

Languages Week

This year, Languages Week officially began on Tuesday 2 April, right after the Easter break. However, the week's planning had been long in the works, ever since our Languages Captains, Molly Grogan and Olivia Choi, launched the Year 7 Languages Week Banner competition a few weeks earlier.

We were impressed by the number and quality of the entries. Over sixty Year 7 students submitted entries which included collages, hand drawn pictures and digital artworks. This made it extremely difficult for the judges to choose the winner. Anne Corbett, Jialu Gao, Cara Li, Victoria Lo and Ella Zhang made it to the final selection, but it was Annie Fang's design that ultimately won (you can see her creativity on display below).

The next warm-up event before the official opening of Languages Week was a beautiful performance by the Madrigals at Assembly, of a traditional Mexican song sung in Spanish: *Las Amarillas*.

At last, on Tuesday the official week was launched with an activity that has become a tradition at Languages Week over the years: the language passport. During their lunch break, students received their own languages passport and earned stamps as they learnt phrases in languages that aren't taught at Meriden, and by teachers and staff who do not teach languages – all around the theme of 'Embrace'. This year, we had girls learning phrases in Italian, Macedonian, Fijian, Russian, Setswana, Irish, Vietnamese, Dutch, and Korean.

Other activities during the week included cultural games (Chinese Mahjong, Japanese Hanafuda and Spanish cards), and other workshops such as origami, language coding and Chinese calligraphy. There was a great buzz around the school on Thursday with the ever-popular karaoke session, where students could perform individually or in a group, singing songs in languages other than English. Other well-attended events were the students vs. teachers Kahoot!, and the salsa dancing workshop where students and teachers alike enjoyed learning from professional Latin Dance Australia instructors.

Throughout the week, students in language classes celebrated cultural diversity in different ways. Year 8, for example, took part in a cultural costume parade, other students responded to the daily quiz '5 Questions a Day', and participated in a school-wide Education Perfect Languages Week Championship.

During Student Chapel, girls also read Bible passages and prayers in different languages, a reminder that the message of the Bible is for everyone.

While it was only a four-day week, Languages Week was still fun-packed and a fantastic opportunity for students to celebrate the many cultures represented across the Meriden community.

On behalf of the Languages Department, I would like to give a heartfelt thank you to all staff and students, as well as the Blue Bell Canteen, for their involvement and contribution in making this Languages Week 2024 such a resounding success.

Ms Teresa Alonso-Lasheras
Head of Languages

- 1. Year 8 students dressed up for the traditional costume parade
- 2. Students learning Chinese calligraphy
- 3-4. Learning to dance: salsa and bachata

