Please read this project as follows:

- 1. This page letters to self and dialogue (doc 1)
- 2. My critical piece the letter explaining the dialogue, alongside the additional side comments (doc 2)
- 3. Finally, the **reflective bibliography** and **reflective letter to Naomi** (doc 3)

<u>"Why are they content? To fall into one category? The Pupil" (Geraint, 15 in Burke & Grosvenor,</u> 2003:11)

A reflective piece of my educational journey

This is for the students who, like me, waste countless hours worrying about their academic success.

This is for the students who never feel quite good enough but have spent years trying to prove they are anyway.

This is for the students who feel physically ill at the thought of an exam, and even more ill at the thought of not achieving an A in one.

But this is also for anyone at all. I welcome you all to engage, to perhaps think differently, or want to ask questions after reading this piece. I would like, at very least, for this piece to encourage you to reflect on what education means to you, because I am about to share what it means to me.



Hello 4-year-old Abi,

I know you can't hear me, but oh, how I wish you could. So instead, I am going to write what I wish I could tell you, if I could go back in time, and give you a message before your first day of school.



I wanted to take this chance to remind you of a few things you are good at, and that you will start to enjoy in your early years of school: playing, dancing, singing, painting, drawing, being a good friend.

I am telling you this because I know that someday, sooner than you think, you will stop thinking these things about yourself. At least, they will become **much less important**.

In 12 years, when considering which qualities you possess, you are going to think very differently.

I want you to know that this is ok, and I am in the process of trying to understand why.

Good luck out there.



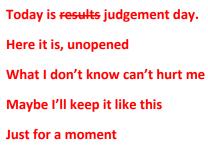
Hi 16-year-old Abi,

Oh, how I wish I could talk to you.

My desire to go back in time and talk to you on one of the scariest days of your life, is stronger than ever. GCSE results day is feared by many, but I know, that for you, it was more than just a nervy feeling in your gut. How you felt is difficult to explain.

So, I am going to let you explain it in your own way, in your own time.

Whenever you are ready.



Until my fate is decided.

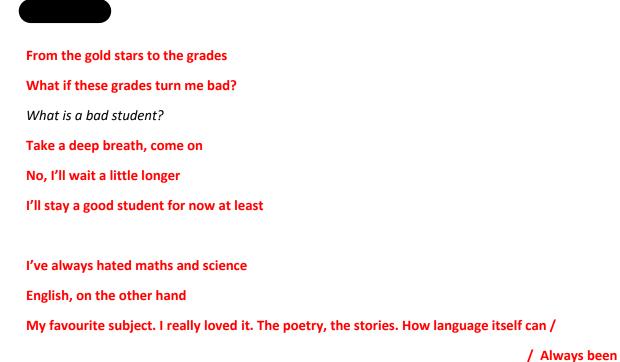
Everyone has been and gone Grasping their grades happily Many did better than they thought they would I don't think that will be me What I don't know won't hurt me

Why is it

That everyone was so eager to find out? As though what lied ahead wasn't important As though the results meant little to them What if they didn't mean everything to you? Why is it that they seemed ok Whatever the outcome?

I've been stood here 5 minutes now I'm sure I can wait a little longer What I don't know can't hurt me

Come on, try and be rational You've worked so incredibly hard Which will make it so much more painful if I've done badly What if you are allowed to be proud regardless of your academic achievement? I am a good student, at least I have been until now What is a good student?



my strongest one, too But what if What if I'm not that good after all What if an exam didn't reveal this? This piece of paper will reveal it all What if this piece of paper was nothing more than a list of letters?

Come on now, everyone has left This needs to be done at some point Just remember what everyone's been telling you If they go wrong, it doesn't matter As long as you get into college, they don't really count

Oh don't be so stupid Of course they count They count for everything What if they didn't?

Whether I'm truly as clever as my parents have always told me Whether I actually am a good writer, as my teachers have repeatedly said



What if these comments didn't determine who you are?

Whether I am a good student or not Do it There's no time like the present Why do I find it so difficult? It's just a piece of paper Ha! Good joke. You know you're lying This paper is everything This paper is the door that will open wide to your future, or slam in your face Now is the time. Face your fate.

Ok

Phew.

Wow! Well done! I was wondering if you might want to reflect on what you have learned throughout this experience of revising and sitting exams?

What I have learned?

Yes! What have you gained from this process? What do you feel you now know from all those months of dedicated work, to gain these grades?

I have gained reassurance that I am still a good student, is that what you mean?

The poetry? The stories?

Oh yeah, I got an A* for that.