Reading for pleasure
Ms Griffiths

CHESSINGTON
SCHOOL

Everyone valued • Every day an opportunity • Every moment focused on success

Research evidence on reading for pleasure

Education standards research team

May 2012

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).

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).

The importance of reading for pleasure

CHESSINGTON SCHOOL

Our previous research shows reading for pleasure can support reading, and wider **literacy, skills**, wellbeing, **empathy**, confidence and aptitude for learning. In fact, our 2024 research showed that twice as many children and young people who enjoy reading in their free time had above average reading skills than children who don’t enjoy it (34.2% vs 15.7%).

National Literacy Trust

Change your story

The importance of reading for pleasure

CHESSINGTON SCHOOL

Using longitudinal census data to look at more than 43,000 students, aged 10 to 11 and then again when they were 13 to 14, the research provides substantial evidence that pupils who enjoy reading high-quality books daily score higher in tests.

UCL

UCL Institute of Education

What does this mean for your children?

CHESSINGTON SCHOOL

- Test scores (exam results) open doors of opportunity.
- Reading builds cultural capital required to access many A Levels.
- Reading builds empathy

However…

CHESSINGTON SCHOOL

Reading enjoyment:

In 2025, the percentage of children and young people who told us they enjoyed reading was its lowest in 20 years.

- Just 1 in 3 (32.7%) children and young people aged 8 to 18 said that they enjoyed reading in their free time in 2025. This marks a 36% decrease in reading enjoyment levels since we started asking about this in 2005.

National Literacy Trust

Change your story

- The drop in reading enjoyment over the last year has been especially steep among primary-aged children and boys, particularly boys aged 11 to 16.

The National Literacy Trust

CHESSINGTON SCHOOL

Reading frequency:

- Fewer than 1 in 5 (18.7%) 8- to 18-year-olds told us that they read something daily in their free time in 2025, again, the lowest levels we've recorded, with daily reading levels decreasing by nearly 20 percentage points since 2005.

Reading at school

CHESSINGTON SCHOOL

- Accelerated Reader (Year 7 & 8)
- Guided reading in tutor time (Years 7, 8 & 9)
- Thousands of brilliant books in our library
- Subject specific vocabulary in lessons

Guided reading

What is it?

- Students and their tutor all read the same book together
- The teacher leads the majority of the reading to keep the pace of the story
- Students are asked to read small amounts
- The teacher will check for understanding verbally with tricky words and with the plot

Guided reading

Why?

- For the love of a good story/to encourage students to read for pleasure
- To increase students' exposure to vocabulary
- To improve reading fluency - the more students see certain words, the faster they can read them - they become automated (like driving a car)

Guided reading

CHESSINGTON SCHOOL

Year 8

8FSF	Groosham Grange by Anthony Horowitz
8LAE	Millions by Frank Cottrell Boyce
8MWS	The Hunger Games by Suzanne Collins
8JHH	Private Peaceful by Michael Morpurgo

Guided reading

CHESSINGTON SCHOOL

Year 9

9CMU	A Good Girl's Guide to Murder by Holly Jackson
9SMY	The Hunger Games by Suzanne Collins
9BCE	The Boy in Striped Pyjamas by John Boyne
9JAN	Private Peaceful by Michael Morpurgo
9CCE	A Good Girl's Guide to Murder by Holly Jackson

Reading at home

CHESSINGTON SCHOOL

- Ideally at least 1 hour per week without the distraction of a phone (before bed?)
- Start with 15 mins a day?

Reluctant readers…?

CHESSINGTON SCHOOL

- The drop in reading enjoyment over the last year has been especially steep among primary-aged children and boys, particularly boys aged 11 to 16.

Reluctant readers…?

CHESSINGTON SCHOOL

Audiobooks - absolutely fine

Can your children read and listen to the text?

Audiobooks help with oracy and intonation

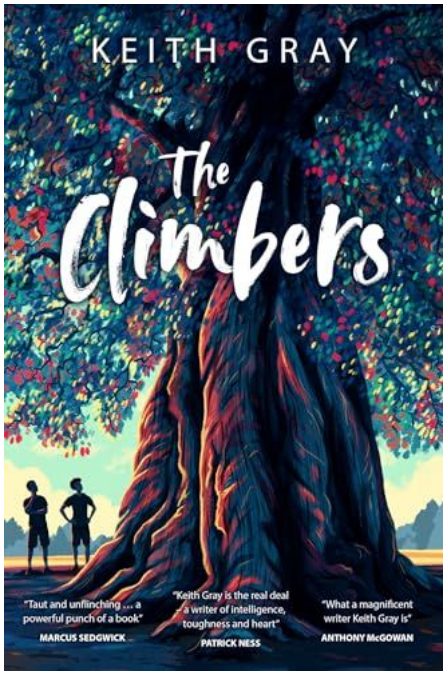
Listening enjoyment and behaviours

- 1 in 4 (25.4%) children and young people are listening to audiobooks, with 1 in 8 (12.8%) listening to just audiobooks and a further 1 in 8 (12.6%) listening to both audiobooks and podcasts.
- Of those who listen to audiobooks, 2 in 5 (44.5%) children and young people said that listening to an audiobook or podcast has got them interested in reading books.

Reluctant readers…?

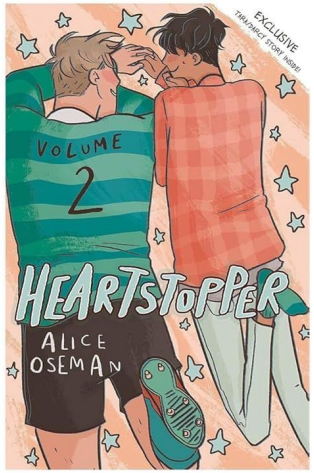
CHESSINGTON SCHOOL

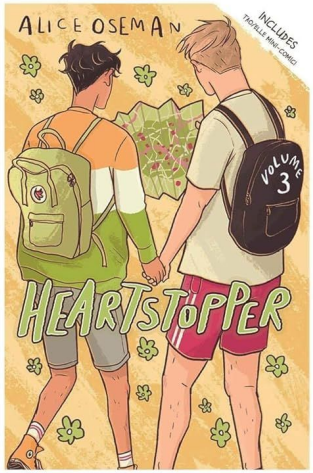
Super readable rollercoaster series - easier to digest vocabulary for teenage interest levels - available in our library

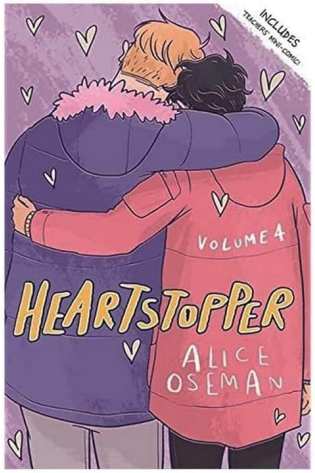


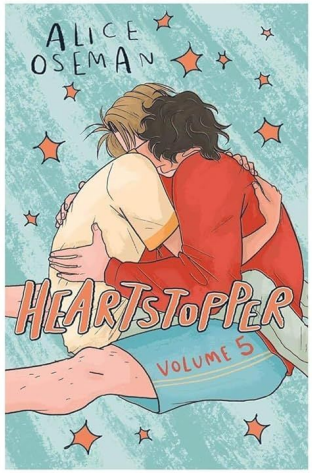
Reluctant readers…?

Comics and graphic novels





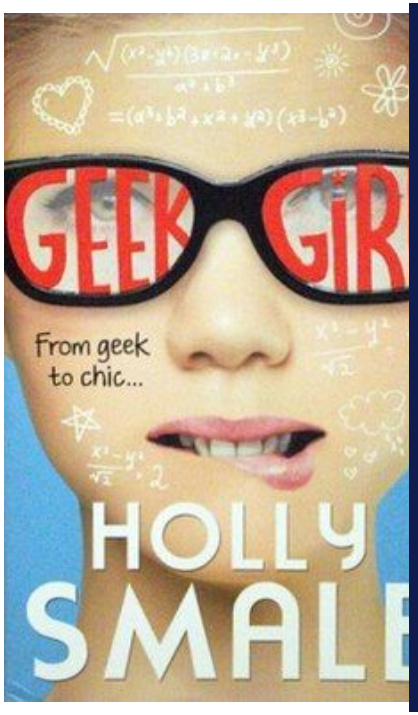


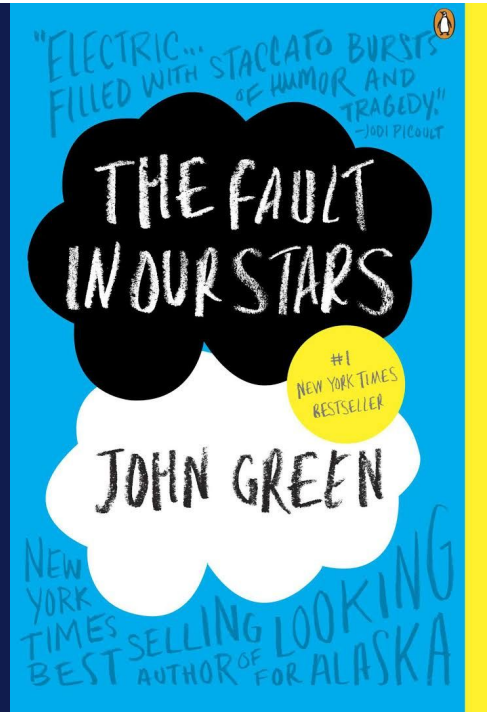


Reluctant readers…?

CHESSINGTON SCHOOL

Books that have been made into popular TV series/films

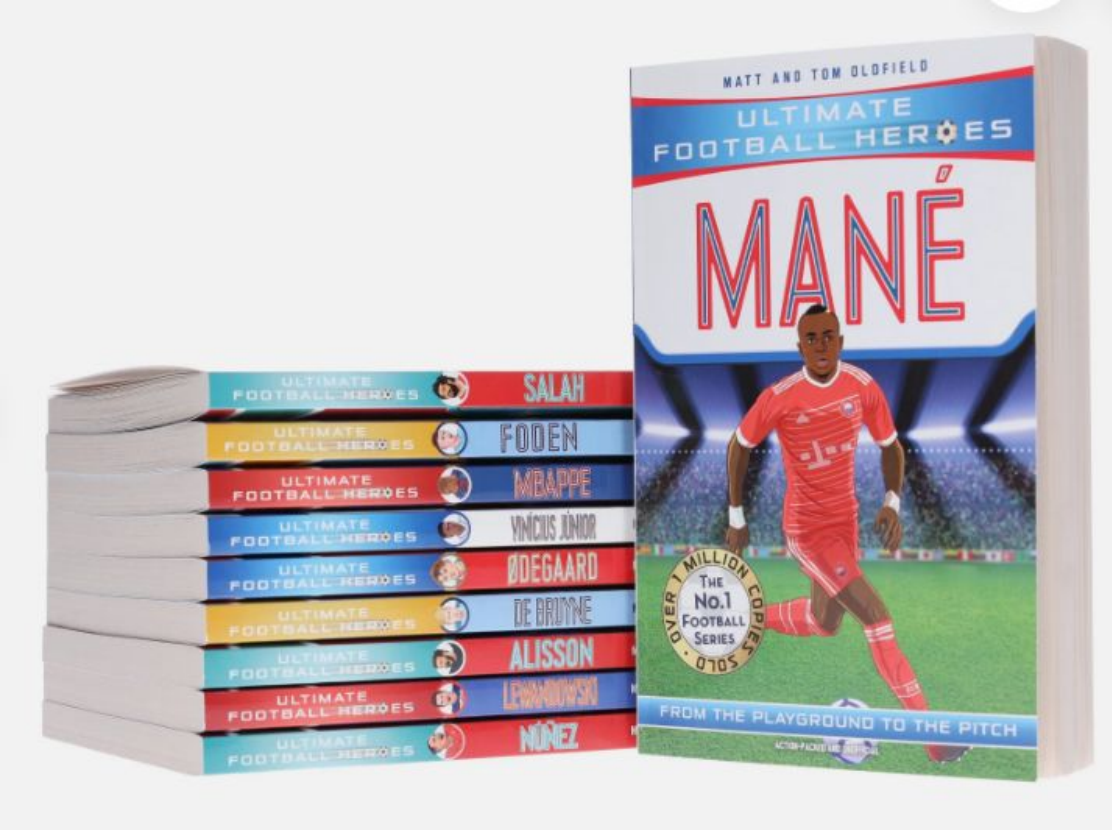




Reluctant readers…?

CHESSINGTON SCHOOL

Books about specific interests (non-fiction - fine!)



Reluctant readers…?

CHESSINGTON SCHOOL

Continue to read to your child where you can.

Read the book together.

Reluctant readers…?

CHESSINGTON SCHOOL

The most important person is Mr Ashton if you would like book recommendations

jashton@chessington.kingston.sch.uk

And he has made recommended reads sheets for Year 7, 8, 9