



**Brighton Hill
Community
School**

Making success inevitable

Literacy across the Curriculum

Parent Collaboration Meeting 15th December 2025

Our Literacy action strands:

- Disciplinary literacy is incorporated into subject curricula through the developing use of authentic, academic texts, targeted vocabulary instruction and explicit development of oracy skills.
 - Staff are aware of the term 'disciplinary literacy' and how to promote it in their individual subject areas
 - Each subject curriculum contains at least one authentic disciplinary text per year group per term as a minimum.
 - All challenging texts include literacy-based tasks to support student understanding
 - Targeted vocabulary instruction is provided in each module of the curriculum
 - Termly explicit opportunities are provided for structured talk to develop oracy skills
- Consistent and robust literacy tutor reading programme.
- Reading interventions



Why these strands?

IMPROVING LITERACY IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS

Summary of recommendations

1

Prioritise 'disciplinary literacy' across the curriculum



- Literacy is key to learning across all subjects in secondary school and a strong predictor of outcomes in later life.
- Disciplinary literacy is an approach to improving literacy across the curriculum that emphasises the importance of subject specific support.
- All teachers should be supported to understand how to teach students to read, write and communicate effectively in their subjects.
- School leaders can help teachers by ensuring training related to literacy prioritises subject specificity over general approaches.

2

Provide targeted vocabulary instruction in every subject



- Teachers in every subject should provide explicit vocabulary instruction to help students access and use academic language.
- Effective approaches, including those related to etymology and morphology, will help students remember new words and make connections between words.
- Teachers should prioritise teaching Tier 2 and 3 vocabulary, which students are unlikely to encounter in everyday speech.
- Teachers and subject leaders should consider which words and phrases to teach as part of curriculum planning.

3

Develop students' ability to read complex academic texts



- Training focused on teaching reading is likely to help secondary school teachers teach their subject more effectively.
- To comprehend complex texts, students need to actively engage with what they are reading and use their existing subject knowledge.
- Reading strategies, such as activating prior knowledge, prediction and questioning can improve students' comprehension.
- Strategies can be introduced through modelling and group work, before support is gradually removed to promote independence.

4

Break down complex writing tasks



- Writing is challenging and students in every subject will benefit from explicit instruction in how to improve.
- Teachers can break writing down into planning, monitoring and evaluation, and can support students by modelling each step.
- Targeted support should be provided to students who struggle to write fluently, as this may affect writing quality.
- Teachers can use a variety of approaches, including collaborative and paired writing, to motivate students to write.

5

Combine writing instruction with reading in every subject



- Combining reading activities and writing instruction is likely to improve students' skills in both, compared to a less balanced approach.
- Reading helps students gain knowledge, which leads to better writing, whilst writing can deepen students' understanding of ideas.
- Students should be taught to recognise features, aims and conventions of good writing within each subject.
- Teaching spelling, grammar and punctuation explicitly can improve students' writing, particularly when focused on meaning.

6

Provide opportunities for structured talk



- Talk matters: both in its own right and because of its impact on other aspects of learning.
- High quality talk is typically well-structured and guided by teachers.
- Accountable talk is a useful framework to ensure talk is high quality, and emphasises how talk can be subject specific.
- Teachers can support students by modelling high quality talk, for example including key vocabulary and metacognitive reflection.

7

Provide high quality literacy interventions for struggling students



- Schools should expect and proactively plan to support students with the weakest levels of literacy, particularly in Year 7.
- Developing a model of tiered support, which increases in intensity in line with need is a promising approach.
- Assessment should be used to match students to appropriate types of intervention, and to monitor the impact of interventions.
- Creating a co-ordinated system of support is a significant challenge requiring both specialist input and whole school leadership.

Our current literacy focus areas:

Our current action plan focuses on these key areas.

Vocabulary
and word
consciousness

Oracy to support
writing

Tutor Literacy
Programme

Why is Literacy important?

Young people who leave school without good literacy skills are held back at every stage of life. Their outcomes are poorer on almost every measure, from health and wellbeing, to employment and finance. The most recent estimates suggest that low levels of literacy cost the UK economy at least £20 billion a year. In secondary schools, the challenge of improving literacy is fundamental.

EEF (2018)



Why is Literacy important?

The habitual act of **'learning to read'**, and going on to **'read to learn'**, is an ever-present part of school life...

For those pupils who lack reading skill, being confronted with reading failures so frequently is a sure-fire way to diminish their enjoyment of and will to engage in school.

Alex Quigley (2020)



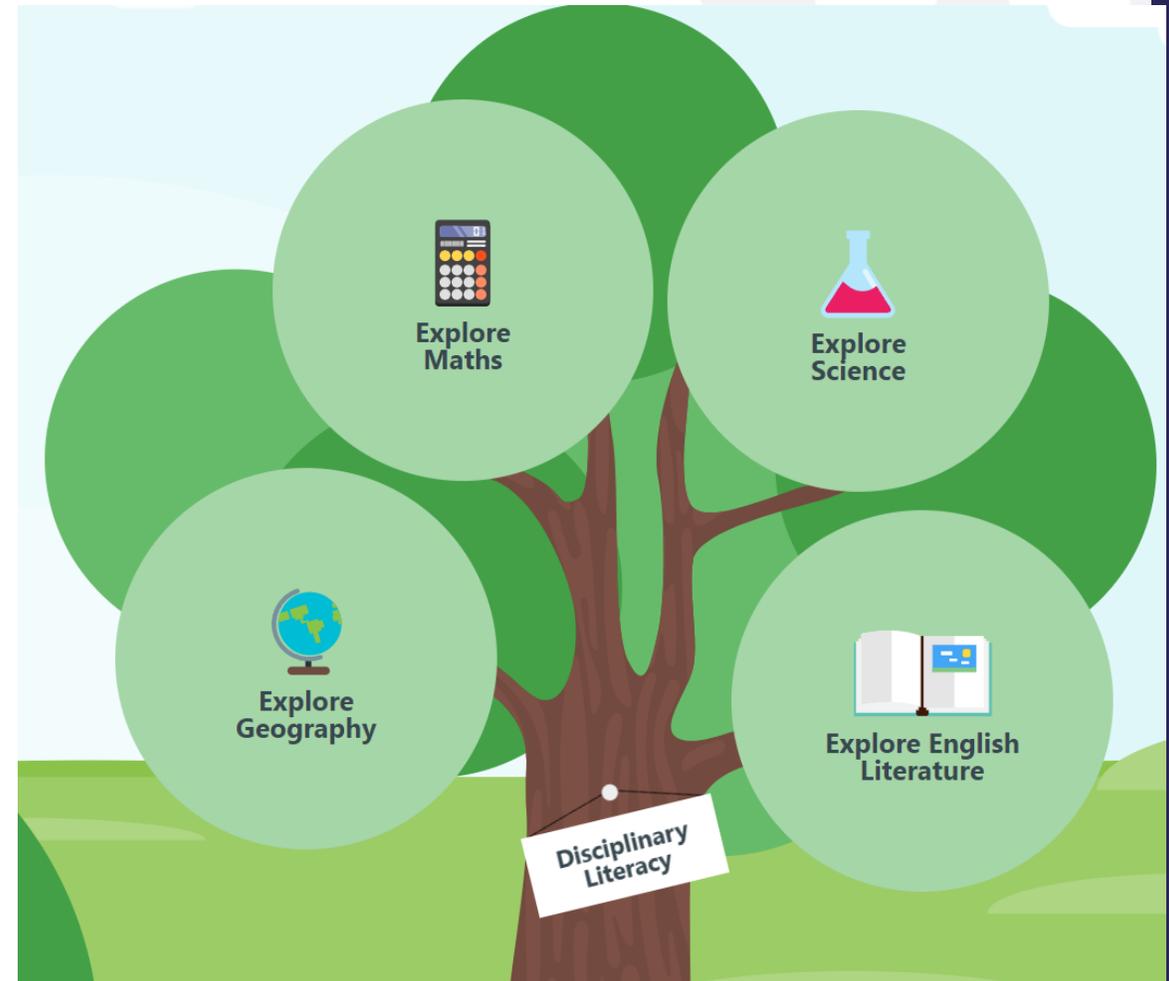
Disciplinary Literacy

We support students understanding and development of literacy across all subjects.

Disciplinary Literacy is simply how we consider the very different approach each subject needs to take to Literacy due to unique demands of each subject.

We are continuing our development on disciplinary literacy and ensuring we are explicitly teaching students subject-specific vocabulary.

Additionally, we have supported staff with their knowledge of disciplinary literacy across their subject.



What each faculty does:

Disciplinary literacy is incorporated into subject curricula through the developing use of authentic, academic texts, targeted vocabulary instruction and explicit development of oracy skills.

- At least one authentic disciplinary text with literacy-based tasks to support student understanding per term.
- ALL challenging texts to include literacy-based tasks to support student understanding
- Targeted vocabulary instruction
- Structured talk/oracy opportunities – at least once per term



What this might look like across the school – e.g. in Science:

Our Science faculty have literacy-specific lessons to introduce key vocabulary and concepts.

They start with introducing the title of an article, asking students to make a prediction.

They link, where possible, to etymology (word roots), to give students the tools to unpick complex scientific language.

Following this, they use questions and images to secure understanding of a text and concept.

Here are some sample slides:

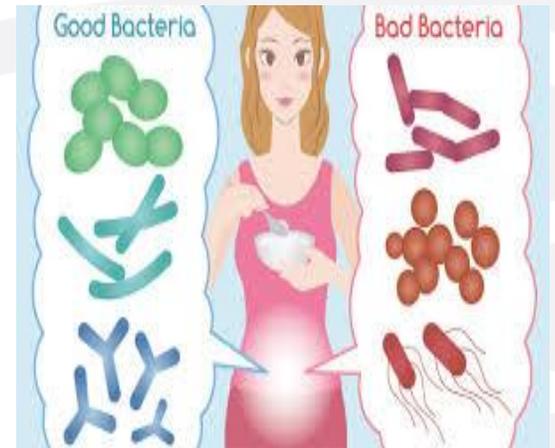


Silent starter: Pre-reading activity.

We will be reading an article called ‘**How do microbes shape fruit fly fitness?**’

Look at the picture and discuss what you think the article is about?

How does the picture make you feel?



Question time:

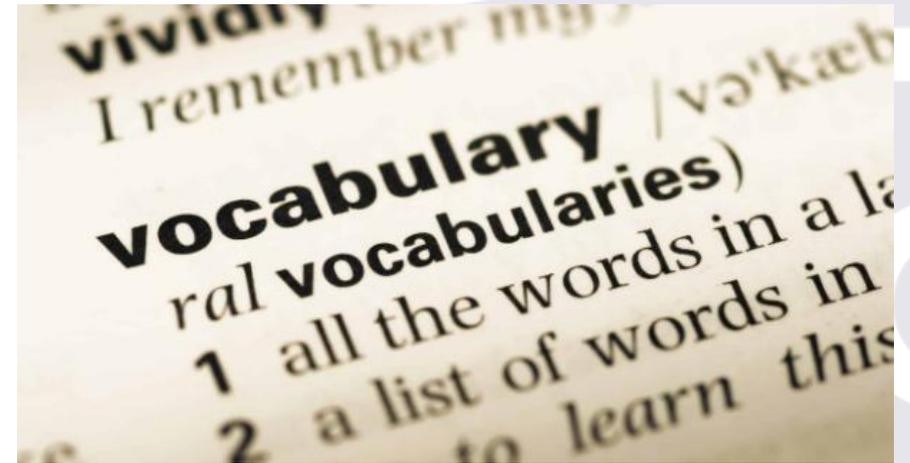
1. What is biological fitness? Why is it important?
2. Why did the scientists use a model organism to study the impact of the gut microbiome on its host's fitness traits?
3. How did germ-free flies compare to those with a microbiome?
4. How do we know that bacteria in the microbiome interact with each other and their host?

Vocabulary support for our students

An element of literacy we are focusing on this year is vocabulary and how we can support understanding of key vocabulary across different subjects.

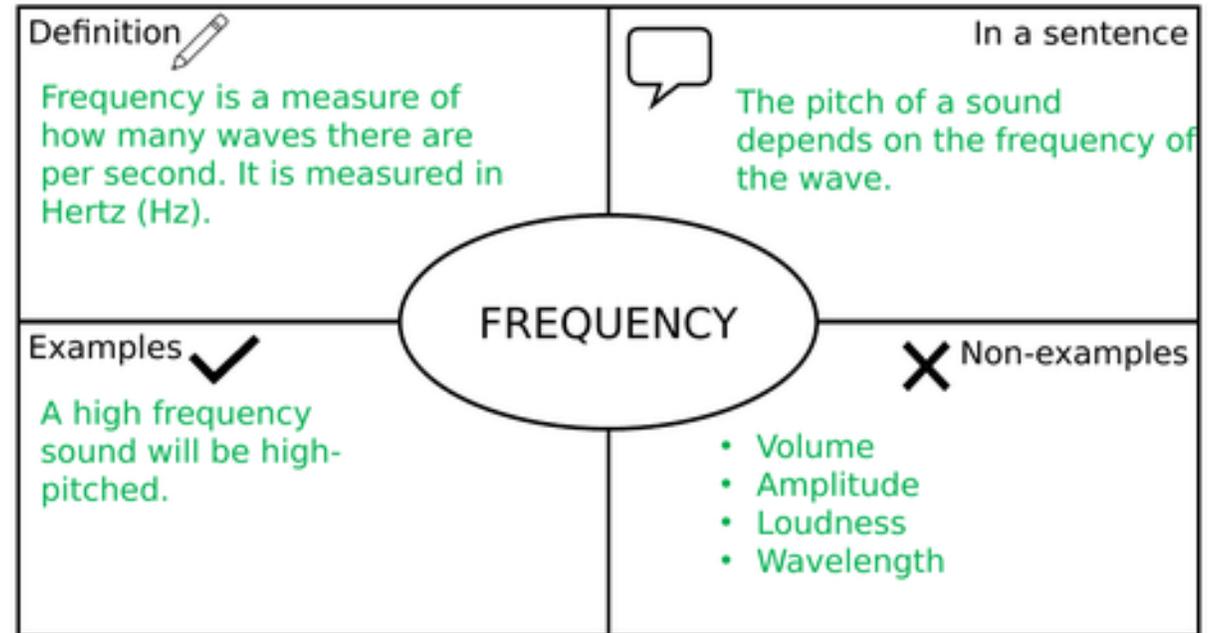
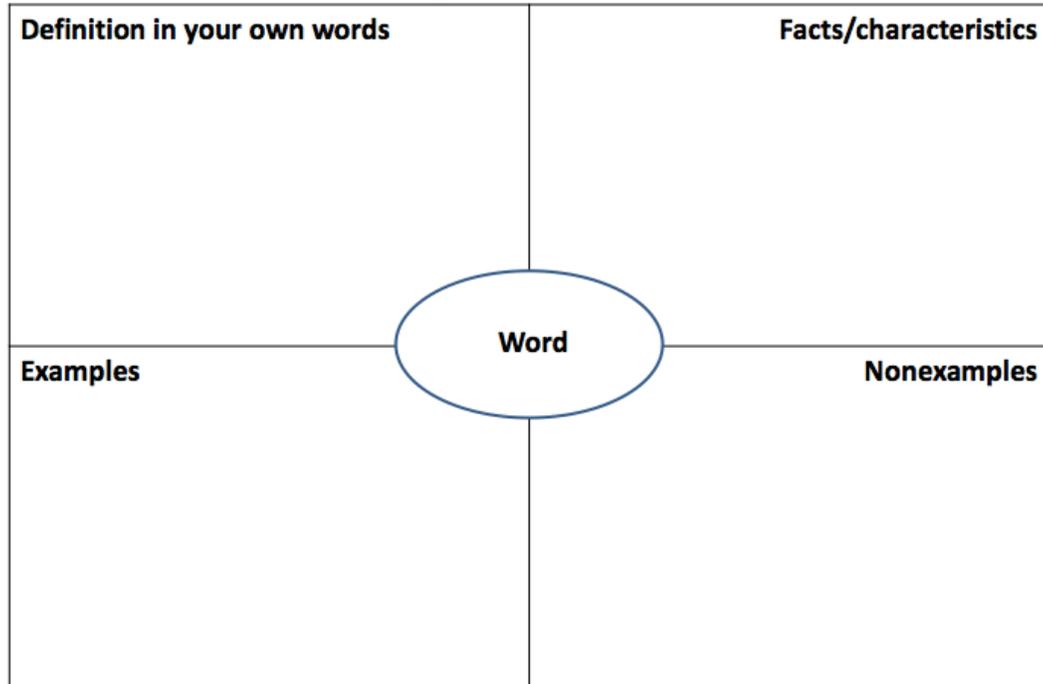
We share a 'word of the week' which is shared with all pupils through our tutor daily Powerpoints. Students are encouraged to use this vocabulary within their lessons and are able to gain house points!

It is our mission to ensure our students feel confident using the right vocabulary across their subjects.



The Frayer Model

Frayer Model



Vocabulary and word consciousness

“Simply stated, word consciousness refers to **awareness** of and **interest** in words and their **meaning**...This awareness involves an appreciation of the **power of words**, an understanding of **why certain words are used** instead of others, and a sense of the words that could be used in place of those selected by the writer or speaker.”

Graves (2008)

“when children develop word consciousness, it **initiates a new way of thinking** that can prove of **life-long worth** for our students.”

Quigley (2018)



How we develop word consciousness in our students

1. Modelling, recognising and encouraging adept diction
2. Promoting word play
3. Providing rich and expressive instruction
4. Involving students in original investigation
5. Teaching students about words



Word play

- The Gift of Words research project lasted 7 years and aimed to develop word consciousness.
- One successful approach:
 - **Talk about the language used by good authors** and provide **scaffolded opportunities** for students to **experiment** with this language
 - This approach can work in ‘**creative**’ and ‘**fact-based**’ subjects
 - English and Foreign Languages
 - Scientific experiments
 - Travel and tourism report writing

Original investigation of words - Etymology

- Taking the opportunity to look at **where words originate** from is a fruitful way of building word consciousness.
- This can happen in any subject!
- Geography – maps lesson
 - Reference to **Atlas**
 - Etymology of:
 - **latitude** (from Latin latitudo "breadth, width, extent, size,")
 - **longitude** (from Latin longitudo "length, long duration")
 - Link to **altitude** (from Latin altitudinem (nominative altitudo) "height, altitude")
- Looking at how words originate also allows us to focus on **root words, prefixes and suffixes.**
 - Allows for links to be made across disciplines
 - Predict = pre + dict
 - dictator, dictionary, indicate, contradict, addict among many, many others.

Oracy development

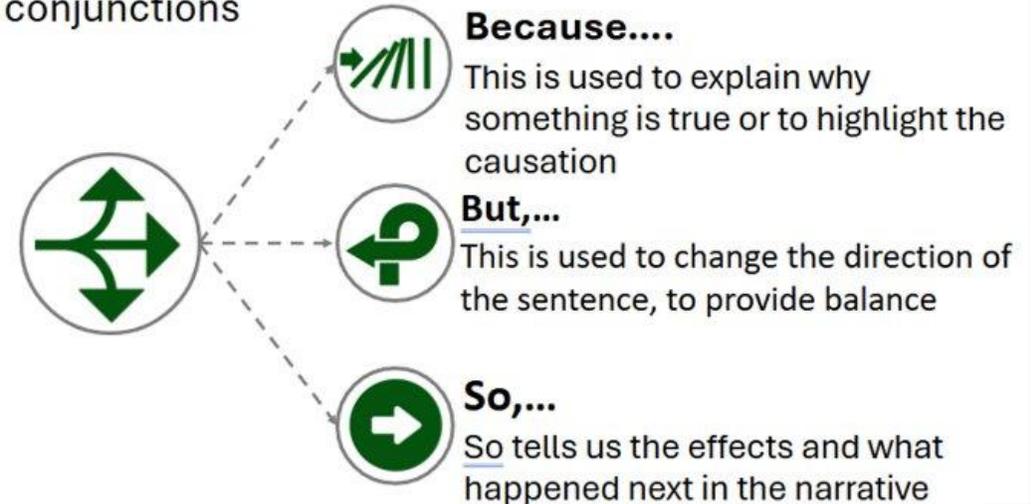
We have been working on developing oracy across the school. This includes giving our students the opportunity to express and showcase their ideas in the classroom.

We have embedded debating activities in our Deep Learning Days.

Furthermore, we have developed an approach where oracy supports writing through the use of **because**, **but**, **so**.

Because, But and So

This is a simple writing exercise that teaches students to think analytically whilst getting working with basic conjunctions



Tutor Reading Programme

Tutor literacy booklets have been created for tutor time, exploring challenging texts with a variety of viewpoints and ideas, aiming to both develop cultural capital and expose students to classic literature.

We are particularly focussing on improving our diverse representation across our tutor reading programme by working closely with Equality and Rights Advocates and the Race Equality Group.

This year we have also introduced more examples of non-fiction texts.

Tasks in the tutor booklets focus on skill building around oracy, comprehension, and word recognition; transferable skills for every subject.

Year 7 literacy booklet: Spring Term



Contents

Week 1-2: p.3-5

Week 3-4: p.6-10

Week 5-6: p.10-14

Week 7-8: p.15-19

Week 9-10: p.20-22

Week 11-12: p.23-26

Reflective task: p.27

Book Tracker: p28 – Track the books you have read this term during silent reading sessions in tutor.



Read along
with your ruler



Speak in full
sentences

Reading regularly is one of the most **powerful** things you can do to **develop** your brain, **grow** your vocabulary and **broaden** your world.

Listening to someone read challenging texts out loud can have a very positive and rapid impact on your reading age. (Westbrook, 2019).

Name: _____

Tutor Group and Tutor: _____



Tutor Reading Programme

What are we trying to achieve?

1. *Exposure to literary 'greats' alongside a diverse range of contemporary and historical texts, covering a broad range of experiences and issues*
2. *Practising literacy skills in an environment where students can make errors and discuss misconceptions*
3. *Build confidence approaching unfamiliar words and texts and develop enjoyment of reading*

“
**THE MORE THAT
YOU READ, THE MORE
THINGS YOU WILL KNOW.
THE MORE THAT YOU
LEARN, THE MORE PLACES
YOU'LL GO.**

Dr. Seuss

Tutor Reading Programme

Week 1-2: Pre reading activities
An article: The Black Rhino, an endangered species



What might it look like?

What animals do you know of that have become extinct?
Can you think of any that are near extinction?

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What can people do to help preserve habitats and protect animals?

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What do you already know about the Black Rhino?

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Before reading an extract, students will engage in a pre-reading activity.

These questions will help them connect to any prior knowledge they have regarding the topic they will begin to look at.

Tutor Reading Programme

What might it look like?

Your task: List everything you have learned about Rhinos.



Task 2: What other words do you associate with this word? Create synonyms.

Endangered

Define:

Why is it important to raise awareness of **endangered** species?

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What can people do to help protect the **endangered** Rhino?

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Students will engage with the extract and focus on specific vocabulary that is mentioned.

They will be given a word which they will explore and link to other words they may know.

Students will also be asked to use the following word in a sentence and answer questions.



Tutor Reading Programme

What might it look like?



Week 3-4: Literacy skills - Root words

A root word is the base word to construct a longer word with a slightly different meaning.

Understanding how to structure words will help us when spelling and constructing longer words. It will also help when we read a text and don't understand a word, we can deconstruct it to help us!

First, we need to understand what a prefix and a suffix is:

Prefix - letters placed before the root word.

Suffix - letters placed after the root word.

Example: → **Un employ ment**

The prefix here is un - which means not / against / opposite

The root word is employ - give work to someone.

The suffix here is ment - which is a condition or state of being.

When you put your understanding of all these words together then you get the following meaning. A person who is in a state of not having a job or work.

Task: → Find as many words as you can from the root word given. Remember that the root word can go at the beginning, middle or end of the new word.
GOLD TARGET: Can you find two examples of your own?

Root word	What other words can be made from this root?
Use	
Friend	
Faith	
Act	
Cycle	
Be	
Fix	

Students will also broaden their writing skills and be exposed to other literacy skills which they can embed into their lessons.

This week's focus is on root words.

Year 7 Reading Together programme

This year we have implemented a reading programme for year 7.

Every Friday afternoon, our year 7 tutor groups takes part in a shared reading session.

During this time, your child's tutor reads a novel aloud while the tutor group follows along using their own copy of the book.

This helps develop comprehension, vocabulary, and a love of reading.





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Thank you

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