



CHATHAM & CLARENDON GRAMMAR SCHOOL

Reading at CCGS

Enjoyment

We are incredibly fortunate to have our 'Hogwarts' style library which provides a lovely environment in which to lose yourself in a book. Our librarian makes sure the library is well-stocked with all the latest books and students have access to the library in designated library lessons. Students are also free to use the library every break and lunchtime to swap books, do homework or read quietly. We have reading groups throughout the school beginning with the 'Carnegie Shadowing Group' at KS3, through to KS4 and 5 where we have a reading group open to staff and students. Our library lessons are also the place where we have our lively class debates. Students use the library to read up on the topic they are going to be defending or opposing.

Building a reading habit

Like all schools, we are battling against the demands on our students' attention from the entertainment of phones and computers. Although technology may allow our students to read more, it is not necessarily challenging or building reading and concentration stamina which are skills required for advanced learning. We try to make reading a habit - but like any other good habit - it needs to be practised until it becomes part of our routine. For this reason, we provide ample opportunity for students to choose their own books and read for pleasure, but we also insist that they read at least one challenging, reading-age appropriate book per half term. We also use Accelerated Reader to quiz and check understanding.

Practising Reading Fluency

Central to our students' success is the progression from 'learning to read' to 'reading to learn'. Research into the role of fluency in secondary pupils (especially those who struggle with reading) suggests that reading accurately and fluently is an essential link between word reading and comprehension. Once pupils have mastered decoding, and can recognise words automatically, (learning to read) this frees up their working memory so they can concentrate on more complex skills of comprehension, understanding and inference (reading to learn). Our

students regularly practise their fluency and expression to help with this process. We have designated library lessons where they read aloud to each other in small groups, their teacher, our librarian and our headteacher. Less confident readers also have their 6th form reading partner present in the library lesson for 1-1 reading.

Reading h/w is set via 'Reading Progress' assignments on Teams where students can quickly see their improvement in accuracy.

Cultural Capital

There is much research from cognitive psychologists on the importance of background knowledge and vocabulary for comprehension. If there is too much content or background knowledge that is simply unknown, comprehension reaches a plateau students cannot get beyond. To make comprehension effective across the curriculum, our teachers regularly monitor understanding and reflect on what has been read. They are role models in demonstrating sophisticated vocabulary and background knowledge relevant to their subject but also across the curriculum. As parents, it is important to recognise the vital role you also play in exposing your child to background knowledge or cultural capital. This means encouraging reading at home but also ensuring your child is exposed to knowledge so they can access the curriculum more easily.

One way we help you with this is by providing a fortnightly non-fiction piece, (usually an article) that relates to topics your child is studying across the curriculum. Discussing these together at home is an effective way you can support your child's confidence and accumulation of knowledge.

