

## Wrapping Up the Term for Christmas

### A Nativity Concert, Together but Apart

Although unable to gather together as normal for our annual Christmas Concert and Nativity, Heritage families were able to join each other virtually to view a pre-recorded version of the concert during a live Zoom session. Infants acted out the nativity story, with the Head Boy and Head Girl giving the Bible readings. Each class performed a Christmas song.

Nearly 200 families attended the event, which was hosted by Mr Fletcher. Some of our parents shared their thoughts:



*The infants' nativity play was wonderful – beautifully acted and adorable costumes! It was really inspiring to hear the carol singing. The teachers had obviously done a great job of preparing them so well.*

*-Rosie Gathercole, Mother of Freddie (Y10)*

*What a lovely opportunity to see the whole school contributing towards a creative and musical telling of the Christmas story. We enjoyed every moment of the performance.*

*-Douglas and Katherine Leckie, parents of Eloise and Rose (UP), Arthur (Y3) and Eva (Y5)*



*Wow, what an evening. After a term of keeping carefully distant it was such a joy to 'enter' school and see the children – from the youngest baa-ing sheep to the oldest singers and beat-boxers, all playing their part. It was so special to see screens of children, teachers and grandparents, and together to celebrate making it through this term, our amazing school, and the birth of Jesus.*

*-Cat Meakin, mother of Benji (Y4) and Izzy (Y6)*



## The Book of Centuries

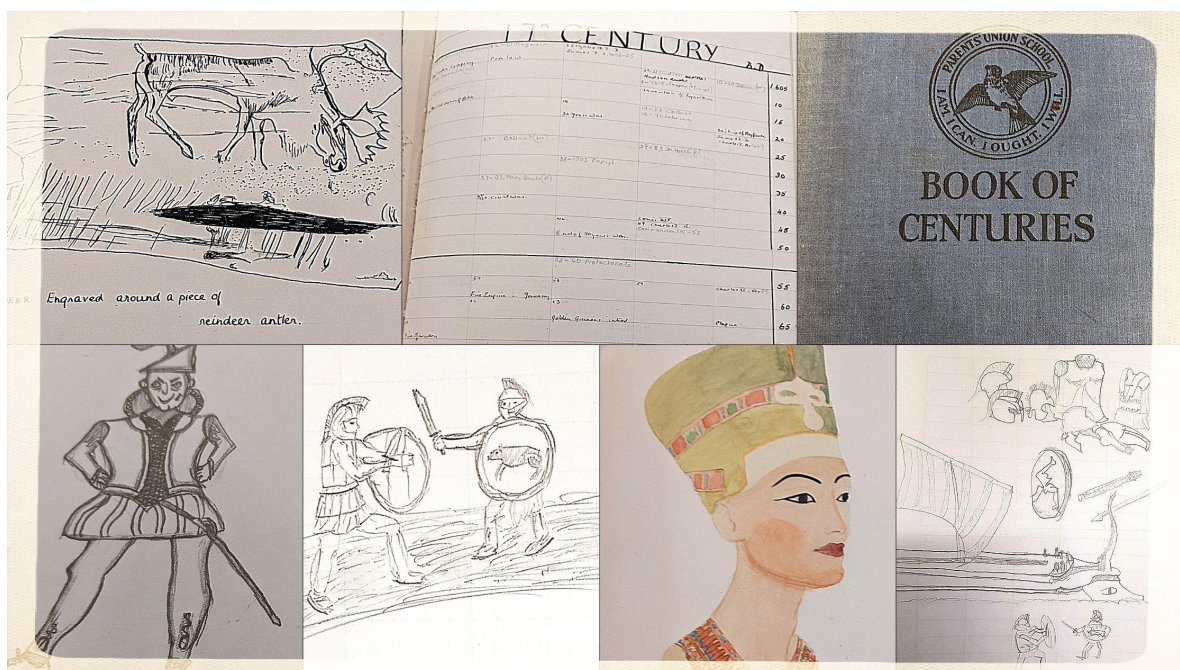
Charlotte Mason believed that the chronology of history formed the framework for many other subjects including literature, poetry, art, music and architecture. She wrote, 'It is a great thing to possess a pageant of history in the background of one's thoughts...The present becomes enriched for us with the wealth of all that has gone before.'

To help children understand this chronology, early Charlotte Mason educators used a 'Book of Centuries' – essentially a timeline in a book in which each two-page spread covered one hundred years. One described it in this way: 'Every child's "Book of Centuries" should bear witness to "a liberal and generous diet of History." The children should be free to enter on their pages events and drawings which have interested them in their wide general reading ....As time goes on the pages become fuller, and fascinating historical facts are discovered which shed light on contemporary and consecutive history in each century.'

Heritage pupils learn history in keeping with the same principles; through narration, in

chronological order. They also keep a Book of Centuries – for Juniors, a small binder divided into the Ancient World, The Middle Ages and The Modern World – to be filled by the pupil over time with written narrations, maps, and pictures. (Years 7 and 8 also keep a more traditional Book of Centuries as part of the Enrichment Programme.) Entries include authors, composers, scientists and artists as well as historical figures. All elements of learning therefore hang together with the timeline, allowing them to make their own connections and providing a visual 'peg' to hang their knowledge of history on. Pupils begin to see for themselves the progression of human society, and history becomes a captivating story to remember for a lifetime rather than dry, disconnected names and dates to memorize for an exam.

Again, Charlotte Mason: 'Let a child have the meat he requires in his history readings, and in the literature which naturally gathers around this history, and imagination will bestir itself without any help of ours; the child will live out in detail a thousand scenes of which he only gets the merest hint.'



*Book of Centuries: Drawings and pages from early Parents' Union Schools and current Heritage pupils*

## Book review: *A Quiet Education*

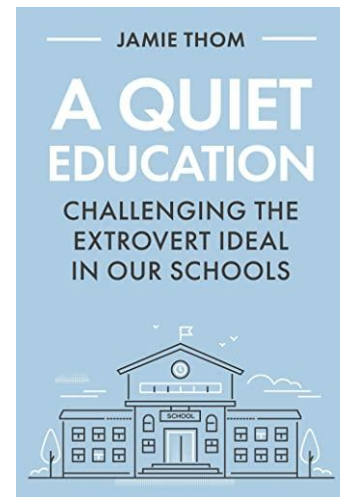
Fiona Macaulay-Fletcher  
Deputy Head

*A Quiet Education – Challenging the Extrovert Ideal in our Schools* by Jamie Thom does just that! This book, published in 2020, questions an ideal that permeates education and teacher training, which places emphasis on discussion, collaboration and group work; which sees a busy classroom with pupils interacting as more to be desired than a classroom where pupils are getting on with their own individual work. The author challenges this full on. Why should all pupils conform to an ideal in society that implies that we should be extroverted and outgoing, and should those who are quiet be penalised for not being like this in lessons? 'This book serves as an unashamed cheerleader for all that is quiet, challenging the notion that collaboration and noise should be at the heart of what happens in school.'

Of quieter pupils who are more introverted, Mr Thom writes the following: 'We often define these students as hardworking but quiet. The recipients of that dreaded conjunction are frequently prodded (by parents, by teachers, by their peers) to "come out of their shells". How often are they perceived as inferior intellectually and professionally, as a result of their quieter traits? How often is being quiet seen as a characteristic to overcome rather than to celebrate?'

Our society, he suggests, accepts the view that being extroverted and outgoing is considered normal and therefore desirable. 'It is a mark of happiness, confidence and leadership.'

With a third of people estimated as being introverted (ten of the thirty pupils in a typical class), do we allow adequate support for our introverted pupils or do we let the needs of the extroverts dominate our thoughts in schools?



Quite apart from simply helping our more introverted pupils, the author suggests that a quieter working environment is good for all pupils, where the ability to think clearly, reflect and harness inner dialogue is vital to learning. 'Deep thinking can only take place in an environment that enables introspection. Silence, therefore, is a gift and certainly not a punishment.' We should welcome quiet in our classrooms as this can be a secret for improved concentration, motivation and discipline for pupils. He does not argue that all lessons must be silent, all work done individually with no discussion or collaboration. Rather, there needs to be balance, and quiet should have a greater place in our classrooms than it currently has. The aim in education after all is to facilitate thinking, he argues.

Mr Thom ends the book with saying that 'If it leads to just one student, who previously felt invisible, receiving a comment that recognises their hidden gifts, then it was worth writing. If it results in a teacher pausing before they utter "Jack is a delightful student, but is a very quiet..." at parents' evening, and instead celebrating Jack's capacity to focus, listen and reflect, then I will be satisfied.'



## Lessons from the Mockingbird

Evelyn Strachan

Year 9-11 English Teacher, Head of English

'Mockingbirds don't do one thing but make music for us to enjoy. They don't do one thing but sing their hearts out for us. That's why it's a sin to kill a mockingbird.'

What an evocative line from Harper Lee's timeless *To Kill a Mockingbird*! The Year 9s and I have been enjoying getting stuck into this fantastic novel this term and seeing once again how a writer can speak straight to our hearts.

A common question that arises when first reading the novel is 'What's the title all about?' I'll often say that they just need to wait and see, but I remember having the very same question when I first encountered the text. Out of all the themes, the distinctive characters and dramatic events, why did Lee choose to zoom into the mockingbird for her title? What was so significant about this bird in the novel?

It's important for the class to learn something about the status of mockingbirds in that society, and how Lee uses them to symbolise the innocent and the vulnerable. Having read through most of the novel now, the students have quickly come to realise which characters are the 'mockingbirds'. They first see Tom Robinson, the good-natured, gentle but wrongly accused black man, and then they come to see that the ultimate mockingbird of the novel is of course Boo Radley. He is the feared outcast of the society and yet the rare hero of the novel as he looks out for the children at every turn.

Harper Lee astutely criticised the American society of the time and yet the students and I have begun to discuss how her commentary on society and the human heart is still relevant to us today. We may still have lessons to learn and we might like to consider who are the mockingbirds in our society today? Who are the innocent people we have made outcasts?

Perhaps you can take advantage of the Christmas holidays to re-read this wonderful book – and ponder these questions – for yourself.



## Year 11s: Onward and Upward!

Earlier this month, our Year 11 pupils successfully completed a challenging two weeks of mock exams. Here is how a few of the class are feeling now that the first term of their final Heritage year is behind them.

### Tobiloba Anifalaje

The mock exams were good. They were both less difficult and less stressful than I had anticipated. However, they did highlight that I have a bit to work on whilst preparing for my IGCSEs. I have mixed feelings about completing the first term of my final year at Heritage. The time has flown incredibly quickly. In this last year I cannot help but reminisce about early years when I was in Year 2 looking up to the gigantic Year 11 pupils. Now I am looking down (figuratively) on the younger students. It has only been after the mocks that I have begun to fully grasp that my time at Heritage is coming to an end. Despite this I am looking forward to taking my education to the next level as I look to the final exams, a relatively short time away.

### William Lauga

Mock exams weren't too different from what I expected, because we had done exams over the previous years. However, these were just a little longer and more comprehensive. The difficulty of most of the exams wasn't too tough, but not too easy either. I definitely feel like I know what to work on for my IGCSEs, as I realised that I had some gaps in my revision, and now I know what to expect, more or less. I'm definitely looking forward to getting mock results back to have a sense of what my predicted grades will look like, and I am glad that I will soon get a rest from the huge workload I've had during mocks.



### Emma Rigby

I think that mocks have helped me feel more prepared for the summer exams, and I have more of a sense of how to manage my time. I will be sad to leave Heritage this summer, but I am looking forward to spending time with my friends now there are fewer lockdown restrictions, and hopefully completing the expedition for Silver DofE in the summer.



### Lara Sclater

Mocks were difficult but less stressful than I had been expecting. Once I was in the exam it felt less intimidating than I was anticipating and I felt calmer than I thought I would. I think the mocks gave me a good sense of what the real GCSEs would be like as it give me a better understanding of content and time management for the exams. I am also glad to get them over and done with before Christmas as I can now have a break over the holiday and come the new term I can focus better on the points I struggled with in the exam.

## The Season of Giving

At Heritage, we are fortunate to have a generous community that supports the school and the causes that are important to us. Here are some of the ways that you have contributed over the past term.

### School photographs

Did you know that Heritage receives a percentage of the pupil and class portraits purchased from Tempest photography? This term, the school received £180 from sales related to the photo day on 6th October. This went towards the purchase of frisbees for the Senior School, new books and SEN resources for the Junior school, and knights and dragons for the Infant School. It's true that every penny counts!



### School Council Fundraisers



Each half-term our Junior and Senior Councils hold events to raise money for charities they believe in. The Senior Council non-uniform day in October raised over £200 to support of Jimmy's Night Shelter – a higher than usual amount. Special mention goes to Year 7 Council members Sandy McDonald and Evelyn Blakely, who encouraged their classmates to bring more than the £2 contribution to cover any pupils who might forget. As it turned out, each of the Year 7 class remembered, and those who brought in extra gave the additional amounts to Jimmy's; a fine example of generosity for all of us. For their December non-uniform days, Infants and Juniors raised £127 for the Angel Tree Charity and Seniors raised nearly £180 for The Intensive Care Society.

### HCA fundraising

And of course, we can't talk about fundraising without including the HCA. Here's a message from co-chairs Ellie Stoneley and Rachel Bruins:

'This term, our priority has been to welcome parents and new families via online events, but planning for future fundraising has been ongoing in the background. Huge thanks to Karen Romans, who has kindly volunteered to be the Heritage link with Amazing Grace school in Uganda and to Vicki Grebe, who has volunteered to help with HCA fundraising strategy and plans. Look out for some exciting events next term, and do start thinking about how you might support an auction of promises. In the meantime, the Second Hand Uniform Shop, with thanks to Jacky Hulett, is open in Panton Hall and raises a considerable amount each year. Also, when doing your shopping online don't forget about EasyFundraising ([easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/heritateschool](https://easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/heritateschool)) and Amazon Smile, which have raised £200 this term alone for Heritage. (When using Amazon Smile, look for Child Light Ltd, which is the trading name for Heritage.) As always, please reach out to Ellie or Rachel via [hca@heritageschool.org.uk](mailto:hca@heritageschool.org.uk) with any HCA related questions.'