



PRESS RELEASE

OHS Grade Twelve Students Present a “Novel” Symposium

Timmins, March 26th, 2008: Laura Kelly, Grade 12 English Teacher at *O’Gorman High School* in Timmins, recently presented her seventeen students with an assignment to read a fictional novel, write an essay and introduce their novel at a “Novel” Symposium held on March 26th and 28th. The students were to evaluate the effectiveness of their chosen fictional novel based on Joseph Pulitzer’s criteria for effective writing based on Pulitzer’s quote: “Put it before them briefly so they will read it, clearly so they will appreciate it, picturesquely so they will remember it, and above all, accurately so they will be guided by its light.”



The Grade Twelve students highlighted their book along with their thesis at a display booth in the *O’Gorman High School’s* main lobby. Their presentations included the use of original posters, costumes and various symbolic objects best representing their novel. Each student was responsible for greeting visitors to their booths by:

- ✓ Summarizing the plotline;
- ✓ Reading three favourite passages from the novel and explained why they liked them;
- ✓ Providing an overview of his/her essay, poster and paraphernalia which advertised the novel; and,
- ✓ Answering any questions and collecting feedback from their guests.



Tallia Damini, student, selected “The Bell Jar” by Sylvia Plath as her featured novel. The story is based on a woman in her mid-thirties in the 1950’s, wanting to become a writer. The main character struggles with mental illness and depression throughout the book and some critics and readers have suggested that the story represents in most part the real life struggles of the author – Sylvia Plath. Tallia had this to say about her selected novel, “This type of literature was new to me and was an eye opener. I would not have read it on my own but it definitely was a learning experience.”

Korey Purdy, student, presented the novel "Angels & Demons" by Dan Brown. "This book was exceptional with the amount of detail and was a very thrilling read" added Purdy.



Other students were personally affected by the story they had read. Stephanie Higgs, Grade Twelve student studied the book "A Lesson Before Dying" by Ernest J. Gaines, a story based in the 1940's about racism and the struggles that African Americans faced during this period. Higgs was left with this impression, "We have to remember that by changing ourselves, we can change others."

This event is one great example of the *Northeastern Catholic District School Board's* belief that *"literacy underpins all learning."*