

SPEAK







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# JOSEPH SOTHCOTT

Editor of Speak Magazine



It is my great pleasure to present the first ever issue of Speak – St Peter's new student magazine.

It's been a bumpy road to get to this point. We've endured obstacles and delays ... and you've endured the infamous dry mouth speech at Senior Assembly. But the team at Speak is excited to share with you what we hope can become a mainstay in the fabric of St Peter's College.

We believe a student magazine is an important initiative for SPC. Often, as students, we feel that we don't have a voice on issues that affect us - as if we are just doing as we are told by those who know best – our parents, teachers and even politicians. The value of a forum for students' voices should not be underestimated. It is our hope that Speak Magazine can be a place where students can

discuss and debate important concerns, as well as have some fun.

A key focus of this issue is the question of how we students interact with our school and how we might change it for the better. Whether you are Year 7 or 13, the importance of adaptability cannot be understated, it's a quality we should all strive for, especially as the student body collectively endeavours to make a positive impact on our school and the lives of those around us.

We hope this issue of Speak sheds new light on an issue you previously haven't given much thought to, or allows you to embrace a new perspective you haven't considered before.

Thank you very much for taking the time to read the first Issue of Speak Magazine, we can't wait to present issue number two!

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JAYDEN KUIJPERS

Academic Prefect

Understanding your learning style can unlock the door to effective studying. Knowing your learning style whether you're a visual, auditory, or a tactile learner, enables more efficient work leading on to greater recall and memorisation of the topics you're studying. Learning how you best study helps avoid panic and frustration for the next big exam or internal. You are more likely to do well and be less stressed before a test when you have had time to properly review and practice the material. And who knows, study may also be more enjoyable once you work out your preferred style!

LEARNING



**06** What's the best way for you to learn about how something works (like a computer or a video game)?

- A.  
B.  
C.

Get someone to show you  
Read about it or listen to someone explain it  
Figure it out on your own



**05** What's the best way for you to study for a test?

- A.  
B.  
C.

Read the book or your notes and review pictures or charts  
Have someone ask you questions that you can answer out loud  
Make up index cards that you can review

**07** If you went to a school dance, what would you be most likely to remember the next day?

- A.  
B.  
C.

The faces of the people who were there  
The music that was played  
The dance moves you did and the food you ate



**01** What kind of book would you like to read for fun?

- A.  
B.  
C.

A book with lots of pictures in it  
A book with lots of words in it  
A book with word searches or crossword puzzles

**02** When you are not sure how to spell a word, what are you most likely to do?

- A.  
B.  
C.

Write it down to see if it looks right  
Spell it out loud to see if it sounds right  
Trace the letters in the air (finger spelling)

**03** You're out shopping for clothes, and you're waiting in line to pay. What are you most likely to do while you wait?

- A.  
B.  
C.

Look around at other clothes on the racks  
Talk to the person next to you in line  
Fidget or move back and forth



**04** When you see the word "cat," what do you do first?

- A.  
B.  
C.

Picture a cat in your mind  
Say the word "cat" to yourself  
Think about being with a cat (petting it or hearing it purr)



## 08 What do you find most distracting when you are trying to study?

- A. People walking past you
- B. Loud noises
- C. An uncomfortable chair

## 12 Of these three classes, which is your favourite?

- A. Art class
- B. Music class
- C. Gym class

## 16 What is the best way for you to remember a friend's phone number?

- A. Picture the numbers on the phone as you would dial them
- B. Say it out loud over and over and over
- C. Write it down or store it in your phone contact list

## 09 When you are angry, what are you most likely to do?

- A. Put on your "mad" face
- B. Yell and scream
- C. Slam doors

## 13 When you hear a song on the radio, what are you most likely to do?

- A. Picture the video that goes along with it
- B. Sing or hum along with the music
- C. Start dancing or tapping your foot

## 17 If you won a game, which of these three prizes would you choose?

- A. A poster for the wall
- B. A music CD or mp3 download
- C. A game of some kind (or a football or soccer ball, etc.)

# Mostly A's

## - Visual

If you are a visual learner, you learn by reading or seeing pictures. You understand and remember things by sight. You can picture what you are learning in your head, and you learn best by using methods that are primarily visual. You like to see what you are learning.

As a visual learner, you are usually neat and clean. You often close your eyes to visualise or remember something, and you will find something to watch if you become bored. You may have difficulty with spoken directions and may be easily distracted by sounds. You are attracted to colour and to spoken language (like stories) that is rich in imagery.

Here are some things that visual learners like you can do to learn better:

- Sit near the front of the classroom. (It won't mean you're the teacher's pet!)
- Have your eyesight checked on a regular basis.
- Use flashcards to learn new words.
- Try to visualise things that you hear or things that are read to you.
- Write down keywords, ideas, or instructions.
- Draw pictures to help explain new concepts and then explain the pictures.
- Colour code things.
- Avoid distractions during study times. Remember that you need to see things, not just hear things, to learn well.

# Mostly B's

## - Auditory

If you are an auditory learner, you learn by hearing and listening. You understand and remember things you have heard. You store information by the way it sounds, and you have an easier time understanding spoken instructions than written ones. You often learn by reading out loud because you have to hear it or speak it in order to know it.

As an auditory learner, you probably hum or talk to yourself or others if you become bored. People may think you are not paying attention, even though you may be hearing and understanding everything being said.

Here are some things that auditory learners like you can do to learn better.

- Sit where you can hear.
- Have your hearing checked on a regular basis.
- Use flashcards to learn new words; read them out loud.
- Read stories, assignments, or directions out loud.
- Record yourself spelling words and then listen to the recording.
- Have test questions read to you out loud.
- Study new material by reading it out loud. Remember that you need to hear things, not just see things, in order to learn well.

**10** When you are happy, what are you most likely to do?

- A. Smile from ear to ear
- B. Talk up a storm
- C. Act really hyper

**14** What do you find most distracting when in class?

- A. Lights that are too bright or too dim
- B. Noises from the hallway or outside the building (like traffic or some one cutting the grass)
- C. The temperature being too hot or too cold

**18** Which would you rather go to with a group of friends?

- A. A movie
- B. A concert
- C. An amusement park

**11** When in a new place, how do you find your way around?

- A. Look for a map or directory that shows you where everything is
- B. Ask someone for directions
- C. Just start walking around until you find what you're looking for

**15** What do you like to do to relax?

- A. Read
- B. Listen to music
- C. Exercise (walk, run, play sports,

**19** What are you most likely to remember about new people you meet?

- A. Their face but not their name
- B. Their name but not their face
- C. What you talked about with them

# Mostly C's

## -Tactile

If you are a tactile learner, you learn by touching and doing. You understand and remember things through physical movement. You are a "hands-on" learner who prefers to touch, move, build, or draw what you learn, and you tend to learn better when some type of physical activity is involved. You need to be active and take frequent breaks, you often speak with your hands and with gestures, and you may have difficulty sitting still.

As a tactile learner, you like to take things apart and put things together, and you tend to find reasons to tinker or move around when you become bored. You may be very well coordinated and have a good athletic ability. You can easily remember things that were done but may have difficulty remembering what you saw or heard in the process. You often communicate by touching, and you appreciate physically expressed forms of encouragement, such as a pat on the back.

Here are some things that tactile learners like you can do to learn better:

- Participate in activities that involve touching, building, moving, or drawing.
- Do lots of hands-on activities like completing art projects, taking walks, or acting out stories.
- It's OK to chew gum, walk around, or rock in a chair while reading or studying.
- Use flashcards and arrange them in groups to show relationships between ideas.
- Trace words with your finger to learn to spell (finger spelling).
- Take frequent breaks during reading or studying periods (frequent, but not long).
- It's OK to tap a pencil, shake your foot, or hold on to something while learning.
- Use a computer to reinforce learning through the sense of touch.
- Remember that you learn best by doing, not just by reading, seeing, or hearing.





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## Josh Hansen

Student Welfare Prefect

The Student Welfare Portfolio is new to St Peter's in 2018, and it has been my pleasure to lead it in its inaugural year. The portfolio has a variety of areas where its' presence can be felt, but our first and most important aim is to support you, the student, through all the challenges that school presents.

There are many services offered by the school which can help you through these challenges. There is our Counsellor, Ms Maloney, our Careers Advisor Mr Tui, our Deans and of course our incredibly important teachers.

The portfolio is led by the Deputy Head Master in charge of Pastoral Care, Mr Hansen who oversees the wider Pastoral Care team.

As a pair, we decided on two major focuses this year, one, to tackle cyber-bullying and responsibility online, and two, to highlight mental well-being and the importance of our mental health, both of which we're making great strides in.

There are several key values we as students need to think about and apply to our daily lives.



# ST Fane

The first is to treat each other with respect, both in person and online, because if we do so, the school will no doubt become a better place for all who go to SPC.

The second is to be conscious and empathetic to other people's situations. We all go through tough times, and we must be aware of this, so we can help them as friends and not hinder them.

And most importantly, do not be afraid to ask for help, whether that be by going to our amazing Counsellor Ms Maloney, your Dean, or any teacher that you trust and have a close relationship with. The most important thing to remember is that it's ok to ask for help, especially because it is difficult to help you unless someone is aware you are having a tough time.

If you ever want to go and see the Counsellor, she is located on the top floor of G block, at the top of the stairs next to the HOY's office.

Throughout the remainder of this year, the Student Welfare Portfolio will continue to support you through the challenges and difficulties faced during school.

So just remember, respect, it is one of our core FRESH P values and is essential for us to continue to grow on the amazing culture at our school.

*"Treat each other with respect"*





JOSEPH SOTHCOTT

EDITOR

# *Look at Education in The future - what can we expect?*

My brother recently asked me about the difficulty of my 2015 IGCSE History exam and expressed his hope that the 2018 exam would be easier. Truth be told I cared little about the difficulty of a past exam or a future one. Like most students, I live in the moment - what happens in the here-and-now is what matters – and everything that occurs before and after is inconsequential.

Upon reflection my lack of concern about my brother's exam was selfish and by extension, a lack of concern for the future of education in general is selfish too. What does the future hold for education in New Zealand? It's a question we students don't often ponder - but perhaps we should. American civil-rights activist Malcom X is quoted as once saying, "Education is our passport to the future, for tomorrow belongs only to the people who prepare for it today."



With this in mind, I set out to discover more about our current education system and what it might look like in the future.

To answer this, I had to stray to the realm of politics.

I know what you're thinking, "politics is boring" and certainly some of it is. If you have been very unlucky you may have inadvertently switched to Parliament TV and been faced with some immeasurably tedious debate. Two hours of the 'Taxation (Annual Rates for 2017–18, Employment and Investment Income, and Remedial Matters) Bill, Third Reading' anyone? But make no mistake, these dull debates have huge implications for all of us.

Many of these debates focus on what education provision should look like in future. And because dull debates don't make great viewing we are often unfamiliar with the outcomes.

So, to truly discover what is changing in education, I have decided to talk to the education spokesperson for each political party (or at least to each one who agrees to be interviewed for this newspaper) to get their take on current and future education policy. First up.... let me introduce David Seymour.

David Seymour has been the Epsom MP and Leader of the ACT Party since 2014 (SPC falls within his electorate). He was quickly recognised as an able politician and

was named Trans-Tasman Politician of the Year for 2015. As part of ACT's confidence and supply deal with National, Seymour was named as Under-Secretary to the Minister of Education with responsibilities for Partnership schools.

Partnership schools are more commonly referred to as Charter Schools. They receive similar levels of funding as State Schools, but have autonomy to set their own curriculum, qualifications, pay rates for teachers, school-hours and school terms – in essence, they are independent of the regulations on the Ministry of Education.

The new Labour government recently began the process of getting rid of Charter Schools but they remain the centrepiece of Act's education policy. So, naturally, my first question to Seymour on a Monday morning in May was what advantages the Charter School model has over a traditional school model.

According to Seymour, "We have one of the most unequal education systems in the developed world." The fault for this inequality apparently lies with the Ministry of Education which has been unable to engage students for 170 years. According to Seymour, thousands of students aren't learning anything and thousands don't show up to school in the first place.

Seymour says that Charter Schools were always the natural solution to this issue, "We said, well, maybe

people out in the community have better answers. The Government will still be funding education, but the role of government is not going to be providing, we're going to let other people do the providing part".

It must be said that the results do speak for themselves. Seymour often points to partnership schools such as Vanguard military school and Te Kāpehu Whetū, the former being a top 10 school for NCEA Level 2 and the latter being the second-best school in Northland for UE, ahead of schools such as Whangarei Boys High and Whangarei Girls High. "We found vastly better results [in charter schools] than just leaving people in their existing schools."

I wondered about the failings in the current education system that Seymour spoke about. This is my 7th year at the school and I've enjoyed every year immensely. SPC has never done me wrong and I doubt many of my friends would say it's done them wrong either. So I asked what are these failings?

To Seymour, the issue is that the entire system is driven by the politics of the Teacher's Union and ignores the needs of students. He also blames the Unions for the downfall of Charter Schools, claiming Labour only got rid of them to appease the Unions. "It's a real shame that a lot of our education is driven not by the needs of the customer of the education system, the student, but by the Seller, which is the Unions" says Seymour.

**"We  
found  
vastly  
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results in  
Charter  
Schools"**

Many have argued that, in High Schools, in particular, the system is too focused on exams and internals, and not on broader life skills. Seymour both agrees and disagrees.

He points out that Maths and English are essential and expresses his bewilderment that you can get through NCEA without taking these two subjects, or even sitting an external examination.



[Recently, the Government unveiled a proposal that if introduced, would halve the credits required for students sitting NCEA Level 1 by scrapping all external examinations in favour of internally assessed literacy and numeracy tests alongside an individually chosen project. Under this proposal, Level 2 and 3 would also be reformed, with 20 out of 80 credits having to come from a 'pathway course', whether that be a trades course, research project or community action project.]

But Seymour also agrees that students coming out of school do lack some essential skills, for example, financial literacy, group work, problem-solving and time management.

It seems that the issue of students leaving school without these skills is in no way limited to New Zealand. Hip-Hop artist Kendrick Lamar, on his 2015 track "Wesley's Theory" made reference to the necessity of these broader life skills, even if you are wealthy and successful.

On the track, Lamar brags that he's, "uneducated, but I got a million-dollar check". Yet he later says he's been duped into an illusion of success by 'Uncle Sam' as anyone can accumulate wealth, the hard part is keeping it. Lamar is fearful his fate may be similar to fellow African-American entertainer Wesley Snipes – who notoriously was convicted of tax evasion in 2010 ... "but remember, you ain't pass economics in school and everything you buy, taxes will deny. I'll Wesley Snipe your ass before 35."

A solution to the "life skills problem" (at least in New Zealand) may have emerged last year. In the run-up to the election, Labour promised to introduce a "School Leaver's toolkit". The toolkit will offer students the chance to get their driver's licence, learn first aid, acquire teamwork and management skills & financial and budgeting skills as well as offering civics education. Seymour supports this but argues it should have been available far earlier.

Alongside these skills, there also seems to be a need for basic technology education for students in the world's current climate. Most schools (including SPC) have introduced Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) programmes to help support students in this way. Interestingly, Seymour argues that "software is designed to be easy to use" and most people, "should be able to figure that out themselves". He's got a point, I doubt that there are many students in New Zealand who can't use Microsoft Word or an equivalent, so a dedicated subject or support system is probably not required.

However, Seymour does believe that technology is massively under-utilised in education. The sort of technology he makes reference to sounds astonishing, if a little far-fetched for the realm of High school Education, like an eye-gaze technology which tracks the movement of your eyeballs to work out which part of the screen you're looking at, using this to work out whether presentations are truly holding student's attention.

However, one particular issue in education has trumped all in recent months, the debate around whether Te Reo Māori should be compulsory in schools. Māori Development Minister Nanaia Mahuta, Employment Minister Willie Jackson and newly appointed Green Party co-leader Marama Davidson have recently led calls for Te Reo to be compulsory in schools. Seymour strongly disagrees.

“No”, he said without hesitation, “why should you have your time taken up and your life used up to fulfill someone else’s philosophical vision of what New Zealand should be like?”

This seemed to contradict Seymour’s whole-hearted support for compulsory English and Maths. I asked if he believed some subjects were of more value to students than others. Maths over Dance Studies?

“No” he said again, “in your career, what matters is that you’re doing something that you enjoy.”

Seymour pointed to his “Dancing with the Stars” partner Amelia, who hates Maths and has built a successful career in dance without the need for it. His argument is that whilst a basic understanding of “essential” subjects should be taught to all at school, forcing students to take subjects past a certain point is unfair.

But back to Charter Schools. An issue many have taken with the model is that it treats schools like businesses, with students as their clients. Certainly, Seymour’s model is based on market forces. It involves “...unsuccessful [schools] getting closed down because no one wants to go to them”.

Opponents of the Charter School system often say that the purpose of schools should be education not profit, so I asked Seymour to respond to that.

He said that education is always the main focus - before adding that there’s nothing wrong with profit. Seymour clearly opposes the vilification of businesses as

something evil, pointing out that, “businesses deliver accounting services, lawyers, build buildings, make cars, make clothes, produce food.” To his mind, the question of whether education should be run like a business is wrong. “The question people need to answer is the other way around, people need to explain why on earth education should be different.”





# "People need to explain why on earth education should be different"

The final topic I wanted to cover was tertiary education. The prospect of three years' free tertiary education is an exciting one for most High School students. Not so much for David Seymour. He views the policy as problematic, suggesting that it will lead great numbers of young people who aren't devoted and serious about education to go to University at extraordinary costs to the taxpayer.

The counter-argument to this, of course, is that the policy creates opportunities for students to go to University who wouldn't have been

able to otherwise. Seymour says this doesn't seem to be the case as there are fewer enrolments than there was last year. This seems to present a problem for Seymour, as if this is true, it renders moot Seymour's previous argument that students will exploit the system by taking a free year at University before moving onto other things.

Seymour points to the previous government's decision to scrap living allowances for post-graduate students which led to protests that the poorer students would be unable to go onto post-grad as a result. However, Seymour says that studies have shown that undergraduates who had previously been eligible for allowances during post-grad carried on studying at the same rate.

"Basically, it's already a really good deal" argues Seymour "you get 3/4 of your degree paid for by the taxpayer, you pay back the other quarter interest-free, you pay back your living costs interest-free, I mean there's no other opportunity, people who start businesses, you know, tradesman they don't get these opportunities."

In the run-up to the election, Labour actually made a campaign promise to allow students to trade in their three years tertiary education and receive \$20,000 to start a business. Seymour believes that's a system that may be abused. In his eyes, either path that policy takes would not be beneficial. If it had no oversight and anyone could start any

sort of business with \$20,000 this could be exploited. On the other hand, Seymour also suggests that having government bureaucrats choose whose business model is eligible for funding could lead to corruption and bias.

The government spends \$2.8 billion a year on tertiary education, a sum of money Seymour thinks can be better spent. Instead of free tertiary education Seymour favours splitting the \$2.8 billion between the 60,000 kids who turn 16 every year. Every 16-year-old would then receive \$35,000 in a special education account with the remaining \$600 million being split up and awarded based on academic achievement at school. This money can then be used at any registered education provider, but it can also be spent on anything you like if you still have it when you turn 65, which with interest could potentially turn into \$315,000. Seymour says this system means instead of students just going to University for the sake of it, instead, “people are going to be very careful about their course choices when they know that’s what it’s worth.”

My final questions to Mr Seymour were, admittedly, unusual. Yet they are questions which I think can be revealing about any person, not just a politician. I asked him: if he was the sole remaining politician in the country, what is one change he would make to education and what is one general policy change he would make.

“The first thing I’d do is introduce the Charter model universally” he said, adding that for Charter Schools to work effectively, they need total flexibility to use their funding and employ teachers without Union contracts. Seymour’s general change would be to get rid of the Metropolitan urban limit or the rural-urban boundary, which he describes as having, “banned a whole generation from building homes the way that baby boomers did, instead they’ve been forced to live on top of each other.”

It’s these final answers that really sum up Seymour as a politician. He’s not afraid to be an outspoken voice on issues that matter to him regardless of the criticism that may come his way as a result.

Seymour’s vision for the future of education is certainly not everyone’s cup of tea. But it is a perspective that must be respected and considered. New Zealand should not be afraid to challenge old ways of thinking and consider new ideas.

David Seymour’s viewpoint on education is of course but one of the thousands across New Zealand. So, to truly get to the bottom of what the future of education will look like, a multitude of perspectives need to be assessed from across the political spectrum. In the next part of this series on the future of education, we look left. Keep your eyes peeled.





HARRY MCLAUCHLAN

International Students  
Prefect

# International Students

Currently at St Peter's, there seems to be a separation between International Students and Local students, a separation which needs to be rectified. As a Student Body we often speak of brotherhood, yet this brotherhood means little if it doesn't extend to all. Perhaps this separation can be put down to a lack of awareness of each other's cultures and backgrounds. Over the past couple of weeks, I've been talking to some of these students to get a better understanding of what their lives and experiences were like before coming to SPC, some of which I would like to share with you.





# Brotherhood



I met first with Thai Hong and Thai Mov, two brothers from Cambodia, a country which is located next to Vietnam. The two brothers came to NZ to study English "professionally", to become fluent in the language. Thai Mov and Thai Hong originally went to Napier as they have a cousin there and it was the easiest way to stay in New Zealand. However, they needed to come to a new school to gain more confidence for University, so they moved to Auckland.



Thai Hong and Thai Mov

School life for them is shockingly different from what it is in Cambodia. In the mornings they actually went to a different school, a private school entirely in English, between 7am and 10am. In the afternoon they would go to their main school and receive tuition in their own language. Like most students in Asia, they wouldn't bring lunch, but rather go to the canteen or even leave school to eat! The most shocking difference is the fact that every month they have exams in up to 10 subjects, all compulsory. They said, however, the same pressures

applies here as it does in Cambodia, which is interesting given the massive contrast in the expectation they said they experienced in Cambodia.

Matthew Huang comes from Kun Ming in southwest China. He came to New Zealand seeking education. In New Zealand he has found there was less intense pressure on him as a student, especially as there are fewer students to compete with, and a better, friendlier environment in the school. In his part of China, there is an enormous overload of university applicants, one million students compete with each other to make it in via an exam called the Gao Kao. This exam has to be one of the world's most strenuous examinations, both in expectation and difficulty. It lasts for 2 to 3 days, however, the preparation for the exam is even more gruelling. It is common for parents to quit their jobs in order to help their children study, and the pressure from teachers and parents to do well in the exam is so intense it has been linked with depression and even suicide amongst Chinese teens. The exam itself is so important and such a big occasion that traffic is often halted around the area to prevent distraction, and police and taxi drivers will ferry students they see walking along the street to their exam for free. Apart from the huge contrast in pressure, Matthew says he has more time for sports and his own interests and study, and there is far more opportunity to get involved. For example, in Chinese chemistry lessons, the teacher



simply talks and performs the experiment being studied, while here, of course, all students get the opportunity to perform the experiment. While this may seem standard for those of us who've been going to school in New Zealand our entire lives, for him it was a huge change. School for him back in Kun Ming would start at 7am and end at 8pm, with only one day off per week! They do however have a one-hour lunch break and a half-hour interval break. Finally, he says that his parents in China would only focus on his study, and give no thought to his personal interests, probably due to the immense pressure to compete with the millions of other students, while his homestay parents here are much more focused on his interests.



Matthew Huang



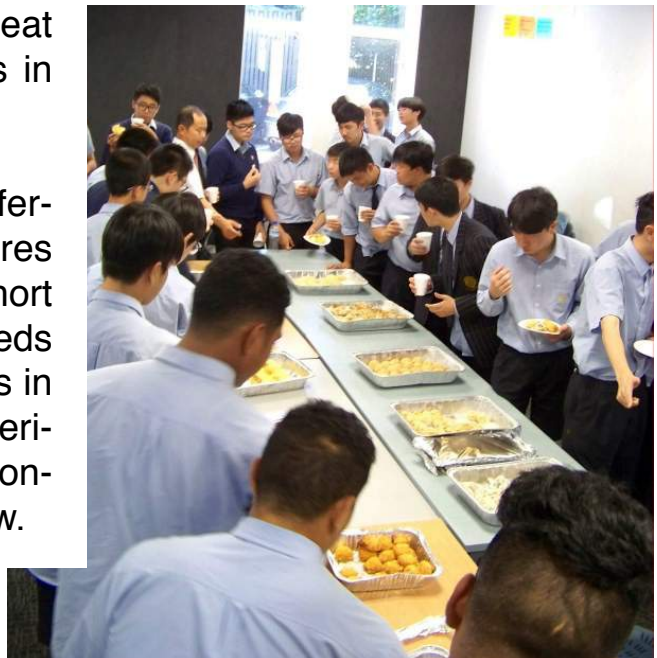
Max Finger

Max Finger comes from Cologne, Germany. The main difference between his school and ours is the fact that his is co-ed. They have a similar staggered start time like us, school lasting in an alternating system between 8:20 and 4:30, and 8:20 and 1:20. They have a lunch subscription as opposed to a tuck shop, and get a one-hour lunch break, during which they can actually leave school to head into town! This is very common in Europe and most schools have a similar system. For example, many French schools have between one and three-hour lunch breaks, finishing much later, however, sometimes as late as 5:30pm. The students at Max's school can only leave during lunch from Year 11 onwards. They also have a system where your class is your class, and they don't move around, rather the teacher comes to them.



Something I find bizarre about Max's school life is that the students at his school are forbidden to eat outside the school buildings, as in they can only eat inside!

It's fascinating listening to the different ways of life in different cultures and countries, and I hope this short report on my interviews sheds some light on how different life is in New Zealand, and on what experiences have shaped our International brothers into who they are now.



# A REVIEW:

# MAY

DIAZ

It tastes different, sweeter somehow, and bitter. The glass was cool against my forehead, and the sun gently alighted upon the weak bones of my cheeks. I didn't like that pure white light, the way it illuminated my blemishes and marks. I went inside. Inside, the light was more bearable. It was slightly dappled, and filtered.

I kicked puddles, skipping and running, filled with the glee of being alone, in the night. The pavement had long turned blue, and the light was orange and hazy. I could hear, back the way I had come, the sounds of busy bodies and noisy chatter. I took a breath. I held it, feeling the cold air in my lungs. I was coming up for air, before I dove back in.

The words were loose and empty in my mouth. When they spoke, the words were regimented and beautiful. They tumbled in perfect order, with the right amount of air and noise. I grew incredibly self-conscious about the fact I had teeth. My lips curled, my hands unsure.

The sky was pastel blue, the clouds skimming across that endless horizon. The light was tinged pink and orange, and the colours of the world were brighter somehow. Saturated, as if the world had been scrubbed and quickly re-assembled. The grass was wet, and I would have to wash my shirt. But here, lying in the sun, I didn't seem to mind.

In the kitchen, twirling on the wooden floorboards, watching my feet in the grimy reflection of the oven door. I had worn holes in my socks, from my dancing and jumping. I shook and swayed with the music, letting those bubbles build in the pit of my stomach, and feeling them burst in my brain. And I felt that I couldn't smile wider.

That familiar sting was beginning to touch my eyes, as I sat, smiling and laughing with pixels and sound-waves. The head-phones were loose on my ears, but it didn't particularly matter. I could hear fine. The laughter that bubbled and built, and then flooded my screen and ears. The smiles shared, through screens and pixels.

It was this month, wasn't it? Sitting on the rough carpet, shrouded in a heavy sleeping-bag. I was blind, and squinted into the darkness. It helped. It was so easy, to let the words stumble out of my mouth. It helped.

I am in love with being alive.



## Editor

Joseph Sothcott  
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Have an opinion on one of the pieces in this issue or want to contribute to Speak? We'd love to hear from you. You can contact me via [joseph.sothcott@gmail.com](mailto:joseph.sothcott@gmail.com).

Weekly Speak meetings will start soon - Thursday Intervals in L13. Come along if you'd like to be involved with the magazine.

Tell us what you think of the magazine by clicking on the link:

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