

ABOUT TONIGHT'S PRESENTATION

Although George III (depicted on the front cover) was the King of England from 1760–1820, his son ruled in his stead in the latter part of his reign, a period now known as the Regency Period. An unfortunate fit of madness struck George suddenly in the summer of 1788 and incapacitated his reason and his ability to rule. Shortly after this serious bout of mental illness, which physicians today believe was *porphyria* (so-called because it turns one's urine purple), an extraordinary event occurred in the gardens of Kew Palace. On spotting his Keeper of Robes, George III started chasing after her, while his physicians chased after him. Recorded by Fanny Burney (the one who was chased) in a diary entry dated Monday, February 2, 1789, the event shows an interesting perspective of George III not available in most classroom textbooks. However, the English Literature and History students had the opportunity of reading Burney's diary entry and were assigned to speculate on other possible perspectives, such as of the Queen and others who had witnessed the crazy occurrence.

The Vice and Virtue course consists of many character-building stories by classic authors, such as Rudyard Kipling, Charles Dickens, and William Wordsworth. This year's Vice and Virtue students have chosen a vice or virtue to personify on stage and will tell one of the stories that they have read.

In a course titled "I Tell, I Speak, I Write," the high school class studied drama, narrative essays and speeches. The literature included works by the great essayists and orators of the past three centuries, including Joseph Addison, Christopher Morley, Henry David Thoreau, G. K. Chesterton, Stephen Leacock, Robert Benchley, Frederick Douglass, and many others. The major dramas that we read included Thornton Wilder's *Our Town*, Oscar Wilde's *Importance of Being Earnest*, and Shakespeare's *King Lear*. This year I asked the students to memorize a long quotation from *Lear* and make it their "life-long lesson in *Lear*." (I called the assignment the "L4 project.") They not only had to recite the passage throughout the year but also had to write a narrative in which they retell an incident in their own lives, inspired by the quotation. The purpose of the L4 project was to encourage students to relate their own life experiences to literature. There are a few students tonight who will be giving a speech that they wrote for the L4 project. The other speeches are musings, narratives, and classification and division essays inspired by one of the assigned works.

This year, the A is for Apple and C is for Cottage class will be reciting classic poetry. Memorizing poetry is a valuable teaching tool for several reasons. First, it provides the student with vocabulary in context and ideas to draw upon for thought, reflection and writing. If the material memorized is spiritual or moral in nature, it is likely to influence his affections and hopefully steer his heart towards God. Memorization also exercises the mind in a very empowering way and increases the student's ability later in life to memorize. Lastly, it provides a pattern (especially when the material is poetry) for musical rhythms, syntax and phrasing.

SPEECH NIGHT 2022

Recitations, Speeches and Dramatic Monologues



*Lord Chancellor, did I
deliver the speech well? I
am glad of that, for there
was nothing in it.*

—George III

Friday, May 20

6:30 p.m.

