

September 2022

Dear Parents and Carers,

This is the second full year of the AIR programme, part of our wider whole school literacy (Communication) programme.

We hope that you will support this programme and support your child and their wider reading.
AIR – Active, Independent Reading.

We expect every student to read independently for 20-30 minutes every week (at least). This is a compulsory requirement.

We expect every student to write a paragraph or more about something that they have read over the course of the week and post this as a private comment. The homework will be set every week (due on Mondays).

Here is an example (this was written by a Year 9 student for Week 34, the final week, of the 2021/22 programme):

This week I have read "Twisted Games" by Ava Huang, the sequel to a book I read last week, and I'm currently reading "Losing Hope" by Colleen Hoover, the sequel to another book I read 2 weeks ago.

So far, I'm loving 'Losing Hope'. The first book in the series, 'Hopeless', was great but this is already better. There was just something missing at the end of 'Hopeless' that 'losing hope' does a great job at filling in.

This novel was in the perspective of the male love interest, Holder, from the other book. We get further insight into his sister's suicide, or 'purposeful overdose' as Holder's mother calls it, more information on Holder's life after the kidnapping of Hope and much more character development on his side of the story.

While in 'Hopeless' Holder was presented as cold and mysterious, "His permanent soul resting perfectly on his face.", in 'Losing Hope' it becomes much more apparent he's a secret romantic, "I can't even explain to you how perfect this girl is." This really impacted me. Holder's stern and icy exterior runs throughout the entirety of the first novel, except when he's around Sky, and then seeing his thoughts and seeing how genuinely happy he is really shocked me. I believe that Holder's projection of himself into society is to do with the death of his sister. He feels guilty for feeling so normal merely a year after the loss of his closest friend, and he feels society will judge him and label him as careless.

Personally, I feel like this perspective and insight into the character's own life really helps to connect with them more. So far, I am loving this novel.

Studies show that reading for pleasure makes a big difference to children's educational performance. Likewise, evidence suggests that children who read for enjoyment every day not only perform better in reading tests than those who do not, but also develop a broader vocabulary, increased general knowledge and a better understanding of other cultures.

Reading is fun and valuable, we hope you agree. There are loads of books available at school for the children to borrow and I'm happy to recommend some. We can discuss their reading in the shared comments in the Communication Google Classroom.

Don't feel as though it has to be fiction every week. A young person might be reading some interesting newspaper articles or a particularly powerful autobiography, for example. I'll discuss my own reading here as well and perhaps other teachers will join in.

I will also post interesting articles about a variety of topics in the individual Google Classrooms. We featured Sports Journalism last year with some success.

The AIR programme will be publicised around school as well as on social media platforms. A student who completes the reading requirement every week and logs their work in the designated area on their Communication Google Classroom will create a solid portfolio of their reading over the year. This will be enriched by a variety of comments from myself and my colleagues.

We would like you to support and encourage the reading of your child. Naturally, you are more than welcome to add your comments to the reading record. If you are moved to discuss your own reading as well then that would be a real bonus.

We would rather submissions are posted online rather than on paper and handed in. It's much easier to manage the hundreds of responses if they're all in one place. Your support here is appreciated.

I look forward to a successful year of Active, Independent Reading. Please feel free to ask any questions via email or Google Classroom.

Yours Sincerely,

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