



The W.A.T.C.H. Word

Elizabeth Bird: CHS Events Editor
Vera Vitiello: Sports Correspondent

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Lead Article Title

by Alice Fuller: Lead Journalist

New Year's traditions can differ across countries, counties and even across households. To celebrate difference in cultures, we have been researching some international European New Year's traditions. Here are three fascinating traditions that really stood out to us.

We'll kick things off in Spain where, as the clock strikes midnight, people eat twelve grapes in quick succession. Each grape is supposed to signify good luck and prosperity in the new year. This started in the late nineteenth century to rebel against class distinctions and ridicule the aristocracy. This tradition has skyrocketed to fame after it went viral on TikTok. The grapes used for this are traditionally white Aledo grapes however after the TikTok distinguished the tradition many people have started using any grapes that they have at hand.



In Greece for some people their year starts off with quite a smell; they hang onions up on New Year's Eve! It is said to stand for rebirth and good luck. They hang onions on their front door on New Year's Eve then; tradition dictates that parents wake up their children on New Year's Day by gently bopping them on the head with an onion.



In Latvia, they pour molten lead into a bucket of cold water. Whatever shape the led takes is how your year will turn out; for example, if the led were to take the form of a heart it would signify that you were to find a new love over the coming year.

It's clear that, across Europe, New Year's celebrations can vary massively. Every country has an individual tradition that we may find strange but represents something historical and important to them. It also gives a sense of hope for the year to come. Whichever tradition you take part in and start doing, we all hope you had a happy new year and good luck across the year to come.



160'000
Points



161'000
Points



158'000
Points



151'000
Points

House Points Standings

Well done Masefield for breaking the forty-thousand point barrier!

However, with only four thousand points separating top spot from the bottom its still all to play for!



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CHOSEN HILL EVENTS PAGE



Sixth Form Open Evening at Chosen Hill

Year 11, Elizabeth Bird, goes undercover to discover exactly what sixth form open evening is all about!

On the 16th of January, it was Year Eleven's turn to explore the endless array of A-Level and B-tech courses of Chosen Hill's Six Form.

As an aspiring student myself, I found the talks and the subject stands to be diverse, interesting and educational; subject teachers were being open, talkative and passionate about their courses. This really helped to extend the reliable and welcoming community to the external students, creating impactful firsts visits. I got a chance to speak to Mrs Henry, Deputy Head Teacher and director of Chosen Hill's Sixth Form who said: "Our vision is to equip our students with the skills and knowledge they need to succeed in future life and this vision underpins everything that we do."

While my interests lie in more humanitarian subjects (like English and History), I found that all stands were engaging and the atmosphere across the school was one of excitement and curiosity. The talks held by the Head Teacher, Head Students (as well as other key individuals overseeing the Six Form) effectively contributed to the success of the evening. I felt that it gave a snapshot into the more formal side of Six Form but also remained concise, providing all members of the audience with facts and figures to compare to other schools.

By the end of the evening, the school had put on a massive showcase of opportunities for new and existing students to discover. From the new Study Center, with its manager Mrs Knight, to the KS5 Future Careers department with Ms Thomas. From Further Maths to Film Studies, both Sixth Form students and staff did a fantastic job conveying the enthusiasm and care that runs through every department across the premises.





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CHOSEN HILL SPORTS PAGE

New Year New Sports Clubs!

By Vera Vitiello

With the beginning of the new year, the sporting spirit of the students at Chosen Hill has begun again and is burning brighter than ever. Many sporting clubs and activities have resumed with strong momentum and great motivation!

As of January, the Strength & Conditioning, Hockey, Rugby, Football teams have their organized training sessions and games. Keep an eye out for those important team sheets! As always these teams are demonstrating exceptional confidence and excellent ambition (especially in this cold!).

We also have the exceptional victory achieved by the Year 9 Rugby team during a semi-final against St Thomas Rich's. It was a fight that saw them prevail at the last minute, 31 - 22. Now they'll all ready to support them in Kingsholm!

Given the commitment that's already been made at the beginning of the new year, I am absolutely sure that all of our teams will achieve exceptional results and more and their successes will encourage more young people will approach the world of sport.



Vive la Resolutions!

By Vera Vitiello

New Year's resolutions are a fantastic way to encourage personal growth! Each year, millions set goals to improve their health, finances, or relationships. This practice creates hope and motivation for a better future.

However, many struggle to keep these resolutions as the months pass. Instead of vague promises, here's how to succeed:

1. Set Specific Goals: Make your resolutions clear and measurable, like "exercise three times a week" rather than "get fit."
2. Track Progress: Keep an eye on your achievements so you can celebrate milestones!
3. Share Your Goals: Involve friends or family for extra motivation and accountability. Shared goals are an effective way of creating new bonds, friendships, and can be an opportunity to meet new people!

With these strategies, New Year's resolutions can become powerful tools for transformation. However, don't forget to celebrate the small achievements, as well as the milestones. So what if you didn't finish a book this month, at least you started one!

And we're not immune either. Here at *The W.A.T.C.H. Word* we have resolutions that range from reading twenty two books this year, to keeping a mental health journal. From learning to dance to ensuring we finish our "to be read" list. So what are we waiting for? With January coming to a close, let's make sure that, this year, we make those resolutions count for something!





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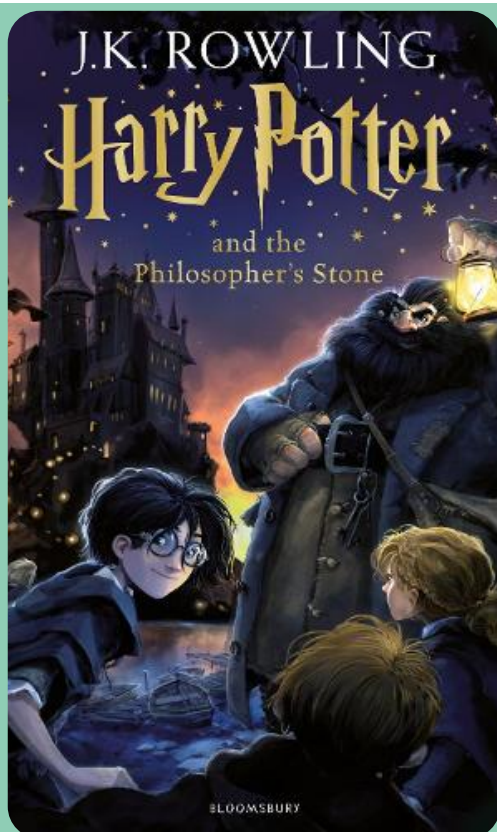
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Book of the Month



Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone

By Amara Akadonye

J.K. Rowling

Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone is the beginning of a series of novels written by J.K. Rowling. This book is recommended for aged 9-12 year olds and is the first novel that our Year 7's have read this year!

JK Rowling tells the story of an eleven-year-old boy named Harry Potter, who is accepted into Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry. The book highlights the friends (and enemies) he makes along the way and the perils that lay ahead of him in his first year of school.

A review from *The Guardian* (published in 2014) shows the thrill of reading such an exciting book, through the start, all the way to the end. The writer of this review even quotes: "J.K. Rowling has me gripped!"

My overall review of the book is relatively positive. I enjoyed the excitement of receiving the letter and the fright of being caught sneaking around in the halls. I really recommend this book for people who are looking for a fun read.



The National days of January

By Maddie Underwood

The month of January has an astronomical number of 'special' days. Such as, National Hugging Day (21st of January), Burns Night (25th of January) and National Hot Chocolate Day (31st of January).

National Hugging Day and National Hot Chocolate Day are quite self-explanatory but Burns Night is not. Burns night is the celebration of Robert Burns's life. He was Scotland's national poet and lyricist. On this night people from Scotland and the UK celebrate with Burns supper. This consists of haggis, neeps and tatties (sheep organs, turnips and potatoes). Accompanying this they also recite some of his famous poetry, such as *Tam o'Shanta*, *To a Mouse*, and *Address to Haggis*. Feel free to look them up and let us know which one was your favourite!





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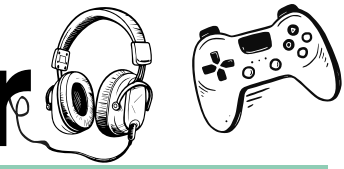
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Media Corner



Movie of the Month Wicked

Chu, USA, 2024

By Joe Cox - Film Critic

Here at the W.A.T.C.H. Words, movies hold a special place in our hearts, any kind will do! Prequels always sat weirdly with me though, until I watched Wicked! So, can Wicked mesmerise our fantasy needs?

Wicked is a prequel to the movie *The Wizard of Oz*. It follows the green witch, Elphaba (Cynthia Erivo), as she arrives at Shiz University. Whilst initially outcast from the other students, Elphaba is partnered with another student, Glinda. Glinda is Elphaba's opposite: very popular, fashionable student and very bubbly. Can these two unlikely friends work out

their differences and overcome the challenges that they face? Guess you'll have to watch it to find out!

In my opinion, this movie is an incredible example of a prequel done right! It is very clear that it's a prequel to the wizard of oz, and really immerses you in Shiz. The scenery and character costumes really makes you feel in a spellbinding world. The songs are super catchy and get stuck in your head! The way the bond between Glinda and Elphaba grows makes you feel for the two. Arianna Grande's performance is magical and really makes the character of Glinda one of my favourites in the movie!

5*****

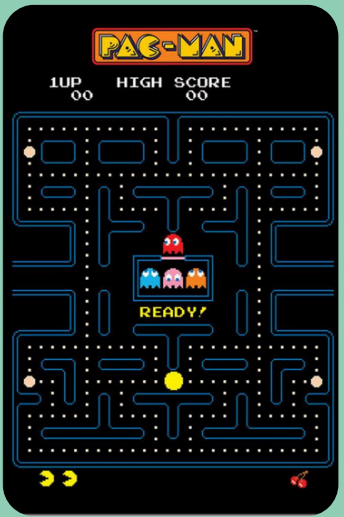
Video Game Highlight:

Pacman

Throughout the decades, new games appear and become extremely popular. However, some games will always stand up to the test of time. Pac-man, for example, is a game that will never be forgotten and will always be loved!

Pac-man is a simple game about collecting all the dots around a map. Throughout each level, you'll encounter different coloured ghosts, scattered around intent on destroying you. Not to worry though, as (in every corner), you'll see a super-sized dot. If you eat it, you can eat the ghosts for extra points. To top everything of, you can eat different foods, like pretzels or cherries, for even more bonus points. If you finish a stage, you will be moved to a slightly harder level, until you lose all three lives.

In my opinion, this game will indefinitely hold a sentimental value for people alive in the 1980's, because of the replay value and enjoyment it had brought. Newer generations love the game because of its retro style. This game in my opinion can have its own aesthetic, with all of its simple 8-bit graphics. The demographic can be anywhere from a young child, to an elderly person, and that shows, in my opinion, that this is one of the best games. I think this because anyone can play this game, no matter age!



5*****



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Meet the Teacher

What is your role in school?

I am the Marketing and Publicity officer for Chosen Hill School.

What do you enjoy doing at the weekends?

I am renovating a house at the moment so all my spare time is spent painting and decorating, so I would have to say that right now! (Although I will be so happy when it is all done!)

What is your least favourite food?

Tomatoes. They are the worst, although tomato flavoured things are ok!

If you could go anywhere in the world, where would you go?

I would love to go to Japan. Everywhere I have travelled to before has not been too big of a culture shift, so am intrigued by the differences. The architecture, fashion and technology fascinate me, not to mention the food looks amazing!

As a Chosen Hill Alumni, What was your favourite thing about the school as a student?

My favourite thing about being a student at Chosen Hill would have to have been the productions and musicals. I was a part of the backstage team from Year 8 all the way up until Year 13 so was involved in lots of different shows! My favourite production was *The 39 Steps*, which was so much fun and so different to the other musicals we had done before!

If you didn't work in a school, what job would you want to do?

If I did not work at Chosen Hill I would love to start and run my own music festival. My degree is in Events Management so would love to do something in live music events.

If you could ask any celebrity to dinner, who would it be?

I would ask Ian McKellen to dinner. He is so skilled with storytelling so think that would be a very calming yet entertaining atmosphere with him there.

What item on your bucket list are you most looking forward to doing?

I would love to visit all the Disney parks in the world. I have been to two and plan to do a third one soon, just have to get to the 3 parks in Asia one day!



Miss Bishop



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Meet the Pet

This month's little rascals have been brought to us by me Madison, in Year 8. Madison tells us she has five cats. Boo, Bear, Cookie, Bunny and Bumblebee.

Bear is the naughtiest of all and has learnt to open doors and can go wherever he wants. Bunny is the newest addition and is one of Cookie and Bears kittens. Bumblebee is the spiciest cat and doesn't really like people. Cookie is the sweetest. She loves everyone. Boo on the other hand is a mix of Cookie and Bumblebee and picks and chooses when she likes you.

Overall, they have their sweet moments and love a good cuddle.

If you would like your pet featured in next month's The WATCH Word send a short description, and your cutest picture, of your pet to TA@chosen-hill.gloucs.sch.uk.





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- ◀ FRIENDS
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- ◀ TECHNOLOGY
- ▶ SCHOOL
- ◀ SOCIAL MEDIA

LIBERATE THE WORLD FROM:

- ◀ WAR
- ▶ INJUSTICE
- ◀ RACISM
- ▶ POVERTY
- ◀ GLOBAL WARMING
- ▶ INTOLERANCE
- ◀ INEQUALITY

RETREAT INTO:

- ◀ IMAGINATION
- ▶ THE FUTURE
- ◀ DREAMLAND
- ▶ UTOPIA
- ◀ AN ALTERNATE UNIVERSE



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Chosen Hill School Presents
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Disney BEAUTY AND THE BEAST

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Originally Produced by Disney
Theatrical Productions



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