



**QUEENS' SCHOOL**  
*Dare to Write*

**ENGLISH DEPARTMENT NEWSLETTER APRIL 2025:**

**BRILLIANT BREIS BRINGS POETRY TO LIFE:**

Breis is a truly inspiring rap artist, performer, author and poet. He came to visit Queens' for the third time on Friday March 21. He delivered an astounding presentation to both Year 7 and Year 8 followed by a series of personalised performance workshops in the library to Year 9 students. It was a real celebration of how poetry can be powerful and the impact of the spoken word. A massive thank you for Ms Jacobs and Mrs Greatrex for helping to organise such a stirring and impactful event.



**QUEENS' CELEBRATES WORLD BOOK DAY IN STYLE:**

On March 6, the English Department and library also celebrated World Book Day. It was a day filled with all things literary: a literary based form competition; a Mad Hatter's Tea Party for our top readers; the distribution of hundreds of World Book Day vouchers and books and, of course, the annual opportunity for everyone in the English Department and library to dress up as their favourite

literary character. As always, it was a fantastic day where we were able to celebrate why books are so inspirational and why the heart of Queens' will always be the fantastic library.



**FABULOUS 'FROGS'**

February 13 also saw the English and Classics Department take their first

ever trip to the Bloomsbury Theatre in London. Here, we watched an hilarious performance of Aristophanes' 'Frogs' superbly brought to life and made relevant by the UCL Classics students. The evening opened with an enlightening lecture on Greek comedy by Dr Rosie Wyles and was followed by an original rendition of the famous Greek comedy that brought both its political significance and scatological humour fully to life. A huge thank you to Miss Wood and Ms Watkins for organising the trip – hopefully the first of many more to come given the hilarity of the performance and enjoyment of the students.



## LOCAL TRAGEDY – ‘DEATH OF A SALESMAN’

On March 20, a group of literature students were also taken to see an amateur dramatic performance in Ickenham of Arthur Miller’s superlative ‘Death of a Salesman’. It was a fantastic opportunity for students to see the drama that they have been studying as part of their A-level course in action. The performance really brought the text to life enabling students to recognise how Miller creates such pathos for the central character, Willy Loman. A huge thank you to Ms Hodgson for organising the event with the assistance of Mrs Goodman and Mr Hurst.

## A ROYAL DOWNFALL – ‘RICHARD II’:



February 25 saw yet another wonderful theatrical trip organised by Ms Hodgson to the Bridge Theatre, London to see the exceptionally talented Jonathan Bailey in Shakespeare’s ‘Richard II’. This was a unique opportunity for students to see another set text in all its dramatic glory. Many students raved about the brilliant performances of the cast and the emotive way in which the eponymous character was portrayed during the painful nature of his tragic fall. Cleverly brought to life and given a modern twist through its war setting, this was a truly moving performance.

## BRINGING BACK BOX CLEVER TO QUEENS’ – AN UNFORGETTABLE ‘MACBETH’ WORKSHOP

We had yet more of the bard on February 12 with the arrival of the outstanding Box Clever Theatre production. They ran two workshop performances for our Year 11 students bringing the GCSE set text to life through physical theatre. This was an invaluable opportunity for GCSE students to experience the text visually and aurally bringing the narrative to life in unique ways and helping them to understand the power of theatre. It

was especially delightful to see that one of the three major performers in the acting troop was a former Queens’ student who had experienced ‘Macbeth’ for the first time in our very own English classrooms. It was a brilliant and really enlightening event effectively organised as always by Ms Jacobs.

## YEAR 9 OPTIONS’ EVENING

On March 11, staff were also to be found at Year 9 Options Evening promoting GCSE Classics, which will be running for its third year in September 2025. It is a truly fantastic course where you get to study not only the best myths and legends from ancient Greece and Rome, but also learn about the cultures and societies on which these fascinating stories were founded. If you are interested in finding out more, have a look at our website for full details and some amazing resources: <https://sites.google.com/queens.herts.sch.uk/classical-civilisation-gcse/home>

## VOCABULOUS KEEPS GETTING BETTER:

The Vocabulous programme that we run for Year 7 classes, keeps going from strength to strength. The aim of the programme is to help students expand their vocabulary and ability to recognise and use a plethora of new words every week by learning about etymology and root words through fun quizzes, videos and activities.

Well done yet again to 7AE – our top Vocabulous form!



QUEENS' SCHOOL  
Dare to be Great

Daring to be *Great* by pursuing our values of Scholarship, Tenacity, Altruism and Respect





### **BRITISH MUSEUM VISIT:**

On March 14, our Year 10 Classics students also took their second annual visit to the British Museum. This gave them an invaluable opportunity to learn about the Parthenon metopes and see some astounding artefacts up close that are a crucial part of their Classics course. It was a fantastic and incredibly educational day out led by Ms Kinshuck and Mr Hurst.

### **BREAKING NEWS!**

We hope that, by the end of this term, we will have the first edition of the new Queens' School newspaper released digitally. It promises to be full of exciting news, innovative articles and superb creative writing pieces all

orchestrated by Queens' students with the help of Miss Smith. A particular thank you to Morgan and Charlotte C. who have spearheaded this project that promises to be utterly amazing. We cannot wait!

### **RECOMMENDED READS:**

Every month, the English department offer a Key Stage 3 and adult recommended read of the month. You will find our recommendations for March below. If you would like to find regular recommendations, then follow us on X: English@Queens'. You can also find further book recommendations on the Queens' School website:

<https://www.queens.herts.sch.uk/students/lrc/reading-lists/>



## **MARCH RECOMMENDED READ – ADULT**

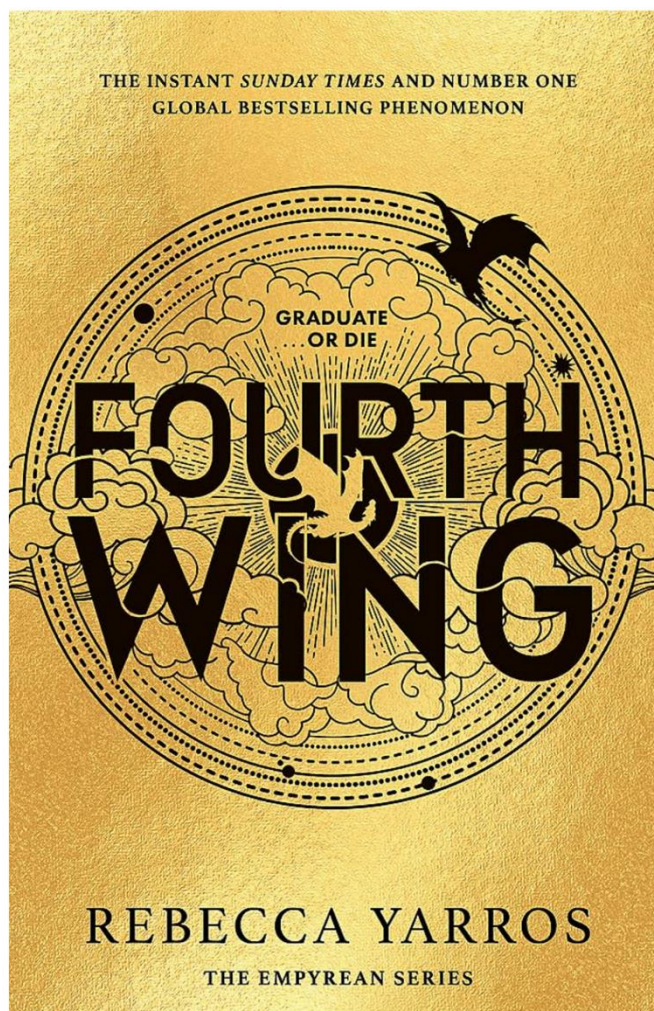
### **'FOURTH WING' REBECCA YARROS**

This is the first in the hugely popular Emphyrean fantasy series. Even if you are not a fan of fantasy, Yarros has created a brilliantly compelling narrative that draws you into the kingdom of Navarre with her superb world building.

The story centres around Violet Sorrengail, who has always dreamed of joining the scribe quadrant and studying the history of Navarre. However, her mother, the Commander of Basgiath War College, has other ideas. No daughter of hers will be anything but a dragon rider even if it costs them their life. Violet is therefore compelled to face the terrifying trials that all riders must endure to prove herself worthy of being chosen by a dragon, if they will have her. Yet every year there are fewer dragons and more dangers that emerge on the borders of the kingdom. In fact, it is increasingly clear that all is not as it seems in the world of Navarre as political intrigues grow, lies abound and who to trust becomes ever more obscure.

Yarros centres her story around the tenacious figure of Violet, who, despite her disability (she has a condition called Ehlers Danlos that she shares with the author herself), is utterly determined to prove herself worthy of a dragon. To overcome her difficulties, she works twice as hard as anyone else but also discovers that true strength comes from within.

This is a unique adult fantasy combining elements of 'The Games of Thrones' series with aspects of Ursula Le Guin and even 'The Hunger Games'. It is one of the few novels that truly live up to the hype and if you are interested in fiction that offers you complete escapism and a propulsive narrative then this is definitely for you.



**QUEENS' SCHOOL**  
Dare to be Great

**Daring to be Great by pursuing our values of Scholarship, Tenacity, Altruism and Respect**





## MARCH RECOMMENDED READ – YOUNG ADULT

### 'THE LAST PAPER CRANE'

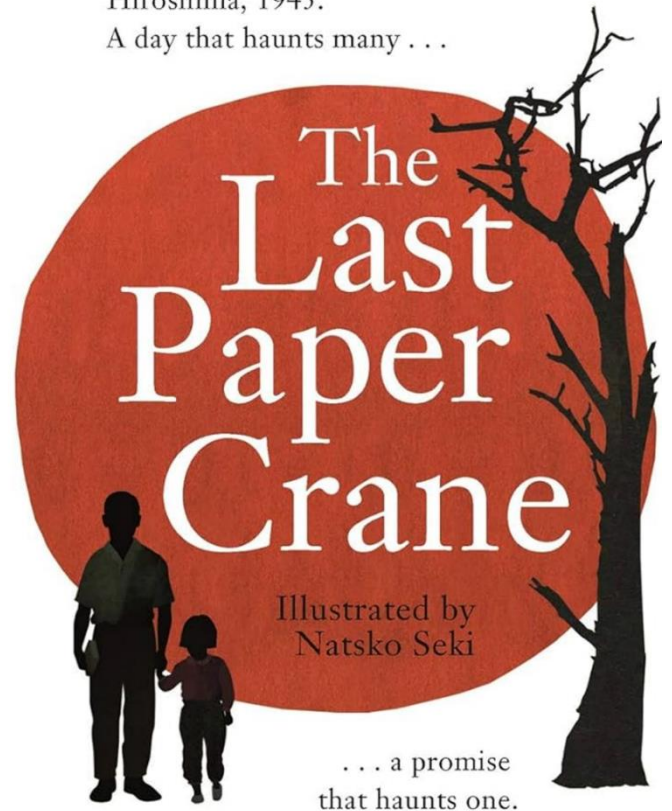
**KERRY DREWERY (illustrator NATSKI SEKI)**

This is a deeply moving and emotional account of August 6<sup>th</sup>, 1945 – the tragic day that saw the bombing of Hiroshima. As such, it is definitely for older young adult readers from year 9 upwards.

Told from the perspective of Ichiro, we follow the traumatic events of this terrible day through Ichiro's teenage eyes. Desperate to help his friend Hiro and Hiro's five-year-old sister, Keiko, Ichiro struggles on, clinging to hope despite his own injuries and the awful devastation that surrounds him. It is a story that he now tells his granddaughter, Mizuki in a final bid to overcome the events that have haunted him for more than half a century. However, Mizuki is not content to simply let the story disappear but determines to help her grandfather lay his demons to rest and bring him the resolution that he has so long desired.

Beautifully illustrated, Seki's drawings bring Drewery's lyrical prose and poetry to life. Although full of mellifluous description, Drewery does not shy away from depicting the horrors that occurred both on the terrible day of the bombing and afterwards given the horrific injuries inflicted on so many. This is a deeply moving story that personalises the Hiroshima bombing. Deeply emotional and harrowing, Drewery has done for this tragic moment in history what Gleitzman achieved on the Holocaust with his 'Once' series.

Hiroshima, 1945.  
A day that haunts many . . .



**KERRY DREWERY**



**QUEENS' SCHOOL**  
Dare to be Great

**Daring to be *Great* by pursuing our values of Scholarship, Tenacity, Altruism and Respect**

