

2nd March 2021

Dear Parents/Guardians,

Reading is POWER!

World Book Day is on Thursday 4th March and this is another opportunity for JoG to:

- a) celebrate the joy of reading;
- b) galvanise students with some shared experiences, albeit remotely.

However, one day where we focus on the power and pleasure of reading is not enough. We want to develop the reading culture at JoG so this 'gift' is something everyone values and feels connected to.

We know that there are many benefits to reading and, specifically, reading for pleasure. Here are a few facts that the research tells us, as published by the DfE:

The evidence on reading for pleasure

Benefits of reading for pleasure:

- There is a growing body of evidence which illustrates the importance of reading for pleasure for both educational purposes as well as personal development (cited in Clark and Rumbold, 2006).
- Evidence suggests that there is a positive relationship between reading frequency, reading enjoyment and attainment (Clark 2011; Clark and Douglas 2011).
- Reading enjoyment has been reported as more important for children's educational success than their family's socio-economic status (OECD, 2002).
- There is a positive link between positive attitudes towards reading and scoring well on reading assessments (Twist et al, 2007).
- Regularly reading stories or novels outside of school is associated with higher scores in reading assessments (PIRLS, 2006; PISA, 2009).
- International evidence supports these findings; US research reports that independent reading is the best predictor of reading achievement (Anderson, Wilson and Fielding, 1988).
- Evidence suggests that reading for pleasure is an activity that has emotional and social consequences (Clark and Rumbold, 2006).
- Other benefits to reading for pleasure include: text comprehension and grammar, positive reading attitudes, pleasure in reading in later life, increased general knowledge (Clark and Rumbold, 2006).

What are we doing to foster a love of reading at JoG?

Tutorial Reading Programme

At JoG, we have established our Tutorial Reading Programme this year which has continued throughout lockdown to great success, and this is a key way we promote the love of reading. Research tells us that reading aloud challenging texts (those that are above their actual reading capability when reading independently), increases students' understanding of complex syntax, vocabulary and ideas.

NEW! Reading Cloud Online Platform

We are also very excited to announce that we are launching a new online eReading platform called 'Reading Cloud.' Reading Cloud is our new, interactive, online Library, linked to our lovely, well-stocked physical one. Students can access it, through our Teams Portal, with their existing school email and login. Here, they will be able to see what books they have borrowed (and which need returning). They will be able to search for and reserve books, as well as linked articles, write reviews of books they have read and generally keep in touch with the Library and Librarian, Mrs Chester. Here, under 'Links', students will also find our eResources, *The Day* online news, debate and curriculum portal and eChalk. Do have an explore of these great resources! Here, too (and most excitingly) is Wheelers eBooks. You will find a range of eBooks AND eAudio books to borrow. You can then read them on your computer or by downloading the App onto your phone or other device.

There will be more information and guidance on all of this over the next few weeks, as well as reminders – and more available on the site as we get to grips with it together (reading lists etc) but for now, just have an explore, borrow, reserve, listen and read! Contact Mrs Chester with any queries.

To find The Reading Cloud: from Teams, click on the Sharepoint, Jog Home PH, and the Reading Cloud tile. Login with your normal school email and password. When you click on 'Links', you will get a warning that this is an 'external resource', click OK, this is fine. For the eBook App, find ePlatform Wheelers, click on John O'Gaunt School from the dropdown list, & login with your normal school details. Have fun exploring!

World Book Day 2021 – Thursday 4th March

Linked to 'World Book Day 2021' specifically we are also:

- asking all staff to spend a portion of live lessons reading aloud to students. This will be from a book (or poetry anthology or non-fiction text) that they have enjoyed or that they think the students might be interested in;
- Progress Leads and Tutors will be doing a range of assemblies and tutorial activities focused on the power of books, reading and sharing the joy of it!
- On Thursday, there will be a 'Masked Reader' quiz that all tutees can have a go at which will also promote our Staff as readers and flag up some potential books for investigation...

There are also some other things going on leading up to, and on, WBD:

- a poetry workshop for Years 10 and 11, run by Mrs Chester and Mrs Morgan linked to the performance poet Sophia Thakur and Hampshire Poetry Slam;
- Mrs Quigley and the English Department have organised some WBD related activities that will be running with KS3 English classes;
- new 'Reading is POWER' channels have been set up in Year group TEAMS so that book recommendations can be put on there, tailored to age groups.

However, it is worth reiterating that World Book Day 2021 is just one day; we want to go beyond this and use this as the catalyst for really embracing a positive culture of reading at JOG. It is central to our curriculum intent, and central to the success of our students.

How can you support us to instil a love of reading in your child?

- Apply the evidence around reading aloud challenging texts at home – reading aloud to your child doesn't need to stop at Primary School. It would be fantastic if you could replicate what we are doing with our Tutorial Reading Programme and find some opportunities to read to your child. This will support our endeavours and show your child that you take reading seriously and that you are a reader too! This article by


world-renowned educator Doug Lemov puts forward a compelling case in this article here:


<http://teachlikeachampion.com/wp-content/uploads/Reading-Aloud.TES.Lemov.pdf>


- Engineer shared reading experiences. Encourage your older children to read aloud to your younger children or to read to a grandparent (via an online platform!). Encourage them to record a story to send to a relative who might appreciate this contact or have a shared 'book experience' with your child where you both read the same book and talk about what is happening in it. Sharing the reading experience can be doubly enjoyable!
- There is some evidence to suggest that just putting the subtitles on TV programmes can support your child to strengthen their reading skill, and therefore support their reading will, without them even really being aware of this. It also fosters vocabulary acquisition.
- Join your local library.
- Have a look at the JoG Approach to Active Reading and our use of VIPERS – there is a video explaining this on the website, on our 'Literacy and Communication' tab under Curriculum: <http://www.johnogauntschool.co.uk/241/literacy-and-communication>
- Actively explore 'Reading Cloud' and 'The Day' with your child – know what they are reading and help them to take full advantage of this incredible resource!
- There are lots more tips on the DfE website here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/10-top-tips-to-encourage-children-to-read/10-top-tips-to-encourage-children-to-read>
- Use the Guidance from the Education Endowment Foundation:


7 Top Tips to Support Reading at Home


Shared reading is a great way to develop children's language and communication and to boost their reading skills. Regular reading routines can offer lots of opportunities for learning during school closures.


- 1 Concentrate on reading quality (it isn't all about reading lots!)**



Don't worry too much about the 'what' and 'how' of reading each day. Books are great—but leaflets, comics, recipes and instructions on a webpage can all be great too. Following a recipe to make some cupcakes is valuable reading. Be on the lookout for reading, wherever it is!
- 2 Ask your child lots of questions**


All reading matters. Shared reading is about 'reading with', not just 'reading to' (even for older children). So, ask lots of 'Wh' questions, such as Who? What? When? Where? Why? Try them when talking about books: for example, 'what do you think Harry is feeling?'
- 3 Ask your child to make predictions about what they have read**


If it is a book, look at the front cover—or the last chapter—and talk about what might happen next. Look for clues in the book and be a reading detective! For example, 'can you see the bear on the front cover? Where do you think he will go?'
- 4 Ask your child to summarise what they have read**


When you've finished reading, talk about what happened. Acting out the things that happened in the story or describing the big idea of a chapter is really fun and maximises learning. For example, 'can you remember all the things that happened on the bear hunt?'
- 5 Ask your child to write about what they have read**


Write, or draw pictures, from anything you've read! Big writing and pictures are even more fun. For example, use an old roll of wallpaper to make a treasure map with clues from the stories you've read together.
- 6 Read and discuss reading with friends or family**


Make books a part of the family. Encourage your child to share them with a relative or friend, over a video call. Laugh about them when you are making meals together. For example, 'I hope the tiger doesn't come to tea today!'
- 7 Maintain the motivation to read**


Talk about the joy of reading whenever you can. Your child is on an amazing journey to becoming a reader. Put them in the driving seat and have fun on the way! For example, 'choose your favourite story for bedtime tonight.'

<https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/public/files/Publications/Covid-19 Resources/Resources for schools/7 Top Tips to Support Reading at Home.pdf>



There is no doubt that reading 'skill' and reading 'will' supports academic success. As the writer Kate DiCamillo is often quoted as saying: 'Reading should not be presented to children as a chore or a duty. It should be offered to them as a precious gift.' Frequent, daily reading, with enthusiastic support from school and home is the key to help our children understand the benefits and joy of reading, so that they see themselves as readers.

Lockdown has been hard on all of us but we hear that sales of books are skyrocketing...perhaps this is one massive positive that we might take from the experience? Reading, and time to read for oneself and with others, is something to be fostered and treasured.

Best wishes and happy reading!



Mrs J Morgan
Assistant Vice Principal – Teaching and Learning

