

'Reading is part of our culture':

At North Kesteven Academy, reading really does matter to us and as our *Reading Strategy* states, '**Reading (really) is Part of Our Culture**'. **We have been working closely with the Department for Education for over 12 months** to further enhance our approach to reading. Reading experts continue to provide high quality research-driven professional learning to our staff and this has helped us to continue to build an effective strategy to support our students.

What does this mean for your child?

This week, we will begin our annual reading tests for all Key Stage Three students.

Although no preparation is required on their part, it is crucial that your child applies themselves fully to the short test so that we are able to gain accurate results and effectively support their individual needs going forwards. All Key Stage Three students will also be completing their baseline vocabulary tests using ***Bedrock Learning* – a platform to support vocabulary development that can be accessed inside and outside of school**. This information alongside end of Key Stage Two data will be used to support their reading needs development at North Kesteven Academy.

We continue to build on our vocabulary focus with all students continuing to be provided with **Knowledge Organisers in every subject area, for every year group and every topic** – these invaluable resources provide your child with the most crucial vocabulary required to support their expert knowledge and learning. So, how does this help you? They are also a great tool for parents/carers to support their child outside of school. We will soon be providing our students with termly packs with guidance on how to get the most from their Knowledge Organisers. In addition, **all Key Stage Three students have a weekly *Reading Lesson*** where vocabulary development and reading development is targeted with the support of expert teachers. *Bedrock Learning* supports our students to develop using a bespoke personalised collection of texts which target their exact needs allowing them to grow their bank of vocabulary and understanding.

As part of our continued development, we are delighted to share with you the **incredibly exciting news this academic year of the launch of our brand-new *NK Reading Canon*: a collection of 24 specially selected texts across 6 different genres**. As part of their daily PDT sessions students will be reading one specific text per term collectively with their peers and tutors. The aim is to provide our students with a diverse and rich range of texts, develop sense of a shared value and foster a sense of love for reading. Daily reading from Year 7-10 is a fantastic way to start the day and is something that is highly valued by our students and staff. Our ambition is to foster a genuine love of reading and support our families by proving opportunities to engage in a diverse and rich range of texts. In addition, our **North Kesteven Academy Library** continues to thrive with an ever growing and changing range of books available to read in school or borrow so why not encourage your child to come and see what takes their interest?

Why are we focussing on development of reading?

Did you know that the average age of GCSE examination papers in England and Wales is 15 years and 7 months? Did you know that the average reading age of Year 11 students nationally is around 13 years? **Reading is without question a determining factor in not only educational and examination outcomes but also life chances.** Reading for just 20 minutes per day

exposes students to 1.4million words per year. It expands vocabulary, develops comprehension and can have a tremendous impact on levels of confidence and wellbeing. Anything you can do to support this at home is of high value to your child's future success!

With reading continuing to play a critical role in navigating and succeeding within twenty-first century society it is crucial that we work together to give your child the best possible life chances. Reading is not just 'an English thing' but a universal tool of communication which absolutely matters! Reading really is part of our culture and we are excited that your child is part of this.

Kind regards,

Mrs J Tunnicliffe
Headteacher