

The Year in English 2023

As English teachers at Merici College, we believe the best way that we can empower independence is to provide our students with a foundation of literacy through language and literature. It is through this study of English that we hope to guide our students as they uncover their own perspectives and develop the confidence to express themselves authentically. As such, one of our primary goals is to support our students in finding their own voice.

In our dynamic world, with ever-increasing access to texts, media, and sources created by human and AI alike, the importance of the ability to analyse, evaluate, research, and uphold the principles of academic integrity have never been clearer. Students in every year group, studying every course have focused on these areas this year. These skills will allow our students to understand how their voice fits in the wider context of the world in which they live.

While the highlights of 2023 for every person will be different, it was wonderful to see the way Merici students approached their studies this year:

- 2023 saw our Year 8 students explore what will become the cornerstones of their study of English in the future: analysing poetry, plays, novels and film, while producing analytical responses, creative responses, essays and oral presentations. The highlight of the year came in viewing the wonderful creativity and effort that students were able to produce in their interdisciplinary unit in which they created a picture book set in the culture of their Language Acquisition course.
- Our Year 9 students explored both modern and classic texts across a year which highlighted the relevance of literature over time, the importance of storytelling, as well as the skills needed to persuade others through the art of rhetoric. The highlight of the year came seeing the thoughtfulness, empathy and passion with which students spoke about the most pressing social issues facing the world today in their Semester 2 oral presentations.
- For Year 10 students, 2023 presented the opportunity to explore a variety of classic literature and to develop work habits that would prepare them for their future studies. Students also showed principled values in their explorations of texts of social criticism and documentary film. The highlight for Year 10 came in seeing students appreciate literature, refine their control of text structure, and build momentum towards future studies and pathways.
- In our senior years, 2023 is characterised by students finding courses and content that best meets their needs. With students studying IB Literature, IB Language and Literature, BSSS English, BSSS Literature, BSSS English as an Additional Language, and BSSS Essential English, students were able to find the English course that best fit their needs.

When thinking about helping students find their voice, I am reminded of a quote from Nobel Prize winning poet and playwright Seamus Heaney, who said that "if you have the

words, there's always a chance that you'll find the way." In 2023 we helped students have the words, and I am confident that they will find their way.

Mr Luke Nott

English Coordinator

Debating Congratulations!

Congratulations to Gabrielle Shoebridge for competing at the National Schools Debating Championship in Melbourne, with teams from each state and territory. The ACT team made it to the semi-finals, placing 4th overall, debating topics ranging from Biden's re-election strategy to strategies to maximise outcomes for reality TV contestants. We also congratulate Gabrielle on being awarded the number one speaker in the ACT Debating Union Advanced competition. This is the first time that Merici College has had a student awarded a first place ranking across all Colleges in the ACT. Well done Gabby!

Mrs. Renee Taylor

Deputy Principal Teaching and Learning