



Department of English

St. Bede's College, Shimla

Activities of the Department of English -2025-26

Report on Book Club Activity: *The Kite Runner*

Date: August 4, 2025

Objectives:

The session was organized by the English Department's Book Club, *Afterthoughts*, which is open to all students of the college. The aim of the activity was to promote inclusive literary engagement, encourage critical thinking, and foster a deeper appreciation of contemporary world literature through discussion and analysis of a significant text.

For this session, the book club selected *The Kite Runner* by Khaled Hosseini, a novel exploring friendship, guilt, redemption, and socio-political change in Afghanistan. A meeting was held on August 4, 2025, attended by students from various disciplines and faculty members of the English Department. The discussion focused on the major themes of the novel, including personal responsibility, the impact of past actions, and the influence of cultural and historical context on individual identities. Attention was given to character development, narrative structure, and the author's use of symbolism. Participants shared diverse perspectives, which led to a thoughtful and engaging exchange of ideas.

Outcome:

The session successfully encouraged analytical reading and critical engagement with the text. The inclusive nature of the book club enriched the discussion and helped participants develop the ability to interpret literature from multiple perspectives. The meeting concluded with reflections on the relevance of *The Kite Runner* in contemporary literary studies and its insights into human relationships and ethical dilemmas. Overall, the activity fulfilled the objectives of the *Afterthoughts* book club by promoting meaningful literary dialogue and fostering a culture of critical and inclusive discussion across the college.



Book Talk



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Kite Runner Discussed

Visit to English Literature Exhibition: “World Within Words”

Date: August 25, 2025

Objectives:

The primary objective of this visit was to provide students with experiential and interactive learning, enabling them to engage with literary texts, authors, and movements in a more dynamic and imaginative manner beyond the traditional classroom setting.

Description:

The students of St. Bede's College visited Auckland House School Shimla for an English Literature Exhibition: Words Within Words. The exhibition was meticulously organized and creatively curated, presenting a wide range of important literary works and movements from different periods of English literature. Each section of the exhibition focused on specific authors, genres, or literary eras, brought to life through an engaging combination of book displays, visual aids, character portrayals, and short dramatic performances. Students witnessed live enactments of famous literary characters, which helped them better understand themes, contexts, and characterisation. The use of costumes, dialogues, and stage settings added depth to the overall presentation, making literature more vivid and relatable.

The exhibition also highlighted the evolution of literature over time, allowing students to trace connections between different literary movements and appreciate their distinctive features. The



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interactive nature of the displays encouraged students to actively participate, ask questions, and reflect on their own interpretations of texts.

Outcomes:

- Enhanced comprehension of major literary movements, authors, and texts.
- Developed a deeper appreciation for literature as a living and performative art form.
- Encouraged creativity and critical thinking through observation of innovative presentation techniques.
- Strengthened students' ability to connect theoretical knowledge with practical representation.
- Motivated students to explore new and engaging methods of studying and presenting literature.
- Overall, the visit was an enriching, insightful, and enjoyable academic experience that left a lasting impression on the students.



Students in the English Literature Exhibition at Auckland House School

Khushwant Singh Literature Festival 2025



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Date: October 11, 2025

Objectives:

- To expose students to contemporary literary discourse and global intellectual perspectives.
- To foster critical thinking and cultural awareness through interaction with eminent writers and thinkers.
- To understand the role of literature in addressing modern societal challenges and shaping the future.

Description:

The Department of English, St. Bede's College, participated in a prestigious literary festival held on October 11, 2025. The event brought together an illustrious panel of speakers, including Shobha De, A. S. Dulat, and Amol Palekar, along with several distinguished authors, scholars, and intellectuals.

The central theme of the festival, "Voices for Tomorrow – Navigating the Future through Words," highlighted the transformative power of literature in fostering hope, responsibility, and innovation in an increasingly complex global landscape.

The festival featured a wide range of engaging sessions that explored diverse themes such as heritage, mental health, philanthropy, and the cultural relevance of literature in contemporary society. The presence of renowned personalities like Amol Palekar, celebrated for his contributions to theatre, cinema, and the arts, along with Shobha De's perspectives on modern writing and A. S. Dulat's insightful discussions on history and policy, provided students with a multidimensional understanding of literature's intersection with society.

Students actively participated in discussions and gained exposure to varied viewpoints, enriching their academic and intellectual horizons. The interactive nature of the sessions enabled meaningful engagement with the speakers, fostering curiosity and dialogue.

Literature serves as a powerful medium for social reflection and transformation. Interdisciplinary perspectives enhance the understanding of literary studies. Engagement with contemporary authors helps bridge the gap between theory and real-world application. Themes such as mental health and cultural identity are increasingly significant in literary discourse. The participation in the literary festival proved to be an enriching and intellectually stimulating experience for the students. It not only broadened their understanding of literature and its societal relevance but also encouraged them to view literary studies as a dynamic and evolving field. Such initiatives play a vital role in nurturing informed, creative, and socially responsible individuals.



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Outcome:

- Students developed a deeper appreciation for literature as a tool for social awareness and change.
- The event enhanced their critical thinking and analytical abilities.
- Participants gained valuable exposure to contemporary literary trends and global issues.
- The experience inspired students to engage more actively with literature and creative expression.



Students Attending Kushwant Singh Lit Fest at Kasauli

Secret Santa



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Date: December 10, 2025

Objective: To cultivate a sense of community and provide a moment of joy and relaxation during an academically demanding period.

Description:

The Department of English at St. Bede's College, Shimla, organized a Secret Santa event on December 10, 2025, to celebrate the spirit of Christmas. The initiative was designed to encourage generosity, empathy, and mutual appreciation among students. The event witnessed enthusiastic participation and was marked by a vibrant and engaging atmosphere.

A series of interactive activities and games enabled students to interact more freely and build stronger interpersonal connections. The celebration concluded with the exchange of gifts, accompanied by refreshments and music, creating a warm and festive ambience. Overall, the event proved to be highly successful in enhancing student morale and nurturing a sense of belonging within the department.

Outcome:

Students participated wholeheartedly in the celebration, gaining a deeper appreciation of the values of sharing and goodwill associated with Christmas, while also strengthening peer relationships.



Students Exchanging Gifts



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Inter-Departmental Activity

“Echoes of 1857: Exploring Rani Lakshmibai through Historical Insight and Literary Expression”

Date: December 11, 2025

Objectives

- To enhance understanding of Rani Lakshmibai's role in the 1857 Uprising
- To integrate historical analysis with literary expression
- To encourage critical thinking and creative engagement among students

Description:

The Department of English and the Department of History jointly organised an interdisciplinary event titled “Echoes of 1857: Exploring Rani Lakshmibai through Historical Insight and Literary Expression” on December 11, 2025, at 11:00 a.m. in the Dina Block, St. Bede's College.

The programme featured a historical talk that provided students with deeper insights into Rani Lakshmibai's role in the Revolt of 1857, highlighting her courage, leadership, and enduring legacy. This was followed by poetry recitations, where students brought alive the literary portrayals of the Rani, blending history with creative expression. The session encouraged thoughtful engagement and offered students a holistic understanding of the freedom struggle.

The event successfully connected historical facts with literary imagination, making the learning experience engaging and reflective.

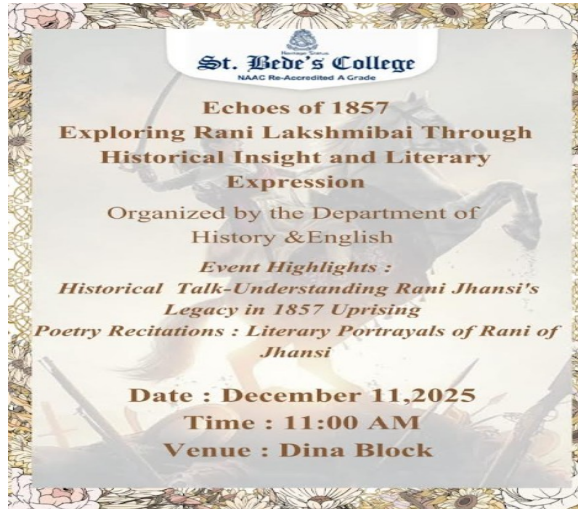
Outcomes

- Students gained a nuanced perspective of the Revolt of 1857.
- Improved appreciation of literary representations of historical figures.
- Strengthened interdisciplinary learning and historical consciousness.

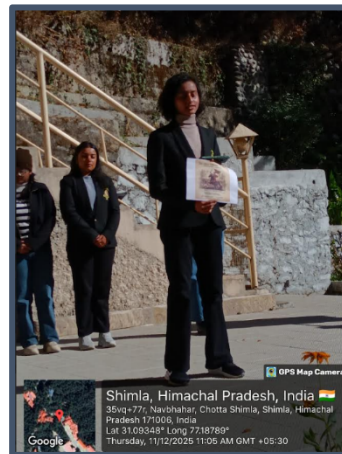


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Brochure





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Inter-Departmental Activity

Dream Journal

Date: February, 2026

Objectives:

- To facilitate introspection and self-awareness
- To improve creative and reflective writing skills
- To assist students in identifying and articulating their personal goals
- To build confidence in self-expression
- To encourage imaginative and critical thinking

Description:

The Dream Journal Project was assigned to first-year Bachelor of Arts students as part of an initiative designed to foster self-reflection, creativity, and personal development. This project required students to maintain a journal in which they explored their thoughts, aspirations, and visions for their future selves. Students were encouraged to express themselves freely through various forms, including descriptive writing, poetry, sketches, and symbolic representations.



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The journals not only captured their ambitions and goals but also reflected their values, emotions, and evolving sense of identity. This activity provided a secure and expressive environment for students to introspect and articulate their understanding of their current selves and their aspirations for the future. The project was met with enthusiasm, and students exhibited a wide range of creativity and originality in their submissions. Many journals demonstrated depth of thought, clarity of purpose, and a strong engagement with personal experiences and future aspirations.

Outcomes:

The Dream Journal Project has proven to be a valuable and insightful initiative, significantly contributing to the comprehensive development of students by integrating creativity with meaningful self-reflection.



Dream Journals made by the students



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Mock Interview

Date: March 26, 2026

Objectives:

- To prepare the students for real interviews.
- Enhance communication skills, verbal and non-verbal skills, including clarity, confidence, and body language.
- Help candidates get comfortable with interview setting and reduce nervousness.

Description:

The Department of English, St. Bede's College organized a 'Mock Interview' session to aid students in preparing for future job opportunities. This initiative was designed to equip participants with essential interview skills, boost their confidence, and familiarize them with the formalities and expectations of professional interviews. The session started with an introduction to interview techniques, students provided insights on effective communication, appropriate body language, and the significance of research and preparation before interviews. Practical mock interviews were conducted by students themselves, simulating real-life scenarios to test and refine their skills in responding to challenging questions. Each participant received constructive feedback from their peers, highlighting strengths and areas for improvement, ensuring a collaborative and supportive learning experience. The session was met with enthusiastic participation, and students appreciated the opportunity to engage in peer-to-peer learning.

Outcomes:

- Students became more confident and articulate in their responses.
- They felt more comfortable handling high pressure situations.
- Students were given a strategic approach to face interviews.
- The students focused on improved body language and tone.
- Feedback was given to each student.



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Students Participating in Mock Interview

Book and Film Review Fridays

Date: Last Friday of every month.

Objective: To inculcate the habit of reading and to foster critical analysis of books and films from different genres.

Description: For the academic session 2025-26, the English Department at St. Bede's College organised "Book and Film Review Fridays" under the auspices of their departmental club, *Afterthoughts*. This initiative provides a platform for students in the second and third years of the English Honours program to engage in critical analysis of literary and cinematic works.



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Each month, designated students will dedicate time to reading a selected book and will subsequently present their reviews on the final Friday, fostering intellectual discourse and enhancing their analytical skills.

The books, films and series reviewed by the students are as follows:

- Ap Jaisa Koi
- Hachi: A Dog's Tale
- Sita Sings the Blues
- Frankenstein
- Don't Sweat the Small Stuff and it's All Small Stuff

Outcome: The book and film review sessions with the students has yielded promising results in fostering critical thinking and analytical skills.



Book and Film Reviews Fridays



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