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# HEADMASTER'S REPORT

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I have read most of the Gonski report now (this is the sort of reason it is risky to have me at dinner parties for entertaining conversation) and it certainly is an important, holistic and even brave document about the future of our education system in Australia. It is not about funding. Instead it is about how to get quality learning for all of the students. Despite my reservations I am impressed by the way that David Gonski and others synthesise such a gigantic and multifaceted topic (all of education) into something resembling a cohesive programme. I am enthusiastic about some areas, but really quite cautious about some others. Let me explain further, just in case you too want to be seen as an entertainment risk at dinner parties.

## Fall in league tables.

It begins by demonstrating how far we have fallen in international league tables in Maths, English and Geography (16th in literacy, 7th to 25th in Mathematics and 4th to 14th in Science). In the interim, other countries such as Singapore, Hong Kong, Finland, Chinese Taipei and Estonia have done extremely well. But there is little analysis of:

- Whether we trust the test
- Why we fell
- Why other countries rose.

Should we trust the test? Does it properly test how capable, skilled, inventive, employment-ready and curious students are? Its co-ordinator Andreas Schleicher indicated at a conference I was at last year that our 'outcomes' system in which we mandate how much each student learns each year (with the implication of 'this much and no more'). However, few teachers I know felt like an 'outcome' was a 'ceiling' - it was more of a midpoint. Many teachers half ignored them anyway - quite luckily it turns out as we are being told now that it was the source of many of our problems. So I don't really buy it as enough of an explanation.

There is also, very concerningly, almost no analysis of why the high performing countries rose. Do they have programmes that we missed? Or are the kids being coached in narrow, co-curricular free schools and then hotheaded in joyless tutoring centres until late in the night?

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## **2) Recommendations**

There are three priorities, twenty three recommendations

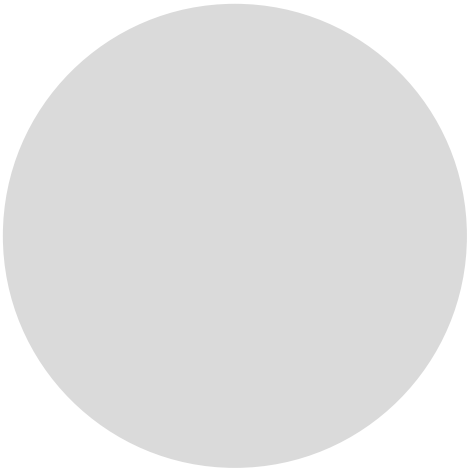
I love being part of a vibrant learning community where knowledge and expertise is shared for a common moral purpose. It is wonderful to receive correspondence from parents who recognise some research, resources, current mission and values. It is even better, when our students echo these ideals back to us as they discover their appreciation of knowledge or the example of role models and see the value of the rich education of their whole being that is nurtured in so many experiences throughout each year.

The Public Speaking Finals provided evidence of the immense power of the lessons lived in the daily life of the Junior School. My congratulations go to every single child who participated in this event and I couldn't help but think that my voice is becoming redundant. I've asked the House teachers to nominate student speeches that illustrate our Oxley Values so that our students may provide the inspiration and voice in some future assemblies. You are in for a treat.

In this edition of Pin Oak I'm celebrating Madeleine Garton in Year 6 who, along with Xanthe McDonald in Year 5, gave Arkie Franics a very close call last Friday. You will have heard Arkie's speech last night as the Junior School Public Speaking Champion for 2018. Maddie illuminated our tag line 'To think, to dare, to dream' in the stories she told to speak about the power of human "Tenacity" which sounded very much like fortitude! Her speech is included below.

There is a famous expression that goes when the going gets tough the tough get going. I was intrigued by what this meant so decided to select this as my topic. The meaning strong willed and determined people will dig deep and work harder to overcome the obstacles and rise to meet their challenges. I was inspired and hope to move you today with the stories of three inspirational people that support the saying and highlight the human spirit of tenacity.

*Do you know of Derek Redmond? He ran in the Barcelona 92*



# Six. Six degrees of separation.

Most of us are a maximum of six connections away from one-another; being linked by friends, then friends of friends, and so on, successively.

What if I told you if this phenomenon not only exists, but the average number of degrees has been not to be 6, but, 3.5 and shrinking constantly.

Facebook, which has in excess of 2.2 billion active users, has been in the media a lot lately, with its CEO Mark Zuckerberg fronting court in April over its data-management practices and the Cambridge Analytica scandal. What became evident was not only a lack of understanding of the value, and constitution of the global spider web of data, but also the tangible consequences of playing with it.

Early in the trial, Senator Hodge posed to the Facebook CEO a question.

“How can you sustain a business model in which users don't pay for your service?”

Zuckerberg, normally stone-faced, replied, “Senator, we run ads” while suppressing a smile.

The casual Facebook user, it seems, lacks a fundamental understanding as to how the service operates commercially.

Facebook ‘mines’, and ‘sells’ data to advertising agencies, while operating as an ad platform itself.

‘Your data’ – things such as posts, photos and comments, are safe – protected by Intellectual Property and privacy agreements.

It's the peripherals that are of interest. Likes, locations, activity patterns, relationships, friend demographics, and browsing history (and yes – Facebook tracks your activity even when you're not using it).

Your time and your habits are very valuable; Facebook posted a revenue of \$40 billion USD in 2017.

In an operation of such scale, data-misuse is inevitable. But sometimes it is deliberately exploited.





This week Oxley hosted two important wellbeing workshops for students in Years 9 and 10. Whilst it is often the case that single-sex schools are attuned to gender, there can sometimes be an assumption that students at co-educational schools do not need gender-specific support for the whole child is one of our strategic priorities and whilst much of what we do applies to both genders, it is important that we also tailor our pastoral care to meet the needs of boys and girls.

### Tomorrow Man

Boys in Year 9 and 10 participated in 'Tomorrow Man – Breaking the Man Code', delivered by former ABC3 presenter Kayne Tremills. It was a two hour workshop that sought to disrupt some of the assumptions and received stereotypes about what it means to 'be a man'. Such perceptions are often narrow and can promulgate a masculinity that denigrates sensitivity, emotions and meaningful communication. Bottling up emotions is a contributory factor in mental illness and with one in eight Australian men experiencing depression at some stage in their lives, changing this restrictive 'man code' is important in promoting wellbeing in young men and enabling them both to reach out to others if they need help and to also reach out when they see that someone else needs help. Similarly, the workshop sought to challenge a toxic view of manhood that promotes shallow relationships with people from both genders and to reinvent a masculinity for a modern world that

Below are some of the quotations the boys gave in their feedback:

"I was behind a mask."

"I will listen to others more and not be afraid to speak of my fears."

"It has helped me to see that I'm not alone in my peer group, like I thought I was."

"It has shown me how to break the stereotype for the better."

"I need to treat people I don't know so well with more respect."

### KYUP! Project

Year 9 and 10 girls attended a KYUP! workshop that promotes self-worth and provides practical training in self-defence. KYUP! (pronounced 'key-up'), a Korean martial arts term that translates as 'Shout!', was created by Mel Thomas in 2013 in response to the continuing reports of domestic violence in the Australian media. Mel drew upon her own personal experience of

family violence to develop a programme that seeks to protect themselves. In this workshop, the students learned about intuition and how to respond to it, the importance of having a voice and also practical techniques for self-defence. In their feedback the girls indicated overwhelmingly that they felt better equipped themselves and staying safe. Some of the comments from the girls included:

"I have become more comfortable with myself and know that people care. I have learnt how to protect myself."

"A great and empowering experience."

"It was fun whilst doing it."

"I liked that we weren't treated as princesses! I really liked the warrior approach!"

"I loved how you took bad experiences and created such a great and powerful workshop."

We intend to run both of these introductory workshops again

## DOCUMENTARIES

These docos are sure to inspire and wow you with their truth and honesty and realness.

**Closer to the Edge** - seriously crazy motorbike race on the Isle of man. SPEED SPEED SPEED, narrated by Colin Farrell.

**Netflix Abstract Series** - a bunch of inspiring creatives doing creative things, [h.jp\\_Bj\\_Y.g\cY XYgj\[ bYf`H\]b\\_Yf`<UUY`X"](#)

**The Eye Travels** - Diana Vreeland Vogues, most amazing Fashion editor - she discovered Twiggy and Angelica Houston.

**Searching for Sugarman** - a famous musician is totally unaware how famous his recods are in South Africa in the 70s.

**Paul Kelly Stories of Me** - great story telling of a famous singer storyteller.

**Embrace** - positive female body image, a must see for all men and Women!

**Blue Planet** - what can we say, David Attenborough.

**Man on a Wire** - terrifying walking on a wire between skyscrapers with no harness.

**Exit Through the Gift Shop!** [5 \[fU h\]](#) legend Banksy leaves questioning the truth.

By Beattie Lanser

## PODCASTS

Podcasts are seriously underrated. They're a movie-book inbetween, and it seems the general population neglects to consider their ability to entertain. Sure, movies are commonly the largest source of amusement, especially with the [\]bj Yb\]cb` cZ` BYH\]J\] ž` UbX` Vcc\\_g](#) create a place for an alternate universe, but you can't watch a movie or read a book whilst driving or working. Podcasts are a fantastic medium. They are a perfect way to escape to another place, using the same imaginative skills for a book, and without staring at a screen. But podcasts are also a great source of knowledge. I've listened to several podcasts, learning about current [U U\]fgz` \\]gcfm\]UbX`WUm\]VzbWdh U`](#) ideas, but recently I've found myself interested in the bilingual kind of podcast. I'm a student who is currently studying French, and I've found listening to podcasts in this language has drastically improved my understanding in class. There is a huge range of bilingual podcasts [\]b` U` gcfm\] cZ` X\] YfYbh` Ub\[ i U\[ Ygž` Zcf` VY\[ \]bbYfg` h\]fci \[ \` hc` Ui Ybh](#) speakers. Of course, learning a language isn't as easy as listening to a few podcasts, but it is certainly a huge aid. So, instead of plugging in your earphones to listen to music on your walk to school, try a podcast. You will be pleasantly surprised.

Check out DailyFrenchPod

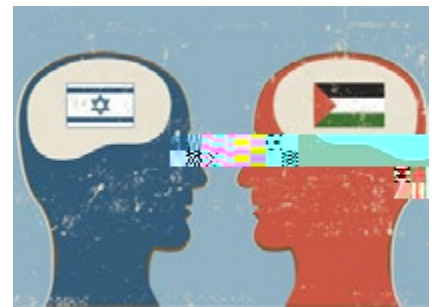
By Tully Mahr (Year 11)

**Now that you're of in the big wide world, what**

# WHAT'S HAPPENING?

## A Windsor wedding

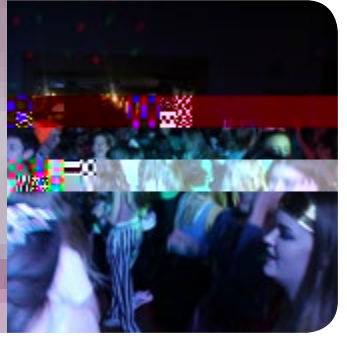
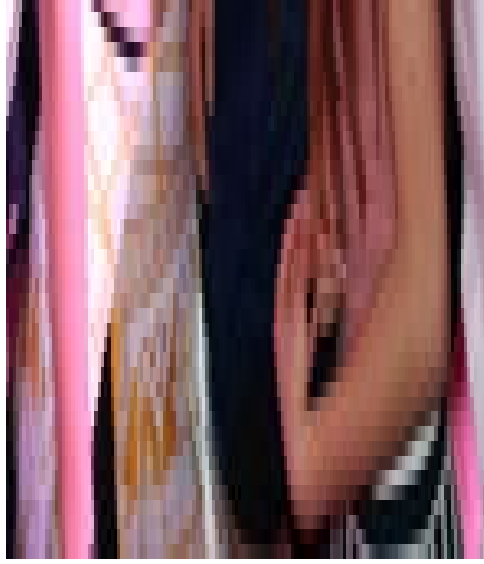
The Daily Telegraph said it all, 'Just Harried'. It truly was a fairy tale wedding captivating billions of people and melting hearts across the globe. The wedding stole the show. Among them were the Clooney's, Oprah, Serena Williams, the Beckham's, Elton John and of course Meaghan's co-stars from "Suits". And, when she arrived at the church, the best kept secret of the wedding was revealed. The bride was a member of the Commonwealth nations. And, what a service. Traditional yet modern incorporating both British elements and parts of Markle's heritage. There were choir boys as well as gospel singers and a gospel choir.



## Israel and Palestine

The border between the Gaza strip and Israel has again become a focal point between Arabs and Jews in the Middle East. Last Monday at least 60 Palestinians were killed and over a thousand wounded when Israeli soldiers opened fire along the fence marking the border. Tension on either side has been building, and the Palestinians have been staging a weekly "March of return" to mark the 70th Anniversary of the formation of Israel in 1948 and the subsequent loss of Palestinian land. The date also coincided with the move of the US embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem. While protestors say they have peaceful intent, many believe they are being exploited by "Hamas", a group that the United States consider a terrorist organisation, and have accused the group of exploiting the campaign to physically attack Israelis. Ordinary Gazans, who have been let down by their leadership and who live in desperate conditions, are the ones who are being exploited and media organisations side with either Palestine or Israel, so make sure you read over everything with a critical eye!

By Jem Taylor (Year 11)



# GALLERY



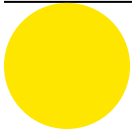
# MAY & JUNE CALENDAR

|                                  |                    |     |
|----------------------------------|--------------------|-----|
| Mon                              |                    | Mon |
| Year 8 Student Parent interviews |                    |     |
| Tue                              | Tue                | Tue |
| Year 9 Batyr<br>Year 10 Batyr    |                    |     |
| Wed                              | Wed                | Wed |
| 2018 ISA Cross Country           |                    |     |
|                                  |                    |     |
| Year 10-11                       |                    |     |
| Fri                              | Fri                |     |
|                                  | Park               |     |
| Sat                              | Sat                |     |
|                                  | ISA Round 5        |     |
| Sun                              | Sun                |     |
|                                  | ISA Rugby Training |     |



## SHORT AND SHARP

On Tuesday 22 May, four Year 11 plays, as well as one Year 10 play, went into a state wide drama competition called 'Short Sharp'. The requirements of entering



## FOOTBALL

1st XI Football team

On the ladder in the ISA Competition. The last game we won 4-1. The boys are playing well as a team and we looking forward to many more successes throughout the season, thanks to our coach Alex Prophet.

Ben Canute (Year 11)



## DA VINCI DECATHLON



That time of year had come around again, the time where eight students from Years 5,6,7,8 and 9 come together to participate and represent Oxley in the regional Da Vinci Decathlon. The eight students from each team were selected because of their high overall success in all subjects at school and because of the large range of high achievers to choose the teams. The Decathlon tests the team's ability to work together in a tight time frame to complete a task. After completing a task we felt as though we could relax our hard-working brains! The ten activities included Science, Creative Producers, English, Ideation, Cartography, Mathematics, Art & Poetry, Code breaking, General Knowledge and Engineering. Every team went really well and here are the following top results:

Year 5 came third in both English and Art & Poetry

Year 7 came third in General Knowledge

Year 9 came second in both General Knowledge and Cartography then came third overall.

The Di Vinci Decathlon was an enjoyable event and was overall a great experience.



By Peggy Holmwood (Year 8)