

Modern Foreign Languages Competition – VocabExpress

By Dhruv Goel

At WHSB, we have a thriving community of students learning not one, but two modern foreign languages! As a result, WHSB is renowned for its MFL Department and its high standard of teaching. We have German, French and Spanish for students to pick.

Every year, we always have quite a few competitions at WHSB, focusing on challenging students when it comes to languages and trying to earn their place in the global leaderboard of the VocabExpress competition.

According to VocabExpress' site, it is:

“an online vocab learning application that was developed with several secondary MFL departments during the first half of 2009.

Significant interviews with MFL teachers, class trials and productive criticism from students have led to the Vocab Express you see today. And the product continues to evolve, with new features and content to meet the needs of teachers and students alike.”

However, in the multi-cultural society of WHSB, VocabExpress is more than a competition.

Students fight for glory among the school leaderboards, the top three performers earning glory among their fellow students and the chance to win distinguished badges, to earn many house points and for the MFL teachers to know that you have gained a sufficient understanding of the subject.

Nevertheless, VocabExpress remains a global competition, all students fighting together for one cause: to bring the VocabExpress Genius Trophy home. The Genius Trophy signifies that the school excels in their MFL Department and that the school is not to be messed with (in VocabExpress terms).

We have savoured such a glory very recently when a WHSB's students came together to fight for the trophy.

On WHSB's website is a more detailed version of the win:

“Students from Westcliff High School for Boys have excelled in the 2019 international Collins Vocab Express League of Champions, coming first in the competition’s Genius Cup. This October, over the course of one week, more than 16,000 students, from over 120 schools, took part in the competition, with 19 million points registered in total.

Miss McKeown, Head of Foreign Languages at Westcliff High School for Boys, said: “Our students’ performance in this global competition was outstanding. We have so many talented language students here at WHSB. They rose to this challenge by stretching their vocabulary skills and competing in their own time over a very intense week.”

Headmaster Mr Skelly said:

“To come first in the Genius Cup is a tremendous achievement for our students this year and one of which they should all be extremely proud. As a School Community, we congratulate them.”

On the whole, WHSB takes massive pride in their Modern Foreign Languages, and it clearly shows.

Dhruv Goel, BBC News,