

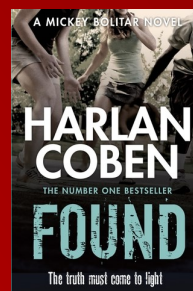
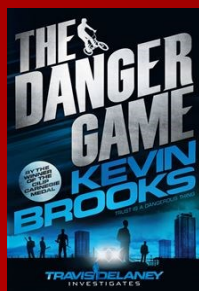
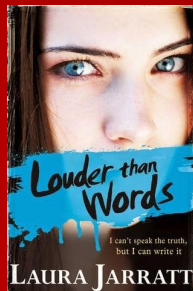
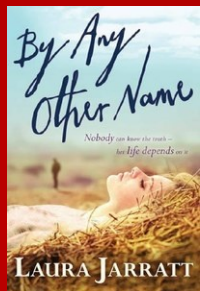


English Newsletter Term 1 2015



Welcome back to all our students and their whanau. A special welcome to all our new students, Year 7 through to Year 10. To those parents who are new to our school, we publish an English Newsletter once a term (except in Term 1, when it is twice). In this newsletter, we celebrate the success of our students in English, their achievements and their goals. Through this forum, we will also keep you informed as to what is happening in our department, events, staffing and student activities. I hope that you enjoy this form of communication with our community. Your feedback would be most welcome. Please feel free to email me on: paula.pierce@ajhs.school.nz. A special congratulations to Shelley Wilson, who has been appointed as the Assistant Head of English. You will learn a little more about Shelley later in the newsletter.

I hope you had a safe and happy Christmas break. I was lucky enough to have my mum visiting from South Africa, which was a real treat. Throughout the holidays, I was also able to read a number of Senior Fiction novels which we have purchased for our students through the Library and English Resource Room. I relish the opportunity to pre-read and buy new books for our students. The range, genre and story telling available to students today is incredible. Below are a few of our purchases:



Our new school motto, "Empower to Excel" is going to be a key focus area for our English teachers. By providing students with a range of

English Classes 2015 Mrs Pierce's Term 1 Goals:

To provide you with relevant meaningful and timeous feedback.

I will do this by:

- providing you with a minimum of one aspect where you have done well
- providing you with a minimum of one aspect where you could improve and how
- making use of opportunities to discuss your work with you
- using google docs to work on a live document with you

To ensure that you know what the requirements are for your tasks, enabling you to set your goals towards Achieved, Merit or Excellence.

I will do this by:

- providing you with a rubric for assessments
- providing you with useful feedback
- discussing criteria with you, including the opportunity to ask questions

information, we hope to empower them to make decisions about their choices and their learning. Teachers will also ensure that each student is aware of their own progress, where they are with their learning, and where they need to head to, ensuring their learning is truly visible and transparent. Each of our teachers will have a focus area in their English classes, which will lead towards students having more awareness and control over their learning in English. Some possible areas of focus may include: effective group work, consistent and timeous feedback, student choice, knowing the assessment and what is required to reach that goal, revision, use of prior knowledge and of course, knowing our learners.

Our Year 10 teachers will once again be working closely with Albany Senior High School, continuing to develop links between our two faculties, ensuring that our students have a seamless transition to the Senior School. We have a good relationship and able to draw on their knowledge and expertise.

In our faculty, we believe in celebrating success. Not only celebrating the success of students who reach their academic goals, but also celebrating students' own personal milestones. Students who have set themselves a goal and have made steps towards achieving it. Your child may well receive a personalised Celebration Postcard from his/her English teacher, commenting on their achievement.

Keep a lookout for the postcards, they look like this:



This is an initiative we started about 18 months ago, and the feedback has been very positive. Our students have appreciated the personalised message and also.... it's awesome nowadays to receive something in the post!

Our library continues to boast a wide range of books for students, from general to Senior Fiction. Sandra Ware, our dedicated Library Manager ensures that student choice is an area of focus when purchasing books. There is something there for everyone.

Please keep in touch with us. If you have any queries, concerns or feedback (positive or otherwise), let us know. Please contact your child's English teacher in the first instance. Their email will be their first and last name plus ajhs.school.nz. Our senior English Teachers are: Paula Pierce, Loena McCormack, Retha Barnard, Shelley Wilson, Lyndsay Prendiville and Pip McCosh.

Finally, one of the best ways to teach children the value and enjoyment of reading, is to be a reader yourself. Through reading, your children can travel the world, meet amazing people, see incredible places, and all from the comfort of your couch! Enjoy.

Paula Pierce
HOLA: English

Can you help us?

We are looking for one or two volunteers who could make a regular commitment to cover books in our school library.

We take responsibility for our English Faculty and other departments, as well as the large number of novels that are processed each year.

If you feel you could help, please contact the Library Manager, for further information.

Sandra Ware

Library Manager

library@ajhs.school.nz

415 5473 Ext 609



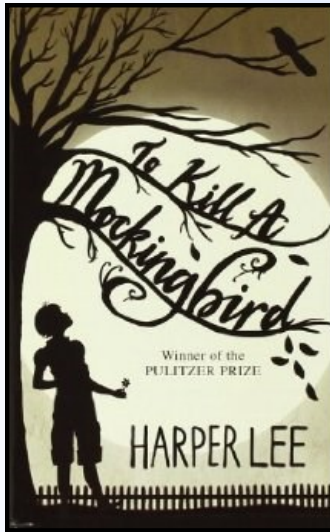


Meet some of our new teachers

Shelley Wilson, Assitant HOLA English

A little about me

I am South African. My daughter and I moved to Ireland when she was ten. We lived there for a few years and moved to New Zealand five years ago. We both love living in New Zealand. I have always enjoyed working with young people and I have taught children from age two all the way up to age eighteen. I also love animals, and in particular, dogs. I have two West Highland Whites and brought them with me from Ireland.



I started working at AJHS a few weeks after arriving in NZ. I studied as an English and Film Studies teacher but I have spent a few years teaching Learning Support classes.



My favourite book

When I was at High School I had a wonderful English teacher who read us the classics with such passion and skill that she brought the characters of Chaucer, Shakespeare and Dickens to life. Charles Dickens has become one of my favourite authors.

My favourite book of all time is *To Kill a Mockingbird*, by Harper Lee, which I read for the first time when I was 16. This was Harper Lee's first and only book.....until now! She is currently publishing her second book after 55 years. I can't wait!

Advice to Reluctant Readers

When my daughter was 8 she couldn't read. She struggled because she has mild dyslexia. With the help of a reading tutor, a caring class teacher and lots of effort, Kylie was able to read a little by the time she was 9. She mostly disliked it and she even had the occasional tantrum at homework time. Then a friend told her about a new book. It was about a boy who was also a wizard. His name was Harry Potter. It was difficult at first but she loved the story so much that she persevered and this was the beginning of her great love affair with books. She says she wouldn't have learned to read without Harry Potter and she ALWAYS has a book with her. It is so important to find a book about a subject or a particular genre you love. My advice for choosing a book is this:

- Never choose a book on a subject that holds no interest for you.
- If you start a book and you can't get into it by the end of the first chapter stop reading it and look for another one.
- Persevere. There will be a book for you.

How to choose a good book

- Ask your friends what they are reading. Your friends have common interests with you so you may like the same books.
- Ask an expert, such as a librarian, for suggestions.
- Look at the top 100 book list in your local book store. They are usually displayed near the door.
- Pick titles that have been made into movies. This is the mark of a popular book.

Good Luck for 2015 and KEEP READING!!

AJHS Library 2015

Welcome back!



Besides all the familiar faces, I am enjoying meeting our new students as they find their way to the Library. They arrive with their classes, with friends and on their own.

We also welcome Susan Williams, our new Library Assistant who will be here part-time each week. Nice to have new eyes and a fresh perspective!

I have started issuing books: last year's cards still work and for new students I can issue manually until their cards are received, probably after Year 7 camp. I have had great feedback from those students who took part in our Summer Reading programme, and I am looking forward to another crop of keen AJHS readers. Remember our library request book where students can request titles, authors or genres they would like to be purchased.

A reminder that the number of titles on our ePlatform continues to grow steadily. Tablets, iPads and laptops are the most efficient devices to download eBooks onto and we will be having another drive to help get students set up to do this in Term 1.

There is a link to the ePlatform through my blog or go direct to <http://ajhs.wheelers.co/> and log in using full student email and password.

Download the app to read online OR create an Adobe ID and download Bluefire Reader free, to download to your device. Further details and links are on the site's Help page, alternatively, see me or come to ICT Help in the Library any lunchtime through the week.

Also a reminder that the library is open early – 7am – if students would like to finish homework, meet friends, or just quietly read.

Upcoming events:

- 2015 student librarians; I will be advertising soon in the student notices. There is a selection process and I will be looking for up to 12 new students to work in our team.
- Kids Lit Quiz 2015 final to be held 7th May. We will be working on creating our two teams at the beginning of March so interested students should keep their ears pricked during notices.

Sandrea Ware
Library Manager

<http://ajhsbetweenthelines.blogspot.co.nz/>



Helen Haine Year 7 Teacher

Kia ora, I'm Mrs Haine and am teaching homeroom in K22. Here's a few things about me you might not know. When not in the classroom I am often found delving into rock pools, beach combing, reading, cooking and if I think no one is looking ... watching TV shows made by Marvel. I am the mother of three girls, all currently at Primary School, our family live locally in the East Coast Bays.



This summer seems to have been one filled with dragons for me. The break has given me time to potter and discover. I was born in the Year of the Dragon and grew up with a fondness for them. My mother read aloud to us long after we could read for ourselves and I still remember first meeting Smaug from the Hobbit as she spun the tale for us with winter wind lashing our corrugated iron roof, her voice weaving itself with the storm.



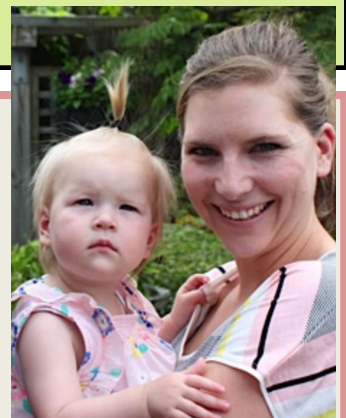
Over the break I found a beeswax candle that reminded me very much of Smaug and it had to come home with me when I found her sitting in a corner of a cafe in the far north. I was grateful for the gentle perfume in the car on the way home as it fought with the distinctive odour that ten days of camping brings in a hot car on a long journey.

The other dragon in my summer has been one by the name of Kai. My eldest daughter was given the first book in the Dragon Keeper series by Carole Wilkinson for Christmas. It is treasure and necessitated a trip to the local library (two actually) to acquire the rest of the books in the series for reading while camping. We have both devoured them and I have found myself recommending them over and over in the past few days so if you need something new and you are interested in dragons and adventure give them a try.

Jess Prior

My name is Jess Prior, I have been an Intermediate level teacher for four years and I love teaching young adolescents! For the past year I have been on maternity leave with my now, one year old daughter. She has expanded my love of reading to books like "Spot" and "That's not my monkey!" My personal recreational reading usually includes Paulina Symonds and Nora Roberts. Also the classics of Dr Seuss and Roald Dahl are constantly coming off and on to my book shelf in the classroom.

It can be so hard to find the time in our busy lives to find the quiet space to sink your teeth into a good book, iPads and other devices can seem more appealing and less effort. However, you will never regret the time spent losing yourself and becoming one of the characters of an inspiring tale. What works for me is to set a bedtime 15 - 30 mins early and use that time to wind down and read.



All the best for your year at AJHS!