



**PRAHRAN
HIGH
SCHOOL**

2020
**THE PHS
NEWS #8**

COURAGE & PRIDE

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**CREATIVITY | CURIOSITY | CHALLENGE | CHARACTER
MAKE AN IMPACT**

COURAGE, KINDNESS & LIVING OUR VALUES

Last week as we began Wellbeing Wednesday, I spoke to the students at digital assembly about courage, strength and holding true to our values. I am so proud of how students and staff have recommitted to Learning@Home 2.0 in these most unsettling of times. As we began our focus on wellbeing, I connected the courage shown by our students to the themes of a book that has always been special to me.

For many reasons, we sought to frame our approach that day around the power of stories. And here in The PHS News, the theme continues. I thought I'd share what I talked about here too as the message seems relevant for us all. We can't forget that we are all 'in this together'.

This is just an extract of my thinking that I talked to the school about that day. It's not polished writing, rather more of a conversation starter and reflections that I hoped might resonate for our students as they logged on to join.

'As we begin our focus on wellbeing today, part of our focus together is going to be on the importance, the power and the beauty of stories. I'm going to share my reflections on a story with you, a novel that I've just re-read in the extra hours at home I have in lockdown. It's actually a book I've read many times. It's one of my favourite stories of all time.

It's called To Kill a Mockingbird and it was written by the late Harper Lee. Some of you will have read this inspiring book already, many of you might read it one day soon. (I'm sure, like me, you're finding more time to read at the moment!)

It's a powerful story of humanity, courage, strength, friendship, growing up and life in America during the Great Depression, well before the true rise of the Black civil rights movement. It's a story that deeply connects also with our school values: creativity, curiosity, challenge and character. Especially character – and how courage sits within our idea of character.

There are so many characters in To Kill a Mockingbird who I admire deeply. I admire Atticus and Jem, Tom and Calpurnia and, of course, I admire the brave, spirited and youngest character in this story - her name is Scout.

Scout sees the world in a different way, in contrast to some of her family and many of her friends. Looking through Scout's eyes, the story un-folds and we learn more about the dreadful prejudices towards Black people in the South of America at that point in history.

It is also through Scout too that we are ultimately uplifted, realising that deep inside this young girl lies a questioning, sensitive, authentic, loving and determined soul. I often think about some characters in this book, especially young people like Jem and Scout, when I reflect on truly good people dealing with complexities of life.

Re-reading To Kill a Mockingbird, also reminds me that it can be challenging to stand up for what you believe, to stand up for what is right and to stand up to do your very best, even when times are tough. When we do this, when we stay the course, when we try our hardest, when we do what's right – we can always look ourselves in the eye and feel proud.

As we have continued Learning@Home 2.0, I have been proud of so many of you. You continue to show me that you are living and believing our school values. None of us knew that we would be Learning@Home again and like me I know you were enthusiastic to come back to school. We will be back again one day.

And yet, here you are, you're with us on my screen, you are learning and you are doing a really good job of managing such a challenging time. Like Jem, Scout and Atticus in one of my favourite stories, you show me that you are still trying your best – whatever your best is, as we approach each new day.

You also continue to show me that you are young people of such positive, courageous and kind character. This is a hard time for us all. But you show up, you do the right thing and you have a go. That is all I ask, and I notice all the good you do."

I hope this finds you healthy and working through these extremely challenging times as positively as possible. Education always is most efficacious when the adventure is a partnership between home and school. To my mind, that's never been more important.

Enjoy this latest edition of The PHS News.

Be kind to yourself.



Nathan Chisholm
Foundation Principal



2020 PRINCIPAL'S WRITING COMPETITION

Finding joy in stories also connects us to our annual Principal's Writing Competition 2020 which we launched last weekend on social media. This week I have emailed all students, asked staff to promote this opportunity actively at school and now we share the details here for families too.

The theme this year is UNPUTDOWNABLE and is an opportunity for our kids to go in different, narrative directions. I hope to encourage them to just simply have the chance to write freely, creatively and embrace their wild and crazy imaginations in any way they like.

The power of stories has been a theme of many of our interactions throughout the past week. Competition entries are due to me by the end of August.

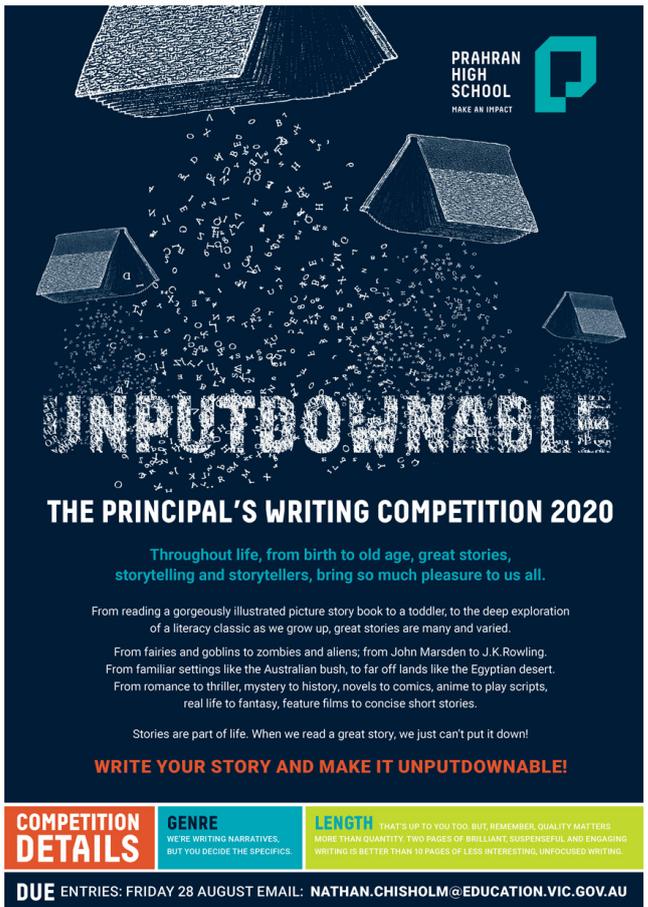
I can't wait to read some UNPUTDOWNABLE stories again this year for my PWC 2020!

INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC – THRIVING!

I am so pleased to report that our instrumental students have been exemplifying values by demonstrating creativity and character towards their instruments and learning. They have also been curious about new skills and are embracing the challenge!

Student attendance to individual lessons has been so consistent, highlighting their willingness and eagerness to persist, despite obvious challenges. New skills and techniques are being mastered. New songs are being learnt and confidence is steadily growing as students express themselves with increasing competency.

Our focus on fostering positive home-school partnership is going well and it's a joy to see families so proud of the accomplishments of their young musicians. It is such a thrill to help the students improve.



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MAKE AN IMPACT 

UNPUTDOWNABLE

THE PRINCIPAL'S WRITING COMPETITION 2020

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From reading a gorgeously illustrated picture story book to a toddler, to the deep exploration of a literacy classic as we grow up, great stories are many and varied.

From fairies and goblins to zombies and aliens; from John Marsden to J.K. Rowling. From familiar settings like the Australian bush, to far off lands like the Egyptian desert. From romance to thriller, mystery to history, novels to comics, anime to play scripts, real life to fantasy, feature films to concise short stories.

Stories are part of life. When we read a great story, we just can't put it down!

WRITE YOUR STORY AND MAKE IT UNPUTDOWNABLE!

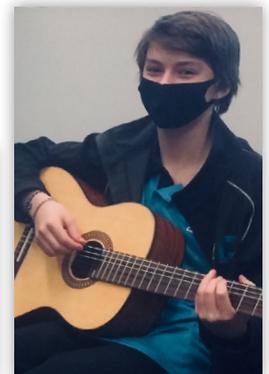
COMPETITION DETAILS	GENRE WE'RE WRITING NARRATIVES, BUT YOU DECIDE THE SPECIFICS.	LENGTH THAT'S UP TO YOU TOO, BUT REMEMBER, QUALITY MATTERS MORE THAN QUANTITY. TWO PAGES OF BRILLIANT, SUSPENSEFUL AND ENGAGING WRITING IS BETTER THAN 10 PAGES OF LESS INTERESTING, UNFOCUSSED WRITING.
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DUE ENTRIES: FRIDAY 28 AUGUST EMAIL: NATHAN.CHISHOLM@EDUCATION.VIC.GOV.AU

I congratulate and commend all students and their families. It is wonderful to witness students flourishing with their chosen instrument, expressing their creativity wholeheartedly.

I encourage you all to keep up the great work and to continue with the positive start you've made to Learning@Home 2.0.

Sam Buckley





ART & DESIGN

Last week in Art and Design Club the students requested a focus on realism, so we went back to basics with some tonal drawing.

We were proud of what we achieved in just 45 minutes!

Lara Karasavvidis



STAYING AFLOAT IN CHOPPY WATERS

Just like ships at sea, we're all navigating choppy waters these days. The good news is that staying on course during traumatic times is very possible. PHS students and staff are a resilient bunch, and with the help of each other, we will get through the isolation soon enough. Here are some reminders about staying afloat in the coming weeks.

Have a purpose:

Knowing where you're headed is helpful during times of chaos. Sometimes, you need to work hard to create this for yourself. As a young person, you might have several purposes – to learn and engage with school, to remain connected to your friends and teachers, to be an active member of your family, to look after your pet or even a plant. Having purpose gives us direction and a reason to engage with something meaningful, and that is good for our wellbeing.

Routine:

When things around you are uncertain, stick to what you know and can control. Routine gives us a path forward, and even little things – using the same cereal bowl each morning, setting up your desk a certain way, eating lunch at the same time, going for a run or walk after finishing school for the day – provides familiarity and comfort in weird times. Don't underestimate the stability that comes from simply going to bed and waking up at the same time each day, even when you don't have to.

Relationships:

Virtually all creatures, and especially mammals, thrive on connection. We humans need each other for companionship, shared resources, safety, community. Right now, our in-person relationships might be very restricted to our household, but don't forget to connect with others digitally. Just saying hi through a chat platform can let someone know you're thinking about them, and it also invites them to connect with you, no matter how small. Even though you might feel lonely, none of us are alone. Reach out.

Laughter:

Laughing binds us to others. Finding humour in movies, memes, old family stories, pets, weird dance moves and friendships is good for our souls. Scientifically speaking, laughter releases endorphins, "feel-good" chemicals from our brain, creating a powerful sense of wellbeing and even pain relief. Ask people you care about what is the funniest thing they've heard or seen and give it a go. Remember – you cannot keep a straight face watching your Nan or Pop doing the floss.

Erin Immel



YEAR 9 CURRICULUM 2021

This year we have been researching and planning to co-create our Year 9 curriculum approach to begin in 2021. James Fidler has led this collaborative work with a dedicated team of students and staff. We were delighted to share this work and the overview structure of **IMPACT9** to begin in 2021 at our most recent School Council meeting.

At School Council, we had a rich discussion with all members having the opportunity to provide feedback and ask questions. We were very pleased that the feedback at Council was very positive and the planning team are progressing development further.

We are excited about **IMPACT9**, the curriculum and learning model that we have developed to begin next year, and we are particularly proud of the development process which has been a genuine student-staff collaboration. The powerful contribution of our students must never be underestimated as we plan side-by-side for their future.

The team at school are now working hard on curriculum unit development, and the process for students to choose Arts, Design and Technology Specialisation selections which will occur this term.

As an overview executive summary, our Year 9 curriculum, **IMPACT9** is designed to achieve the following key drivers:

- **IMPACT9** is a co-created, future-focused curriculum designed for Prahran High School students in 2021
- At Prahran High School, **IMPACT9** is the culmination of students' learning experiences in the Middle Years
- **IMPACT9** prioritises student wellbeing and strives to build the personal, social and emotional capabilities of students
- **IMPACT9** values genuine community, real world and future learning experiences
- The development of high-level literacy and numeracy skills is vital learning now, and for the future
- Students in **IMPACT9** will have significant agency in their learning and their school
- Students in **IMPACT9** will have the opportunity to pursue their unique passions

IMPACT9

We will invite families to attend an online **IMPACT9** Introduction and Information session by WebEx.

This session will run for 45 minutes and we will schedule two opportunities in week beginning 31 August 2020.



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