching still-fizzing remnants of rain underfoot- well, if you can call the acid-like substance that settled everywhere post-explosion rain. Her words trip into one another. Deep breaths intend to slow them, but- she instead makes the decision to sit against the side of the road, to take a break. Legs cross into one another, in the same way they would on the carpet of the book corner of her insignificant little primary school.

"Let's just- get- to the point, yeah? Yeah. I was ... trying to ignore it. Someone's gotta repopulate ... right? But ..."

It's a weak attempt at a joke. Her fingers, reddened with cold, reach to her ear, her breath catching- and return to the centre of her fading vision, dripping with blood in the same way she'd watched the rest of the world succumb to.

"Lilah McKenzie, signing- out. Don't forget about me, yeah? ..."

Please, don't forget."



Eva A - Skrentny Student Winner

Dear Diary,

November 11th 1918

Sorry I haven't written for a while, these past few days have really taken a toll on my health. The nausea and pain have taken over my whole body, not allowing me to pick up this pen and write a single word.

I'm looking out onto the endless fields mingling with a thick layer of frost. I can see the fog approaching, suffocating them. Trapping them in a cold prison. It reflects exactly what I'm feeling; trapped, helpless, can't escape what's coming for me. I close my curtains in the hope that the bitter morning air won't enter uninvited. Unlike my gloomy thoughts.

On a positive note, Mother brought me a new pen yesterday with a beautiful black exterior complete with golden swirls that mesmerize me everytime I look at it. It gave me the motivation to write to you again. Although there are no known cures for influenza, I believe writing to you is relieving me of my discomfort. As well as my loneliness. I hate staying at home all day with the privilege of going to school and seeing my friends being snatched from me. I'm not allowed to go anywhere and see anyone with my illness so it doesn't spread through our town. It is really just a curse in disguise.

Anyway, my headache is getting worse, I will speak to you tomorrow...

Bonnie

Dear Diary,

October 18th 2024

Since moving to this town last month, I just can't get used to this house. The whispers when no one is around, the creaking of the floorboards and the spine

chilling feeling I get when sitting on the windowsill in my bedroom. The more days that pass, the more it bothers me. The whispers are getting louder, the creaking is getting closer. I need to escape.

The walk from the house to town was about ten minutes and the further I walked, the more reassuring my surroundings became. It went from a misty, isolated environment to a welcoming town hidden in a blur of autumnal colours. There were more houses here, every building unique and beautiful. Dressed in mahogany reds and marmalade oranges matching their background. Why couldn't we have moved into one of these?

As I carried on through the town, I met more and more people. Chester, a bubbly baker who granted me a free cinnamon roll. Dorothy, a kind, elderly woman who owns the antique shop next to a small, snug library where her daughter Clara works, who is stern but nice. As I ambled out of the local cafe holding a steaming hot chocolate, I was met with a mesmerising sky of yellows and pinks, a sudden reminder that I needed to get home. As I hurried back to the house, the colours began to fade into a dull, grey sky. Then, all of a sudden, something caught my eye. I stopped. A head buried in a tatty book underneath a birch tree. I began to approach her before my dad called for me through the kitchen window, "Dinner time!" "One second Dad!" I shouted before turning back to look at the girl once more before realising that she was gone. "Dad scared her off!" I thought.

Anyway, I hope I see her again, I haven't met any other kids yet.

Bye diary,

Freya

Dear Diary,

October 19th 2024

My hopes rose with the sun, knowing that the town isn't as bad as I thought. I opened my curtains to be met with the daily sight of fog suffocating the vast fields in front of me. As well as a familiar person sat at the foot of a tree outside my house.

I quickly got dressed, and rushed outside. A harsh gust of wind slapped me in the face as if not letting me continue. I slowly walked toward her, "Excuse me," I said. Startled, she jolted back, her head knocking into the tree trunk.

"I'm so sorry!" I exclaimed.

The girl just sat there staring, almost as if she had never seen a human being before.

"Are you okay?" I was confused how she wasn't hurt after her collision with the tree.

She nodded quietly, moving her greasy, black hair behind her ear.

"I'm Freya," It seemed like I was doing all the talking.

"Bonnie," She replied with a slight smile.

I invited her to go to the cafe in town with me for breakfast. The last thing I wanted to do was spend another minute in that house. She agreed hesitantly before standing up to reveal a pretty beige dress and pinafore. She clutched her book tightly as we walked along the path, fog clinging onto us as we exited the hazy environment.

When we got in the cafe, Bonnie froze, looking around in awe at all the cakes and food. I just assumed she hadn't been to this cafe.

"What are you going to order?" I asked, interrupting her thoughts.

"Oh! Just a banana."

"Are you sure that is enough?"

She nodded, looking confused.

After we both ordered, we sat at the nearest table. The awkward silence gnawed at my skin urging me to start another conversation. "So you like reading?"

"Very much, and writing," She replied.

"Me too!" I don't know if I was happier that we shared the same interests or that she spoke more than 3 words.

We began speaking about Anne of Green Gables and the Wizard of Oz which made me realise that Bonnie liked reading old fashioned books. I also realised that after a confused look she gave when I mentioned Harry Potter.

Perhaps the book she was holding was an old story too. I was intrigued. So intrigued that, I know it is wrong but I began reading it when she left to order a drink.

It was a diary! Her diary! I read the date: *November 11th 1918* 1918? Surely that is a mistake. I flicked through the rest of the pages. 1918, 1918, 1918. I read through them. She was ill? It all makes sense now. The way she was dressed, the old books, the banana! Who is this girl?

Freya



Faith H - Skrentny Student Winner

Dear Diary,

If anyone is reading this, count this as a form of confession. Everyone has skeletons in their closets. Some are bigger than others. The skeletons in my closet are bigger than you'd expect.

If this is the first time you are reading this, I fear I should add some backstory. I am a chef/baker. I have quite a few recipes posted online, and in a published book. I am quite well known around my area, for my recipes of course.

Depending on the type of person you are, if you have a passion for cooking, you may have read a recipe at one point. Whether it was online to learn how to bake a cake for your friend's birthday, or a family recipe for your grandma's famous casserole, you have probably found yourself reading one.

If you have seen recipes, especially online, you will have come across a little story above the recipe.

An introduction.

We all know that no one reads those.

Why would you?

You just want to get to the recipe, don't you?

Those little introductions, the little stories, they are pointless. I have set out to prove to society that you will always somehow find a way to miss the most obvious submissions.

I suppose I should begin to explain why this is a confession, rather than just a regular diary entry.

I have a few, irregular hobbies.

Writing my recipes is hard enough, having to try it time and time again, just to ensure they work every single time. But trying to come up with a whole story, before I even write the recipe, is even harder to do.

So I use it to admit to some of the things I've done, using it as a way to brag to the authorities about how incompetent they are.

It's exhilarating to confess this way, in such a public way, with the chance of getting arrested at any minute. I use my real name for my recipes, my declarations. Anyone could search me up, find me, take me in. The feeling, the excitement, makes my life so much less boring than it has been in the last years.

I've tried confessing, but no one ever believes me. I suppose they are right to think I am joking. Who would believe that someone like me would do such horrible things? Who would believe that?

I have no remorse for what I did. They all deserved it. Each and every one of them.

Dear Diary,

They were talking about me on the news today. "The notorious Ravenville killer strikes again".

I sit by myself and watch the news while typing up my recipes, confessing my sins in each and every one of them.

When I did it. How I did it. Why I did it.

It's a shock no one has caught on yet. I am not subtle, at all.

Although, I have lived my life almost as a double agent, a regular boring looking baker by day... and by night? Well I am sure you already know that if you have found these extracts.

I used to make bets with myself how long it would take them to figure me out, years later, it hasn't happened yet.

Only one person has ever read through my stories and has genuinely questioned it. That old lady - by the name of Elise White - is more competent than the entire police and detective force in the entirety of my state.

It was unfortunate for them that the poor little old lady thought it was some Halloween prank and just ignored what I wrote. If she had snitched, they would have finally caught me.

You would have figured it out quicker.

Dear Diary,

I turned the news on this morning and saw a very interesting headline.

"The Ravenville killer, caught at last!"

Oh if only they knew. The guy they claimed was me - a guy, mid 20s, tall - just so happened to be in the wrong place at the wrong time. Well, that sucks for him.

Just finished my newest recipe. This one was for a treacle tart - got the inspiration for the recipe from binge watching movies over the weekend.

Shocking, even people as cold-hearted as me can have favourite movies.

Back to the matter at hand, I did publish a new recipe today, circling around my latest endeavour. Mark the date - Friday the 9th of July, 2004.

The dire incompetence of the detectives around here is actually shocking. My confidence levels have never been higher.

I know that they say 'there is a thin line between confidence and arrogance' but when you're in my situation, self-assurance is a given.

It's not ego talking, I just know I'm good. I'm going to keep bragging until the day I die.

Dear Diary,

I think someone might be on to me.

The same person keeps buying or commenting on all my recipes.

An anonymous username. user38275600509. They've been commenting the same thing on all my recipes 'I know who you are'. Like, yeah? I have my full name in my username.

At least someone is appreciating my work.

At least someone is getting closer.

Took you long enough.

Lucy N - Skrentny Staff Winner

Dear Diary

Another grey January morning,
same old routine

Groundhog Day.

Check in with my mood, how
am I feeling today? Accept those
feelings, don't fight them, that's the
advice. Not as easy as it sounds.

Turn a corner. The sky! It's
beautiful. The colours, vibrant and
glowing

Glowing as if the sky is ablaze.
Bathing the world with crimson
light, igniting a lifting of the soul,
awakening magic.

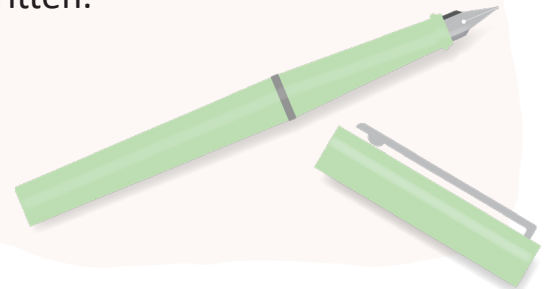
Although fading away, the moon is
still visible

Taking on the pink hue of the sky
Existing in harmony, the end of one
day overlapping with the start of
another.

The transition from darkness
into light. My mood lifts; a new
beginning, a new day to cherish.

Not all days are positive, but there
are positives in every day if you
look hard enough.

Each day is a gift to be seized, a
chance to live. A blank page in my
diary, a new chapter waiting to be
written.



Massive congratulations to our Skrentny competition winners. We hope you have enjoyed reading our winning entries as much as we have. It's amazing to see such talent among our very own students and staff.

