



READING

The St Leonards Academy

"Inspiring our children and staff to flourish and achieve their best"

READING AT THE ST LEONARDS ACADEMY

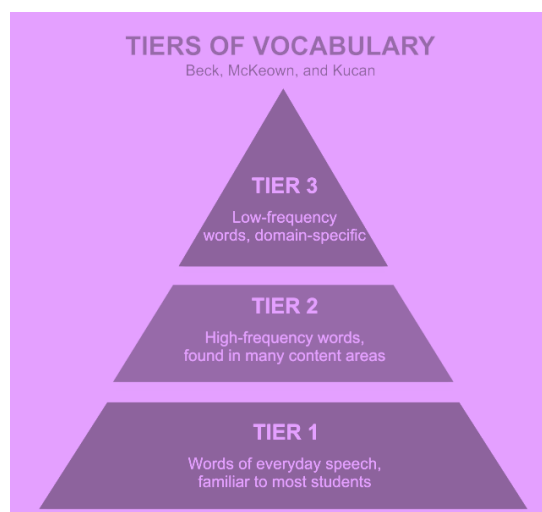
Intent

Reading, alongside socioeconomic status is one of the main barriers to student achievement at GCSE. Learning can be highly impacted by a student's lack of vocabulary or lack of ability to read fluently and comprehend texts. As an academy we have a moral duty to improve and develop the reading and vocabulary of every student so that they can access our broad and ambitious curriculum and be successful at GCSE.

Of course, reading is not purely beneficial for academic success but is an opportunity for all students to access the world outside of their local context and imagination. Every student, no matter their background, should have access to, and be able to benefit from, the richness of books. The St Leonards Academy is committed to ensuring:

- Vocabulary sits at the heart of our curriculum and lessons.
- All students are given frequent opportunities to read for pleasure.
- Students who are behind in their reading are given support to catch up.

VOCABULARY TEACHING



At the St Leonards Academy, our teachers explicitly teach tier 2 and tier 3 vocabulary in almost every lesson. Curriculum planning documents identify the tier 2 and tier vocabulary that is to be taught to students. This vocabulary is then explicitly taught using a Frayer model, teachers check for student understanding and students are helped to recall the definition through frequent, low stakes quizzing and direct questioning.

FRAYER MODELS

A Frayer model is a graphic organiser that helps students to understand the meaning of a word and link it to the meaning of other words. At The St Leonards Academy a Frayer model will typically include a student friendly definition and the etymology and morphology of a word, helping students to recognise common prefixes, suffixes and root words in order to support them when they encounter unfamiliar words in an unseen text.

Definition:	Word family:
Etymology:	In a sentence:

KEY WORD

CLASSROOM STRATEGIES TO SUPPORT READING

Group	> 2 years behind their chronological age	0-2 years behind their chronological age	0-2 years above their chronological age	> 2 years above their chronological age
Strategies	Model good fluency when reading texts. Allow the students to listen to you read a portion of the text and then read it back to you or a peer. Explicit pre-teaching of vocabulary (including Tier 1 vocabulary when necessary) in order to support comprehension. Verbally check for comprehension. Expect the use of new vocabulary even by the lowest ability readers. Explicitly point out the disciplinary features of the text.	Support students to activate prior knowledge related to the text. Ask students to predict what the text is about based on cues such as the title, pictures etc Ask students to clarify the text Ask students to summarise the text Model and scaffold the above strategies Explicit pre-teaching of tier 1 and tier 2 vocabulary in order to support comprehension. Explicitly point out the disciplinary features of the text.	Support students to activate prior knowledge related to the text. Ask students to predict what the text is about based on cues such as the title, pictures etc Ask students to clarify the text Ask students to summarise the text Ensure that texts are sufficiently challenging and use higher order questioning to check for comprehension, inference etc Challenge these students to remember and use new vocabulary, both verbally and in writing.	Ask more challenging questions in relation to the text. Provide extended reading outside of the classroom. Inspire student's intellectual curiosity by sharing challenging texts Set more difficult extension tasks when students complete comprehension work.

READING FOR PLEASURE

The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) has concluded that reading for pleasure is even more important than social class in determining academic skills and that finding ways to engage students in reading may be one of the most effective ways to bring about social change.

At the St Leonards Academy we are fortunate to have a school library that is open all day and after school. It is staffed by a full-time librarian who matches pupils to reading materials, promotes reading for pleasure, organises author visits and involves students in initiatives such as the 1066 book award.

The library has a full set of laptops and was recently refurbished so there is plenty of space for students to sit. The library stock is regularly replenished and we have a group of student librarians who help to choose books, return stock, create displays and organise events.

All students in years 7-9 have at least one hour a fortnight of their curriculum time in the library. During this time they select a book of their choice to read in silence. Once the book is completed, they take a quiz on the content of the book using **Accelerated Reader**. The programme will then recommend to them a range of books that will challenge them without being overly difficult.

Students who find it difficult to engage with the accelerated reader programme may receive additional small group support.

ASSESSING READING

All students in years 7-10 have their reading assessed using the **Star Reading Assessment** three times a year. Reading age data is shared with all members of staff and is included on **ClassCharts** seating plans.

SUPPORT FOR STRUGGLING READERS

Our commitment to Reading Recovery has the intention of all students being able to read at least at their chronological age by the end of Key Stage 3. Students who persist in having a lower reading age at this point will have been screened in house for learning barriers and will have a bespoke plan of support in place to support their Key Stage 4 studies.

Key interventions include:

Reading Pathway: Year 7 students with a low MIDYIS score for reading are given a bespoke, reading focussed curriculum in English.

Better Reading Partners: Capable readers from Years 9 and 10 support weaker readers from Years 7 and 8 by reading aloud together three times a week. This peer-to-peer approach is designed to improve reading fluency and confidence.

Reading Toolkit Programme: Small groups of students who are up to two years below their chronological reading age receive lessons focused on comprehension strategies, such as skimming, scanning, and summarizing. This structured program aims to build essential reading skills over time.

1:1 Reciprocal Reading: Targeted for students with significant reading gaps, this intervention includes both in-class and withdrawn reading sessions where students practice reading aloud for 10-minute slots. Students with more severe needs receive one-hour sessions.

Toe By Toe Programme: A phonics-based manual used daily for 10-minute sessions with students who are more than four years below their chronological reading age. It focuses on decoding difficulties and aims to boost confidence in struggling readers.

Lexia PowerUp: This software is designed for students with dyslexia or those significantly below their chronological reading age. It provides targeted support for students to make accelerated progress in reading through two one-hour sessions per week.

Additional support include access to reading pens for students with dyslexia, and a TSLA Dictionary, which offers a list of subject-specific high-frequency words to help students with vocabulary development. There is also a focus on family engagement through information evenings and resources to support reading at home.

Each intervention includes regular progress monitoring using Star Reading tests and data collection to ensure the right students are targeted and improvements are tracked.

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READING PATHWAY

The **Reading Pathway** is a new approach to supporting struggling readers in year 7 developed by the English team at The St Leonards Academy. It involves adapting the year 7 English curriculum to include more frequent reading sessions, whole class modelling, partner work and independent reading. Children deepen their understanding of the texts they read through the systematic use of a series of strategies and language stems.

The approach encompasses the key principles of effective reading provision and supports a deep understanding of texts, developing oracy around reading and increasing breadth of reading. The Reading Pathway also helps to build a culture of reading for pleasure and purpose.

BETTER READING PARTNERS

Better Reading Partners is a peer-to-peer reading intervention where capable readers from Years 9 and 10 support students in Years 7 and 8 whose reading ages are up to two years below their chronological age, as identified by Star Reading data. This intervention, held three times a week during tutor time in the library, allows lower readers to practice reading aloud to their older peers, improving their fluency and confidence. Staff manage the sessions by registering students, overseeing book selections, and tracking progress through book logs.

Research shows that peer tutoring can be highly effective in improving academic outcomes. A meta-analysis by the Education Endowment Foundation (EEF) found that peer tutoring can lead to an average of five additional months' progress in reading and other subjects over the course of a year, with both the tutor and the tutee benefiting from the process. Peer tutoring also enhances students' self-confidence and motivation, as it creates a supportive, low-pressure environment where learners feel more comfortable taking risks and engaging with the material. Additionally, by reading aloud to a peer, struggling readers can improve their oral fluency, comprehension, and vocabulary acquisition, which are critical to overall reading development. Capable readers, in turn, deepen their own understanding and empathy, gaining leadership skills as they guide their peers

READING TOOLKIT PROGRAMME

Reading Toolkit Programme is an intervention designed to teach key reading skills that support comprehension and reading fluency for students whose reading ages are up to two years below their chronological age or who are at moderate risk of dyslexia. The program is taught to small groups and focuses on developing a "reading toolkit" of strategies such as skimming and scanning, summarising, understanding text structure, using prior knowledge, visualisation, predicting, and asking questions. Each session includes 30 minutes of focused teaching followed by 30 minutes of group reading from a class novel, reinforcing these strategies in practice.

Research shows that explicit instruction in reading comprehension strategies is highly effective in improving students' reading outcomes. According to the National Reading Panel, teaching strategies like summarising, questioning, and predicting helps students actively engage with texts, enhancing their ability to understand and retain information. These skills are especially beneficial for struggling readers, who often lack the ability to organise and make sense of information without guidance.

The Education Endowment Foundation (EEF) also highlights that interventions focused on comprehension can lead to an additional six months' progress in reading, particularly for students with learning difficulties, such as dyslexia. By focusing on these specific strategies, the Reading Toolkit Programme empowers students to become more independent and confident readers, helping them to overcome barriers and close the gap between their reading ability and their peers

LEXIA POWER UP

Lexia PowerUp is a computer-based program that adapts instruction to the specific needs of students. Students begin at a point in each area of the program that is right for them, based on the results of a brief assessment.

PowerUp uses a structured and systematic approach to filling in skill gaps for our students. The program is broken up into three main skill areas, since students may have different needs in each.

Word Study — Students develop reading accuracy and fluency by focusing on sound and syllable patterns in words.

Grammar — Students learn how written language works in order to improve their writing and reading comprehension. They learn how parts of speech function in sentences and how sentence parts convey meaning.

Comprehension — Students learn skills & strategies to become independent and strategic readers. Passages include original and authentic texts of multiple genres including informational texts, narratives, drama, and poetry.

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TOE BY TOE READING PROGRAMME

Toe By Toe Reading Programme is a structured phonics-based intervention for students whose reading ages are more than four years below their chronological age and who have significant reading barriers, including decoding difficulties and dyslexia. Students participate in daily 10-minute sessions in breakout spaces, working individually with their personal books. Each session is designed to reinforce phonics skills, focusing on systematic and incremental progress.

Research demonstrates that phonics-based interventions like Toe By Toe are highly effective for struggling readers, particularly those with dyslexia or severe reading difficulties. A study published in the British Journal of Special Education found that Toe By Toe helps to significantly improve reading accuracy and confidence, especially for children who have not responded to other types of intervention. The programme's highly structured approach ensures that learners build foundational skills step-by-step, which is crucial for students with severe literacy challenges. According to the National Reading Panel, phonics instruction is particularly beneficial in improving children's ability to decode words, which directly impacts reading fluency and comprehension.

RECIPROCAL READING

Reciprocal reading is an effective and proven approach to developing reading comprehension – particularly for students who can decode but do not fully understand what they have read. Reciprocal reading is targeted at students who:

- Can read but struggle to understand
- Cannot explain their understanding to others
- Read very slowly because they are focusing on accurate decoding so never get the flow of the text or grasp its meaning
- Read too fast and do not pay attention to what they are reading
- Only read for plot events and not the details within the writing
- Lack confidence when reading new or unfamiliar texts

Reciprocal reading is designed to improve reading through structured conversations about texts between students and adults. It takes place in either small groups or one to one and during a session, both the students and the adult have an equal responsibility to contribute and engage with the meaning of the texts they are reading. Sessions are based on 4 key principles: Predict, Clarify, Question and Summarise.

1. **Predict:** making predictions about the text itself if starting a new book or about the next chapter/section of the text. *I predict that in this section of the text...*
2. **Clarify:** making clearer any words, phrases or ideas once the text has been read.
3. **Question:** after reading the text, four types of questions should be asked:
 - a) **Deduction:** questions about what the text does not tell us but we can work out from clues in the text.
 - b) **Inferential:** questions about what the text does not tell us, but we can work it out from our knowledge and experience.
 - c) **Authorial:** questions about the author's use of language.
 - d) **Literal:** questions about what is actually going in the text (the more obvious things).
4. **Summarise:** at the end of the session summarising the text and going over what has been found out. Checking whether the predictions made at the start of the session were correct.

SUGGESTED SCRIPTED QUESTIONS FOR RECIPROCAL READING

PREDICT	1. What do you think the text/section of text will be about? 2. Why do you think this?
CLARIFY	1. Are there any words you would like clarifying? 2. Is there anything in the text you are unclear about, such as words, phrases or ideas?
QUESTION	1. Do you have/does anyone have any questions? 2. What do you/we think about...? 3. What could ...mean?
SUMMARISE	1. Can you sum up the text and go over what we've found out? 2. Were your predictions correct? 3. What are the main ideas in this section of text?

PROGRESS IN READING AGES 22-24

Year group	Average reading age progress 22-23	Average reading age progress 23-24
7	3 months	9 months
8	6 months	10 months
9	8 months	1 year 1 month
10	NA	11 months

STUDENTS RECEIVING READING SUPPORT 23-24

Year Group	Reading Pathway	Lexia Power Up	Reciprocal Reading	Total	% of year group
7	45	25	9	79	41%
8	0	22	9	31	12%
9	0	16	8	24	9%
10	0	21	6	27	10%
Total	45	84	32	137	NA

THE IMPACT OF READING SUPPORT 23-24

STRATEGY	Number of students	Average reading age Sep 23	Average reading age July 24	Progress (in months)
Lexia Power Up	84	8y 3m	9y 6m	15
Reciprocal reading	29	7y 1m	8y 7m	18

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LEXIA POWER UP

	TOTAL	SEND	PP
Number of students	84	72	50
Average reading age Sep 23	8y 3m	8y 11m	8y 8m
Average reading age July 24	9y 6m	10y 2m	9y 6m
Progress (in months)	15	22	10

RECIPROCAL READING

	TOTAL	SEND	PP
Number of students	29	21	17
Average reading age Sep 23	7y 1m	7y 1m	7y 2m
Average reading age July 24	8y 7m	9y	8y 6m
Progress (months)	18	23	16

