

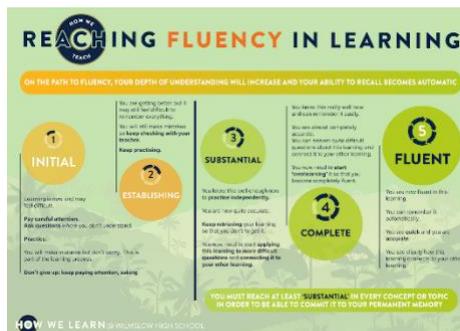
## HITs Reading

The Matthew Effect: *The word rich get richer and the word poorer get poorer*

*1 in 6 people in the UK have very poor literacy levels* (National Literacy Trust)

*Reading aloud is the foundation for literacy development. It is the single most important activity for reading success* (Neumna, Coople, and Bredekamp 2000)

*Some educators say that it's narrow to focus on maths and literacy, but there is nothing as narrowing as not being able to read and write to an adequate level. These basics have clearly been affected by interrupted education, right the way through the system.* (Tim Oates, Interrupted Learning)



We are all aware of the significant impact the pandemic has had on our students' learning. Student engagement with the formal curriculum, their learning habits, their achievements, and academic progress have been severely interrupted. Everything needed to be a successful learner pre-Covid has become even more critical. We have all had to adapt, reflect, and respond to the ever-changing situation and the immediate learning needs of our students. One of our responses has been the further development of our Key Stage 3 HITs (High Impact Teaching) programmes.

Our flagship HITs Literacy programme has had significant impact on academic progress, achievements and student's self-efficacy. As such, our HITs provision has been valued and celebrated by students and parents for several years. With a focus on tier two vocabulary (academic words), reading fluency, oracy (academic talk) and used writing practice students have made accelerated progress. In May 2019 Ofsted said:

*"The school's HITs groups provide a unique and effective approach to tackle pupils' weaknesses in English...The teaching to support pupils' literacy skills is skillfully focused and pupils catch up quickly."*

Developed in September 2022, our HITs Reading programme is designed to improve the reading fluency of our students. You may well ask; why is reading fluency so important? The answer is simple; **greater fluency allows students to become more successful learners because it frees up cognitive load and makes learning less effortful.**

Current HITs Reading students were identified for the programme following the completion of our bespoke reading diagnostic. Over 250 students have been involved in this process, which assesses a student's reading speed and accuracy as well as their comprehension of a text and ability to detect inference. Two Year 7 HITs Reading groups are mid-way through their 10 week cycle. The students have been focusing on developing their tier two vocabulary, and improving their oracy and reading fluency using the text *A Monster Calls* by Patrick Ness. Cycle 2 of the HITs Reading programme is scheduled to begin during half term 5.

### **What are students saying about HITs Reading?**

*I feel so much better about my spelling and reading, I get to practice more, and I don't feel rushed.*

*This is giving me the chance to learn new words and join in and practice reading.*

*I'm reading a lot more now!*

*It's very helpful when we read aloud in unison together, we can all say the words confidently.*

*I enjoy it when we read aloud in pairs and when we take it in turns to read the character's dialogue, it helps me imagine what's happening in my mind.*

*Talking about what we've read is actually fun! It means we can say what we think and ask questions. I've learnt a lot about the story and other things from some of the other students.*

*Miss has taught us how to use our voice to bring the story to life, like how to say words written in italics/ bold. She makes us all practice changing our tone or volume - it's entertaining and makes such a difference. It's not boring.*

*I don't feel silly reading in front of the others, we all do it and it's not stressful, even if we aren't sure.*

*It's a lively start to the day, the time flies as we are busy from the minute we come through the door. I even like getting to the lesson early to practice.*

### **What are parents saying about HITs Reading?**

*He suggested himself that he will go to the local library tonight and get two nice books.*

*That is great news. I think any intervention that you do is amazing so thank you for this, the kids are very lucky.*

*I just wanted to say how pleased I am that you are doing this. He hates reading, I've tried to help and encourage him for years. I don't know how good he is anymore, I think you'll have your work cut out, but thank you.*

### **Top tips to improve your child's reading fluency:**

#### **Reading habits:**

- Read for a minimum of 15 minutes each day in a supervised space with no distractions. For example, no additional sounds from TV/ music/ mobile phones.

#### **Reading diets:**

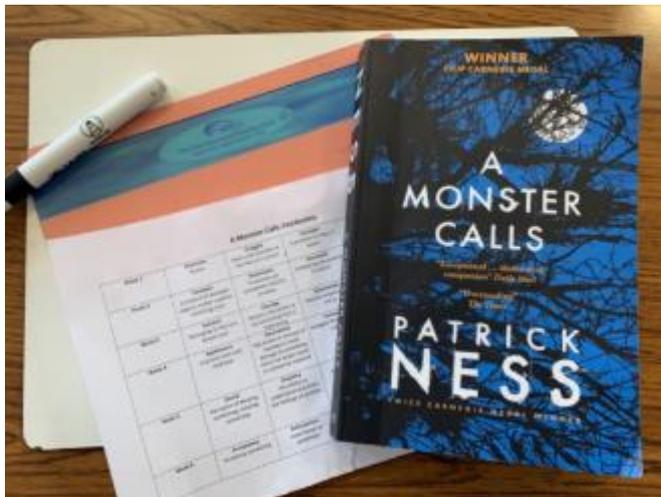
- Read appropriate material which is accessible whilst providing a 'good' level of challenge. For example, students should be able to read 95% of the text in order to comprehend it.
- Read complete texts. Try to avoid re-reading the same 'easy' book multiple times. This can be achieved by selecting short novels, reading extracts from novels, factual/news articles.

## How to support, check and engage with reading as a parent:

1. Read the same material as your child so that you can ask questions/ talk about the text.
2. Select key vocabulary that is relevant to the text and check their understanding of meanings. Key words/meanings can be made into quiz cards, fridge displays – make them visible and use them.
3. Read with your child. This can be done in a variety of ways:
  - a) take it in turns to read aloud to one another and follow with a quick fire quiz – competition can be fun!
  - b) paired reading in unison. Read a short extract together and follow with the instruction: summarise what we've read in 3 bullet points (spoken or written) – teamwork can be motivating!
4. Following reading time, check for understanding. Use some of these strategies: true or false, spot the error, select the best answer, sketch what's just happened, find the odd one out
5. Demonstrate and model a positive attitude towards reading, promote reading as a valuable life skill and focused activity.

## Next Week: HITs Handwriting

For more information contact: Ms C Boden Key Stage 3 Raising Attainment Lead  
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HITs Reading equipment: novel, vocabulary grid, reading ruler, white board and pen

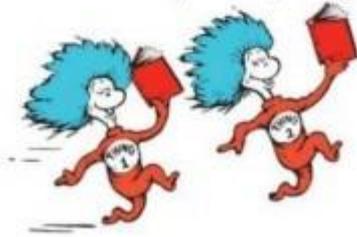
### A Monster Calls

**Extract:** In the pale **half-light of the moon**, he could clearly see the **church tower** up on the **small hill** behind his **house**, the one with the **train tracks** curving beside it...the moon shone, too, on the **graveyard** attached to the church, filled with **tombstones** you could hardly read anymore.



Example of a 30 second sketch to check for understanding:

The MORE  
that you read,  
the MORE things  
you will know.  
The MORE that you  
LEARN,  
the MORE places you'll go.



"The books transported her into new worlds  
and introduced her to amazing people who  
lived exciting lives."



Matilda by Roald Dahl