Reading For Pleasure
Mrs Stallard

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

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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

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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 Institute of Education

What does this mean for your children?

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

In 2025 …

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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.

Now in 2026 …

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Key findings

Reading enjoyment rose in 2026 after four years of decline

- More than 1 in 3 (36.1%) children and young people said they enjoyed reading in their free time, up from 32.7% in 2025.
    - This is the first increase in reading enjoyment since 2021.
- Enjoyment increased for both boys and girls and across all age groups, with the largest rises in those aged 14 to 16 and 16 to 18.

National Literacy Trust

Change your story

Daily reading also increased slightly in 2026

- In 2026, 1 in 5 (20.3%) children and young people aged 8 to 18 said they read daily in their free time, up from 18.7% in 2025.
    - This marks the first increase in daily reading since 2023, although levels remain below earlier years.
- Daily reading increased across all age groups, particularly among those aged 14 to 16 and 16 to 18.

Reading at 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?

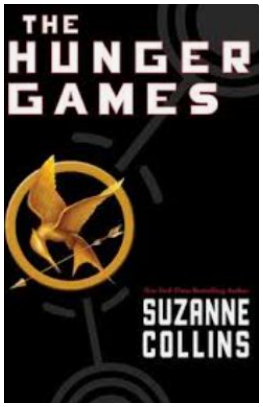
- For the love of a good story/to encourage students to read for pleasure
- To increase students' exposure to vocabulary
- To improve reading fluency - the more students see certain words, the faster they can read them - they become automated (like driving a car)

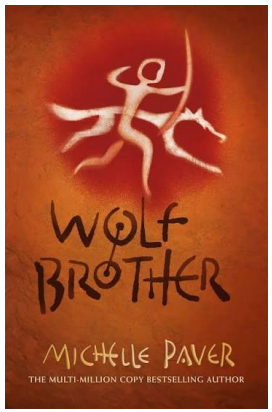
Guided reading

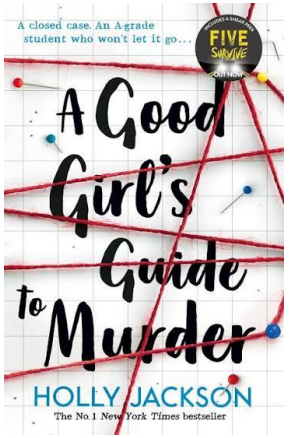
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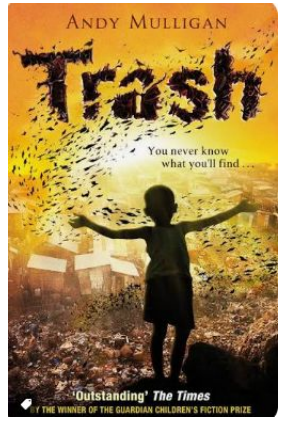
Year 8

Form	Book
8MIE	Hunger Games by Suzanne Collins
8GSO	Wolf Brother by Michelle Paver
8EWI	A Good Girl's Guide to Murder by Holly Jackson
8EGE	Trash by Andy Mulligan









Reading at home

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

- Reading before bed may help you relax, fall asleep more easily, and sleep longer.
- Making reading part of a consistent bedtime routine can help signal to your body and brain tha it's time to wind down.
- Printed books may be better for sleep than e-books, since light from electronic devices can interfere with melatonin production.
- Choose books you find relaxing rather than exciting or stressful enough to keep you awake past bedtime.



Dustin Cotliar, MD, MPH
Board-Certified Emergency Medicine Physician

Reluctant readers…?

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Reading still matters even when enjoyment is low

- More children and young people who enjoyed reading read daily than those who did not enjoy reading (49.8% vs 4.5%). The relationship became stronger with age, with reading enjoyment and frequency more closely aligned among older age groups.

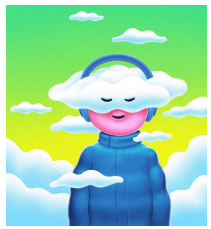
Reluctant readers…?

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.

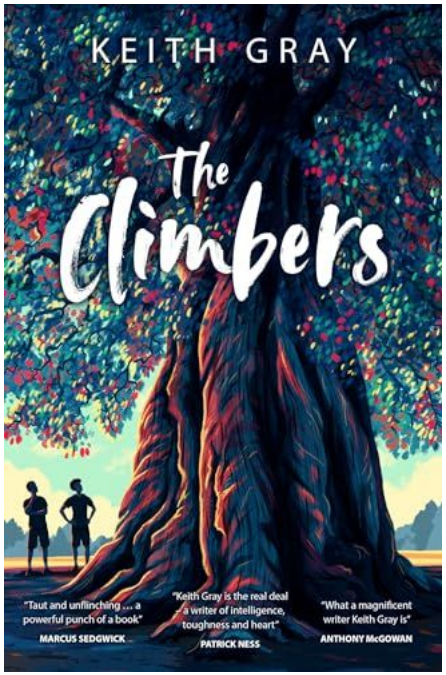


Reluctant readers…?

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



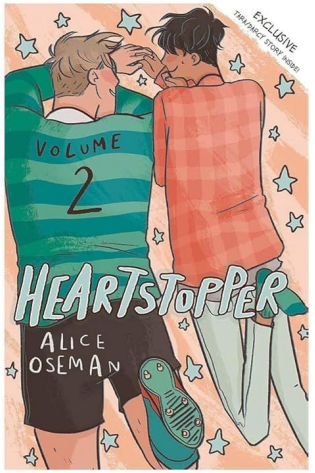


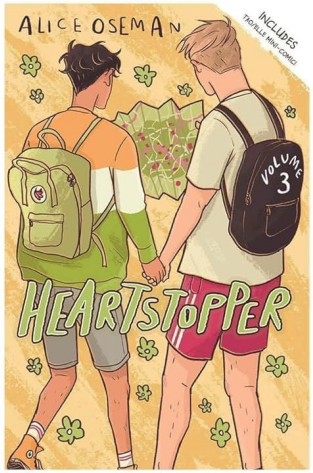
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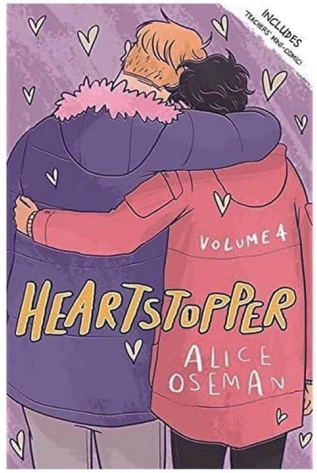
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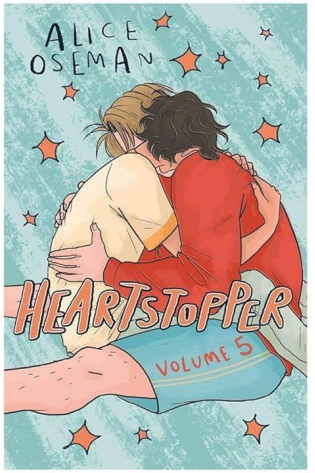
Comics and graphic novels







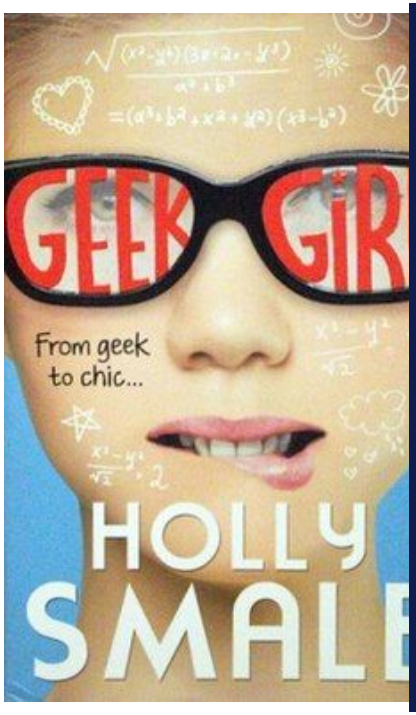




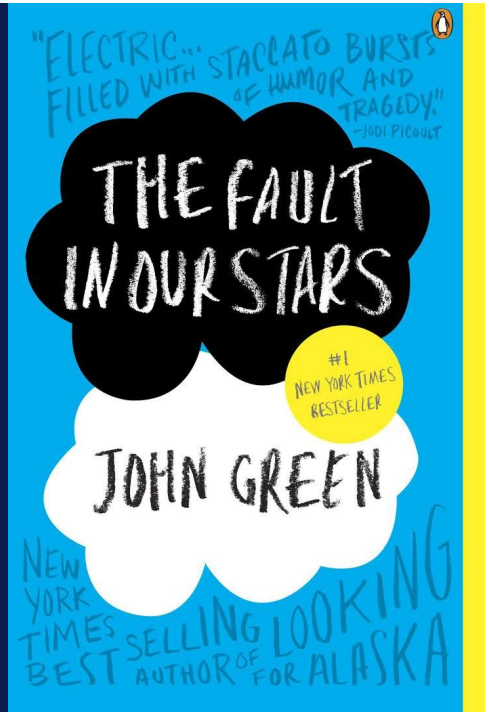
Reluctant readers…?

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Books that have been made into popular TV series/films





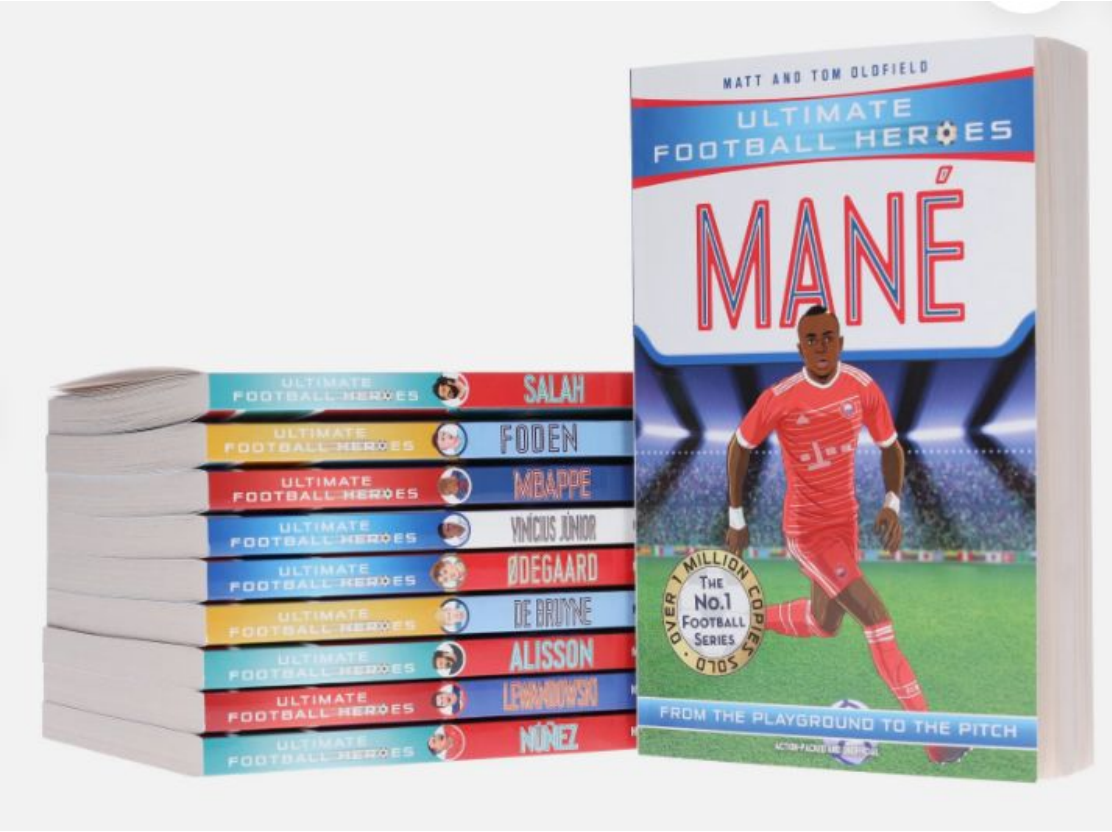




Reluctant readers…?

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



Reluctant readers…?

The most important person is Miss Henderson if you would like book recommendations

fhenderson@chessington.kingston.sch.uk

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