

Reading Matters – St. Mary's Middle Reading and Literacy Newsletter Autumn 2023 #1

We would love to have some parental help hearing readers in school. If you are interested, please contact the school office.

A new year at St. Mary's C.E. Middle School!

Welcome! Reading is a core focus for here at St. Mary's C.E. Middle School, and we will be involving your children in lots of exciting reading-focused activities, welcoming visiting authors into school, offering book clubs, creating Reading Ambassadors within each class, World Book Day, World Poetry Day, and many more.

Reading can be a wonderful escape in times of stress. Reading for as little as 6 minutes can reduce stress by 60%, slow your heart beat, ease muscle tension and alter your state of mind.

Why does reading matter? Why can't I skip my 20 minutes of reading tonight?

If a child reads for 1 minute a day, they will have read about **8000 words in a year.**

If they read for 5 minutes a day, they will read about **282,000 words in a year.**

If they read for 20 minutes a day, they will read **1,800,000 words in a year.**

Reading increases a child's 'vocabulary hoard'. This equips them with the language they need to express themselves clearly in any subject and throughout their life. Plus, reading improves your child's writing enormously.

This year, we are asking parents and guardians to hear their child read aloud (even if they are in Year 8) for a minimum of 3 times a week to build fluency and so that you can correct mispronunciations.

Please sign and date in their *GWB* to say you have heard them read, and write a brief note about fluency, words which they found difficult, etc.

Your involvement in their learning journey is very much appreciated.

Exciting news!

Blue Peter has unveiled a new Book badge, designed by one of the UK's best-known illustrators, Sir Quentin Blake.

The Blue Peter Book badge will be awarded to children aged 5-15 who send in their thoughts to Blue Peter on a book, draw a character or scene and share which other books and writers they love. **We would love to see some of our pupils earning a Blue Peter Book Badge.** They would of course be able to wear the badge on their school uniform!

Additionally, in partnership with The Reading Agency, an expert panel of librarians, booksellers and children in library sessions, Blue Peter have chosen a list of Book Club recommended reads from awesome authors and fantastic illustrators. These are:

'Finding Her Feet' by Eve Ainsworth and illustrated by Luna Valentine

'The Christmas Carrolls' by Mel Taylor-Bessent and illustrated by Selom Sunu

'Juniper Mae: Knight of Tykotech City' written and illustrated by Sarah Soh (Flying Eye, Nobrow)

'Poems Aloud: an anthology of poems to read out loud' by Joseph Coelho and illustrated by Daniel Gray-Barnett.

'Am I Made of Stardust?' by Dr Maggie Aderin-Pocock and illustrated by Chelen Ecija

'Michael the Amazing Mind-Reading Sausage Dog' by Terrie Chilvers and illustrated by Tim Budgen

Joke:

Yesterday a book fell on my head...

Well, I only have my shelf to blame!

Accelerated Reader

At St. Mary's C.E. Middle School we use a reading programme called **Accelerated Reader**.

Its purpose is to ensure that the books your child is choosing are within their reading ability but challenging enough to improve their reading and vocabulary levels.

They will shortly be taking a Star Reading Quiz at school, which is a reactive reading test. The answer to each question will result in a harder or easier next question, to accurately determine their reading age.

More detailed information on Accelerated Reader will be coming home shortly.

You child may take up to three books out of our school library at any time. The other two books do not have to be within their ZPD colour, but the reading book they bring to school should be their ZPD colour book.

At the end of every book they read, they are asked to log on and take a quiz on the book. If they are in Year 5 or new to the school, your child will shortly be given their log-in details. Good scores on these quizzes will raise their ZPD score and allow them to take out books in a different colour. They should take these quizzes soon after finishing the book - within two days at most. They can log in at school and take the Accelerate reader quiz or do it at home.

Happy Reading! Mrs. Monro - KS2 English Subject Lead