



The Connector

20 February 2017 – Week 23 – Week A

MESSAGE FROM THE PRINCIPAL



Dear Parents and Carers

Thank you for your donations to our two non-uniform charities this week. It was a pleasure to be able to raise money for two very worthy charities, both of which are important to our community. We raised £780.

Last week we also had a very successful Parent Partners meeting where we had an opportunity to further explore our progress tracking and reporting process. Thank you to all the parents that joined us on Thursday. Details of the next meeting are provided below.

Well done to all the students awarded prizes in this week's celebration assembly. It is always a delight to recognise students in each year group who are achieving so much. From group 100% attendance awards to individual recognition the Academy continues to use every possible opportunity to reward success. The February, Academy Challenge Newsletters are also available this week; each edition full of notable achievements. When we return we will be awarding Expert Students their badges for Spring 2.

Next week I will be writing to parents/carers about the KS3 home learning project and also giving more details on the Spring term parent/carer workshops.

Deborah Warwick
Principal

SURVEY

As part of our annual evaluation cycle, we would value your feedback about the Communications department via this short survey: <https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/VNQSYXR>.

Communications encompasses a number of subjects including **English, French, Spanish** and **Literacy**.

The survey will close at the end of the day on Monday 20th February. Thank you in advance for your feedback.



PARENT GOVERNORS

We would like to announce that we are delighted to welcome our two new parents to the FCA board of governors.

- Mrs Alex Anderson
- Mrs Sarah Wilson

We look forward to working with them both.

DROP EVERYTHING AND READ (DEAR)

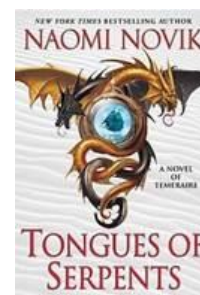
DEAR will take place during lesson 1 after half term. Students need to ensure that they have a book with them as part of their Choppers.

Please continue to check your cupboards and book shelves at home for any appropriate books that you would like to donate to the Academy. Our collection is growing and there are a wonderful range of books that are now stocked in our open library at reception.



Our recommendation for over half term for Year 7 is the “Daughter of Time” by Josephine Tey. Scotland Yard Inspector Alan Grant is intrigued by a portrait of Richard III. Could such a sensitive face actually belong to a heinous villain — a king who killed his brother's children to secure his crown? Inspector Grant seeks what kind of man Richard was and who in fact killed the princes in the tower.

For Year 8 our recommendation is “Tongues of Serpents” by Naomi Novik. This novel offers a dazzling blend of military history, high-flying fantasy, and edge-of-your-seat adventure, Naomi Novik’s Temeraire novels, set in an alternate Napoleonic era in which intelligent dragons have been harnessed as weapons of war, are more than just perennial bestsellers—they are a worldwide phenomenon.



G.C.S.E. Pod

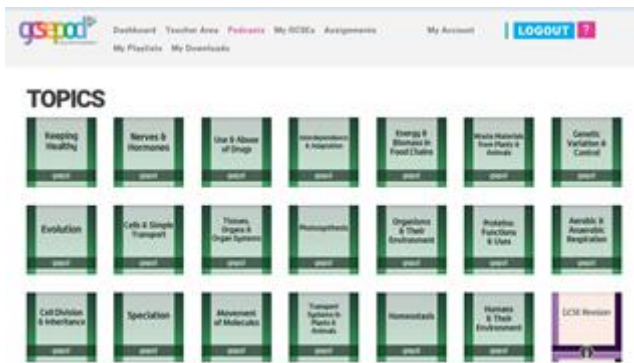


Year 11 have a wonderful revision resource in G.C.S.E. Pod. This is a fantastic way of supporting students with their revision in the run up to the exams. Please ensure that your child logs into the system. Go to the VLE, applications and click on the G.C.S.E. Pod icon. There are tutorials that they can watch that will help support with logging on and using the system. This can be found on: <https://www.gcsepod.com/online-training/>

Alternatively go to G.C.S.E Pod online and follow the instructions:

A screenshot of the GCSE Pod login page. It features the GCSE Pod logo at the top, followed by the text "WELCOME TO GCSEPOD.COM". Below this is a "LOGIN" section with fields for "USERNAME OR EMAIL ADDRESS" and "PASSWORD", and a "Login" button. At the bottom, there is a "NEW HERE? GET STARTED" link and a note: "Your login details for the original GCSEPod site will not work. Forgotten your login details?".A screenshot of the GCSE Pod "NEW USER" registration page. It has a "NEW USER" heading and two radio buttons for "ACCOUNT TYPE": "PUPIL" (selected) and "TEACHER". Below this are fields for "FIRST NAME" (Forename), "LAST NAME" (Surname), "DOB" (Month and Year), and "SCHOOL" (Search for your school).A screenshot of the GCSE Pod account settings page. It shows a "Username" field with a tip: "Don't just write your name as your username. Think of a username that is unique to you and that you can easily remember." Below this are fields for "Password", "Confirm Password", and "Password Hint". At the bottom, there is a section for "Please set your subjects below. You can manage these in your account settings." with dropdown menus for "English", "English Language", and "Chemistry".

There are resources for each curriculum area that will support students with their learning.



Please encourage your child to use this resource as much as possible as it has been proven that revising in this way increases good outcomes in the examinations.

SAINSBURY'S ACTIVE KIDS



Sainsbury's
Active Kids 2017
Eat well • Move well • Live well

The Sainsbury's Active Kids vouchers are once again available. The vouchers are an invaluable source of equipment for the PE department and your support would be greatly appreciated.

Please put any collected vouchers in the box situated at Student Services. The voucher collection will again be run as a Year competition. The year that collects the most vouchers will receive a prize!

WORLD BOOK DAY

World Book Day is on Thursday 2nd March and this year, to celebrate, Richard Harrington MP will be holding a Writers' Competition.

The competition is to write a short poem about Watford. This may include something about the high street, Watford FC, local events you have enjoyed or anything else you can think of! The word limit is 100 words, so something like a limerick or a Haiku would be encouraged.

The competition is open to Year 7-9 pupils (potential flexibility on this if needed) either living in Watford and the surrounding area, or going to school here. Entries to be submitted on A4 paper please either attached to an email to richard@richardharrington.org.uk or dropped off at the Watford office which is:



Richard Harrington MP
30 The Avenue
Watford
WD17 4NS

Entries must include the following information:

- Student's name and age
- Home address and which school they go to
- Name and contact details for Parent / Carer (including email address)

Entries are open until Monday 20th February. Finalists will be announced shortly after, and there will then be a public vote to decide the winner – who will receive prizes including tea in Parliament for the winner and their family, plus book vouchers!

Richard will hopefully present the winner with their prize, at their school, on Friday 10th March in celebration of World Book Day.

Every child who enters will also receive a certificate.

PARENT PARTNERS MEETING

The Academy's Parent Partners meeting last week was very successful. We were delighted to welcome some new parents to the meeting and it was good to see both familiar faces as well as new ones.

Salma Haque presented our new "Assessment Without Levels Strategy" and there was a good discussion around how we report to parents. The feedback we gained was positive regarding the format of our reports and what we report. Parents liked the attitude to learning levels and highlighted Home learning and the VLE as something they would like us focus on in future meetings.

Thank you for those who gave their time – your feedback is invaluable.

If you would like to participate in future meetings, please look out for the details of our next Parent Partner meeting on 14th March 2017. We will be using this as an opportunity to review the KS3 Spring Home Learning Project and other aspects of supporting learning at home.

PARENT PARTNER WORKSHOPS

On Tuesday 28th February the Academy will be running three focused workshops for parents and carers. Each workshop starts at 6.00pm and will finish by 7.00pm

The focus of these workshops are:

Workshop 1

Drugs Workshop – what do parents need to know about drugs and teenagers?

Workshop 2

CEOP (Child Exploitation and Online Protection) – helping parents and carers keep their child safe when using the internet.

Workshop 3

KS4 Revision – this workshop is designed to help parents and carers support their child with their revision. We will be exploring and sharing some effective revision tips and strategies.

More details on each of the workshops in next week's Connector.

SPRING TERM ACADEMY DATES

Week	Date	Event
23	Weds 22 nd February	Year 11 Parents' Evening & Post 16 Info Evening
24	Tues 28 th February	Parent Partner Workshops
25	Weds 8 th March	Year 6 Welcome and Masterclass Evening
26	Tues 14 th March	Parent Partners Meeting
28	Fri 31 st March	Last Day of Term Non-Uniform Day & Early Finish

BATTLE OF THE BANDS

Francis Combe Academy would like to bring the community together through music by hosting a Battle of The Musicians competition this year.

To enter all you need to do is send an email to s.ernestine@franciscombeacademy.org.uk

with the name of your band/soloist/choir plus the song title.

To confirm your place all you need to do is make a £5.00 entry contribution which will get you two free audience tickets for the night.

The competition has a limited number of spaces so get your place quick. We ask that any entries be submitted by **20th May 2017**.



WORD OF THE WEEK

This week's word is: **Susceptible**

Definition: Easily influenced or affected by something

An example: Since the dog lives outside, he is highly susceptible to parasites that thrive in the outdoors

NB: If you would like to know the pronunciation of our word of the week please follow the link: www.oxforddictionaries.com

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