

Top Button



A Verulam School Publication

Issue 17 December 2014





Top Button

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Contents

**Will Gompertz
visits Verulam**

The Winter Fair

**Visit to the
British Library**

Blubberie

Contributors: **Duncan Kennedy** Year 12
Daniel Galvez Year 7
Zak Goldman Year 7
Ben White Year 7
Ethan Phillips Year 7
Dylan Labuda Year 8
Nathan Thornton Year 8
Tom McLoughlin Year 9
James Barham Year 9
Joe Hensman Year 9
Cooper Caminsky Year 9
Alfie Green Year 9
Spencer Caminsky
Year 12

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Will Gompertz visits Verulam

Will Gompertz, arts editor for the BBC, visited Verulam to give the weekly lecture for our engaging minds series.

His lecture followed that of Peter Tatchell, who set a high standard, and he managed to top that with his lecture. He decided to talk to us on the topic of perception, specifically on the perception of modern art.

His witty introduction of himself as, 'evidence that you can be both hideously ugly and very successful', set the general, light-hearted tone of the afternoon.

Will started his talk with an anecdote of when he went to Amsterdam with his girlfriend as a young man. He explained how his girlfriend had dragged him along to an art museum in the city and how he had reluctantly attended. He spoke of one piece of art in particular, which he assured us was rubbish, that changed his life utterly.

Through a series of events, he found himself looking at this one painting a second time, only this time he recognised its beauty. He explained how, the second time he viewed the art, he saw many things he failed to see the first time, revealing its hidden beauty. This was the moment he fell in love with art and the girl he was there with - who later became his wife.

This taught him that not all art is good, but that art can be anything.

***Not all art is good,
but art can be anything.***

This story was one of many that he used to show us his life's turning points and revelations, the first having inspired him to take up a career in the arts.

After his time as director for Tate Media, Will applied for the job of BBC Arts Editor.

According to Will, one of the major reasons why he got the job was his 'silly hair'. His theory, once he got through to the interview stage, was that, as a public service broadcaster, the BBC must have candidates from all kinds of backgrounds to represent the diversity of Britain. He decided that he was the BBC's 'worst nightmare' to hire as a 'white, posh, middle class man'. He thought if he dispelled their concerns about why not to hire him, they would only be thinking about why they could hire him.



So, as a school drop-out who had no A-levels to his name, he convinced the interview panel he was their diversity candidate due to his lack of education. Furthermore, he also believes that someone needs to have something to be remembered by; to make them stand out. In his case, his hair. This tactic proved successful as he got the job at the BBC.

He greatly recommended the idea of setting up a show at the Edinburgh Arts Festival to anyone who has a slight motivation to do so.

His message not to view anything superficially, was expertly and subtly put across and will not be forgotten by many.

Whether in art, or in reference to people, this lesson is a valuable one, not to mention the comedy of the talk as a whole. The attention of the whole sixth form was kept undeniably on him.

Will Gompertz was a truly funny, interesting and inspiring speaker. Our great thanks to him.

Duncan Kennedy

The Winter Fair

On a Saturday morning in November, Verulam turned a miserable, rainy, dull day into a fun-packed one! The year 7s and 8s held stalls which ranged from cakes to a penalty shoot-out with Santa. The Canteen was packed with people having a good time chatting and laughing and the delicious scents from the kitchen attracted even more people. My Form, 7Y, raised £70 and others raised even more! We therefore raised lots of money for a good cause – our school!

To conclude, I think this was a good old kick start to the festive season and got everyone into the Christmas vibe!

Daniel Galvez

On Saturday 22nd November the Winter Fair took place. Everyone was buzzing with excitement. Food, stalls, raffles, games and so much more took place. An extremely special event was the incredible Lotus Elise S1 that sat just outside the main entrance to the school. It was possible to have your photo taken in the remarkable car.

All the school stalls, set up brilliantly by year 7 and year 8, were absolutely incredible. Big crowds gathered to have their turn in all the fun and exciting challenges. There were cycling and rowing challenges making you use every ounce of strength in your body. You could also see how good your aim was by target shooting. The tombola was a great success too, with lots of amazing presents and treats to buy you just couldn't resist! Lots of delectable foods were being served too, such as mouth-watering pies and delicious hot dogs.

As well as this, a raffle took place at the Fair with prizes such as £150 in cash, a luxury hamper and many more. The event was held from 12-3pm, but no one wanted to leave. But you know the saying 'all good things must come to an end'.

Zak Goldman

Verulam School's Winter Fair this year was absolutely fantastic. Sadly I was only there for 45 minutes which I regret. We were all smartly dressed in uniform and my form ran the 'Chubby Bunny Challenge' which was an original idea and I can say it was certainly very popular!

I had a go and got marshmallows in my mouth before I couldn't say 'Chubby Bunny' anymore. The record on our stall was 21 which is unbelievable! The Fair was a great environment to be in. The canteen food was amazing and I'm proud to be a part of Verulam School.

Ben White



The Winter Fair

On Saturday 22nd of November, Verulam's amazing Winter Fair was about to begin and it was great. Along with some old favourites, we had some new ideas too, like the 'Chubby Bunny' challenge which was 7C's stall. This did please a lot of people, but it also left some disliking marshmallows!

The Year 7 stalls were very varied. 7B were doing an interesting stall where you had to put on as many t-shirts as you can in 30 seconds. The person who put on the most won a prize. 7Y's 'Beat Santa' stall was where you had to score a goal past Santa who was the goalkeeper. 7H did some old classics that everyone would love. Apple bobbing and smack the rat – two that everyone would remember from their childhood. 7J did something that was

a mix of a party game and something that made this year's Movember special. Pin the moustache on the teacher! 7P got a large amount of small polystyrene balls and put them in a cardboard box along with a range of carrots, some whole, some missing the top and some missing the bottom – prizes were given depending on which carrot you pulled out.

We were also lucky enough to be able to have our photograph taken whilst in a Lotus. There was also a popcorn maker and a candy floss machine which was a lovely touch.

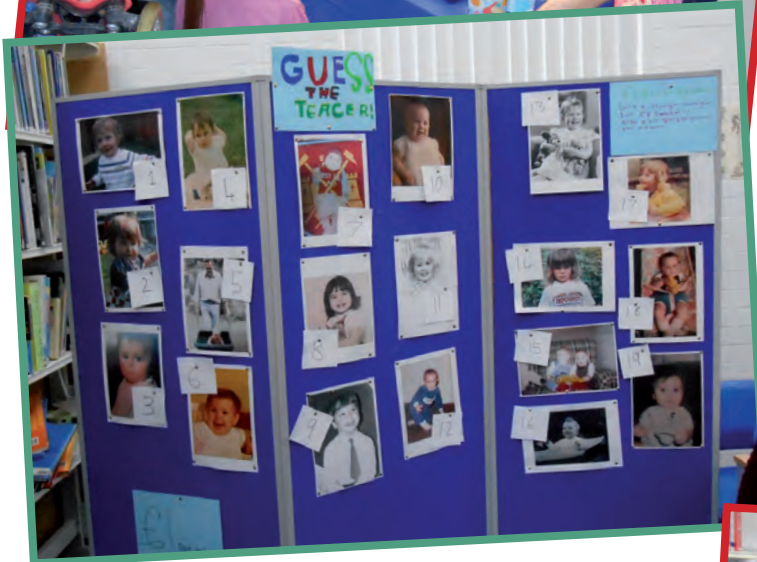


Ethan Philips

For 8H the Winter Fair was a great opportunity to raise money. Furthermore, we had two stalls that we were running. The first stall was 'guess the teacher' from their baby photos. This was extremely hard to solve; even for experienced teachers! However, our form tutor, Madame Michel, had made the prize well worth it: a £10 gift voucher for WH Smiths, numerous huge bars of chocolate, the new Hunger Games, the Mockingjay Part One tin, and enough sweets to last a year! After one and a half hours Isaac Nathan (8C) with 10 correct answers was winning but Miss Nelson just beat him with 11. Then the competition really got going with Dominic Lamb (7B) getting 12 correct guesses. Unfortunately for him, Mr Tansley got 13 correct guesses. Some could say though, what could a PE teacher do with all those sweets and chocolates?

Our other stall, run by Mr Fitzgibbons, was table tennis. This proved to be a star attraction at the Fair raising a lot of money. The aim was to put two of 8H's finest table tennis players on the two tables. If you beat them, you got a free game. Overall, our Form's stalls as well as the Christmas Fair was a great success.

Dylan Labuda



Lots of people came to the table tennis stall – over 64 if my maths is correct. One player was so good he stayed on for 9 rounds so we gave him an R2. Our stall was very busy; we had lots of games and we had to have lots of people to help out. The atmosphere around the table tennis stall was great – lots of smiles!

Nathan Thornton



British Library trip - Gothic Literature

I enjoyed reading about all the old gothic horror stories and how the genre started. The fact that one person could come up with this idea is, frankly, amazing. The venue, the British Library, was awesome and the way they laid the exhibition out set the scene perfectly and made it even more interesting. The workshop leader from the British Library was great and made the workshop fun and a little different.

Tom McLoughlin

When we arrived, I was incredibly impressed by the scale of the building – the British Library was huge! We were taken to the exhibition which really gave a gothic vibe with it being dimly lit and black everywhere. First, we had to pick up some common features of the gothic horror novel. My favourite part of the exhibition was seeing the original manuscript of Frankenstein by Mary Shelley which is my favourite gothic novel. We then had an opportunity to come up with our own gothic inspired story. Overall, I had a great day and learnt lots.

Alfie Green

The trip was for year 9 students and was held at the British Library. I thoroughly enjoyed it because we learnt all about old and new gothic horror literature. My favourite part was going off by ourselves to find out about a certain word from the gothic horror genre. For example, we might have been given the word 'science' to research, or the word 'weather'.

James Barham

The English trip to the British Library was an interesting trip. We visited an exhibition in the basement of the Library. It was about the gothic genre. In the Exhibition we looked at the inspiration for gothic horror, the types of gothic horror and the words associated with the genre. This was interesting and different.; I liked learning about the genre outside the classroom.

Joe Hensman

Our trip to the British Library was great. It started with a long coach ride, but it didn't seem as long as it really was because I had just recently been on a coach to France – that was long! We had a lot of fun at the British Library doing research activities and in the end, even making our own gothic story plots. I was really fascinated to see how the gothic genre has evolved over time.

Cooper Caminsky



Blubberies

Background

Blubberies are a special type of poetry, where instead of using deliberate literary techniques and special use of punctuation to get a message across, it throws tons of words together in no real order to convey a message. The interesting part is, that the message is displayed through the last letter of every line - read downwards to spell out the purpose of the poem.

In this Blubberie, the purpose of the poem is the type of poem itself. It shows that most modern poetry and literature today is, in my opinion, bland and repetitive, missing out the most important aspect of writing as a whole: the fun of it. This poem explains that even the worst poet can do blubberies, as it's a type of poetry that's so easy and flexible you won't have to worry about incorporating certain rules and techniques to do it. .All you need to do, is be creative.

A less keen and carefully conspicuous eye would not disagree with most and me that literature bends the dangerously death-defying boundaries of the conscience mind so delicately - one raw loose end forces the reader to apprehend such a terrible field to tend, an impossible drop by an understandably daft and dim-witted human being in which he does not want to descend, so terribly enforced by schools as tools for the working mind as matter for inconspicuous chatter, bit by bit we sit and sit and slowly but surely our minds turn to silt, engulfed with those brainless condescending things every literary technique and work of mystique always brings, shielded by grand armadas of full-stops and commas, trapping the reader like angry pajamas. Wow. What was that. i've never heard such a thing, you said, in your muddled up brain there is no hope to mend, you're completely unable to now comprehend, all of the things that make poetry tend to go down the slippery slope. god. What is he talking about? look again and you will see, what I am doing now, as clear as can be, is being the breeder of new poetry, where words are just waffle to go through right angles and language is jumbled together in tangles. get it? oh. explanation: now try to imagine a world made of glass where all is the same from the bolts to the brass and nothing is different but centre of mass. us. in earth's everyday spinning there's more losing and winning, we've lost all of our sense of good fun. but with modern ideas comes brand new achievers-even the losers have won:p

Spencer Caminsky
