

# ŌTOROHANGA COLLEGE

## WEEKLY HIGHLIGHTS

Term Two, Week One  
Wednesday 29<sup>th</sup> April – Friday 1<sup>st</sup> May 2026

# ENGLISH FACULTY

It has been a bustling start to the term in the English Faculty as our students dive into new worlds through our novel studies and prepare for their CAA Literacy assessments. Here is a look at what is happening across the levels.

Our Year 9 and 10 students are currently immersed in their junior novel studies. This unit is designed to foster a love for reading while sharpening critical thinking skills. Our students will analyse the texts with particular focus on audience and purpose for writing, main ideas and the structure of their novel. Through these novel studies, students are exploring various themes—from survival and identity to social justice. Beyond just reading, the junior classes are engaging in creative responses, character analysis and lively classroom discussions. We encourage parents to ask their rangatahi about the book they are currently reading; these conversations at home are invaluable for reinforcing their learning.

A major focus for many of our students right now is the upcoming Common Assessment Activities (CAA) for NCEA Literacy.

- What they are: These are digital assessments that evaluate a student's foundational reading and writing skills.
- The Schedule: The first assessment window for 2026 is scheduled for 18 May – 29 May, our students will begin their first assessment on 26 May.
- Preparation: In class, we are focusing on familiarising students with the digital platform and honing the specific technical skills required for these standards. We are also preparing through the use of practice exams and online platforms.

Successful completion of these CAAs is a prerequisite for being awarded any level of NCEA, so we are working hard to ensure every student feels confident and prepared.

The SMART Tool is a new, bilingual diagnostic platform launching in New Zealand schools this term to provide a consistent "snapshot" of student progress in Reading, Writing and Maths (Years 3–10). SMART replaces E-Atstle which had become outdated and inefficient to use. For teachers, it reduces administrative load through automated marking, while for parents and students, it offers a clear view of academic achievement aligned with the refreshed national curriculum. We will begin using SMART next week in the first phase of diagnostic testing using this new tool.

Seniors:

Level 1: We are seeing a more streamlined approach with a focus on fewer, larger standards that allow for deeper learning as well as our Level 1 students, who are beginning to achieve at Level 2 through the use of selected standards appropriate to their abilities.

Levels 2 and 3: The Faculty is busy rolling out University Entrance assessments that will require students to achieve at a higher level. Our teachers are working closely with students to navigate these new requirements, ensuring that the focus remains on high-quality communication and critical analysis.

We are incredibly proud of the hard work our students are putting in. Whether they are decoding a complex poem or preparing for their first external exam, their resilience is a testament to the Ōtorohanga College spirit.



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# ANZAC

## ANZAC Service



Our Head Students, accompanied by the Principal and four Student Leaders, were proud to represent the College at this year's ANZAC Service. Held under beautiful autumn skies, the calm and clear weather reflected the respectful and reflective tone of the occasion.

A particular highlight was the contribution of our Head Students, who spoke with sincerity and from the heart as they honoured the service and sacrifice of fallen soldiers. Their words acknowledged not only the bravery of those who served, but also the enduring importance of remembrance, gratitude and peace.

The students conducted themselves with maturity and dignity throughout the service, demonstrating the values we hold as a College. It was a meaningful opportunity for our young leaders to connect with the wider community and to pay their respects on such a significant day in our national calendar.



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# Bluelight Voyage Trip

## Sail On Have an anchor so that life does not toss you around.

During the second week of the school holidays two Ōtorohanga College Students, Tylah Ostern and Moana Oakley-Tupou, were sponsored by Otorohanga/Te Kuiti Bluelight to attend a weeklong leadership Sail Voyage on Steinlarger 2, which was used in the 1989/90 Whitebread Round The World Yacht race. The voyage is run in conjunction with Bluelight New Zealand and NZ sailing Trust. The students have the opportunity to develop their leadership skills, team building exercises and learn basic sailing skills.

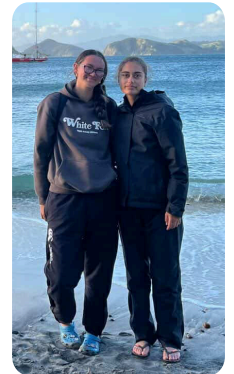
### Tylah

Tylah said it was something completely out of her comfort zone and was grateful to be able to share this experience with one of her College friends. Highlights of the trip included meeting new people and forming friendships, learning how to navigate and sail the yacht and the stop offs at various locations where they went on walks and did team building activities. One of her favourite activities was the kayak races and least favourite was having to jump in the water for a swim each morning - the weather wasn't the greatest!

This was an unforgettable experience for sure which has helped grow her confidence and leadership skills and by participating in this voyage it gave her an advantage to apply for and be successful in gaining a senior leadership role at College.

### Moana

Moana's highlight was when she had to eat a whole dry Weet-bix and whistle a song for her team to carry on with a game. During this her team was so supportive, everyone was engaged and encouraging each other. Another highlight was when she realised that no one can work alone we need each other to build to improve and to make things easier or even. She loved how the supervisors said to give everything a go. Her advice is to take that step no matter how hard or difficult it may be or become, you should never doubt yourself nor give up. You are not alone, we stand together.



Brenton Irwin

## Key Dates

Friday 15 <sup>th</sup> May	Pink Shirt Day
Tuesday 19 <sup>th</sup> May	Ōtorohanga College Board Meeting
Thursday 21 <sup>st</sup> May	Photolife
Friday 22 <sup>nd</sup> May	Kyoai Gakuen High School Visit
Tuesday 26 <sup>th</sup> May	Reading CAA
Wednesday 27 <sup>th</sup> May	Writing CAA
Thursday 28 <sup>th</sup> May	Numeracy CAA
Friday 29 <sup>th</sup> May	Fluro Day
Monday 1 <sup>st</sup> June	King's Birthday
Wednesday 10 <sup>th</sup> June	Production Evening Performance
Thursday 11 <sup>th</sup> June	Production Evening Performance
Friday 12 <sup>th</sup> June	Production Evening Performance
Tuesday 23 <sup>rd</sup> June	Ōtorohanga College Board Meeting
Friday 26 <sup>th</sup> June	College Ball
Friday 3 <sup>rd</sup> July	Matariki Celebration Day
	Term Two Ends

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