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# Literacy News

## The Second Million Achieved

### Accelerated Progress As Hard Work Pays Off

'Already?' was a common response to the news that our pupils have now read in excess of two million words over this academic year.

If you remember, we were celebrating hitting the first million at the end of January, and given that we have had closures of 2 weeks for half term, snow and training days, this second million really does seem to have come around very swiftly.

Last year, pupils read 300,000 words. *Accelerated Reader* had only arrived in school for the January re-start and therefore it took some time to get the whole process started. Some staff were leading the charge by trying to engage pupil in their support slots and a school wide development of reading was undertaken.

From a good foundation last year, it has been much simpler to progress reading since September. Primary staff and intervention specialists on the secondary side have continued to push pupils towards interesting books, towards supported and guided reading activities and towards celebrating their achievements at the completion of each text.

We have seen that our pupils place huge value on the time they can spend in their one-to-one sessions. They generally respect both the staff and the resources in ways we do not always see in the wider environment, often competing to get to work with those staff outside their scheduled sessions.

This year we have been fortunate to develop our resources and approaches. Adding new stock to the library is always a slow and painful process; engaging, well written texts seem to eat through funding alarmingly fast! However, we are finding our purchases effective as pupils read their way through popular works such as by Jeremy Strong, the 'Tom Gates' series and anything 'Dirty Bertie'. And word soon spreads.

The best recommendation of a title is always another pupil enjoying it and passing on their approval.

We also added the *Word Shark* software last term, which is really helping some learners with spelling and word recognition. Through **Book-buzz** last term and **World Book Day** this month, we have also ensured every pupil has had the opportunity to take a book home, with others earning books to reward their outstanding efforts in reading over the term.

This half term has seen the **6 Book Challenge**, inspired by the annual Reading Agency activity. Several pupils have stepped up to complete this, motivated in large part by the small rewards on offer.

Continuing to offer public and private acknowledgement of achievements, awarding certificates and other prizes, investing in different resources and encouraging competition are just some of the many tools at our disposal. Our goal is to give every pupil their own personal reading adventure, tailoring it to ensure they can make the most effective progress with this skill that underpins their whole learning experience. We aim to nurture literate individuals who can love all that books have to offer, giving them a gift for life as well as the skills to succeed in education.

Word count tracking is just one tool we use to monitor the rising engagement level of our pupils. Referencing success in quizzes against the pupil's ZPD & book choice is another. The current rise in those achieving 100% is another indicator that our approach is both effective and having an impact over time on progress.

The hard work has certainly paid off, but in two weeks time we return to school to start all over again. Can we get to 4 million this year? Which pupils will hit a personal million this year? I for one can't wait to see!

*Every Lesson A Literacy Lesson*

NOW ON

The 6 Book Challenge

# Spring Term Ladders

## Accelerated Reader Quiz League II

		Quizzes	100.00%	Accuracy average	Points earned
<b>1<sup>st</sup></b>	<b>Jay</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>91.50%</b>	<b>71.5</b>
<b>2<sup>nd</sup></b>	<b>Xander</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>82.00%</b>	<b>50.3</b>
<b>3<sup>rd</sup></b>	<b>Harvey C</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>85.70%</b>	<b>11.6</b>
	Aaron	11	7	93.60%	11.1
	Tristan	10	7	93.00%	7.6
	Dean	2	2	100.00%	5.0
	Bradley	10	8	94.00%	4.7
	Alex	2	1	95.00%	4.5
	Tyler H	7	4	91.40%	4.1
	Reece P	7	7	100.00%	3.5
	Theo	4	0	40.00%	3.5
	Denham	4	1	90.00%	3.2
	Danny	6	6	100.00%	3.0
	TJ	7	5	85.70%	2.9
	Jack P	10	4	67.00%	2.9
	Harvey R	5	3	88.00%	2.2
	Phoenix	4	2	90.00%	1.8
	Josh C	1	0	60.00%	1.8
	George	3	3	100.00%	1.5
	Armani	2	2	100.00%	1.5
	Josh T	3	1	93.30%	1.5
	Dominic	2	2	100.00%	1.0
	Callum	1	1	100.00%	0.5
<b>Totals</b>		<b>133</b>	<b>82</b>	<b>88.70%</b>	<b>201.2</b>
			61.65%		
<b>Weekly School Pass Rate = 89.8%</b>					

**2**  
**Million**  
**Words**  
**Read**

	Quizzes		Word Count	
	Passed	Taken	Term	This week
<b>Jay</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>488,904</b>	<b>42,943</b>
<b>Xander</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>411,608</b>	
<b>Harvey C</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>86,721</b>	<b>73,407</b>
Aaron	11	11	74,998	
Tristan	10	10	45,159	
Dean	2	2	32,435	
Theo	1	4	30,285	
Alex	2	2	29,639	
Denham	4	4	20,999	7,995
Josh C	1	1	18,192	
Tyler H	7	7	17,466	
Jack	7	10	8,027	1,172
Armani	2	2	6,230	
Phoenix	4	4	5,709	
Harvey R	5	5	5,137	
Danny	6	6	5,083	5,083
Josh T	3	3	4,788	
George	3	3	3,765	
Dominic	2	2	2,525	
Reece P	7	7	2,150	401
Bradley	10	10	2,024	137
Callum	1	1	1,568	
TJ	6	7	1,400	
<b>Totals</b>	<b>125</b>	<b>133</b>	<b>1,304,812</b>	<b>131,138</b>

**WORDS READ THIS YEAR**  
**2,049,696**

## In The News...

### From The Staffroom

This half term we have run two activities specifically for staff, as part of a warm up for next term’s challenges.

The staff **6 Book Challenge**, as expected, has been spectacularly unsuccessful, demonstrating just how hard it can be for even literate, well-intentioned individuals to achieve goals in reading. With all the demands of the workday, home and family life, it can be extremely difficult to find time for oneself to delve into reading purely for pleasure.

Having run this activity in other schools, the outcome is entirely as expected. Where it is useful though is to help staff reflect on the implications for pupils, when we puzzle about why they might not read at home, and to aid in setting personal targets.

As part of our well-being awareness, we know we must make time for ourselves in order to relax and de-stress, refresh and recharge our energy. Not everyone will do this through reading, but if you genuinely wanted to read more, assess your progress and set yourself a realistic target for the next half term.

### Book Borrowing and Exchanges


Thank you to the very generous offspring of our staff who have sent in books they have finished with at home. We have some great books around school now so please continue to bring in anything suitable that is unwanted.

We are also pleased to be building a wider reading community by lending books to staff and their families. Feel free to borrow our texts, but please return them to the area from which they came in a timely manner.

### Collaborative Writing

This is another project that can be a huge challenge to some staff. To produce a piece of writing in a short time frame, with all that can be going on in life, is impossible sometimes.

Remember, when you set a pupil a writing task, you define the context and parameters for the content as well as the timeframe. The task you set will target the pupil’s ability and learning needs. What it will not always do is allow for where the pupil’s head might be that day or what life issues might be going on. It will not necessarily feel engaging or purposeful to them in that moment, or be anywhere on their priority list. Use this activity as a chance to reflect and renew your understanding of some of the challenges our pupils face.

SIX BOOK	Passed	100%
 Aaron ✓	7	6
Danny ✓	6	6
Harvey R	5	3
Jack	4	2
Denham	3	1
Harvey C	3	-
Dean	2	2
Dominic	2	2
Alex	2	1
Josh T	2	-
Armani	1	1
Tyler H	1	-
Phoenix	1	-

### EVENTS

**This Week**

**12th—29th March**

**STAR Test Updates**

**Easter Break starts**  
*Enjoy your time away.*  
*All counts are reset next term.*

**ENDS THIS WEEK**

*The Six Book Challenge*

## Looking Ahead

### What’s coming next term?

We are currently revisiting the STAR tests and therefore will begin next term by reflecting on the progress of pupils using *Accelerated Reader*. This will not only allow us to reflect on and evaluate our approaches, but it will be an excellent opportunity to set the pupils more specific reading targets.

We will also be setting weekly challenges for the pupils to take on in order to try to earn extra rewards. Some of these will be school wide, others directly related to the individual.

Other events for the first session include:

- *Word Shark* challenge
- 6 Book Challenge 2
- Pupil book reviews
- Piloting the pupil reading log
- More library visits
- Staff data training

Looking further ahead, there will be a major literacy promotion around the football World Cup in June and hopefully another book giveaway.

We will obviously also be reviewing and resetting pupil literacy targets .

We look forward to another term of huge steps forward. Have a wonderful break

# Commas

## SIX COMMON RULES FOR COMMA USE

### 1. SERIES OF ADJECTIVES

Use a comma when a series of two or more adjectives modify a noun.

**SAL'S BAND PLAYS LOUD, ABRASIVE, COMPLEX MUSIC.**

### 2. SERIES OF ITEMS

Use a comma to separate three or more items in a series.

**ANNA'S GRANDMOTHER IS GOOD AT MAKING FUDGE, NURSING HURT ANIMALS, TENDING FRUIT TREES, TELLING STORIES, AND PLAYING SCRABBLE.**

### 3. FANBOYS – FOR, AND, NOR, BUT, OR, YET, SO

Use a comma before a coordinating conjunction that joins two complete sentences.

**GLENN WAS CRAVING KRISPY KREME DONUTS, BUT HE KNEW IT WAS A BAD IDEA TO EAT TOO MUCH SUGAR BEFORE GOING TO BED.**

### 4. INTRODUCTORY CLAUSES

Use a comma after material that introduces a complete sentence.

**NOTE:** There are six types of introductory clauses.

- **Since** my parents enjoy watching movies, they go every weekend. (Dependent word)
- **In** Mexico, the Day of the Dead is a traditional holiday. (Preposition)
- **To learn** ballroom dancing correctly, you should take lessons. (Infinitive verb = "to" + verb)
- **Walking** home from school, the young boy found a fifty-dollar bill. (Present participle)
- Dr. King **said**, "At the center of non-violence stands the principle of love." (Signal verb)

**ELAINE CAUGHT THE FLU. THEREFORE, SHE HAD TO MISS HER COUSIN'S WEDDING. (TRANSITIONAL WORD)**

### 5. NONESSENTIAL VS. ESSENTIAL CLAUSES

Use commas around a "nonessential clause," which is material that is extra information and does not change the meaning of the sentence when taken out.

**MY BROTHER, WHO IS SINGLE, LIVES IN NEW YORK CITY. (NONESSENTIAL)**

**MY BROTHER WHO IS SINGLE LIVES IN NEW YORK CITY. (ESSENTIAL)**

### 6. INTERRUPTERS

Use commas to set off information that "interrupts" the flow of a sentence. Interrupters can be emotional interjections (*oh, well, wow*), parenthetical expressions (*to be exact, in fact, it seems*), and transitional words (*moreover, however, therefore*).

**PEOPLE THINK MY ENGLISH ACCENT SOUNDS FAKE. MY GIRLFRIEND, HOWEVER, THINKS IT'S ATTRACTIVE.**