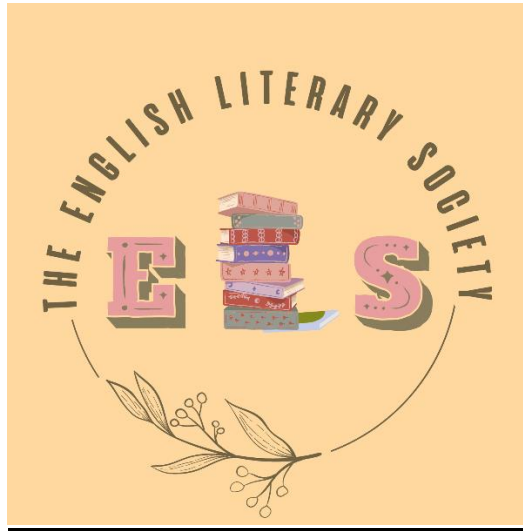


**THE ENGLISH LITERARY SOCIETY (2022-23)**



**Teachers in charge:** Ms. Nishtha Dev, Ms. Jini Joseph | **Club Secretary:** Shruthi Mahadevan

*“It is literature which for me opened the mysterious and decisive doors of imagination and understanding. To see the way others see. To think the way others think. And above all, to feel.”*

*-Salman Rushdie*

The theme for the year 2022-2023 was 'An Old Lore for an Old Soul'. By diversifying our events, we wished to capture the multifaceted essence of literature this year. Taking a look beyond the conventional notion of literature, we discovered areas such as songwriting, food in literature, translated works in literature, Queer Fiction, fanfiction, and reformist literature.

Listed below are the events we conducted this year.

## TranQUILLity

Date: 3rd August

Time: 1.30 pm

Venue: AV Room front

No. Of participants: 20

Ever since the pace of our lives quickened with the globe rotating faster than it did before, we've all been asking ourselves one question: what does, in actuality, give us peace? Is it the relief of reaching home after a long, long day? Is it the sight of our beds and the next movie on Netflix? Or perhaps it's a good music album, or a book? Maybe it's an emotion, a place, a person. It's the translation of peace into comfort that humankind assembles under one umbrella, one shade of a tree, to discuss and tell each other, so that we all can find solace in our joined struggles, and all our joys.

Which was what the ELS Members gathered for, on the 3rd of August: as a celebration of peace, its interpretation as comfort, and a contribution to the ongoing 'Peace Fortnight'. In the AV Room, 16 students gathered to read out anonymous letters that each of them wrote to a comfort person, character, or book. They were encouraged by the Senior Executives to express their feelings in an open, accepting environment. One of the Executives, Riddhi Tiwari, moderated the entire session and led the students to being comfortable with each other and their environment, as for many this was their first ELS event.

The event was thrown open to all students, and all of them expressed their experience of 'catharsis': they felt lighter after pouring their thoughts onto a piece of paper. Many of them also emphasized on the fun of listening to their letter being read out and reading out letters from other people as if it were their very own. The participants also expressed their gratitude to the organizers, who, they said, created a comfortable and relaxing environment for them. Over and all, all of the students took back the idea of peace with them, and how they all found comfort in the world, and the various beauties they're surrounded by.

### **Students' Feedback:**

"This felt so good..i didn't know i was around such good writers..this event was comfort in itself. Thank you so much<3"Awesome work!!! Loved loved the idea and intimate atmosphere

"It was amazing. i had so much fun not just writing my letter but also listening to others letters it was the highlight of my day"

“It was a great experience, one that I would like to repeat.”

**Photos from the event:**



## OCEAN VUONG POETRY DISCUSSION

Date: 20<sup>TH</sup> August 2022

Time: 1.30-2.45 pm

Venue/Platform: Room 9, Sophia College

No. of Participants: 18

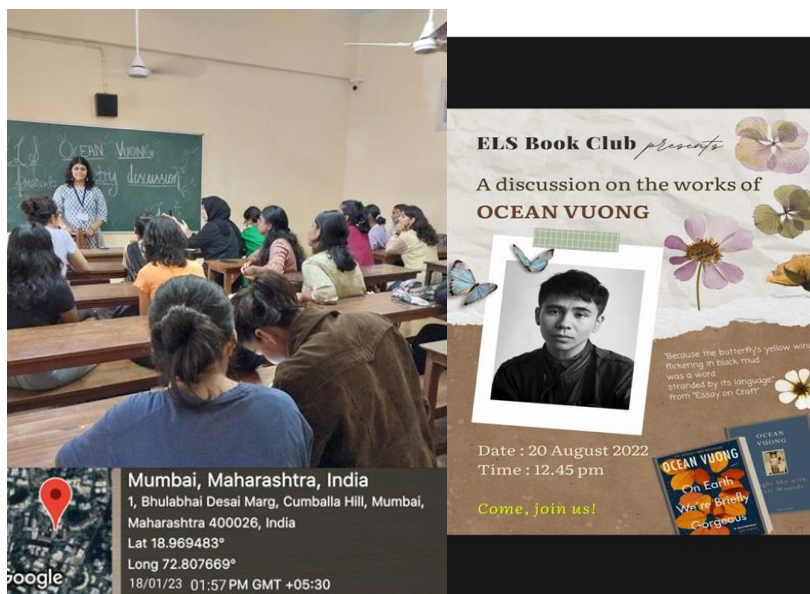
Three works by Ocean Vuong were discussed- “Toy Boat”, “DetoNation”, “Someday I’ll love.” The audience response and interaction was amazing. An engaging discussion of one hour took place.

### **Student Feedback:**

“I learnt a lot about Ocean Vuong as a person and a poet. It was really fun to analyze and look at his works. It has definitely made me curious to check out his other works! Thank you for the event!!! <3

“I think when discussing the poem, the biological facts of their poet took precedence over the poem itself. Things about the poet that weren’t inherently in the poem were heavily featured in the poem analysis. However, the discussion was conducted seamlessly and was encouraging for all to put across their points. It encouraged creative analyses that were subjective - something I love about poetry.”

### **Pictures of the Event:**



## WHOzier

What happens when the beauty of weaving words and the spirit of singing come together? The English Literary Society and World Music Dance Club came together on 29th September to find out-- with their collaborative event-- WHOzier, a songwriting and singing event. Members and participants gathered together at everyone's favorite socializing spot-- the marble staircase at 2 pm. The participants were mailed a list of three random words, which they had to compulsorily incorporate into a song they composed. They could participate either individually or in a team of two and had to sing the song during their turn at the venue. They were allowed to carry an acoustic instrument with them for the same.

The event was overlooked by ELS Club Secretary Shruthi Mahadevan and WMDC Club Secretary Ishani Sen. Team members of both the clubs worked together from graphics to management at the venue and helped make it a memorable and enjoyable day for everyone present. Sounds of the audience applauding and occasional bursts of laughter decorated the event, perhaps like a melodious chorus of good times. Everyone was delighted to hear the various beautiful and witty songs composed by the talented participants.

### **Student's Feedback**

“It was an amazing event with the culmination of writing and singing—the two things that I absolutely love!!!”

“Look forward to more such fun events and collabs in the future <3 “

“Such a memorable experience of writing a song and singing it in front of such a fun audience “

### **Pictures of the Event:**



## FANFICTION WRITING

Since time immemorial, works that have established universes have tickled the rapid imaginations of writers. What if a character ended up with someone else? What if they ran away instead of fighting the enemy? What if they fell in love with someone unexpected? These questions have found their answers in the way of 'fanfiction': where fans write their versions of a story, often with new pairings, or even transcending universes by either bringing characters from one to another, or making worlds collide. While the totality of the 'writers' don't see fanfiction as 'serious writing' - the capabilities of fanfiction writers to bring the best of universes and to create something brand new that is also art; is what we, as ELS, witnessed in our online 'Fanfiction Writing' event.

The executives at ELS created a Google Form, inviting entries from the first years from all streams from 3rd October to 18th October 2022, and featured excerpts from some of the entries on ELS' Instagram handle on Halloween, 31st of October. The entries were from multiple, diverse universes: ranging from fictional worlds like Harry Potter, anime like Haikyuu!/, novels like The Spanish Love Deception, with real world celebrities, and even from classic books like The Scarlet Pimpernel. The writers showed their creativity and language prowess in their words, which sometimes moved the executives' hearts. The executives then made their hard choice of choosing between the best of the best, featuring those works on the Instagram page. The rest of the entries were featured on ELS' official Wordpress blog, for the world to see.

Therefore, with their lovely words and even lovelier ideas, the writers in ELS proved that fanfiction is also literature, pure and creative.

### **CREATIVES USED (PICTURES):**



## MIDNIGHTS MUSINGS WITH ELS

Date: 7th November 2022–28th November 2022

Platform: Instagram and Google Forms (online)

No. of participants: 13

Bringing all the Swifties in the English Literary Society together, the club conducted the ‘Midnights Musings’ event, based upon the recent Taylor Swift album ‘Midnights’. The event—held by collecting entries from ELS members via Google Forms, and showcasing excerpts of those via the official Instagram page—allowed writers to express their own interpretation of certain song lyrics, which acted as writing prompts. Most of the featured writers chose poetry as a way to set their creativity into motion, revealing bitter memories and broken hearts and aspirations through the varied perspectives and focuses on either the entire song, the entire lyric, or parts of it. The creatives for the event were made by Aabha Deshmukh, Junior Exec., and Keerthana Iyer, Senior Exec., while the prompts were chosen by Shruthi Mahadevan, Club Sec.

And through this event, ELS once again showcased not only the creativity of its members but also the influence of music on literature and literary expression.

### **Creatives Used:**



## ON THE SAME PAGE

**Date:** 12<sup>th</sup> November 2022

**Time:** 1.30 pm

**Venue:** Room - 9

**No. of Participants:** 17

All together, warm and comfortable, ELS members had a fun filled and memorable event with their favorite books. All the while bonding with your fellow bibliophiles!

For the event, participants were asked to carry their favorite, most cherished books, either as paperbacks or kindles. Each one then had a turn, to come up and share what made the books so memorable and beloved and how they impacted their lives and touched their hearts. The event passed by with each one happily talking about their books and prompting others to extend their wish lists!

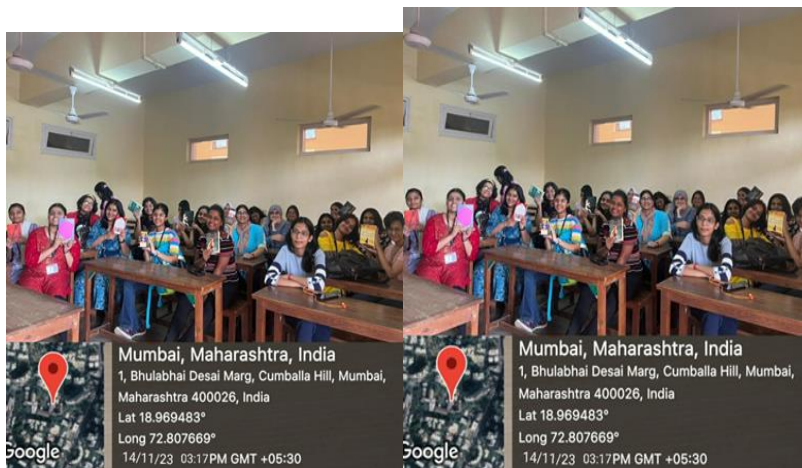
### **Student's Feedback:**

“I had soo much fun today! I was glad to be able to share my fav books with everyone!”

“Wow, I want to read soo many new books now!”

“I’m so happy I got the chance to share my book with everyone! (:”

### **Pictures of the event:**





## DISCUSSION ON WRITING WITH JOEL THOTTAN

Date: 19 November, 2022

Time: 1:30 pm

Venue: AV Hall

The English Literary Society of Sophia College organized a Discussion on writing on 19th November 2022 which was held in the AV Hall.

Joel Thottan, a copywriter, scriptwriter and TedX speaker joined the students as the resource person. He shared valuable information about his own creative process while writing and the creation of popular projects like “Butterflies“. He also advised the students about the problems that they encounter during their writing journey, such as creative blocks, lack of ideas and so on, and how they can be tackled. Screening of Butterflies: Episode 1 that was shot in the Sophia College campus, was done for the students. The enthusiastic students asked several questions about their personal struggles with writing. The event was a successful one which gave the students valuable knowledge, helping them to refine their art of writing.

### **Student’s Feedback:**

It was an enriching session that helped us to learn about the nuances of writing. Joel is such a great and fun person to talk to. I could easily ask about my doubts. Interesting workshop filled with lots of learning and laughter.

### **Pictures from the event:**



## DISCUSSION ON THE WORKS OF AGHA SHAHID ALI

Date: 6th December 2022

Time: 2:00 PM

Venue: Room 9

It is often said that art is political and historically poems are tools of revolution. The English Literary Society and the International Relations Club of Sophia College organized a book discussion on the selective works of Agha Shahid Ali's *The Country Without a Post Office* on 6th December 2022. There were up to 10 students who participated in the discussion.

Students spoke of their own take on the hauntingly touching political pieces of Ali's works which deals with diaspora, evoking the tragedy of the land of doomed addresses. They also tried to relate it to other international conflicting events— Israel-Palestine and the Taliban- Afghanistan issue. The discussion protected the sentiments of the people of Kashmir and tried to empathize with Kashmir's plight. Students were also able to come up with their own interpretations of the verses.

The event was successful with the sharing and imparting of knowledge of the history and politics of the valley.

### **Student's Feedback**

"It was a fun and exciting event getting to know different perspectives." "There were so many interesting interpretations of the poems."

### **Pictures from the event:**



## **A BOOK DISCUSSION ON THE SEVEN HUSBANDS OF EVELYN HUGO**

The English Literary Society and the Sophia Queer Collective of Sophia College organized a book discussion on the popular novel by American author Taylor Jenkins Reid on 17<sup>th</sup> December 2022. A total of 15 students participated in the discussion. The discussion primarily focused on the work being an important piece of popular queer literature of the 21st Century. The participants explored the gender politics of the text, focusing on the author's perspective on sexuality and power. The participants provided their multiple interpretations of the text and that produced a fruitful discussion of the layered central female characters of the novel, in particularly Evelyn Hugo. The subversive language, unique characters and queer relationships present in the novel were discussed at length. Other important queer texts and film adaptations were also included in the discussion. The event was a successful one with many key takeaways. The participants freely shared their views on gender and sexuality in an inclusive and open space where every voice was given importance.

### **Student's Feedback:**

“It was a really great event and I had loads of fun talking and discussing the book. The Management was great as well :) thank you for holding a really fun event!”

“The topic was very interesting and it was moderated very well. The varying opinions were fun to listen to, though it was also a little funny how most of the opinions ultimately matched.

“Gave me things to think about!”

### **Pictures from the event:**



## GIFT A TALE

Date: 21<sup>st</sup> December 2022

Time: 1:30 pm

Venue: Room 9

Sharing love, kindness and gifts is the best way to spread Christmas cheer and ELS members did the same by gifting their favorite books to the Gift a Tale book exchange event, Secret Santa style.

Participants were asked to wrap the books of their choice, preferably pre-owned books in wrapping paper. They were asked to write down their favorite quote from the book and three words which they felt described the book. Names of all those present were jotted down on chits and everyone had to pick one up at random. The names they got were the ones they had to gift the book to. Everyone came one by one, spoke about their mystery book and gifted it. Students had a lot of fun sharing an important part of themselves in such an exciting and warm way.

### **Student's feedback:**

“Just can't wait to read the book I've got xD”

“Had soo much fun today!!”

“Absolutely loved the event”

### **Pictures of the event:**



## Toadreads: Umbridge's Book Reviews

**Date:** 14 th to 15 th January, 2023

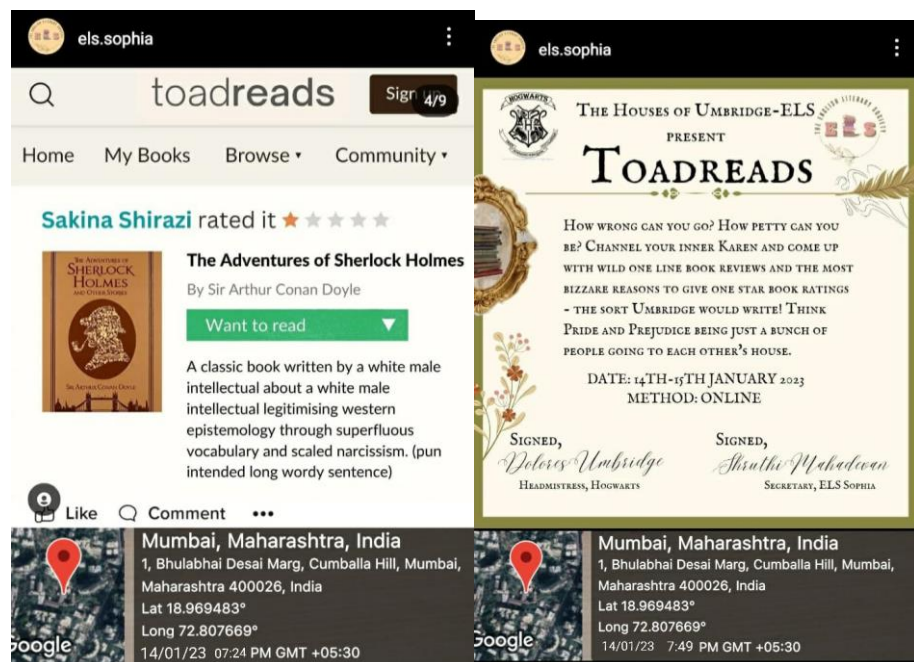
**Venue:** Online

“Toadreads: Umbridge's Book Reviews” was organized online as the first pre- event to ELS' flagship “Spoken Lores”. It was a light hearted event which invited the participants to review books – with a twist. Members had to come up with the most bizarre and outlandish reasons to give one- star book reviews and channel their inner Dolores Umbridge – the ultimate Karen!

All the participants displayed their flair for witticism and satire by coming up with the most humorous and eye – opening responses and submitting them via a Google form shared with them. The event helped students critically evaluate the books they had read and see them through an analytical lens.

Many of the best entries were shared as a post on ELS' Instagram page on 14 th and 15 th Jan. The best entry was decided and given a bookmark as a prize.

### Pictures of the event



## I Wrote That?

**Date** - 23rd-24th January, 2023

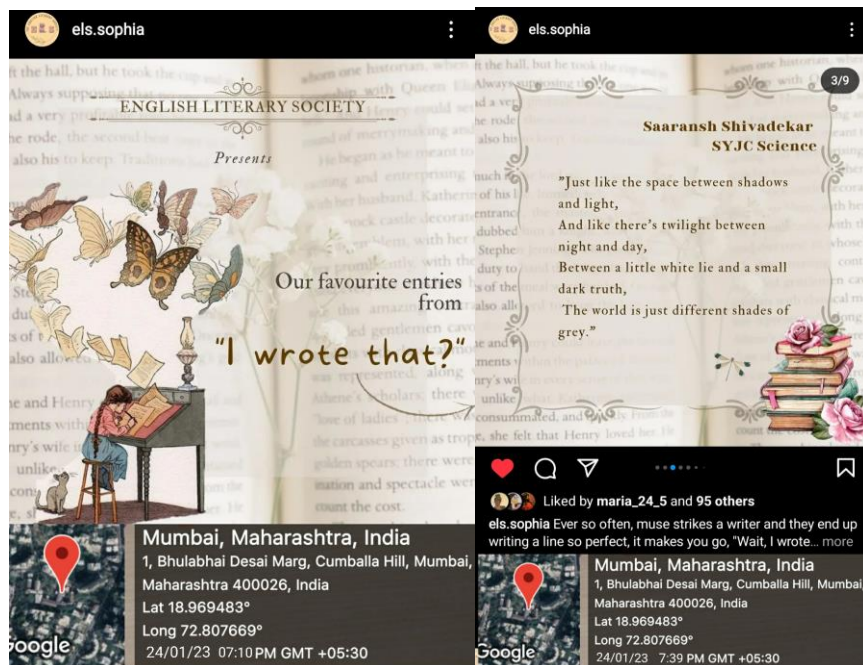
**Time** - N/A

**Venue** - Online

The English Literary Society of Sophia College conducted the online, submissions- based "I Wrote That?", as a pre-event for our flagship Open Mic, on 23rd and 24th January, 2023.

We invited members to send in the best original line of writing; the idea being that the line was so good, it made the writer wonder whether they'd actually written it.

We received many entries, and the best ones were put up on our instagram page. The winner was Saaransh Shivadekar.



## Human Library

Date: 18<sup>th</sup> January, 2023

Time: 1:30 pm

Venue: AV Hall

As a part of ELS, what's more important than sharing stories? This January, members came together to share the most important stories of them all – their own.

'Human Library' was organized as the first of a series of pre- flagship events held prior to 'Spoken Lores'. Participants were requested to carry or share photographs, which meant something extra special to them and share with everyone why that was so.

Everyone sat together and became a part of an intimate and comfortable space and shared stories of love, family, loss, fear and..... Cats! Each participant was given a turn to come up and share their story.

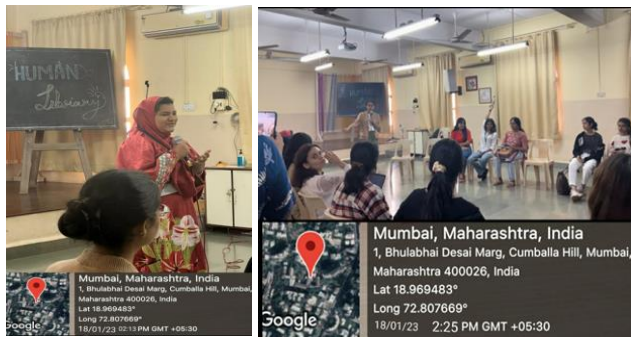
### **Student's Feedback**

“This was the best event at Sophia College that I have attended overall. I'm not even capping right now. You guys are really doing some great work. Keep it up , team ELS.”

“It was simply superb. I personally have a fear of public speaking but I felt warm amid these people.”

“It was great! I had a lot of fun participating in it.”

### **Photographs of the Event**



## SPOKEN LORES- FLAGSHIP EVENT

Date - 27th January, 2023

Time - 2:00 pm

Venue - AV Hall

The English Literary Society of Sophia College successfully conducted its flagship Open Mic event on 27th January, 2023.

Everyone holds a story within them. Our experiences and musings, as diverse as life itself. ELS Open Mic: Spoken Lores was a platform where everyone could present their stories, without the bounds of medium, language or genre.

Foram Shah, the founder of Spill Poetry, writer, poet, and TedX speaker, joined the event as a judge. Students performed their original pieces – poems, creative non-fiction and spoken words – both in Hindi and in English. 17 performers, selected by the ELS core, presented their pieces. From nostalgic musings about childhood, home and paper boats, to humor, heartbreak and Greek mythology, the pieces transcended subjects and genres.

The variety and quality of pieces held us spellbound, and regardless of the results, we all ended up richer for having lived this experience. The hours of the afternoon passed blissfully, all present enraptured by the breadth and beauty of poetry on display.

We also announced the winners of our pre-events, I Wrote That? And Toadreads: Umbridge's Book Reviews. With our sponsors, Mystique Magic and Shweta Paints providing beautiful, hand-crafted gifts for the winners, it truly was a memorable day.

The winner for the Open Mic was Haritha Vattolikal, with her witty piece, New Adult. Fia Thottan, with her wistful piece, Paper Boats was the first runner up, while Bhavishka Mendonca and Sarah Mathai shared the second runner up place. All in all, the event was a spectacular success, being conducted in person after two long years, and served as a reminder of the restorative power of poetry.

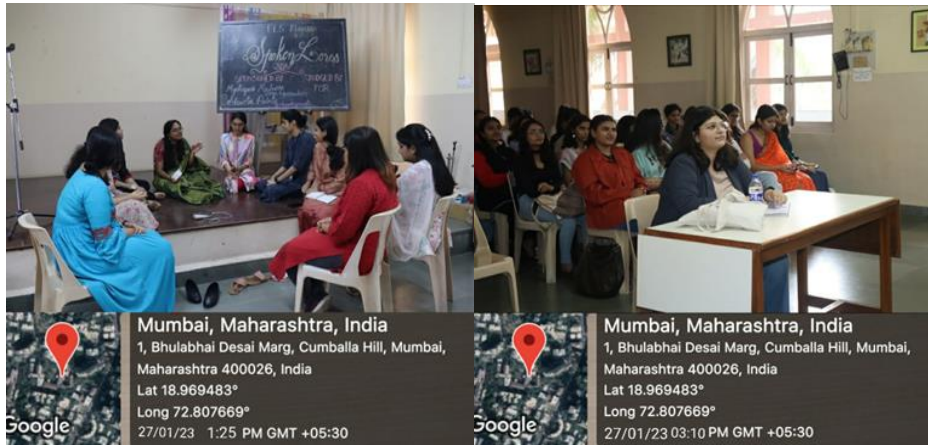
### **Student feedback -**

“Loved the gift to its every last bit of detail from the really creative packaging to that cute little personalized note...it means a lot !”



“A huge huge thank you to ELS for having us at the event today, it was absolutely an exhilarating experience, from the countless thank yous to all the performances and the audience. a lot of gratitude to ELS and [FSI] Shruthi, thank you so much for creating this platform today and simple listening. Will always live up to your words of 'literature is not easy.'”

### Pictures from the Event:



## A DISCUSSION ON THE WORKS OF MAHASWETA DEVI

Date : 6<sup>th</sup> February

Time: 1:30 pm

Venue : Room 10

The English Literary society in collaboration with the Student's Social Reform Initiative decided to delve into the subversive, provoking and visionary works of Mahasweta Devi in this intellectually stimulating discussion. The works of Mahasweta Devi that were covered were mainly- Kunti and the *nishadin*, Breast giver and finally Draupadi. All of these stories dealt with the oppression and the implicit rebellion absorbed into the wide spectrum that is the caste system and femininity. The discussion was highly engaging with students drawing parallels and making critical comparisons between deep seated mythologies and its contemporary adaptations and perceptions.

Students enjoyed this event to the fullest and we were extremely happy to have such a fruitful experience and collaboration

### **Students' feedback**

" such an intellectually freeing discussion. Goo els and SSRI"

"Mahasweta Devi's work amazes and astounds me all at the same time. The hosts did a great job at conducting an extremely engaging discussion

### **Pictures From the event:**



## KADHAI-KAARAN

**Date** - 20th February, 2023

**Time** - 1:30 pm

**Venue** - Room 10

The English Literary Society successfully conducted its last event for the Academic Year 2022-23, Kadhai Kaaran, on the 20th of February, 2023. Honoring the time old tradition of oral folktales, of storytelling by word of mouth, and keeping in line with our theme, "Old Lore For An Old Soul ", this event focused on folklores. A traditional storytelling event, wherein we invited members to share folk tales, myths and stories native to their state, their family or their local culture.

Drawing inspiration from a word play on the Tamil "kathai", meaning story, and "kadaikaaran", meaning vendor, the idea behind kadai kaaran is that people are vendors of stories; and stories are the currency of our tradition.

The event was a wholesome and successful one, with people bringing several different stories from various backgrounds, and was the perfect swansong for what has been a very eventful year for ELS.

### **Pictures from the event-**

