



Reading Newsletter

Spring 1



Welcome to our third newsletter of the new academic year. We hope your children have managed to access their remote learning, and are keeping busy during lockdown.

This term's newsletter gives you an update on our new reading reward system, some of the new collections available on Sora, and some recommendations from learners across school of the books they have been reading. Included in this newsletter is the login details needed for The Day Newspaper, so you and your children can access this at your leisure, along with some feedback from our second learner and parental surveys on reading for pleasure.

As always we welcome your feedback. Many of you have requested more rewards for those who read physical books, and this newsletter will give you more information about that. Do please keep the ideas coming. Email me with any suggestions and we will aim to act on as much as we can.

Lockdown can feel quite isolating and teenagers may be looking for things to do. There are many ways to access books during this time. we are lucky enough to have our own online library, but there are also books available online from Tameside Libraries as well, or via The National Literacy Trust. More information is provided in the newsletter about this.

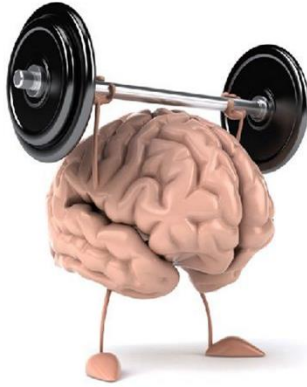
If your child requires a book, please let us know. We have a supply at school and can send one out if needed.

Mrs Emery

(Reading and Literacy Coordinator)

The Importance of Reading for Pleasure

**Reading
is the
best exercise
for
your brain**



Reading improves memory – the brain is a muscle that requires 'exercise'. The more you read the more you stimulate your brain.

It can even improve your memory.

According to a study at the **Fisher Centre for**

Alzheimer's Research Foundation, mental stimulation like reading can help protect memory and thinking skills, especially with age. The authors of the study even suggest that reading keeps brains healthier and higher functioning for longer.

Did you know that reading poetry boosts activity in the right side of the brain? That's the area where you can access "*autobiographical memory*" which makes it so you can evaluate your own experiences and compare it to what you just read.

Read the poem below by Catherine O'Meara. See if the right side of your brain is triggered to compare it to your own experiences at the minute.

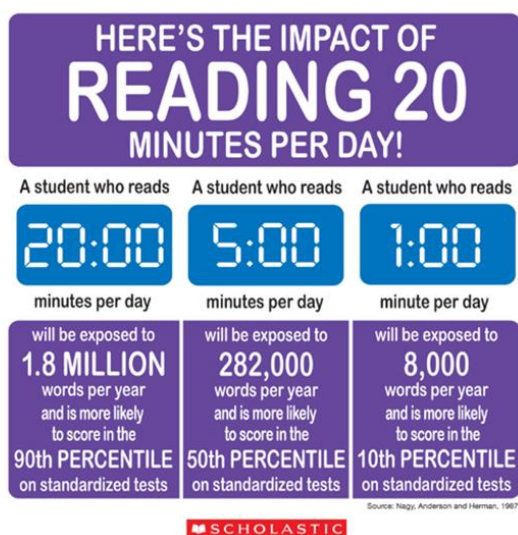
And People Stayed Home- Catherine (Kitty) O'Meara of Madison, Wisconsin (2020).

And people stayed home
and read books and listened
and rested and exercised
and made art and played
and learned new ways of being
and stopped
and listened deeper
someone meditated
someone prayed
someone danced
someone met their shadow
and people began to think differently
and people healed
and in the absence of people who lived in ignorant
ways,
dangerous, meaningless and heartless,
even the earth began to heal
and when the danger ended
and people found each other
grieved for the dead people
and they made new choices
and dreamed of new visions
and created new ways of life
and healed the earth completely
just as they were healed themselves.

Sora- The Digital Library



Sora continues to be popular with learners, and increasingly we are seeing more and more taking out books in the evening and at the weekend. The time learners are spending on Sora is increasing and they are becoming much more familiar in how to access collections and find books they want to read. In the recent survey, 77% of learners who responded said they have accessed Sora, and 89% saying teachers promote it across school..



Below is the data for Sora access in Autumn 2. Audiobooks are becoming increasingly popular, and there have been lots of new books added over Christmas, details of which can be found in the newsletter.

November:

Books Accessed- 2291

Checkouts- 1091

Average Minutes per day, per user: 35.78

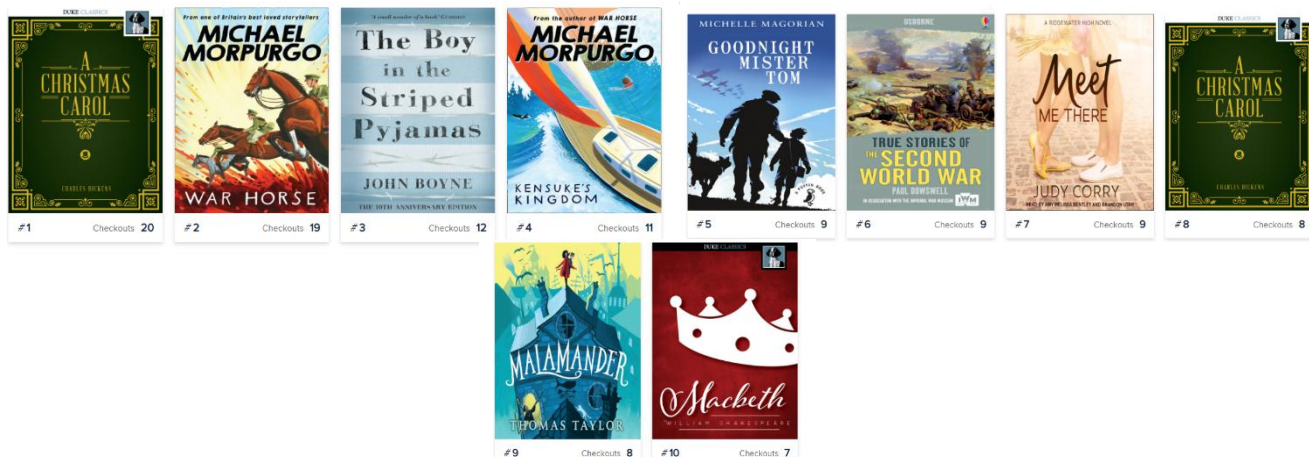
December:

Books Accessed: 1228

Checkouts- 591

Average Minutes per day, per user: 35:60

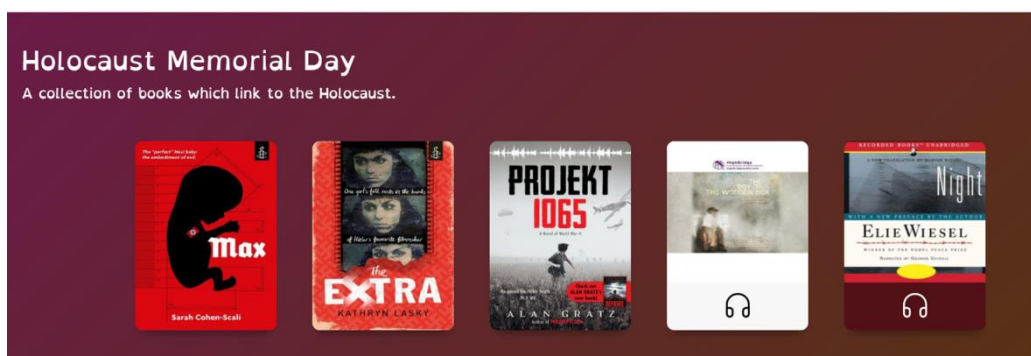
Top 10 Most Popular Books on Sora- December



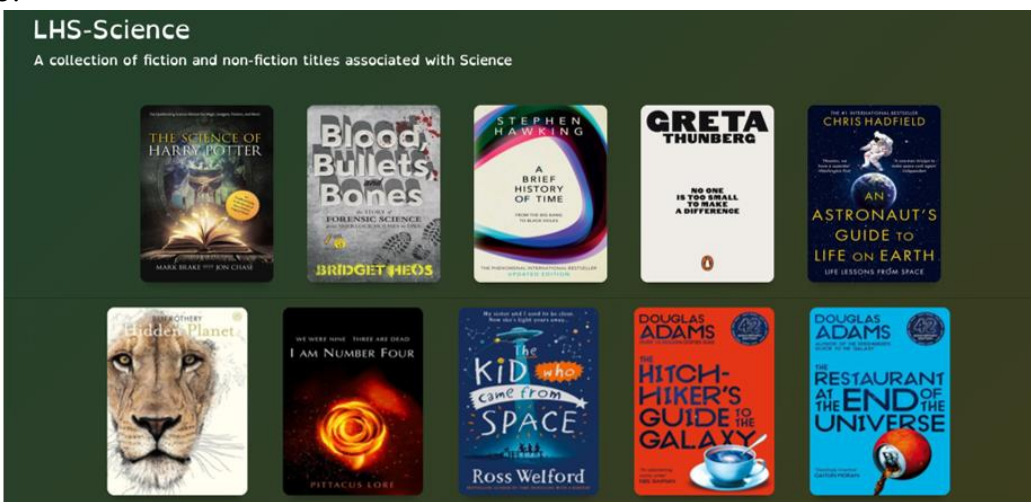
If your child is still struggling to log on to Sora, please send us a quick email to d.emery@lhs.aspireplus.org.uk

New Collections Update

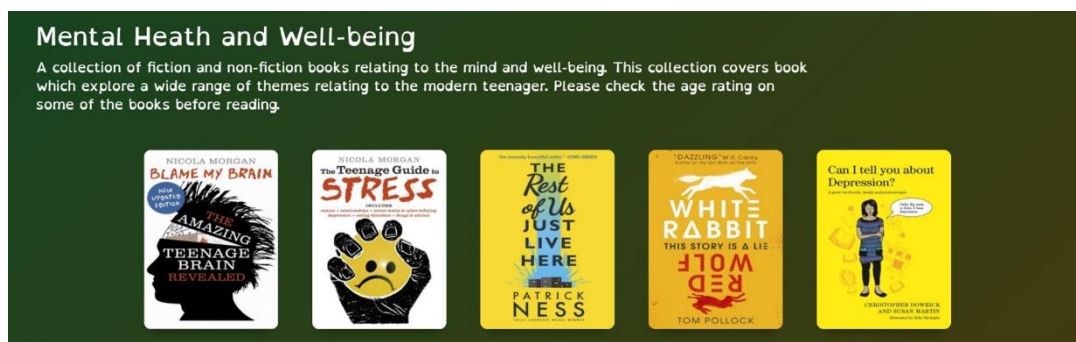
On Sora there have been some new collections added which may give your child some ideas on books to read.



Holocaust Memorial Day is 27th January. This collection contains books linked to this theme.



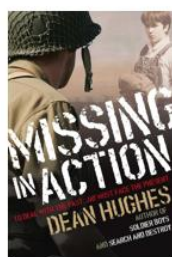
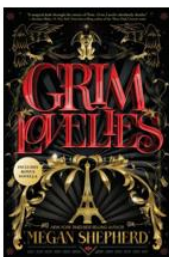
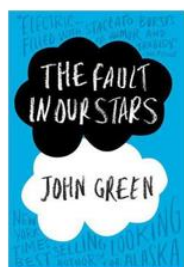
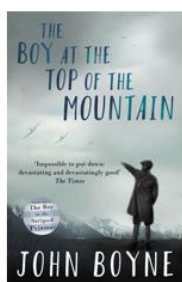
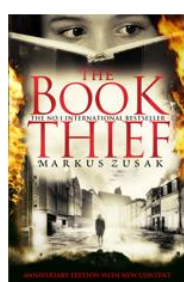
The Science Department at LHS have put together a list of 33 recommendations for learners with an interest in Science. These cover topics such as climate change, the human body, forensics and space. This collection contains a variety of fiction and non-fiction texts.



This collection contains books linked to mental health and well-being. It includes a variety of teen self-help books, motivational books, and fiction books with mental health as a key theme.

Prefer a Physical Book?

There's nothing quite like the feel of a physical book in your hands, and the satisfaction you get looking at how much of the book you have read. A wide selection of our learners prefer to read physical books. Sora can be used as a tool to browse, and read the first chapter of books they may like to purchase/loan from the library. Here are some additional suggestions, based upon popular rentals from Longdendale learners last term.



If your child has read all their books at home and doesn't like reading online, please contact us at school. We have a limited selection of books we can post out and will be happy to do so. Email Mrs Emery on: d.emery@lhs.aspireplus.org.uk



The Day Online Newspaper

UK INTERNATIONAL

THE DAY
NEWS TO OPEN MINDS

THE FUTURE OF
DEMOCRACY

Longdendale High School

HOW TO USE

SIGN OUT

MY ACCOUNT

Search The Day



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Just a reminder about this excellent resource available to all LHS learners. The Day Newspaper, is a newspaper aimed at KS3-KS5 learners, based upon current affairs all across the world.

To access this newspaper, use the link and the login details below:

Username: lhs

Password: Longdendale1

Designed to spark curiosity and develop independent learning skills, the articles all have links to additional newspaper links based on key features in the stories, along with YouTube links to give them more information on the subject they are looking at.

Please let us know your thoughts on this resource, we think it's a great alternative for those who prefer reading short, non-fiction articles on important events across the world.



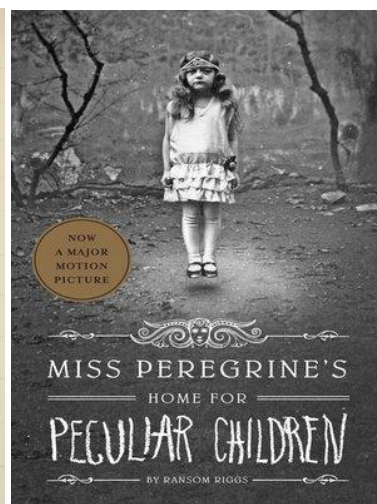
Learner Book Recommendations

One of the best ways to encourage young people to read for pleasure, is to talk about the books you are reading with others. The learners expressed in their recent feedback that they would like to see some reviews written by learners across school. Hopefully some of these will entice your child to read a new book.

All learners who submit a review receive their Bronze reading!

~~MISS PEREGRINE'S HOME~~
~~FOR PECULIAR~~
~~CHILDREN~~ review:

Before even reading this book, I had high expectations for it and those expectations were beyond exceeded. From each characters perfectly molded personality to the scrutiny of detail with every object. As most people do when reading a new book, we develop a favouritism. I (in this book) was immediately drawn to Enoch O'Connor - the boy capable of raising the dead. Though he isn't a major character in the book, I found his personality intriguing. I absolutely adored this book and I am not surprised that it was remade into a movie. It is truly an escapism from our world into another where people have special abilities and where we can travel back in time to escape some evil creatures hungry for these peculiar childrens eyes.



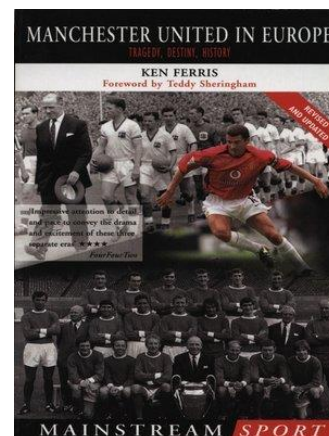
Reviewed by Aimee
in 9P

This book is currently available as an e-book and audiobook on Sora.

I think my book is great because it is on something I enjoy to do in my spare time and is about the history of my favourite football club (Manchester United). It is great to see what they really do behind the scenes like at training and how the managers coached them I would give the book a 5★ rating because I enjoy reading it.

Reviewed by Mason in 10P

This book is available as an e-book on Sora



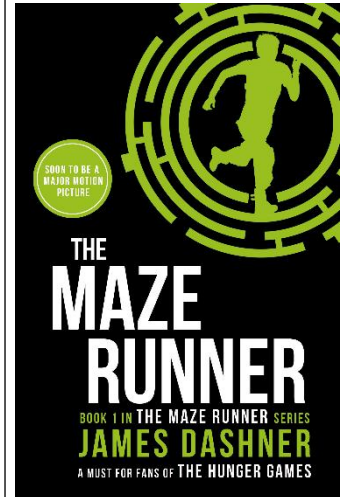


Learner Book Recommendations



The Maze Runner is a book by James Dashner about a world that has been struck with sun flares and is now in disease. The disease (called the flare) has taken over the world, causing riots, death and psychosis. In order to try and find a cure for the disease and help their mistake that was releasing the man-made virus, the remaining governments of the world join together and run tests.

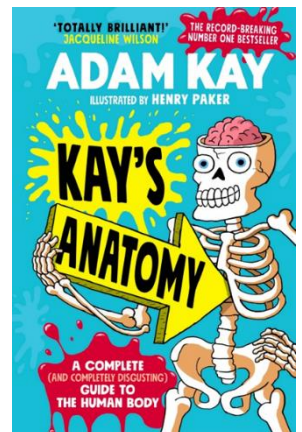
The author captivated me and wouldn't let me put it down, the detail and imagery he includes is immaculate and gave me such a clear picture of what was happening. Although the plot is complicated, he delivers it in such a way that it is extremely easy to understand. I have now moved on to the other books in the series and I am still enjoying them as much as the first one. I would definitely recommend this book to others, especially if you like dystopian series such as the hunger games.



Reviewed by
Chloe G in 9E

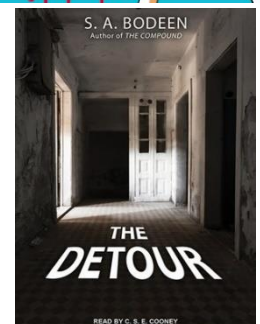
Kay's Anatomy is a book about the human body and how it works. The book puts a humorous twist on everyday actions and the magic that goes on inside of us. In my opinion, it is a very useful book as it teaches you to look after your body more and to make healthy choices. It is a 378 page book with vivid illustrations and tons of facts, it covers everything from fingernails to your brain and doesn't leave a single answer out. It answers questions such as 'are bogeys safe to eat?' and 'how much of your life do you spend on the toilet?'

Reviewed by Alexandra S in 7S



The book 'The Detour' by S.A. Bodeen was intriguing as from the start of the book the tension was clearly shown. The novel portrays the two different lifestyles people experience from being at the peak of life with loads of money, a best-selling novel, and many fans to the bottom of the chain living life in the dark full of jealousy and not that much money. The teenager Livvy Fylnn was on her way to a book conference when her journey takes an unexpected detour. She finds herself hurt, in her kidnapper's basements and her brand new car smashed up. But there is nothing she can do. She tries everything to escape but no one can hear her.

If you are into suspense novels I would recommend this book as it takes so many unexpected turns all the way through.

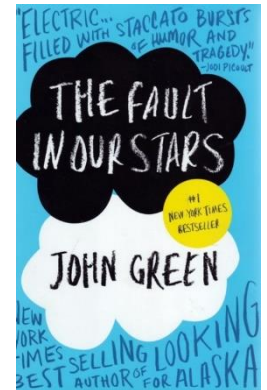


Reviewed by
Bethany T in 10A

Available as an audiobook on Sora

Staff Book Recommendations

The Fault in Our Stars by John Green should definitely come with a warning label as it is a very emotional read. It's the story of Hazel Lancaster, a very intelligent 16 year old girl who is living with cancer. Hazel's parents are very protective, she has little social contact until she meets Gus Waters at a teen cancer support group. Hazel lives her life avoiding relationships in attempt to reduce the impact her death would have on others, however Gus takes an instant shine to her and she can't help liking him. This story is very much a tale of modern star-crossed lovers. Please don't be put off by the sad topics raised within this book though, it's very funny and well written. I would avoid watching the film until you have read the book, the book answers questions that I feel were missed in the film. This book teaches us all a valuable lesson that you can't give up even when something is trying to stop you living a happy life, it also reminds us how important love is whilst also making you think about how short life can be.



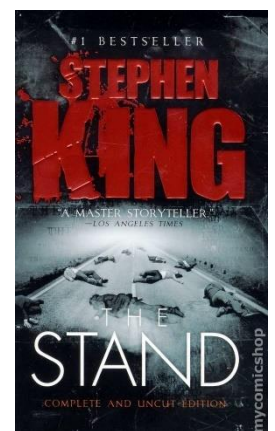
Reviewed by Mrs Parker

This book is currently available as an e-book
Available on Sora

I was 15 when I read this book for the first time. To be honest, I wasn't much of a reader at that time, and it was a heavy book with what I thought, were just too many pages! I wasn't hopeful of completing the book when I began. I rarely got to the end of any book. The whole thriller / horror genre was a completely different direction for me.

As I opened and began to read, I was immediately gripped. That night I forgot to come down for my tea and I carried on reading into the night. This had never, ever happened to me before with any book. When I tried to go to sleep that night I could only think about the book. I took it to school the next day and the day after. I read it every spare second I had. This book transformed me into a 'reader', and I've never looked back since. Everyone needs to find 'that book. This was mine.

It's a story about a pandemic that kills most of the world's population. It is about the survivors and their struggle. Even though this book was written back in 1978, it has a very relevant place in the world we are all living in today. If you read the book, that me know how you did with it and what you thought!



Reviewed by Mrs Willis

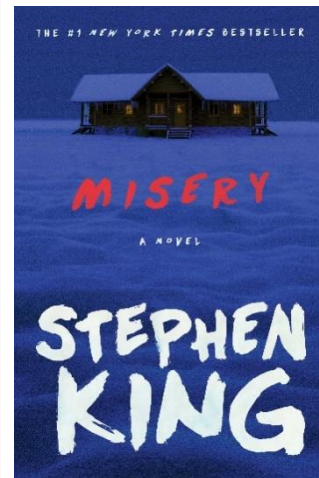
Does your child have a book recommendation that they would love to share with our learners? Next term we are looking to feature reviews from some of our learners from across school. These can be submitted to their English teacher, or emailed across to Mrs Emery on d.emery@lhs.aspireplus.org.uk

Staff Book Recommendations

I am massive Stephen King fan. I've read: Misery, Carrie, The Shining, IT, Pet Cemetery, and some of the books he wrote under his 'Richard Bachman' pseudonym (The long walk/The Running man (ARNIE film)

However, Misery was the first book to make me physically react with a shocked inhale! Very simple idea, biggest fan meets and gets to care for her idol after he is involved in a car accident near her isolated house.....but she just doesn't want to let go. What starts as a help to save a life, quickly turn into him fighting for his life from his crazed fan. The book contains some shocking moments and graphic imagery, but a brilliant tense read right to the end. One for our older readers

Reviewed by Mr Emmanuel

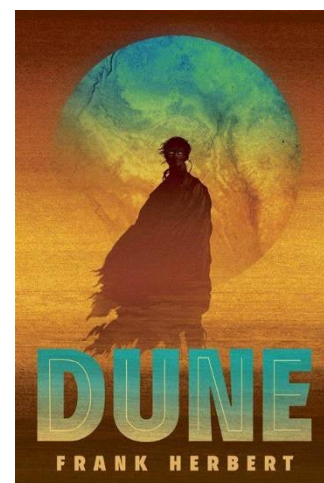


One of the best books I have read and re-read over many years is the Science Fiction novel Dune by Frank Herbert.

The book takes place in the far future (roughly 20,000 years in the future) and opens an expansive universe up to the reader which is in depth due to the landscapes and characters that the writer describes. It tells the story of Paul Atreides, a brilliant and gifted young man born into a great destiny beyond his understanding, and how he must travel to the most dangerous planet in the universe to ensure the future of his family and his people.

The book has been made into a TV series and film over the years, and a new film release is due out in 2021 and the trailer looks amazing. I read this book when I was 14 and even now when I have free time I can pick it up and read a few chapters and enjoy them.

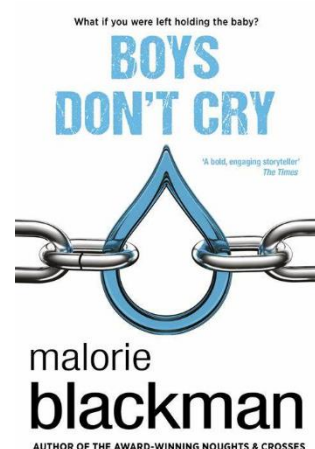
Reviewed by Mr Emery



Picture this: It's A-Level results day and you're sat nervously awaiting the results being delivered to your door. Suddenly there is a knock. You open it, and your life turns around completely.

This is what happens to Adam, who opens the door to find out he is a young father. He is left literally 'holding the baby' as the young mother is struggling to cope. This book follows Adam's story as he comes to terms with a life-changing scenario, and 'finds himself' in the process.

A great book written by Malorie Blackman (Noughts and Crosses) and now a set GCSE English Literature text with Edexcel. I really enjoyed this book. I found it an easy read, and I liked how it had multiple narrators, so you could see different character perspectives throughout the story.



Reviewed by Mrs Emery

Available on Sora

You said, we did...

As promised, we wanted to continue to give you some information about how we have used your feedback to make improvements across school. Below are just a few of the ideas and suggestions we had which we immediately worked on. We had 307 learners respond to our survey at the start of term, and 117 parental responses. Keep your eyes open for our next survey and get involved to keep improving the experiences your children have across school.

"More book reviews from students and staff" - [Additional pages in the newsletter devoted to book reviews.](#)

"More competitions are needed to promote reading for pleasure" - [Book review competition during lockdown, encourages learners to review books to earn their Bronze Reading Award. 12 Days of Christmas Reading Challenge, and incentive system for reading on Sora. More competitions and reading incentives are to come, we are looking at ways in which we can reward those reading physical books, in a similar way to the way we reward reading on Sora. News to come soon!](#)

"Could there be more time in tutor devoted to reading? / My child likes DEAR time, but says they don't always do it" - [During lockdown, all Year groups have a tutor reader that they are starting, linked to the Life-skills curriculum. Year 7/8 are reading 'Wonder', Year 9 are reading "Out of My Mind" and Years 10/11 "The Other Side of Truth." These books focus on the themes of disability, bullying celebrating difference, and refugees and their experience in the UK. Learners will continue to read these as physical copies upon return to school, and be encouraged to reflect on their key themes. In Spring 2 there will be 2 DEAR sessions per week in tutor.](#)

"More promotion of books to read in tutor" - [PowerPoint with recommendations on, along with promotion of new collections on Sora.](#)

"Open the library and allow my Year group access to it (Year 10)." [We are looking into a way in which we can open a library in the KS4 bubble area of school, which will have a collection of books aimed at older reader, college prospectuses, careers information and CV writing advice. We are currently looking at locations for this, and the practicalities of running it in a COVID-19-secure manner.](#)

Competitions and Rewards

12 Days of Christmas Reading Challenge

This was launched in September as a way of learners achieving their Bronze reading award. We had lots of wonderful entries, but were blown away by the efforts of Joe in Year 7, whose portfolio of evidence was substantial. Take a look below at Joe's winning entry.

12 Days of Christmas- Reading Challenge!

1. Read a book that is older than you (selfie).
2. Read a book to a sibling or family member (selfie).
3. Share a poem with someone (copy of poem).
4. Watch a film/TV adaptation of a book you love (selfie).
5. Re-write a passage from a book, from another character's perspective.
6. Draw a picture of the main character from the book you've read, and add quotes to explain your choices.
7. Share a story with someone over Zoom/Facetime (selfie).
8. Draw one of the settings in the book you have read.
9. Write a review of one of the books you have read.
10. Find out about the author of the book you have read.
11. Read by the Christmas tree (selfie).
12. Take an 'Elf on the shelf' extreme reading picture.



Twelve Days of Christmas – Day 9: Book review- 'His Dark Materials – The Subtle Knife'.

Joe Worsley (75)

I greatly enjoyed this book, which has left me looking forward to the 3rd book in 'His Dark Materials' trilogy.

In this sequel to 'Northern Lights', the author introduces the character Will Parry. Will is a young boy in his teenage years, who lives in 'Our world', Oxford with his poorly and confused mother. He is on the run from some 'Men in black', who are searching for some letters from his missing explorer Father who Will and his mother have not seen or heard of for years.

After a scuffle with one of the 'Men in black' at Will's family home this results with the accidental death of the intruder. Will, must run for his life, to find his father, who he hopes will help him and his mother. His mother is placed in the care of his old piano teacher.

At the start of Will's ventures, he stumbles across a window to another world and the city of 'Cittigaze'. The city is deserted apart from a small group of abandoned children who talk of spectres chasing their parents away. Here, Will meets heroine, Lyra Balacqua, who has travelled from her world through the 'Northern Lights.'

Lyra has her Althiometer stolen buy one of the men in black and must locate the 'Subtle Knife' in order to get it back.

Will and Lyra's meeting is not a coincidence, as it is Will who becomes the successor to the previous holder of the Subtle Knife which is located in the tower in the city of Cittigaze and has the power to open an infinite number of windows to an infinite number of worlds.

Lyra and Will must find Will's father to put things right in Will's 'Our world' Oxford. However, Lyra's detached and distant mother, Mrs Coulter has her own plans for Lyra and is on her own mission to destroy her daughter.

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Reading Rewards System

December brought the launch of the Reading Rewards System, where learners can achieve, Bronze, Silver and Gold reading awards for their reading efforts. There are different ways they can achieve these awards, depending upon their preferred reading methods.

Learners who read on Sora for 20 hours receive a Bronze award, 100 hours gets them the silver award, and 200 hours a gold. Already we have 19 learners who have achieved their Bronze, 5 Silver and 1 Gold! In addition to this, we have 20 learners who have reviewed a book and earned their Bronze award. We are currently looking at how to reward physical book readers their Silver and Gold awards, and this will be announced shortly.



Book Rewards

Just before Christmas, the English department had a competition, where all learners showing an excellent attitude to learning were placed into a raffle. 120 names were drawn and these learners were sent a book for Christmas. Some learners were isolating, so these will be posted out so you may receive one in the post in the next few days!



We recently received the exciting news that we have won a collection of STEM books in conjunction with The National Literacy Trust's 2021 STEM reading challenge. A selection of KS3 learners will use these to research & design a new habitat aimed at survival on a new planet. Look out for these entries in our next newsletter!

Life Skills Tutor Readers

Life Skills is the curriculum taught in tutor time to learners across all year groups. Life Skills is a term used to describe a set of skills acquired through learning and/or direct life experience that are used to help individuals and groups effectively handle problems and questions commonly encountered in their daily life. Life Skills aims to equip learners in becoming citizens for the active role required of them in today's complex and diverse society. Learners across school have regular Life Skills lessons, where we touch upon a variety of topics.

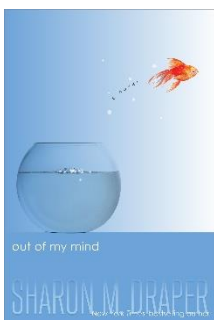
Life skills touch upon issues that are:

- Real: they actually affect people's lives.
- Topical.
- Sometimes sensitive: they can affect people on a personal level, especially when family or friends are involved.
- Often controversial: people disagree and hold strong opinions about them.
- Ultimately moral: they relate to what people think is right or wrong, good or bad, important or unimportant in society.

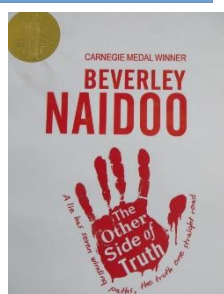
This term, every year group will have a tutor class reader. Each book covers themes which link to the Life Skills curriculum, which get them thinking about topics which can help them develop empathy for others. Reading helps to develop empathy, and this is another way of us teaching these key Life Skills, in an engaging manner.



Year 7 and 8 are reading **Wonder**. It follows the life of August, a boy born with facial disfigurement, who is starting school at aged 10, after being home-schooled for all of his life. This book covers the themes of disability, friendship, difference, bullying, resilience and community.



Year 9 are reading **Out of My Mind** by Sharon Draper. This book is narrated by a girl with cerebral palsy, who overcomes many barriers due to her resilience, drive and determination. It focuses on difference, friendship, disability and resilience.



Year 10/11 are reading **The Other Side of Truth**. This book is about a family who have to flee Nigeria and seek refuge in the UK, due to the assassination of their mother by government officials. It looks at what life is like living in an unfamiliar country. It looks at the themes of bereavement, difference, racism, family and friendship.