

January 2021

Dear Parents,

As you know we are very keen to support children's literacy skills at JOG and it is no different in lockdown situations.

What are we doing to support your child's literacy?

During live tutorial slots, we are continuing to do some tutorial reading and we are also aiming to set up a Freerice competition that will support the acquisition of vocabulary. To enable us to do this, your child will need to register an account by going to www.freerice.com and then join their TG by using the correct code. All codes are attached.

Live lessons will also have a focus on VIPERS reading skills where appropriate, as we would usually do in a face:face capacity. This approach helps students to focus on active reading strategies like inference, summarising and retrieval. We are also continuing to focus on the key words that teachers have identified as needing to be explicitly taught during Term 3 (although these are subject to some change where teachers have had to tweak the Curriculum because of lockdown). The key word lists for Years 7-9 are attached.

Year 7 Students can continue to take AR quizzes on books they have read. From the JoG Home page, click on Accelerated Reader and enter password (Username: Initial & surname, password: ABCD). They can also have a go at reading and quizzing on 'articles' if they'd like a challenge! Email Mrs Chester if there's a problem nchester@johnogaunt.excalibur.org.uk

If you'd like to know if a book has an Accelerated Reader Quiz, check with <https://www.arbookfind.co.uk/>
All students can also access 'The Day' online newspaper from the JoG Home page. This is an excellent resource featuring daily articles and resources linked to the Curriculum.

What can you do to support your child further?

Research suggests that on average, a typical successful secondary school student, leaves school knowing 50,000 words. Having a broad vocabulary on which to draw is vital for students to communicate effectively and to express their ideas. As you know, we are therefore following research into vocabulary instruction that suggests that explicit teaching of words, repetitive learning, and then the application of words in different contexts, helps students to retain and use them.

It would be really helpful if students could be encouraged to use the Term 3 vocabulary at home with you as a way of supporting their literacy and communication skills during lockdown. Please explore the relevant words with them, look at definitions, and encourage them to use these words where appropriate.

Motivating your child to access 'Freerice' to support their TG would also be another way for them to broaden their language.

A helpful approach to support reading even more, is to read aloud to your child and get them reading out loud to you. Perhaps one way of supporting family communication, whilst everyone has to keep apart, might be to get a grandparent and grandchild reading together over zoom (or another video platform!). They can share what they think of their 'joint' book.

Audiobooks can also be really powerful like this 'Mr Gum' book read by the author Andy Stanton <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2DVZbffc2oM> (good for Year 7). Michael Rosen reading his poetry will amuse year 7/8 students - <https://www.youtube.com/user/artificedesign>

For those Year 7s who do 'NESSY' at school to support spelling, NESSY accounts can be accessed at home. You just need to go to www.nessy.com/uk and they type in their usual username and password. If you are a parent of a Year 7, please encourage them to read using Accelerated Reader.

Free Resources:

Join your local library online, for free, where you can download eBooks and magazines to read, here <https://info.westberks.gov.uk/libraries>

Oak National Academy have now set up a Virtual Online Library - Every week a popular children's author or illustrator will provide you with free books, exclusive videos and their top three recommended reads. <https://library.thenational.academy/>

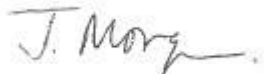
Penguin Talks is a programme of free, creative talks for young people from influential figures, thinkers and writers including Michelle Obama, Stormzy, Saoirse Ronan, Gareth Southgate and more. <https://www.penguin.co.uk/company/creative-responsibility/penguin-talks.html>

Reading charity Book Trust has got a whole host of resources linked to reading: <https://www.booktrust.org.uk/>

You could also take a look at our Covid 19 Useful Information and Resources page, which has further guidance on how you can support your child with reading and home learning: [Useful information and resources - John O'Gaunt School](#)

We will continue to do as much as we can to support Literacy during remote learning.

Yours sincerely



Jay Morgan
Assistant Vice Principal – Teaching & Learning/CPD

[Year 7 Vocabulary List – Term 3](#)

[Year 8 Vocabulary List – Term 3](#)

[Year 9 Vocabulary List – Term 3](#)