

FOCUS THIS WEEK

APOSTROPHES

- Possession
- Abbreviation
- See Page 4

# Literacy News

SPRING TERM, PART 1

011: 22ND JANUARY 2018

## Discover Literacy

Discover covers our key stage 3 humanities provision, including religion and philosophy, history and geography.

As soon as pupils enter the Discover classroom they are submerged in a wealth of visual stimuli. The walls are covered with all manner of display work, mixing teacher prepared resources with pupil produced material. In a veritable feast of text and images designed to excite and support learning in this very popular subject area, displays include subject aspects as well as literacy and numeracy support reminders.

Every lesson is built around key words and concepts, whether that be 'succession' in history or the Islamic 5 Pillars or the environmental impact of plastics. Pupils are expected to explore the root, structure and meaning of keywords even before embarking on their voyage of discovery into the topic. Word searches involve looking up meaning, as well as identifying words. This is something that has especially excited the current year 7 class as they scurry to dictionary corner to seek definitions and origins of new words, racing to be the first to find it. Sometimes dictionaries are compared, in an effort to find the clearest meaning. It is a fundamental building block to any successful lesson: pupils must know and understand the key vocabulary with which they are expected to work.

Word lists and spellings are always made available for lessons, to help encourage the best use of appropriate, specialist vocabulary. This is something all good teachers seek to achieve, but especially in subjects with challenging terminology we remember to support pupils through repetition and reinforcement. Sometimes just pronouncing words in Discover can be a challenge, as different languages contribute key terms, this being especially relevant to the religions we study. Again, this is why we look at roots and meanings as we encounter words, for that also helps pupils remember terms like Chronos, chronology and chronological.

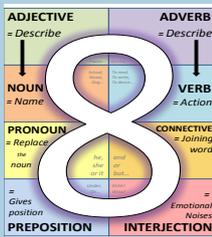
The tasks we set pupils in Discover are always word rich, but as with other departments, we support vocabulary with carefully chosen illustrative graphics – pictures, emoticons or diagrams. And

there is a lot of reading. We love to share reading as a fundamental part of each lesson so that pupils can all contribute in public reading, albeit that the sentences might be very brief. This allows us to complete traditional comprehension style tasks (responding to questions, blank filling, etc.) but more often to make a game or puzzle of the task. Recently we had a grid of facts that pupils had to link with the relevant British monarch, as we had been studying the latter Henrys, Mary and Elizabeth. Pupils love the challenge of testing their knowledge and decoding the task it seems.

A major issue we have in Discover is that there is often no one right answer, and even the text or artefact we are looking at might not provide straightforward information. We therefore have to do a great deal of work around inference and opinion. Helping pupils develop their social literacy as they learn to express views around sensitive issues like faith, or their emotional literacy as they consider motives and behaviours in history or environmental areas, requires that they consider the impact their words might have on another person. Of course the pupils also have to develop a sense of ownership of views. 'I think...' or 'I believe...' or 'Some people believe...' are generally indicators of a more correct answer in this room, which is often very difficult for pupils to grasp. We know many of our pupils need support to develop empathy, and to deal with the many shades of grey, preferring a place where there is one achievable right answer. Discover is a huge challenge for some of our pupils, but their engagement and achievement levels show we are providing a secure and inspiring environment for them to enjoy exploring some of the more lifelong areas of learning.

In summary, in every lesson, literacy in Discover is supported by:

- A stimulating environment
- Keywords for the lesson
- Resources with visual & verbal balance
- Wall displays include key grammar reminders
- Varied, short reading & writing tasks
- Focus on repetition of words and skills



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**Every Lesson A Literacy Lesson**

# Spring Term Ladders

21 January 2018					
Accelerated Reader Quiz League II					
		Quizzes	100.00%	Accuracy average	Points earned
<b>1<sup>st</sup></b>	<b>Jay</b>	3	3	100.00%	17.0
<b>2<sup>nd</sup></b>	<b>Bradley</b>	1	1	100.00%	5.0
<b>3<sup>rd</sup></b>	<b>Tristan</b>	7	6	98.60%	5.0
	<b>TJ</b>	5	3	80.00%	1.9
	<b>Josh C</b>	1	0	60.00%	1.8
	<b>George</b>	2	2	100.00%	1.0
	<b>Denham</b>	1	1	90.00%	0.9
	<b>Reece P</b>	1	1	100.00%	0.5
<b>Totals</b>		<b>21</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>91.08%</b>	<b>33.1</b>
			80.95%		
<b>Weekly School Pass Rate = 100%</b>					

## WORD RACE

21 January 2018

	Quizzes		Word Count	
	Passed	Taken	Term	This week
<b>Jay</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>113,639</b>	<b>73,555</b>
<b>Tristan</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>21,988</b>	<b>17,869</b>
<b>Josh C</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>18,192</b>	
Denham	1	1	6,522	
George	2	2	2,152	
TJ	4	5	864	
Reece P	1	1	358	358
Bradley	1	1	145	
<b>Totals</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>163,860</b>	<b>91,782</b>

### Northern House: Words Read

# 914,530

“Read,  
read,  
read!”

Alex Wheatle to NH  
pupils, December 2017

Cigarette: You pick up the burnt cigarette, hand rolled in red argyle paper, and waft in the distinct smell of tobacco. Your encyclopaedic mind whirs as you analyze the scent. Thuoc lao.

You're sure of it. This is a rare Vietnamese strand of tobacco that's very potent. Judging by the guy's teeth he's been smoking for a while.

# Updates

## CPD Recap: key stage 2 literacy summary

Last week we were fortunate to have another training session from our primary lead, as she concluded her series of overviews. I know many colleagues have marvelled at how much the primary English curriculum demands as pupils struggle with every aspect of spelling, punctuation and grammar. The complexity of the specific terms is often mind-boggling to adults, let alone a class of young children.

But, thanks to Katie, we all now know that this text includes all the different kinds of noun. Given that many colleagues will not have learned this themselves at school, it will be interesting to see how well you do at spotting and labelling them. You have your workbooks!

Being reminded of all the punctuation, the phonetics, the grammar terms, the sentence types, the vast number of named sentence openings and the like, that we have looked at during these sessions, we were made to feel in awe of both our primary colleagues and the pupils who are mastering these ideas. Indeed, we need to remember, that while just the glossary for the primary literacy curriculum runs longer than some of our entire secondary subject documents, this is just one of the subjects in a primary classroom.

Hats off to you all, but special thanks to Katie for raising our awareness and supporting development in literacy between the key stages.

## Promoting high expectations

As professionals, I'm sure we all edit and proofread our text before we print, publish or send it. But occasionally we make mistakes. So, always check and double check, as pupils need to always see punctuation used correctly, especially at the end of a sentence.

Encourage pupil engagement by making a game of catching the teacher out. Deliberate mistakes can help pupils realise everyone does make errors, but also makes them feel great about getting one over on the teacher. 'Oops, can anyone see where I forgot to put the question mark?' is a well worn phrase in English. So if you do notice an error in your carefully prepared resource, make sure you address it. Leaving errors unaddressed can undermine learner confidence and reinforce incorrect understanding.

Be especially careful when using technology that you have the UK dictionary set up. Sometimes the US one slips in unnoticed, leading to a flawed spell check.

If you are ever unsure of your grammar, use a colleague. Some of us check scones recipes with Sharon, or muscle names with Bryan or Emiliya. Use our linguists in the same way.

## CPD: AR REMINDERS

- Log in at the school portal.
- Star Reading reports provide you with basic reading information. Search my class to find your group.
- Accelerated Reader will provide data on book quiz performance and word count. It also shows progress towards reading targets that have now been set.
- All training and information is in the staff drive, under 1.Northern House 2017 > literacy.

### What You Should Know

What is the reading level of the materials you are using?

What else might cause difficulty accessing the resource?

### Pupil Input

We are looking to start producing a pupil version of this newsletter this half term.

We want to showcase the best of our students' work, but also have staff input.

Please keep your eyes open for examples of literacy progress.

### More Reading

Random mugging: It wasn't. Mardler is not the brightest.

### EVENTS

*Dead body: His clothes are old but well kept. He has a head of short black hair and thin marks on his face around his eyes. A broken pair of glasses lies beside the body.*

*You look at his weathered hands. There are small chemical burns on his fingers and bits of charcoal and sulphur underneath his nails. Further up his arm you see an old scar from a bullet wound that's healed up from at least a year ago.*

# Alternative Reading: More Interactive Fiction

## Victorian Detective

### The Shakespearean Bomber

Written by Peter Carlson

Morning sunlight lazily struggles through the opaque smog of London. You crouch over a **dead body** in the alleyway of Lilt Street, thumbnail between your teeth in thought.

There's a half-smoked **cigarette** beside the corpse. Interesting...

"Looks like a **random mugging**," says your partner, Mardler. You're both detectives for Scotland Yard. "No identification on the victim. He was shot point blank, and his

wallet was stolen. He was just in the wrong place at the wrong time."

"It wasn't a **random mugging**," you reply.

"You just want this to be exciting because the chief took you off the **mystery bomber** case," laughs Mardler.

You need some evidence to show Mardler that this wasn't random, how about the fact that the corpse was...

...once a chemist

...smoking a cigarette

...familiar with combat

More detail on the highlighted clues is found in this document. This is another example of the more engaging text that can often engage boys better than conventional text.



# Apostrophes

Apostrophes are the most abused form of punctuation in English, and yet they should be so straightforward.

There are 2 rules.

## 1) Use an apostrophe to show omission.

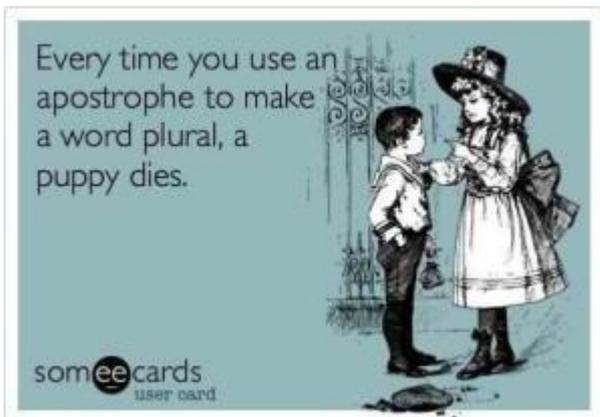
Examples: I am > I'm, do not > don't.

## 2) Use to show possession.

Examples: Dave's room, Mairead's group.

**NEVER USE AN APOSTROPHE FOR PLURALS.** This is the most common abuse of this mark, often called the greengrocer's apostrophe as it was so often mistakenly used on fruit and vegetable price signs. Never: Apple's, CD's & DVD's, burger's.

Also note that decades are the '90s not the 90's.



### FROM THIS WEEK

Please be on watch for use and abuse of apostrophes around the school.

Encourage pupils to use them correctly by building them into your lessons, for example using them in sample task answers or on the board when making notes.

If you need further help, ask!

### For more help:

<https://www.grammarly.com/blog/apostrophe/>

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/skillswise/factsheet/en29punc-l1-f-apostrophes>

### Common confusions

*Its v it's.* **It's** is only ever used for **it is**. The possessive **its** is never apostrophised. "It's poop." therefore means "It is poop." "Its poop." would be the poop the animal just did.

What if it ends in S? If the word ends in an S you don't need the extra S. Chris' book, The Moss' car.

Think, what belongs to what when you have too many s's? If you have a number of boys and books, it can be confusing.

- The boy's book = 1 boy, 1 book
- The boys' book = 2+ boys, one book
- The boys' books = 2+ boys and 2+ books
- The boy's books = 1 boy, 2+ books

But what about Chas & Dave songs?

Chas & Dave's songs = The songs of Chas & Dave

Chas' & Dave's songs = The songs of Chas and of Dave.

Chas & Dave's song's lyrics = You get the idea!