

## Year 7 Vocabulary and Reading (VAR)

VAR is a standalone subject that is taught to Key Stage 3 pupils across the curriculum. The lessons are taught by staff from a range of subject areas and pupils will have one lesson every two weeks. Through these lessons, we hope to give pupils more opportunity to read for enjoyment and develop a more extensive (tier 2) vocabulary which will allow them to gain confidence with reading and comprehension across the curriculum.

### Initial Assessment

All pupils are tested using the New Group Reading Tests in the first few weeks of Year 7. Testing drills down into pupils' individual reading knowledge, identifying any specific deficit and provides teachers with precise information about the gaps in knowledge using LASS tests.

The LASS test comprises eight standardised tests covering reasoning, reading, phonic decoding, spelling, visual and auditory-verbal memory and phonological awareness. The tests quickly identify any difficulties related to dyslexia or those caused by underlying cognitive problems in phonology and/or memory, highlighting any differences between a pupil's actual and expected literacy levels. This information is used to provide the correct support for pupils.

Pupils with identified needs may be re-tested in Year 8 and Year 9 and while no additional testing takes place beyond Year 9, reading support may continue until the end of Year 11.

### Reading Support

***For those pupils not reading accurately there is a phonics programme delivered by a trained teacher;***

A specific synthetic phonic program (Ruth Miskin) is used for a small number of pupils identified by primary transition and/or NGRT scores.

Identified pupils tested using the LASS test and selected for individual specialist reading intervention using selected phonically decodable and structured books.

IDL support group for identified pupils during one form time per week. Current trial using Dyslexia Gold.

***For those not reading automatically, additional practice is put in place, including reading aloud;***

Additional literacy lessons in Year 7 for groups 3XA and 3ZB.

Year 7 paired reading using Year 10 readers to focus on word recognition and/or comprehension skills during form time once a week.

Library lesson for all pupils in Year 7 during English lessons on a half-termly basis.

### ***VAR Lessons for all pupils;***

After an introductory lesson, explaining the rationale behind VAR to pupils, lessons will generally follow the same format:

1. Retrieval practice – recapping the five words from the previous week.
2. Introduction of this week's 'wonder words' – allowing pupils time to try and figure out the meanings of the words and then exploring the definitions and the etymology of the word.
3. Reading a text as a class – ideally the teacher will read to the class and they will follow with their own copy. In some circumstances, pupils may volunteer to read but pupils should not be forced to read.
4. Reflection on this week's wonder words – can pupils use them correctly in context?

**At the end of each term, a reflection lesson will be provided where pupils will complete activities/games/quizzes to check their vocabulary knowledge/use.**

### **Year 7**

- From September to Christmas, pupils will be given a booklet of short stories. This has been designed to expose them to a range of different styles/genres/eras.  
H.G. Wells – The Red Room, Ken Liu's 'The Paper Menagerie'
- **'Ghost Boys'** by Jewell Parker Rhodes. A heart breaking and powerful story about a black boy killed by a white police officer, drawing connections with real life history.