



**Brighton Hill
Community
School**

Making success inevitable

Literacy across the Curriculum

Parent Collaboration Meeting 4th December 2023

Our Literacy action strands:

- Disciplinary literacy is incorporated into subject curricula through the developing use of authentic, academic texts, targeted vocabulary instruction and explicit development of oracy skills.
 - Staff are aware of the term 'disciplinary literacy' and how to promote it in their individual subject areas
 - Each subject curriculum contains at least one authentic disciplinary text per year group per term as a minimum.
 - All challenging texts include literacy-based tasks to support student understanding
 - **Targeted vocabulary instruction is provided in each module of the curriculum**
 - **Termly explicit opportunities are provided for structured talk to develop oracy skills**
- **Consistent and robust literacy tutor reading programme.**
- **Reading interventions**



Why these strands?

IMPROVING LITERACY IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS

Summary of recommendations

1

Prioritise 'disciplinary literacy' across the curriculum



- Literacy is key to learning across all subjects in secondary school and a strong predictor of outcomes in later life.
- Disciplinary literacy is an approach to improving literacy across the curriculum that emphasises the importance of subject specific support.
- All teachers should be supported to understand how to teach students to read, write and communicate effectively in their subjects.
- School leaders can help teachers by ensuring training related to literacy prioritises subject specificity over general approaches.

2

Provide targeted vocabulary instruction in every subject



- Teachers in every subject should provide explicit vocabulary instruction to help students access and use academic language.
- Effective approaches, including those related to etymology and morphology, will help students remember new words and make connections between words.
- Teachers should prioritise teaching Tier 2 and 3 vocabulary, which students are unlikely to encounter in everyday speech.
- Teachers and subject leaders should consider which words and phrases to teach as part of curriculum planning.

3

Develop students' ability to read complex academic texts



- Training focused on teaching reading is likely to help secondary school teachers teach their subject more effectively.
- To comprehend complex texts, students need to actively engage with what they are reading and use their existing subject knowledge.
- Reading strategies, such as activating prior knowledge, prediction and questioning can improve students' comprehension.
- Strategies can be introduced through modelling and group work, before support is gradually removed to promote independence.

4

Break down complex writing tasks



- Writing is challenging and students in every subject will benefit from explicit instruction in how to improve.
- Teachers can break writing down into planning, monitoring and evaluation, and can support students by modelling each step.
- Targeted support should be provided to students who struggle to write fluently, as this may affect writing quality.
- Teachers can use a variety of approaches, including collaborative and paired writing, to motivate students to write.

5

Combine writing instruction with reading in every subject



- Combining reading activities and writing instruction is likely to improve students' skills in both, compared to a less balanced approach.
- Reading helps students gain knowledge, which leads to better writing, whilst writing can deepen students' understanding of ideas.
- Students should be taught to recognise features, aims and conventions of good writing within each subject.
- Teaching spelling, grammar and punctuation explicitly can improve students' writing, particularly when focused on meaning.

6

Provide opportunities for structured talk



- Talk matters: both in its own right and because of its impact on other aspects of learning.
- High quality talk is typically well-structured and guided by teachers.
- Accountable talk is a useful framework to ensure talk is high quality, and emphasises how talk can be subject specific.
- Teachers can support students by modelling high quality talk, for example including key vocabulary and metacognitive reflection.

7

Provide high quality literacy interventions for struggling students



- Schools should expect and proactively plan to support students with the weakest levels of literacy, particularly in Year 7.
- Developing a model of tiered support, which increases in intensity in line with need is a promising approach.
- Assessment should be used to match students to appropriate types of intervention, and to monitor the impact of interventions.
- Creating a co-ordinated system of support is a significant challenge requiring both specialist input and whole school leadership.

Our current literacy focus areas:

Vocabulary
and word
consciousness

Oracy
development

Tutor
Reading
Programme

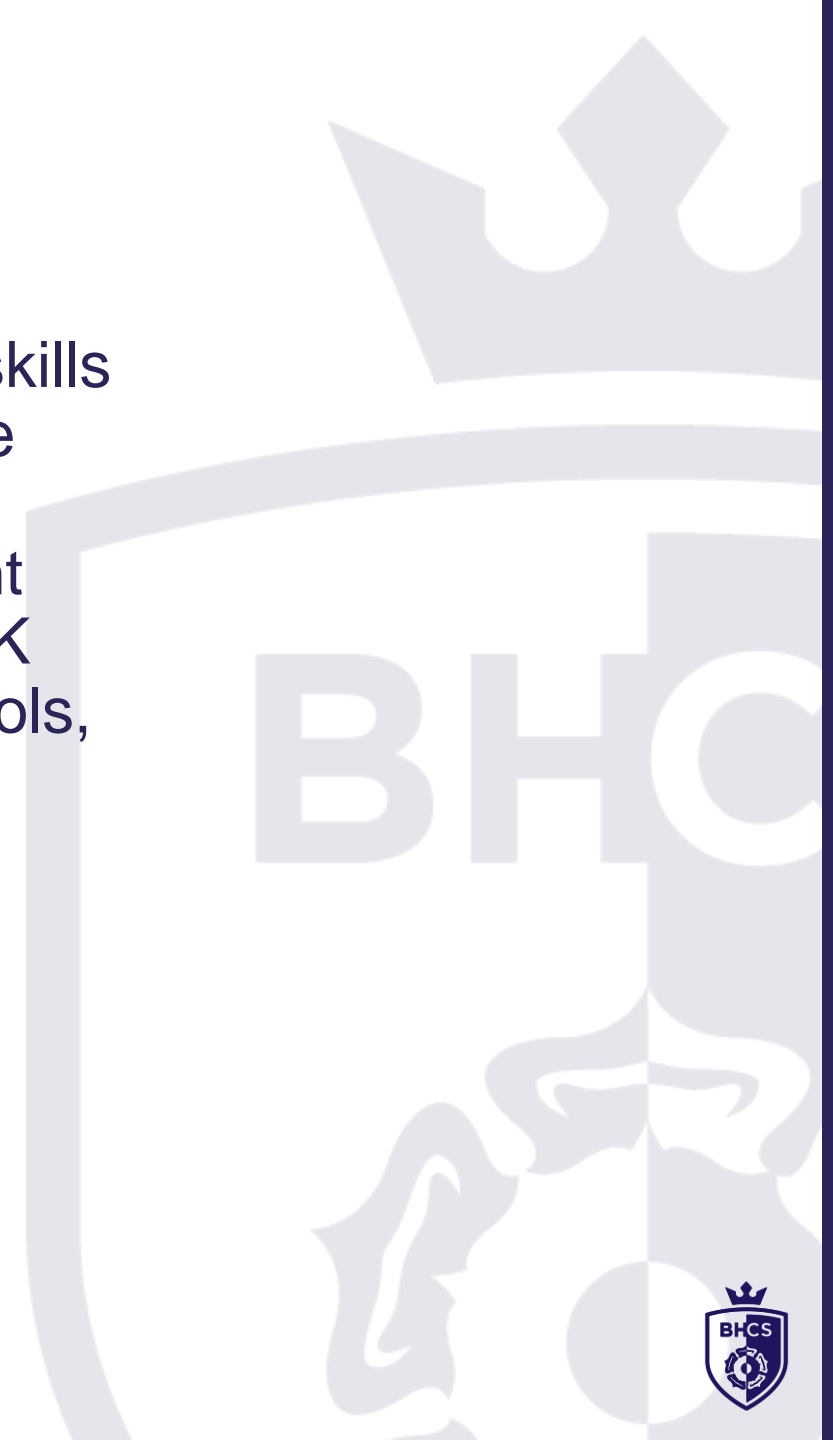
Reading
interventions

We are currently in Year 3 of our three year action plan; these are the key strands we are focussing on developing this year.

Why is Literacy important?

Young people who leave school without good literacy skills are held back at every stage of life. Their outcomes are poorer on almost every measure, from health and wellbeing, to employment and finance. The most recent estimates suggest that low levels of literacy cost the UK economy at least £20 billion a year. In secondary schools, the challenge of improving literacy is fundamental.

EEF (2018)



Why is Literacy important?

The habitual act of **'learning to read'**, and going on to **'read to learn'**, is an ever-present part of school life...

For those pupils who lack reading skill, being confronted with reading failures so frequently is a sure-fire way to diminish their enjoyment of and will to engage in school.

Alex Quigley (2020)



Why is Literacy important?

Vocabulary size is a convenient proxy for a whole range of educational attainment abilities – not just skills in reading, writing, listening and speaking but also general knowledge of science, history and the arts... **KNOWING MORE WORDS MAKES YOU SMARTER!**

Ofsted (2018)



Disciplinary Literacy

We support students understanding and development of literacy across all subjects.

Disciplinary Literacy is simply how we consider the very different approach each subject needs to take to Literacy due to unique demands of each subject.

Last year we continued our development on ensuring we are explicitly teaching students subject-specific vocabulary. Additionally, we have supported staff with their knowledge of disciplinary literacy across their subject.



What each faculty does:

Disciplinary literacy is incorporated into subject curricula through the developing use of authentic, academic texts, targeted vocabulary instruction and explicit development of oracy skills.

- At least one authentic disciplinary text with literacy-based tasks to support student understanding per term.
- ALL challenging texts to include literacy-based tasks to support student understanding
- Targeted vocabulary instruction
- Structured talk/oracy opportunities – at least once per term



What this might look like across the school – e.g. in Science:

Our Science faculty have literacy-specific lessons to introduce key vocabulary and concepts.

They start with introducing the title of an article, asking students to make a prediction.

They link, where possible, to etymology (word roots), to give students the tools to unpick complex scientific language.

Following this, they use questions and images to secure understanding of a text and concept.

Here are some sample slides:

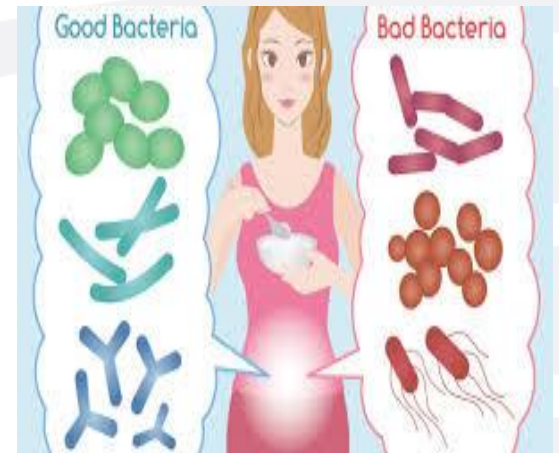


Silent starter: Pre-reading activity.

We will be reading an article called ‘**How do microbes shape fruit fly fitness?**’

Look at the picture and discuss what you think the article is about?

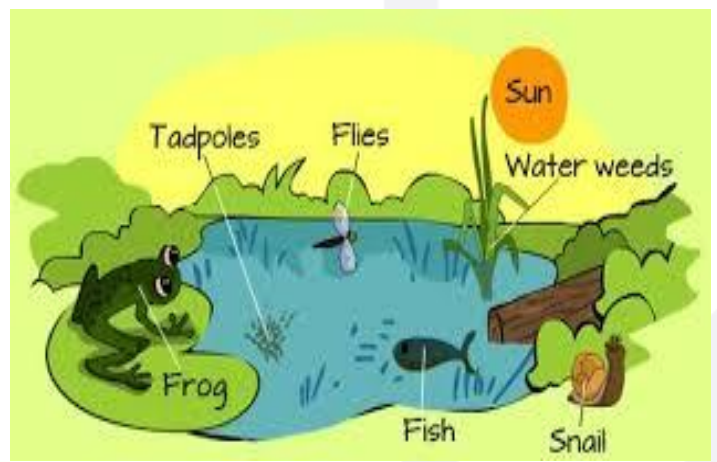
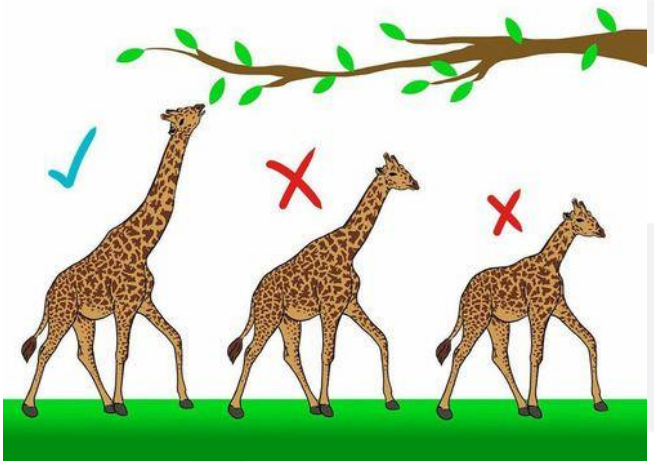
How does the picture make you feel?



Question time:

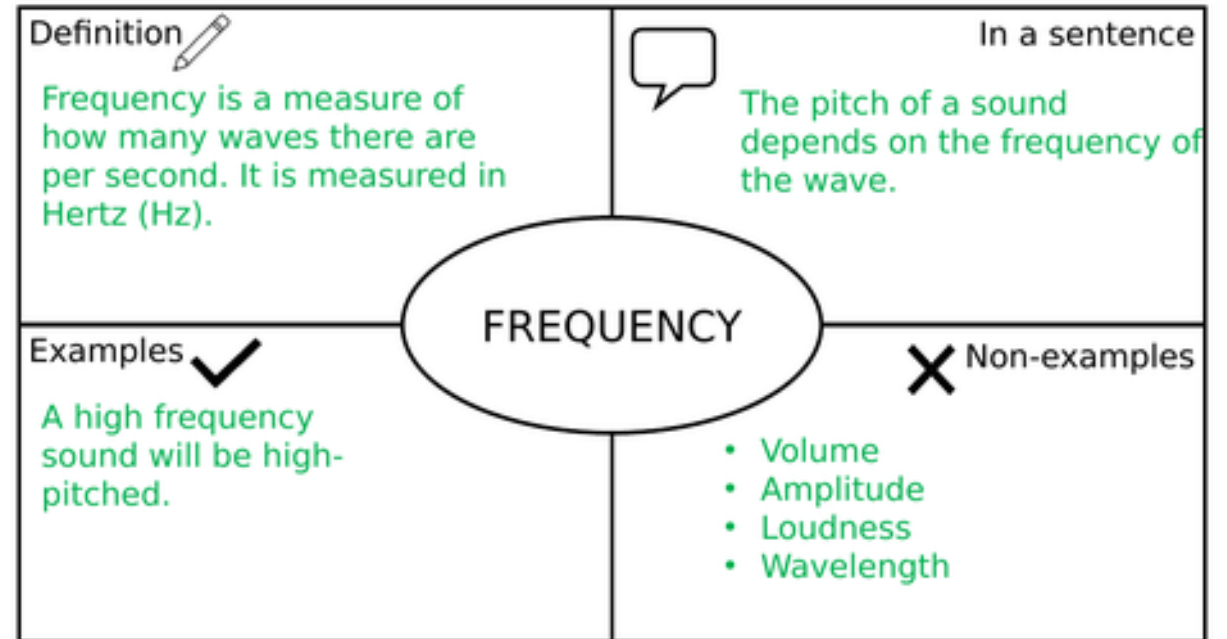
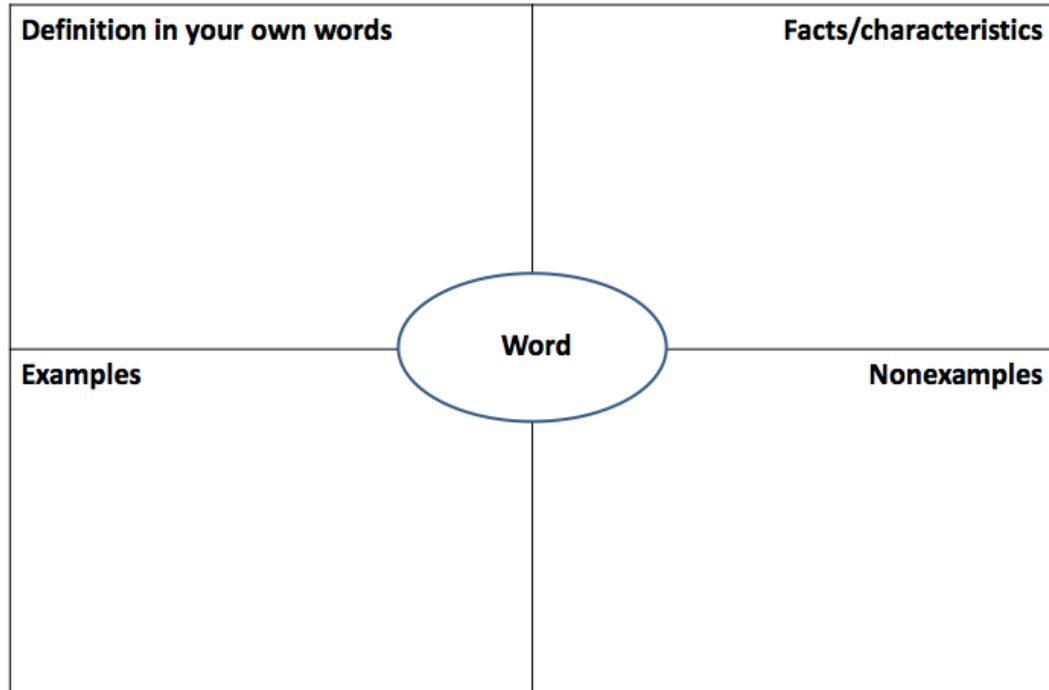
1. What is biological fitness? Why is it important?
2. Why did the scientists use a model organism to study the impact of the gut microbiome on its host's fitness traits?
3. How did germ-free flies compare to those with a microbiome?
4. How do we know that bacteria in the microbiome interact with each other and their host?

What words do these images represent?



The Frayer Model

Frayer Model



Vocabulary and word consciousness

“Simply stated, word consciousness refers to **awareness** of and **interest** in words and their **meaning**...This awareness involves an appreciation of the **power of words**, an understanding of **why certain words are used** instead of others, and a sense of the words that could be used in place of those selected by the writer or speaker.”

Graves (2008)

“when children develop word consciousness, it **initiates a new way of thinking** that can prove of **life-long worth** for our students.”

Quigley (2018)



How we develop word consciousness in our students

1. Modelling, recognising and encouraging adept diction
2. Promoting word play
3. Providing rich and expressive instruction
4. Involving students in original investigation
5. Teaching students about words



Word play

- The Gift of Words research project lasted 7 years and aimed to develop word consciousness.
- One successful approach:
 - **Talk about the language used by good authors** and provide **scaffolded opportunities** for students to **experiment** with this language
 - This approach can work in ‘**creative**’ and ‘**fact-based**’ subjects
 - English and Foreign Languages
 - Scientific experiments
 - Travel and tourism report writing

Original investigation of words - Etymology

- Taking the opportunity to look at **where words originate** from is a fruitful way of building word consciousness.
- This can happen in any subject!
- Geography – maps lesson
 - Reference to **Atlas**
 - Etymology of:
 - **latitude** (from Latin latitudo "breadth, width, extent, size,")
 - **longitude** (from Latin longitudo "length, long duration")
 - Link to **altitude** (from Latin altitudinem (nominative altitudo) "height, altitude")
- Looking at how words originate also allows us to focus on **root words, prefixes and suffixes.**
 - Allows for links to be made across disciplines
 - Predict = pre + dict
 - dictator, dictionary, indicate, contradict, addict among many, many others.

Tutor Reading Programme

Tutor literacy booklets have been created for tutor time, exploring challenging texts with a variety of viewpoints and ideas, aiming to both develop cultural capital and expose students to classic literature.

This year, we are particularly focussing on improving our diverse representation across our tutor reading programme by working closely with Equality and Rights Advocates and the Race Equality Group

Tasks in the tutor booklets focus on skill building around oracy, comprehension, and word recognition; transferable skills for every subject.

Look out for info of which books we're reading in newsletter – encourage reading for pleasure of the whole books if they're interested

Year 7 Literacy Booklet Spring Term

Contents:

Week 1 (extracts and definitions):	w/b 1 st January -	p. 2-3
Week 2 (questions and task):	w/b 8 th January -	p. 4-5
Week 3 (extracts and definitions):	w/b 15 th January -	p. 6-7
Week 4 (questions and task):	w/b 22 nd January -	p. 8
Week 5 (extracts and definitions):	w/b 29 th January -	p. 9-10
Week 6 (questions and task):	w/b 5 th February -	p. 11-12
Week 7 (exploring own book):	w/b 19 th February -	p. 13
Week 8 (extracts and definitions):	w/b 26 th February -	p. 14-15
Week 9 (questions and task):	w/b 5 th March -	p. 16
Week 10 (extracts and definitions):	w/b 12 th March -	p. 17-19
Week 11 (questions and task):	w/b 19 th March -	p. 20
Week 12 (responding to both texts):	w/b 26 th March -	p. 20

Name: _____

Tutor Group and Tutor: _____

Words and Definitions:

Across the booklet, there are a few words underlined or highlighted. In the grid below the extract, try and see if you can figure out their definition, then put them in a sentence of your own. If you get stuck your tutor will be able to help. If there are any other words you need to check the meaning of, add them to the glossary!

Reading the extracts

Your tutor will read you the extracts. As you listen, write down any questions you have in the margin so you can discuss it once they have finished reading.



Tutor Reading Programme

What are we trying to achieve?

1. *Exposure to literary 'greats' alongside a diverse range of contemporary and historical texts, covering a broad range of experiences and issues*
2. *Practising literacy skills in an environment where students can make errors and discuss misconceptions*
3. *Build confidence approaching unfamiliar words and texts and develop enjoyment of reading*



Tutor Reading Programme

What might it look like?

Word	Definition	Use it in a sentence of your own
Species		
Excruciatingly		
<u>Arch-enemy</u>		
Perspective		
Intriguing		

Once students have read an extract, they are presented with some words to find a definition for from the extract, using literacy strategies that the tutor discusses.

Words are presented in a dyslexia-friendly font, so students are not intimidated by the complex language.

We then give them an opportunity to cement understanding by using in a sentence of their own.

Tutor Reading Programme

What might it look like?

2. Mum uses the words 'bad', 'big' and 'scary', as she is describing things to her primary school aged daughter. What words could you swap these out for to make them more complex or to make the vocabulary more interesting?
- a. 'Bad':
 - b. 'Big':
 - c. 'Scary':

Following the 'words and definitions', students then have the opportunity to answer a number of comprehension based questions about the text; linking to the idea of 'reading to learn'.

They will need to use inference skills and find evidence from the text.

Tutor Reading Programme

What might it look like?

Task time!

Choose one of these tasks to do below. If you finish before the time given by your tutor, try the other one!

- Draw an image inspired by the extract and annotated with quotes.
- Knowing that Mary is a palaeontologist who faces difficulties because of her class and gender, write the next part of her story.

Finally, students complete an extended task about the text, that develops the ideas from the extract further.

There are always two options, allowing for students to pick an option more suited to their skill level and interests, or to complete both if time permits.

Reading Interventions

We are in the process of liaising with the SEND department to understand current reading interventions and how we can complement that through whole-school strategies. We are looking to utilise the library as a space where we can include further reading interventions for students.





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Thank you

choberts@brightonhill.hants.sch.uk