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Sufiya Ahmed Author Visit

As part of World Book Day 2019, we welcomed Sufiya Ahmed, author of ‘Secrets of the Henna Girl’, to the Library on Tuesday 5th March.

Working with Year 8 and a group of Year 10s, she spoke about her life and career to date, what had inspired her to become a writer, her passion for politics and political activism, including issues such as forced marriage, as well as her experience as a second-generation British Muslim woman.

Her passion for politics, she said, was born from her Dad’s insistence that she watch the ‘9 O’Clock News’ with him every day, so she could keep up to date with current affairs, although he wasn’t so keen on her becoming a writer, but thought a ‘proper job’ would be more suitable!

She grew up going to the mosque every day, learning the Koran (Quran), lucky to have parents who were very supportive of her being an educated and independent woman.

After university, she discovered becoming a published author was not as easy as she’d thought, with her manuscripts being rejected by book agencies, despite having a good writing style. Although she never gave up hope of being published, she took her Dad’s advice and got a ‘proper job’ in an advertising agency, travelling all over the world.

However, earning a great deal of money still wasn’t fulfilling her dream of becoming published. Already being politically active as a member of the Labour Party, she applied for a job in the Houses of Parliament as a researcher and political advisor – which helped to polish her skills as a writer.
As part of her work she frequently came into contact with various pressure groups, and was particularly interested in the work of Survivors of Forced Marriages, a group of Asian women in their late 30s/early 40s, who wanted to petition Parliament to ban forced marriage (marriage without consent).

This inspired her to write ‘Secrets of the Henna Girl’, a story of Zeba, 16 years old, taken on holiday by her parents to Pakistan after her GCSEs, where she is forced into an arranged marriage with her cousin Asif by her father.

Although this has never been Sufiya’s experience, she recalled a girl from her own time during Year 10, who did not return to school after the holiday and no one had questioned it because it was considered part of Asian culture. Now schools and the authorities have a duty to monitor school attendance.

Her book was published on International Women’s Day in 2012 (8th March) and launched at the Foreign Office, with the full support of the UK government.

Forced marriage was made illegal in the UK in 2014, carrying a 7-year sentence, as a result of the women’s pressure group. Individuals effecting change, which she felt was highly empowering.

After reading from her novel, some Year 8s were given the opportunity to re-enact the engagement ceremony from the book with props!

The Year 10 Q&A session discussed the more current predicament of Shamima Begum and whether she should be repatriated to the UK, as well as the feeling of insecurity amongst other second-generation Britons about their own status as a British citizen.

This discussion led onto talk about FGM (Female Genital Mutilation), marital rape, violence, child protection, patriarchal societies and honour, as well as grooming and where to go for help.

For more information about forced marriage, go to: www.fco.gov.uk/forcedmarriage
Tel: +44 (0)20 7008 0151

For more information about FGM, go to: www.gov.uk/government/collections/female-genital-mutilation
Tel: 0800 028 3550

Call Childline: 0800 1111 or the RSPCC: 0808 800 5000.
BOOKS THAT WILL... SCARE YOU BOO!

(Book passage)

Lord Loss by Darren Shan
The Wasp Factory by Ian Banks
The Shining by Stephen King
1984 by George Orwell
Frankenstein by Mary Shelley

(Book passage)

Pride and Prejudice by Jane Austen
Forever by Judy Blume
Wuthering Heights by Emily Brontë
The Diary Of A Young Girl by Anne Frank
How I Live Now by Meg Rossoff
Jane Eyre by Charlotte Brontë
Twilight by Stephenie Meyer

For new books and events, follow the Library at:
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BOOKS THAT WILL... Make You Laugh Tee! Hee!

Geek Girl by Holly Smale
Angus, Thongs And Full Frontal Snogging by Louise Rennison
The Secret Diary Of Adrian Mole, Aged 13 ¾ by Sue Townsend
Catch 22 by Joseph Heller
The Diary Of A Wimpy Kid by Jeff Kinney
Darcey Burdock by Laura Dockrill

BOOKS THAT WILL... Transport YOU......WHOOSH

The Great Gatsby by F. Scott Fitzgerald
Northern Lights by Phillip Pullman
Harry Potter series by J.K. Rowling
The Lord Of The Rings by J.R.R. Tolkien
The Life Of Pi by Yann Martell
Percy Jackson series by Rick Riordan

BOOKS THAT WILL... CHANGE THE WAY YOU THINK

Noughts And Crosses by Malorie Blackman
A Streetcat Named Bob by James Bowen
The Perks Of Being A Wallflower by Stephen Chbosky
The Curious Incident Of The Dog In The Night-Time by Mark Haddon
To Kill A Mockingbird by Harper Lee
Wonder by R.J. Palacio
The Book Thief by Marcus Zusak

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BOOKS THAT WILL...
Before I Die by Jenny Downham
The Kite Runner by Khaled Hosseini
War Horse by Michael Morpurgo
Tess Of The D’Urbevilles by Thomas Hardy
My Sister’s Keeper by Jodie Picoult
Of Mice And Men by John Steinbeck
The Color Purple by Alice Walker

BOOKS THAT WILL...
The Fault In Our Stars by John Green
The Outsiders by S.E. Hinton
The Knife Of Never Letting by Patrick Ness
The Catcher In The Rye by J.D. Salinger
I Capture The Castle by Dodie Smith

BOOKS THAT WILL...
A Clockwork Orange by Anthony Burgess
City Of Bones by Cassandra Clare
The Hunger Games by Suzanne Collins
Rebecca by Daphne Du Maurier
Gone by Michael Grant
Skulduggery Pleasant by Derek Landy
Divergent by Veronica Roth

* With thanks to “World Book Day” and Dr P. Hayman

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Calling All Budding Journalists...

Last term we publicised that we were on the lookout for students who wished to write a piece for the Library newsletter. We were delighted by the response. Here is the first.

How Does The Canteen Choose Their Menu?
by Saieesha Bailoor, 7.5

Something my friends and I wonder every time we eat there. We all know the food variety is great, but how do they choose it? Not only do they provide food for all the staff and children, but they also have gluten free, vegetarian and halal food options to provide for all dietary requirements.

I decided to make a list of things that students think choose the menu. I have narrowed it down to: 1. teachers, 2. governors, 3. students, and 4. the previous year’s favourite food. So, I decided to ask the head of the canteen, Mr Potter, a few questions about the canteen. These are the answers to some questions you may have about our canteen.

Q. Why do we use plastic cutlery?
A. Mr Potter said: ‘This is a question I have had since I joined the school. We all know that plastic pollution is a serious problem and has bad consequences, so why are we not contributing? Well, luckily the canteen staff have already thought that one through. All the rubbish is put in large bins and collected by a company called Ahern which collect the rubbish and recycle plastic.’

So when throwing plastic cutlery out now, I feel confident that it will not go to the wrong place.

Q. What about metal cutlery?
A. When collecting plastic cutlery, I always see the metal ones but never take them as I sometimes go outside to eat. Metal cutlery is used in the private dining room for teachers and are out for students, but some throw them away in outside bins. Students should take responsibility and give them to the canteen.
staff to wash. This is a real waste of good cutlery and should not be abused, so next time you take out metal cutlery, please leave it in the canteen.

**Q. How are the canteen menus chosen?**

**A.** Here is the question you have been waiting for...the teachers have no say in the canteen menu and neither do the students, but if anyone would like the students to have a say, ask your student councillor and the student council could arrange something with the canteen. In fact Mr Potter and his assistant make it up based on the seasons and what is most popular. They can take a look at the biometric system (fingerprint scanner) and decide which foods are best to sell at affordable prices. This year, the grab-and-go foods like pasta have proven to be popular with the pupils and will be carried on. Weather conditions have been taken in mind and these are completed on a termly basis.

**Q. What would happen if plastic ran out?**

**A.** This seems like a silly question, but is something we have to keep in mind because one day it could eventually happen. Plastic is made out of oil from the Earth and that will inevitably run out over time. If that did happen metal cutlery would be used and plastic kept to a minimum, no one really wants this to happen but it could if people are not careful.

To sum up all of this, when asked if he has anything to tell the students, Mr Potter said that he and his team are very open to suggestions from the student council or anyone who has any queries, so if you ever have any suggestions for the canteen please tell your student councillor and that could be sorted. Students should use this platform to voice any concerns and suggestions to the canteen to make it a better experience for you.

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**Want to write an article for the next newsletter?**

Whatever you choose to write about, whether it’s about a book or film, an interview, a hobby, an event here at WHSG or just student life, send your article in document form (not a PDF) to library@whsg.info. Make sure you include your full name and form.
FOCUS ON...
Recommended reading for SUMMER

All of the above are available to borrow from the Library now

For new books and events, follow the Library at:

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The Library
Online Catalogue

Welcome to the Library’s home page. The Library catalogue can be accessed in school by typing “Library” into the search bar. Then click on “Library Online”. Alternatively, to access the catalogue from any other device, enter the following address into any search engine – http://aiscloud.uk/wst13/#/dashboard. A link is also available from the school website.

Searching for books and other resources is easy. Specially selected reading lists are readily available from the “Quick Lists” option and resources helpful for your studies can be quickly found via the “Visual Search”. By logging on using your normal logins, you can reserve books, write reviews and much more.

Further information can be found in and around the Library.
Teenagers should ditch the highlighter, stop revising late at night and instead sniff lemons, according to a ‘neuroscience’ revision guide produced by a leading independent girls’ school.

Queen Anne’s School, near Reading, has spent five years working with neuroscientists at universities including Oxford, Reading and Goldsmiths, London, to understand how teenage brains work to optimise learning. They have come up with the ultimate revision guide, based on its Brain Can Do programme, which advises pupils not to burn the midnight oil because it is better to revise at the same time of day at which exams are sat.

Highlighting or underlining reams of text is dismissed as unhelpful. Instead, pupils should use self-explanation and practice testing over several months to embed information in their brains.

Sniffing lemons, squeezing ears and visualisation of the exam room are the more unusual techniques it recommends, particularly for those who fear that nerves will get the better of them on the day. Associate an object or sensation with a positive mood. Select a ‘trigger’ – a physical action such as squeezing your ear or sniffing a lemon. On the day of the exam use your trigger to invoke the same positive emotions you have associated with it and take that happy feeling into your exam with you.

Other tactics for tackling nerves include deep breathing, shoulder rolling, head lifts and ‘even adopting a Superman pose’ to calm a physical stress response in the body.

Girls are warned to avoid negative people before the exam, particularly those who will distract them by worrying or asking last-minute questions. Use self-affirmation by reminding yourselves what an ‘all-round brilliant person’ you are.

Go to have a look around the exam room so you can visualise the room while sitting past papers in the library or at your kitchen table at home. Visualisation helps to reduce stress of the unknown.

Aim to finish work no later than 9pm. Put down your phones to get into a good sleep routine.

Julia Harrington, head teacher at Queen Anne’s, said: ‘When I was at school revision was a matter of numbing your mind into many hours of boredom in the hope that some of the material you covered might stick.’ But, she believes the Brain Can Do principles help students and teachers understand the brain, so they accept they have the neurological ability to rewire their brains, and that ‘intelligence and ability are not fixed.’
Retrieval practice: Regularly test yourself. Make learning a challenge for yourself by testing what you think you know. Use flash cards, an app or completing past papers.

Interleaving: Mix up the subjects you want to revise so that you spend a shorter period on each subject but cover multiple subjects in one complete day of revision.

Conditioning: Select a trigger such as squeezing your ear, or sniffing a lemon. Spend five minutes a day thinking or doing something that makes you smile and feel confident in the presence of your trigger. On exam day use your trigger to invoke the same positivity.

Be inquisitive: Don’t accept answers at face value. Be critical of the information you receive and try to understand the steps that resulted in that particular answer.

Source: The Times, 18th March 2019
The Library

Please take conversations outside
Switch mobile phones to silent mode
Do not bring food into the Library

......or drinks apart from water

Thank you

Use your Library, you’ll miss it when you leave!

For new books and events, follow the Library at:

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