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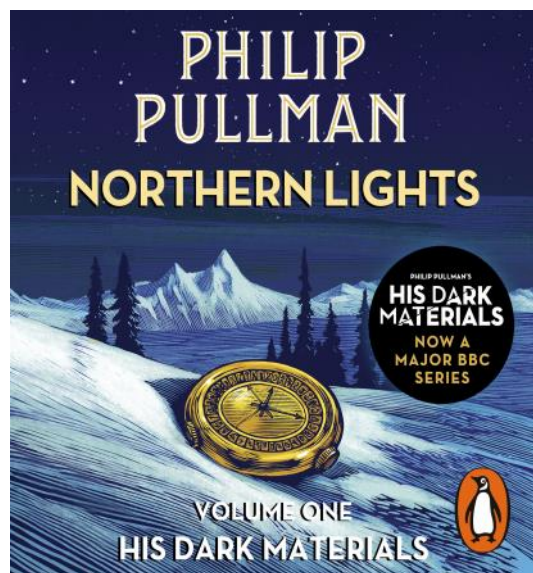
THE LINK

A fortnightly Newsletter for the pupils, parents
and staff of St Michael's Catholic College

Issue 196- 15th February 2022

Reading for pleasure

Northern Lights by Phillip Pullman



The book 'Northern Lights' is about a girl named Lyra who thought Lord Asriel was her uncle until the Gypitans tell her that he is her father and Lyra becomes the talk of the town among the witches who have heard it from the Gods. Lyra is destined to fulfill a prophecy with the Gypitans and Iorek Byrnison on her side.

Iorek Byrnison was the Prince of a place called Svalbard where guards were bears. Everyone there was a talking bear, even Iorek Byrnison, but he had so many anger issues that he killed another bear and was banished from Svalbard, because of this he helps Lyra on her quest.

What I particularly liked about the book was that there were unexpected moments. I never knew what was going to happen. For example, at the end, Mrs Coulter and Lord Asriel made up again but he left her to go across the bridge to a new world and Roger, the kitchen boy at Jordan College, died because Lord Asriel only cared about himself.

I personally thought that Lord Asriel was a nice man who cared for others and Lyra especially, but I was wrong.

My final rating of this book is 8.5 out of 10 because the middle and the end were the most interesting parts. Partly because the end was the most intense part of the book and the middle of the book had mysteries which I kept trying to work out.

The answers to the questions I had were revealed later in the story. But the beginning of the story didn't attract me as much because we met each of the new characters. That's why my final rating is 8.5/10. *Naod, 7BC*

Don't forget, you can write your own book review, alternative blurb, alternative ending or a letter to the author of a book you have recently read. Every entry will win 50 points for your house. To submit, press on the link below, go to the tab 'Book Reviews' and fill in the Google form. Happy reading! <https://sites.google.com/stmichaelscollege.org.uk/readingforpleasuresmcc/the-amazing-benefits-of-reading>

E2X Mentoring



This year, a group of Year 9 students are meeting with mentors from E2X after successfully applying for the mentoring program.

E2X is a technical agency based at London Bridge that specialises in platform strategy and technical design.

Below, Matthew G (9RU) discusses the mentoring sessions so far.



My first E2X session was an hour long zoom to get to know my mentor. I learnt what they were like to help me feel more comfortable during our sessions. They also learnt what I like to do. In my second session, I learnt about how job interviews work and tips to help pass them, like learning new skills to add on the CV to make it look good. A helpful acronym for an interview is the skill-based format 'STAR' which stands for SITUATION (what was happening), TASK (what you had to do), ACTION (what you did) and the RESULT. When explaining a situation, it is important to highlight your skills. We also discussed a topic I brought up about CEO's not having full control over a company but rather the investor of a company. To a certain extent, this was right but I also learnt that a CEO can have total control over a company in that they can buy out their investors or at least the majority share.

Becoming a member of the London Schools Symphony Orchestra-Performance at the Barbican Centre

11th January 2022

My name is Caspar and I am in Year 10 at St Michael's. With encouragement from Mr Laurence, I started studying the French horn at the end of Year 7. It is a wonderful instrument with a rich sound which I love to play, so I was very happy back in December when I was offered a place in the horn section of the London Schools Symphony Orchestra. (LSSO). The LSSO play three concerts at the Barbican Hall over the course of a year, and each of these require an intense period of preparation. Shortly before my Christmas holidays I received the YouTube links and the sheet music/score for the pieces that I would play, in order to familiarise myself before rehearsals began.



There were four wonderful pieces in the concert programme: *Prelude to Act 1 of Lobengrin* by Richard Wagner; *Four Last Songs* by Richard Strauss; *Romeo and Juliet fantasy Overture* by Piotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky; *The Firebird Suite* by Igor Stravinsky. I had 7 days of rehearsals from 10am-5pm, mainly in the second week of the holidays, but also on Sundays. There was a dress rehearsal on the day of the concert from 3-6pm.

The experience of playing with other horn players was both enjoyable and very useful, not only to improve my technical skills on the French horn, but also to improve my ability to work in a larger group and stop thinking only about what I was playing. I also made a few friends – most of them French hornists, and I was the youngest of them, so they took me under their wing! It was also a steep learning curve working such long hours and getting used to taking constructive criticism, yet it was also an exciting new process.



Playing in the Barbican was truly amazing – not only because of the fantastic sound that was created by the orchestra in the vast auditorium, but because we were all cooperating and supporting each other – our notes, the building blocks of harmonies and beautiful melodies. I sat in front of the bass drum and, for the really dramatic parts, I could feel my seat shake! It was so exhilarating and thrilling, and it was as if the entire impressive space was the instrument – the vessel through which our sound reverberated.

I am very fortunate that my Year 10 music class in St Michael's has keen and talented musicians with great enthusiasm for music, so when I looked out from the stage and saw my friends from the Year 10 GCSE Music class in the audience it gave me a huge boost of confidence! Mr & Mrs Laurence were also there to encourage me, as was Mr Smith; I have always had great support from St. Michael's as my passion for music has developed. The experience of playing in an orchestra is truly unique because everyone is on the same team, playing towards the same goal: to create something beautiful for the enjoyment of the audience and themselves. **Caspar G, Year 10**

Visit by Dulwich College to St Michael's 31st January 2022

On Monday 31st January, we were delighted to welcome Dulwich College Music Department to St Michael's for a performance in the hall by their senior brass ensemble, a quintet made up of two trumpets, French horn, trombone and tuba. Pupils from Year 7 as well as those studying brass instruments at St. Michael's enjoyed the very high standard of performing by the group, including music from famous films like the Pink Panther, Batman and the Incredibles. We were also given an educational talk by Dulwich College's Head of Brass who explained the origins of the trumpet and demonstrated the mechanics of brass playing using a shell, watering can and a hosepipe! It was a thoroughly entertaining and engaging musical experience for all who attended this wonderful performance, especially the pupils that learn these instruments at the College who found it all very inspiring.



New St Michael's members of the Inner Voices London Youth Choir talk about their wonderful musical experience

At the beginning of the year, Mr Laurence presented us with a fantastic opportunity to join the London youth choir: Inner Voices. There was no question that we would not go, so we accepted this offer and started to attend the weekly rehearsals in Grey Coat school. The choir has unquestionably helped improve our confidence, not only for singing but for speaking in assembly or volunteering to help out around the school, we've almost established a mindset that if we can sing in front of a large audience of adults then surely we can speak in front of our year for a few minutes. So far we have performed in Kennington for the Harvest festival with other youth choirs, had a Christmas concert in Fulham with the Fulham brass band and most recently have had the amazing opportunity to attend St Paul's Cathedral. Being able to make people happy with our singing was something we very much enjoyed. We have appreciated the experience more than anything. We are incredibly grateful for the experience and can't wait for all the fun and exciting performances to come; including the two-day retreat to Durham which is coming up in February (2022) and the potential trip to Italy in February 2023.—*Irati A. & Julia M*



Launch of Sixth Form Debating Club

We are delighted to announce that the 6th Form Debating Club has launched this term! Building on the success of the Debating Clubs in Years 7, 8 and 9, a cohort of Year 12's are participating in a series of six workshops that will culminate in a Southwark-wide schools' debating competition. Led by our debating coach Richard - a university student and seasoned debater with specialist training from debating charity Debate Mate - with the support of Mr Fellows and Mr House, students are already looking forward to other upcoming debating competitions. Most excitingly, the St Michael's team has qualified for the prestigious "Speaking

Frankly" competition, in honour of the Founding Father Benjamin Franklin, at the US Embassy, where we will be taking on schools from across the UK to compete for the prize of a place at a prestigious summer camp in the USA. So if you like to win arguments, if you want to develop your ability to articulate your thoughts, if you want to increase your confidence in public-speaking and you like the chance to win big prizes... JOIN US!

6th Form Debating Club – Every Thursday 4pm-5pm, S10 (Old Building) -
Mr House and Mr Fellows




Technology for Learning | Lease-to-buy scheme

This article is a reminder for parents of students in Years 7-9 participating in the Laptop Lease-to-buy scheme.

Following the Technology for Learning parent survey, the college is moving forward with this exciting programme to include the use of laptops to support independent learning, study and homework. We want to give students at St Michael's the best possible opportunities to learn anytime and anywhere.

How much does this device cost?



Acer Chromebook 311 (C722)

This 11.6" Chromebook is light, portable, rugged, and productive – the ultimate everyday learning tool. It brings Google Classroom, G Suite for Education, and today's most popular education apps to students and teachers, making digital education accessible, enjoyable, and manageable. This Device is tough, durable, with full sized keyboard, anti-glare screen and long battery life.

Years 7 & 8

36months	£12.21 / month
<i>Terms available with no credit check</i>	
Cash option	£391.77

Year 9

Payment breakdown

30 Months	£13.97/ month
<i>Terms available with no credit check</i>	
Cash option	£372.34

See Portal for full device specification and what is included.

Based on our extensive research, the best company for this offer is from Freedom Technology, who supply over 400 schools with laptop schemes. They are also used by one of our partner schools, who have had positive experiences with them.

The monthly payment will be under £14 a month by direct debit and includes:

Acer Chromebook 311 (C722)
Sleeve for the Chromebook
Google Licences and enrolment of software
30 (Year 9) or 36 (Years 7 & 8) months warranty
30 (Year 9) or 36 (Years 7 & 8) repair service and a replacement device whilst yours may be away for repair.

There are no credit checks and parents/carers must sign up to the portal by **10th March 2022**. At the end of all payments, you will own the device. There is a cash option to purchase the device outright, if preferred.

Why have we chosen this device?

There is a wide range of tablet and laptop-style devices available on the market. We have conducted considerable research when considering the type of device that would be best suited to students in our school and for the specification and cost this is by far the best one.

How to place an order

You will receive an email with a username and password giving you access to our web portal to **sign up by 10th March**. If you choose to take up this excellent offer, you will then need to:

- Create an account
- Select the payment option
- Place your order

Key Dates:

Ordering deadline:

10th March 2022

First Direct Debit (confirming orders placed with Direct Debit):

25th March 2022

Ordering Portal Details:

www.tech4learners.co.uk

Username: STMICH22

Password: S3cure02!

Given the current national and international demand for digital devices and the scale and timing of our order, we expect to receive delivery and have the devices set up by April 2022.

Ultimately, the digital devices are primarily to enhance, not replace, the teaching that takes place in our school, and the learning for your child.

Ms Casey and I are running a Parent Question and Answer (Q&A) Webinar on Tuesday 22nd February via Zoom to answer any points. These may include teaching and learning and use of the Chromebook. A representative from Freedom Tech will also be online to respond to any financial queries. Please feel free to attend this event using the following Zoom details:

[Parent Q&A Webinar | Tuesday 22nd February at 5pm](#)

St Michael's Zoom is inviting you to a scheduled Zoom meeting.

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/87119657055?pwd=VXVtSG5VT1JWc3ZOZGpZVFhTZ0pjQT09>

Meeting ID: 871 1965 7055

Passcode: H1FExT

Further information and a 'Frequently Asked Questions' section are also available from the college website.

<https://www.stmichaelscollege.org.uk/technology-for-learning/> **Mr Arda and Ms Casey**

Chaplain's Corner

The Word of the Lord

Jesus Calls His First Disciples

Luke 5:1-11

Once while Jesus was standing beside the lake of Gennesaret, and the crowd was pressing in on him to hear the word of God, he saw two boats there at the shore of the lake; the fishermen had gone out of them and were washing their nets. He got into one of the boats, the one belonging to Simon, and asked him to put out a little way from the shore. Then he sat down and taught the crowds from the boat. When he had finished speaking, he said to Simon, 'Put out into the deep water and let down your nets for a catch.' Simon answered, 'Master, we have worked all night long but have caught nothing. Yet if you say so, I will let down the nets.' When they had done this, they caught so many fish that their nets were beginning to break. So they signalled to their partners in the other boat to come and help them. And they came and filled both boats, so that they began to sink. But when Simon Peter saw it, he fell down at Jesus' knees, saying, 'Go away from me, Lord, for I am a sinful man!' For he and all who were with him were amazed at the catch of fish that they had taken; and so also were James and John, sons of Zebedee, who were partners with Simon. Then Jesus said to Simon, 'Do not be afraid; from now on you will be catching people.' When they had brought their boats to shore, they left everything and followed him.

A reflection on this...

- Jesus' ministry starts in a sense with the calling of these first disciples. With his omniscient nature, Jesus knew that these were the people who could fulfil his ministry on earth after his ascension
- Jesus knew these were to be His witnesses on earth and the people whom could take the power of the Holy Spirit and spread His Good News
- The phrase 'fishers of men' comes from this story, we know that Jesus saw that the gifts the disciples possessed could be used to fulfil a different calling

TODAY – consider, what can we do if we are called? What could we be called to do? How can we be Jesus' witnesses on earth?

Miss Casey, Head of Chaplaincy



What's been happening in the faith life of the school?

Year12 began their CAFOD programme to become Youth Leadership Ambassadors – watch this space for the exciting events they have coming up.

Four pupils from the Chaplaincy Teams in Year 10 and Year 12 (2 from each, respectively) took part in the Youth Engagement Board with the Diocese, this was part of the wider Synodal process. From what they have learnt we are looking to launch our own Synodal meetings after half term. We have celebrated Bosco and Vicuna feast days, with Bosco charity efforts still ongoing. Stand by for Vicuna charity week after half term.

Lost property

Please make sure your child's property has their name on, this makes it easier to reunite lost property to its owner.

Please don't bring expensive property to school;

Please note that all lost property that is not collected will be disposed of at the end of each half term.

Safeguarding

Important Notice from the Safeguarding Officer - there is a copy of our Safeguarding Policy on the College Website. A hard copy of this is available in the College Office.



**Contacting the College - Direct parents access to college via email
contact@stmichaelscollege.org.uk For absence please phone: 0207 237 6432 EXTN. 708**

