First term is almost over! Over the past eight weeks I have learnt much about the school, the students and the staff. As I walk through the school buildings and grounds observing the myriad of activities and interactions occurring, the ethos of the school is palpable. The values of the school are merely words unless they are actually represented in the actions and occurrences that occur throughout the school. The community of this school lives its values every day and we collectively pursue the best outcomes for the students.

Most recently the declaration of the poll for school council was made, and it was most pleasing to welcome four new parent members and two new Department of Education and Training (DET) members, to the new council. Members of both the old and new councils met last Tuesday. The new council co-opted outgoing president Ms Tina McCarthy. Ms McCarthy has been on the council, and its president, since the school’s, and therefore the council’s, inception and it was believed that her presence on council would be most beneficial to ensure a smooth transition and to provide the history to previous decisions. She graciously agreed on the condition that she would resign from the council within six months to allow new membership. Two students will be co-opted to school council in the near future. The election of office bearers resulted in Dr Iqbal Gondal being elected president, Ms Tina McCarthy elected as vice-president and Ms Vinothini Selvakumar elected as Treasurer.

The school council has some exciting challenges ahead. While the extension to the gym has been previously approved by the council, on Tuesday the council formally accepted the recommendation of a preferred tender and the building project will start at the beginning of second term. Council will also be considering an increase in membership of the council and also the sub-committee structure. Sub-committees provide an opportunity for members of the community to contribute to the decision making processes of the school without necessarily being elected to council.

Leadership within the school occurs at many levels. We proudly advertise the leadership opportunities for our students and the SRC are a perfect example of the leadership of our students. I have been very impressed with both the enthusiasm of the SRC and their practicality. Collectively they have proposed many great ideas for both the benefit of the school and the students. One proposal has been the suggestion of a Year 11 camp. The students instigated this idea, including identifying suitable venues and availability. Using social media they have liaised with their fellow students and presented detailed options. This is just one example of the commitment the student leaders are making to both their peers and the school.

Last night we conducted the first of the 2016 Year 9 information evenings for prospective students. Tours of the school were conducted by Year 10 student ambassadors from 6.30pm, which were then followed by presentations from Erene Sakabitis, one of our school captains, the assistant principals, Frances Muollo and Stewart Milner, and me. Attendance was quite reasonable and I am looking forward to the next information session on 6 May. It is imperative that we showcase our school and advertise widely to attract applicants to the school. When the concept of a select entry school in the west of Melbourne was first mooted, the theory was that it would cater not only to students from the western and north western suburbs of Melbourne, but also students to the west of Melbourne. Everyday thousands of people commute from Geelong to Melbourne for work. Our next target audience are the students of greater Geelong; an hour by train from Geelong to Hoppers Crossing railway station. We have begun advertising in Geelong with a ‘bus advertisement’, which is a very big advertisement on the side of a bus used for public transport! The DET is also advertising specifically in Geelong for the whole select entry network, but with an emphasis on our school. On Tuesday 28 April we will conduct an information session at the Geelong Town Hall. This is just the beginning of an exciting opportunity for our school.

Finally, I wish all members of our community a safe and productive term break. This is a time to reflect, recharge, consolidate and prepare for the next term.

Colin Axup
Principal
Traffic safety in the school car park

To improve student safety and alleviate congestion in the school car park, we request that parents adhere to the following two expectations:

1. **Please park in the visitor parking spaces in the car park but do not park in the delivery and bus drop-off zone out front of the office.**
   Parents are welcome to use the drop-off / pick-up zone out front of the office to collect their child but please do not park in that area for extended periods. Parking in that zone impedes the flow of traffic wishing to pick up or drop off children—everyone else has to wait while cars there are stationary—and the traffic flows much more safely and smoothly if that area is only used to stop to collect students, rather than to park there and wait for students. There are also many days when buses returning to the school at the end of the day need to be able to access that zone to drop off students returning from excursions.

2. **As per the sign at the school entrance (reproduced here), there is to be no right-hand turn out of the school car park during drop-off and pick-up hours.**
   To exit the school car park at this time, please only turn left. If you wish to continue to the right down Hoppers Lane, consider collecting your child from the car park across the road (next to the Wyndham athletics track)—students can cross the road using the supervised crossing and meet you at that car park. Please also note that there is parking available in the car park next to the gymnasium next door to our school.

We recognise that parking around the school is limited and we will continue to communicate with local council and lobby for the construction of much needed parking bays along Hoppers Lane but at this point council advise that they have no plans to make solid verges on the road nor to install parking bays there. **Mr Stewart Milner** Assistant Principal

Road works commencing for improved access to and from East Werribee

There are major improvements planned for the access roads into the East Werribee precinct. Work has already commenced along the land to the south of the school which will lead to a new freeway interchange at the end of Sneydes Road. Vic Roads have advised that they will also shortly begin road construction works at the intersection of Princes Highway West (Werribee Main Road) with Hoppers Lane to develop an aligned intersection between Hoppers Lane and Old Geelong Road. This will include road widening works. During this work, temporary traffic lane closures and speed restrictions may apply to Hoppers Lane from time to time. We ask parents to stay alert to changed traffic conditions and observe any signs in place and we will work with Vic Roads to communicate updates to our school community as promptly as possible. Access to the school will, of course, remain available throughout the period of road works. **Mr Stewart Milner** Assistant Principal

Early dismissal on the last day of term

On the final day of each term, students will be dismissed at the earlier time of 2.20pm.

The final day of term one is Friday 27 March.

This will be an out-of uniform day for students with a gold coin donation contributed to the Royal Children’s Hospital Good Friday Appeal.
We are privileged at Suzanne Cory High School to have such a multicultural community. It is essential that we acknowledged the multitude of cultural backgrounds of the students at our school and that we share the unique customs of our different backgrounds. One of our aims as school captains this year, is to ensure that students have the opportunity to celebrate and share their cultures with students from other cultures.

Last week, the world celebrated the event of Holi, the Hindu religious celebration of colours and festival of love. In celebration of Holi, we will be holding our own colour festival during the lunchtime of Friday 27 March on our new school oval. This day will be a casual clothes day for students, however we ask that students who wish to take part in this colour throwing event bring a change of clothes to change into after the event, before taking public transport home.

The celebration of this festival should be enjoyed by all students, however the we ask that students wishing to participate pay a $3 levy to cover the cost of the powdered paint as well as the cost of cleaning the school oval. Any additional funds gathered will be donated to the school "Breakfast Club", that provides free breakfast weekly to all students of the school. Ricky John and Erine Sakabetis  2015 School Captains
Cottrell Report

We, the Cottrell house debating leaders, are very pleased with the valiant effort and hard work of the Cottrell house debaters this year. The debating season kicked off with a tutorial from Suzanne Cory graduates Matt Lagamba and Ella Byrne to help get everyone interested and excited about debating.

From there on Elena and I rallied the house to inspire nine competitors from each year level to participate in the preliminaries. Although not all volunteers had debated before, we are very proud and impressed by the fact they had put themselves out there to compete for the house with us.

We would like to thank the following people for their contributions: Ali Naqvi (12A), Louis Devine (12A), Andy Chao (12A), Rawand Alkalame (12D), Nipuna Fonseka (12D), Zein Alhamandani (11A), Aswin Selvanathan (11C), Danny Hou (11C), Will Pan (11C), Salvin Kumaran (11A), Kim Do (11A), Luke Matiluck (11A), Zoe Cook (11A), Emily Phan (10G), Michael Zhixin Ye (10B), Remy Nguyen (10G), Harry Tran (10G), Raiysnu Sunderarajan (10G), Ha Lam Nguyen (10B), Brandon Lai (9G), Bivek Singh (9G), Remy Pequignot (9G), Boen Galutera (9H), Bryan I (9H), Marlan De Silva (9H), Henry Truong (9H), Robin Uh (9H) and Aamna Syed (9H).

A special thank you to Emily and Michael, who showed true house spirit by filling in on a debate at the last minute with no preparation. Despite this, they performed exceptionally well! Brandon Lai also deserves a special mention for helping coordinate the Year 9 Debaters. The strong efforts of these amazing Cottrell people ensured that Cottrell landed three grades in the finals and one grade competing for third. Although we did not win overall, their efforts were nothing short of admirable. We would also like to thank all the teachers and students who acted as time keepers and adjudicators who enabled a smooth and successful event.

Kristine Carlos

Rothwell Report

The debating competition was a chance for us to give a kick start to 2015 and show everyone; the other houses and teachers what a talented group of students make up Rothwell!

It was an experience that allowed many students to work together in groups to strengthen house spirit and encourage contribution.

The level of confidence and experience showcased by all year levels was absolutely outstanding. Also amongst the teams there was a great level of organisation and teamwork. There were a large number of juniors who expressed interest, and we were lucky enough to have Ismaeel Muhammad, Hazaied Ahmad, Sameer Muhammad, Leah Martinez, Ankitha Bijukumar, Khushi Kalra, Swetha , Maheen Ali and Alain Nguyen represent Rothwell, taking home gold!

In the C Grade debates, proudly representing our house was: Elizabeth Ta, Richard Rigoli, Ibrahim Muhammad, Jennet Deswal, Hana Umer, Darshan Shet, Liang Xue and Neha Devarakonda. The Year 11’s showed great sportsmanship, courage and organisation by putting their hand up; Sukhmani Randhawa, Daniel Vo, Nikhilesh Navani, Youssef Grgs. Thank you especially to Sukhmani Randhawa and Daniel Vo who were brave enough to participate in two debates, in spite of other school commitments.

Lastly, a huge thank you to the seniors who put as much effort as possible into debating to the best of their capabilities, showing the rest of the houses what we’re made of; Elicia Lok, Tim Eastwood, Anoooshree Katwe and Peter Nguyen. There was an exceptional display of sportsmanship, house spirit and competitiveness that took us right to the finals, and for that, we’d like to thank all Rothwell students, debaters, adjudicators and teachers who showed us support. To the other houses for gave us a good competition and everyone who came along and watched the debates. It’s been a great experience, and one that we will dominate again in 2016 and the years to come! Neha Devarakonda & Lyn Nguyen
Kororoit Report
Debating report – Kororoit. Kororoit house showed their spirit once again turning out for the house debating competition. Teams and adjudicators from all year levels included: 

Year 9: Jacob Kalapurackel, Veronica Mercado, Amos Lee, Antonio Bal, Ahmad Rubas, Sanika Hambarday and Anagha Giri.

Year 10: Alana Stepanovski, Mylinh Do, Annegret Cumming, Joshua Cordina, Swara Samudre and Melissa Lam.

Year 11: Mario Peiris, Kasuni Imbulana, Henry Hulstrom, Davinya Ravichandar, Maria Jacob, Camille De Torres and Bowen Xu.

Year 12: Xavier Kee, Thao Tran, Emily Lew, Ricky John, Tori Kovach, Tam Le and Luke Mannix.

Blackwood Report
House Debating has definitely been a wonderful opportunity for all year levels within Blackwood to come together and show house spirit by participating in the debates, adjudicating or by coming along to support. The amount of interest and enthusiasm shown was amazing as everyone was prepared to help out to make sure that this event was possible.

The competition consisted of a diverse range of topics, such as “That feminism is irrelevant to young women today” and “The Australian government should not lobby foreign government on behalf of Australians imprisoned in that country”. Consequently, these topics definitely generated interesting debate and arguments from all teams.

Despite missing out on first place and coming second in the competition, it was great to see so many people willing to step out of their comfort zones and give debating a go! We would like to thank all the debaters for putting in so much effort in planning out their debates and the adjudicators and staff who dedicated a lot of time to ensure that this competition was a success.

Here is the list of all the debaters and best speakers:

A grade: Liem Nguyen, Ravee Pathya, Elif Yilidiz, Jenny Tran, Erene Sakabetis

B Grade: Sofia Pacheco, Elizabeth Vu, Srishti Gupta, Sakina Abedi, Emily Tesfaye, Caprice Czarnecka, Tristan Gaga-a, Rebonto Zaman Joarder, Devika Nair

C Grade: Tarra Co, Kim Vu, Jieni Pan, Sehaj Singh, Shimran Kumaran, Angelo Bombuwelage Don

D Grade: John Paul Montejo, Karthik Ponraj, Sandra Kumar
Our new school oval was christened recently with a staff v. students cricket match. The students won by a landslide!

DAV Interschool Debating Competition

DAV Interschool Debating Competition
The first round of the DAV (Debating Association of Victoria) interschool debating competition was held this Wednesday evening (March 18) at Williamstown HS (Bayview Street campus). It was an eventful first round, with 50% success rate from our ten teams across years 9-12: three outright victories, two victories from forfeits, four losses and one bye. Many of our students (particularly our new Year 9s) clearly benefited from the experience of the House Debating competition, as they prepared comprehensive arguments which were presented with confidence, eloquence and poise. Others lamented their somewhat impaired preparation, in part attributed to a busy fortnight of assessment and numerous co-curricular activities. As always, our students impressed with their enthusiastic, collaborative and aspirational approach to this endeavour. Congratulations to the following students who received the best speaker award for their debate: Hana Umer (10A), Swetha Jinson (9B), Anagha Giri (9E) and Maheen Ajmal (9A). I know our students really appreciated the support of parents and teachers (Ms Velisha, Mr Portelli and Mr Cummins) who came along to watch the debates. Thanks also to our alumni Ella Byrne and Matthew Lagamba (and his father Greg) for dropping by. We will be seeing more of Ella and Matt next term when they provide a workshop to our senior debating teams, with a focus on ‘rebuttals’. The next round of debates is scheduled for Wednesday 6 May.

Ms Cindy Sullivan
English/Humanities Leading Teacher
Early on the morning of Thursday 5 March, an eager group of Year 12 representatives attended the annual International Women’s Day breakfast at the Crown Palladium hosted by the Women in Rotary. Women in Rotary are a group that promotes a dynamic culture in which men and women can work together to improve the lives of individuals and communities.

The students gathered at Crown, along with Ms de Garis and Ms Sullivan, well before sunrise, eager to listen to the debated topic for this year’s event: “does gender equality benefit us all?” There was a record number of 1200 attendees at this year’s event, including many distinguished and influential guest speakers such as Geraldine Doogue, Kate Jenkins, Professor Andrew Macleod, Peta Searle, Tom Elliot and Judge Prance Millane.

As we all indulged in the delicious breakfast offered, comprising of eggs Benedict and smoked salmon on toast accompanied by an array of baked pastries and fruit, we listened carefully to the arguments presented by the guest speakers on the issue of gender equality in Australia and around the world. Everything from domestic violence, to the gender pay gap to the education industry was explored in relation to finding solutions to induce and promote gender equality in Australia. The solutions, as posed by the guest speakers, to achieving gender equality are to unite men and women and to encourage the idea that gender inequality is a societal issue and not something only for women to fight for. Society has to ask questions such as: do we like gender stereotypes? What are we trying to teach the future generations? Do we really need different types of lego for girls and boys?

In order to solve the problem of gender inequality, we, as a diverse community, we need to focus on the gender stereotypes that face our society sets and to measure the change we wish to make in our communities. In the words of the first female St Kilda AFL coach, Peta Searle, “what gets measured, gets done”. Gender inequality is a global problem for men and women, so society needs to work together and unite to drive a change.

The event was both educational and enjoyable for everyone who attended. It certainly gave us all a lot to think about and inspired us to help drive the change for gender equality. We encourage more students to attend the event next year! Erine Sakabetis
Grip Leadership Conference

The grip leadership conference was truly a fulfilling and interesting way to develop and learn leadership skills. Over 1,000 students had come together at the Melbourne Exhibition and Convention Centre, and participated in a wide range of workshops and lectures that targeted many areas of hardships student leaders may face.

There were many great pieces of practical advice that was taken away from the various lectures and workshops.

For some, it was learning to maximise the events to tailor to your students, for others it was how to change your leadership style to fit a certain situation. Additionally there were many great new ideas taken away from this event, like trying to get the school to break or make a world record; or auctioning off the school leaders for charity.

However the most insightful part throughout the day would have to be the Q&A and anecdotal recounts the Grip Leadership team members had to share with all 1,000 students. Through their recounts, they reminded us that we are privileged to be in a position where we can do things for the students and the school. That if we are in these positions we should try our best to make the most of it because sometimes the changes we make and encourage other students to make can become some of the most rewarding and memorable times in high school. Kristine Carlos
11A House Debating Leader and SRC Member

Wyndham District Swimming

14 students participated in the Wyndham District Swimming held at Werribee outdoor swimming pool on March 10. All the students who swam on the day did a fantastic job and put in 100%.

The following students were successful at getting through to the next round and will be competing in the Western Metropolitan Region Swimming on the 26 March:

Congratulations to all students who swam on the day and good luck to those who are going through to the next round! Ms Fiona Krogh
**Tennis Success**

The Suzanne Cory Intermediate girl’s tennis team recently competed in an interschool tournament against other schools in the Wyndham city area. The team consisted of 6 girls from Year 9 and 10. The girls travelled to Salt Water Reserve, Point Cook to compete against Wyndham Central. Unfortunately for the girls we only had one opponent which didn’t give us much competition; however, it did mean that we had more chance in advancing and so we did. The girls powered through their matches in the heat and were all successful in winning their matches, both doubles and singles. The team collected the most overall points and have successfully progressed to the next round being regionals, to be held early in Term 2.

The next round is sure to bring tougher opponents and will provide a significant challenge for the girls. However we wish them all the luck and are sure that they will do well nonetheless. The intermediate boys also competed on the same day. Although there were more competing schools in the boys competition, our boys came through with flying colours. Like the girls, the boys have progressed through to the regional round by going through the Wyndham region undefeated.

Well done to both teams and best of luck at the next stage of the competition. **Mr Michael Bourke**

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**Instrumental Music**

Recently we had some Wyndham Central students come to play their saxophones with the Suzanne Cory band students.

If you are interested in joining our instrumental music program, please see Ms Morris in the music department, as there are still some vacancies.

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**Wyndham Relay for Life**

Wyndham Relay for Life is an annual event that raises vital funds for the Cancer Council’s research, prevention, information and support services.

**When:** noon April 18 - noon April 19  
**Where:** Wyndham Athletics Track (across the road)

Again this year Suzanne Cory High School is intending to enter a team into the event. Interested students are encouraged to join the team—there will be sign-ups this week and next and more information at a lunchtime meeting. We have run this event in previous years and it has been a lot of fun.

There is live music, plenty of food and a great community atmosphere. Parents are also encouraged to come along, enjoy the fun and assist with supervision. If you would like to join the team you can see your House Citizenship Leaders and join a meeting this coming week at lunchtime to find out more. **Caroline Alchin 12D**
On the 6 of March, 9B along with three other classes went on an excursion to Sandridge Beach in Port Melbourne and Point Cook Coastal Park to investigate the impacts of humans on the coastal environment at these beaches. We travelled by bus and arrived at our first destination, wary that it could begin to pour at any time but it luckily didn’t. We studied our environment whilst trying to not fall in the water at the same time. After plenty of time walking around and observing the beach, we then left for our second destination. Once arriving, we had the opportunity run around and spend some time in the fresh air of the beach. We then went on to observe the not-so-pleasant Point Cook beach and identify why it wasn’t so pleasant. Soon after, we left the beach and headed home with big smiles on our face thanks to a fun day that helped not only with our school work but also with our class spirit and collaboration.

Davor Trifunov 9B

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Davor Trifunov 9B

On the 5 of March, the Year 9 home groups 9E, F, G and H were lucky enough to be the first group of year 9s to go on the Geography excursion to Point Cook Coastal Park and Port Melbourne Beach. This fieldwork excursion allowed us to put all of our geographical skills of collecting data, and observing management strategies for coastal landforms, which we had learnt about in class, into action. My teacher, Ms Fenby, made sure that this was clear before the excursion, so we knew what we were looking for and how we could indicate whether longshore drift was occurring or whether erosion could be seen etc. This is because Ms Fenby wanted us to make the most of the excursion so we would be able to analyse the impacts of people at a local beach environment and identify any management strategies for our assignment.

Despite the windy day, we had a very educational and fun day at the beaches, taking photos, collecting data, observing human impacts and management plans on each of the beaches in detail while also playing on playgrounds and having lunch at the beach. Edris Chan 9F

On the 6 of March half of Year 9 went on an excursion to Sandridge Beach and Point Cook Coastal Park to investigate the effect of humans on natural coastal locations. With a mixture of class verse, class soccer games, time on the playground and note taking the day ran smoothly. Despite the cold temperatures and slight showers that greeted us, the day overall was both successful and enjoyable. Zoe Lovatt 9B

Photo by Joe Hew 9F
Iris Dixon Women’s Cycling Champion of the Year Awards

We congratulate our immediate past school council president, Tina McCarthy on winning the Cycling Victoria Iris Dixon Women’s Cycling Champion of The Year Award for 2015. This award is presented to a Victorian who has made an outstanding contribution to cycling as a leader and a role model for women’s cycling. Among her many contributions to the school as a member of school council, Tina has pioneered our school’s participation over the last four years in the Great Victorian Bike Ride. Tina is pictured here with Iris Dixon, the eminent cyclist after whom the Award is named. Iris holds 30 national titles and 60 masters titles. Congratulations Tina.

The Premiers’ Reading Challenge

The Premiers’ Reading Challenge 2015 has officially opened. All Year 9 and 10 students are registered and have unique usernames and passwords to access their individual online reading records. Students should keep their login information in a safe place and update their lists regularly.

Books started from 1 January 2015 can be entered into reading records and students will need to finish at least 15 books to successfully complete the challenge. Many books from the 9-10 challenge list will be available to borrow from the iCentre, but students are also encouraged to borrow from their public library. In addition to fiction books, E-books, graphic novels, audiobooks and non-fiction books can be included.

English class texts will be included in students’ reading lists. Teacher Librarians will be working with English teachers and classes, groups of students and individual students to help students achieve a successful outcome. The challenge will finish in early September. All students who successfully complete this year’s challenge will receive a certificate signed by all the Premiers in November and their names will appear on an honour roll. Successful challengers will be eligible for achievement prizes and house points. The winning house will be awarded the Premiers’ Reading Challenge trophy.

The Premiers’ Reading Challenge reading record represents what your child is reading throughout the year. Parents and English teachers will usually be involved in the verification of each student’s reading record in Term 3. Some other ways that you can help your child to successfully complete the challenge include: helping students to visit and borrow from their public library, encouraging them to participate, looking at their reading record and discussing what they are currently reading.

For more information about the Premiers’ Reading Challenge 2015:


Ms Fiona Starford iCentre Manager
English PLT

News and competitions

OZCLO

We had nearly 100 students staying on after school on Thursday 12 March to sit the OZCLO linguistics competition. The questions demand that students hypothesise and identify patterns in a range of unfamiliar languages; this year that included Finnish, Vulgar Latin and ancient runes. The two competition rooms were buzzing as our intermediate and senior teams threw themselves into solving complex problems that involve logic, lateral thinking and a high level of teamwork. It would be great to get some students through to the next round this year - watch this space for the results.

Thanks to Ms Nugara for her help with refreshments and to all the staff who helped prepare or supervise the teams. Ms Helen Bradwell

Final call for submissions for the following two competitions:

Write4fun
Poems or short stories. No theme. Cash prizes. Open to all year groups.

Entry is FREE and all entries must be in by Sunday 29 March 2015. Please see website http://www.write4fun.net/competitions/54 for further details.

Nilumbik Ekphrasis poetry award
Write a poem of up to 12 lines in response to a work of art. The artworks are on the following link: http://victoriancollections.net.au/organisations/nillumbik-shire-council?q=ek201
Entries must be in by 30th March 2015. For more details please go to http://www.nillumbik.vic.gov.au/Things_to_do/Arts_and_culture/Awards_and_Prizes/2015_Ekphrasis_Poetry_Award

Year 9 English
Our first assignment – a creative response to Steven Herrick’s novel ‘The Simple Gift’ – inspired some imaginative and well-crafted writing. In recent lessons we’ve been studying ‘The Catcher in the Rye’, getting to know the character and concerns of Holden Caulfield. Now our Year 9 students are busy preparing for their next assessment task, comparing aspects of these two novels. From 2016, VCE English students will need to be able to take a comparative approach to texts, so we want to start preparing them for this. They’re preparing a presentation using an app called Prezi. Prezi allows them to take a creative approach, using visual or moving images and interactive text to enhance their ideas about the two texts. Most importantly, the app should allow our Year 9 students to zoom in on an idea and explore it in depth, using plenty of evidence, and to make logical connections between ideas. We look forward to seeing what they create.
English PLT

For an early writing task we asked Year 9 students to write about their names. We loved this response from Maya Rizkyvianti of 9C:

The Inner Dialogue of a Nameless Stranger
I glance at the woman standing at the bus stop. She is staring ahead with a blank expression, because, frankly, it’s Monday and it’s the only peace she is going to get for the next five days. I want to say something to her. I think for too long, come up with convoluted descriptions for something that should be so simple. So in a silent soliloquy I speak only for myself.

“It drops from the mouth like two pebbles. Ma-ya. It disappears before it hits the ground, losing all its weight on the way down, and yet it encompasses my whole identity to a passing stranger. First a stranger knows your face; the second thing they know is your name. It takes a step back on the palate, dwelling on the lips in muted vibration, sometimes afraid to leave. Afraid like how I am afraid to speak to the woman at the bus stop. It opens up and falls into a funnel. It widens one more time in its zenith (think of a horizontal hourglass) before it dies, ensconced in the wet chasm of the mouth. This collection of letters banded together to form a Goddess’ name in a land of spice and vibrant deities; land of temples and markets and the Ganges River. Yet it is only the name that came from India and I borrowed it from the forgotten goddess’ grave. She may never want it back.

Mortality has tainted it. She, the goddess of illusion, would think mortality of being too real, too tangible. My mother picked it out of ten thousand names simply because she liked how it sounded, like the two pebbles, and how in a sea of mountains two pebbles would sound deafening only to her. Names can be released in an ephemeral breath, a single puff of air, and feel like family. They kindle wars and pierce hardened hearts with the faces of people they were too afraid to remember. It is a lifelong branding, not exactly a friend, but not an enemy. Usually it sits on the top right hand corner of a page, mechanical movements placing it there like the thousands of times before. Like oxygen or your left ear, most people don’t give it much thought. It is the frame of my identity, the blank space inside unchartered territory. And as I outgrew my crib I coloured it in with substance, memory, a body. It is the guarded sign written all over my arms, my legs, falling from my hair.”

But when I sit beside her I say something terse and like the Monday morning sky.

“Hello, my name is Maya. What’s yours?”

The ‘M’ sound left my mouth, not afraid to leave anymore, because I am not afraid to speak to the woman at the bus stop. I memorize her face and then I hear her name. When we sat in those graffiti-splattered plastic benches waiting for that damn bus, she coloured in her name like the most talented painter I had ever seen.

ASX Sharemarket Game

The first ASX Sharemarket Game began this week, with over 11,000 students competing nationally. Suzanne Cory students have made a bright start in the game with 6 students ranked in the top 100 in Victoria. The game teaches students how the sharemarket operates by allowing them to invest a virtual $50,000 over a 10 week period, in 200 companies listed on the ASX. The prices students buy and sell at are the same prices as they would get in the live market so this is as close to real life share trading as you can get.

As a result of playing the game students can:
• Develop their knowledge of the sharemarket
• Learn how to research companies
• Discover the importance of wise investment decisions
• Gain a greater knowledge of economic and world events
• Begin to learn more about investing which is beneficial for their future
• And, as a bonus, students can win cash prizes

In just four days of trading, 14 students are already turning a profit with 32 students having made their first purchases. At this early stage of the competition, Alicia Lim and Sarfraz Nouri lead the way with an increase in their portfolios of more than $1,000. Good luck to the more than 70 students competing from Suzanne Cory. Mr Michael Bourke