

Tournament of Minds 2018



On Sunday 9 September, a contingent of over 40 GGHS performers and their families travelled to Flinders University for the annual Tournament of Minds. The ToM Secondary Schools' Competition involves teams of five to seven Year 8-10 students working together to solve two challenges. For the **Long Term Challenge** each team had six weeks in which to create a 10 minute play (script, set and costumes), which they then presented before an audience and a panel of judges on Tournament Day. For the **Spontaneous Challenge** each team completed an unseen challenge, solved in a very short time, before a panel of judges.

This year GGHS had three teams – **two Language Literature Teams** and **one Arts Team**. This year's Language Literature Challenge required teams to present a pitch to persuade a panel of judges why a particular book, that they had chosen, deserved to be turned into a film.

Our **Green Language Literature Team** – Abbey, Angelina, Matthew and William (Year 8), and Josh (Year 9) – presented a powerful pitch to show why Jackie French's Australian novel about school bullying, *Dark Wind Blowing*, should be made into a film. Abbey's considerable performance experience showed in her role as the highly professional Pitch Presenter. Matthew and Angelina were convincing in their roles as the student bystanders to bullying, who had done nothing to stop it. William played the poor bullied 'Loser', who is fed up with being bullied and sets out to get his revenge in this story. Josh played their hapless History teacher, who succumbed to the mysterious malady that 'Loser' inflicted on the class. Multi talented Abbey was also their set and costume designer. William's script made it clear that this novel should be turned into a film because both school bullying – and being a bystander to bullying, without confronting the bullies – are important social issues that need to be addressed. These young newcomers to ToM all showed great potential for future years!

Our **Gold Language Literature Team** – Grace and Tia (Year 8), Ebanee and Skye (Year 9), and Cooper, Kaelan and Renee (Year 10) – presented a pitch to show why, for its levity and sheer entertainment value, Dr Seuss's picture book, *Yertle the Turtle*, should be made into a film. To add humour and complexity, they decided to present their pitch to a panel of *Book Tank* Celebrity Judges (along the lines of TV's *Shark Tank*). Their panel had Kaelan as 'explosive' Film Director, Michael Bay; Ebanee as the Dark Lord, Voldemort, from *Harry Potter*; Skye as the drunken rum-toting Captain Jack Sparrow from *Pirates of the Caribbean* and Renee as the tearful, lovesick Bella Swan from *Twilight*. Cooper played Pitch-Presenter, Dr Seuss and talented newcomers, Grace and Tia, played the turtles, Yertle and Mack. Well done to Skye for both her well-constructed pond set and her highly-engaging script. Well done to all actors for their excellent characterisations and their comic timing to bring this script to life. The witty repartee between the *Book Tank* panellists, Dr Seuss and the turtles had the audience in stitches, and Skye could surely have a future as a scriptwriter, if she wants one!





This year, for the first time, ToM offered an Arts Discipline. Our **Arts Team** – Alanna, Kimberley, Piper (Year 8), and Bailey, Jarvis, Soren and Zac (Year 10) – had to create a musical on the theme of freedom, featuring: a dance from the 1920s, an artwork from the 1940s, a song from the 1960s, fashion from the 1980s and four songs. Soren’s clever script had Zac and Soren playing the Masters, while Jarvis, Alanna, Kimberley and Piper played the Slaves. Bailey played multiple characters, including: God singing the theme from *The Big Bang Theory*, Louis Armstrong singing *What a Wonderful World*, Michael Jackson singing *Man in the Mirror* and a chef dancing to *Carnival Kerfuffle*. Their staging was enhanced by Bailey’s versatile rotating four-scene set, depicting at various times: space, an oil painting, a kitchen and a museum. Well done to Zac and Jarvis on their fitting costume designs.

We congratulate all of our TOM performers on their dedication over the six weeks of ToM:

- attending the Introduction to ToM Day, Planning Day, Design Day and Dress Rehearsal Day, plus their weekly after school play rehearsals and Spontaneous Challenge practices
- sharing their ideas with their team to create fabulous scripts, set/costume designs, and responses to Spontaneous Challenges
- making all their own sets and costumes, learning their lines and overcoming any nerves to present their plays confidently before a large audience of ToM families.



By participating in ToM, and performing on Tournament Day, these EXCEL students have demonstrated graduate qualities that our school and future employers look for: the ability to work well as a team and to bring a major project to completion by the required deadline.

All teams were complimented by the judges on their creative scripts, innovative set designs, their acting and their teamwork. At the end of the day, I honestly thought that any one of our teams could have been given an award, and I would have felt that it was well-earned. Fortunately, for the sixth year in a row, one of our GGHS teams was successful in winning medals. This year our **Arts Team won Tournament Honours**. They were the only public Secondary School team to receive an award. We congratulate them on their success and we commiserate with our Language Literature teams, who surely must have just missed out!

All teams were very well supported by parents and siblings, as well as a student teacher, Ms Caroline Xu and a past-GGHS ToM student, Leah Schamschurin, who volunteered as our ToM photographer on the day. We thank them all for devoting their Sunday to making the creative opportunities that ToM provides available to extend our talented EXCEL students.

Many thanks to our Art, Technology, PE and Library staff for lending us paint-pots, sewing materials, stopwatches and their libraries for our Training Days. I hope that all of this year’s ToM students will recognise how much they have developed their creative and interpersonal skills by participating in the Tournament of Minds this year and will come back and share the experience that they have gained with our newcomers to ToM in 2019!

Mrs Lyons
EXCEL Leader

