

Excellence in all we do



Castle View Academy
Summer Reading Challenge

‘There is more treasure in books than in
all the pirate’s loot on Treasure Island’
Walt Disney.

At Castle View Academy we believe that reading is one of the most important skills a child can develop throughout their education.

We see the Summer holidays as the perfect opportunity to develop these reading skills and prepare our new students for the wide variety of texts they will encounter at our school.

Please complete the tasks in this booklet and bring it with you for your first day in September. We look forward to seeing all the reading you've done.

Week 1

Below is an extract from the novel *Once* by *Morris Gleitzman*. It is the story of a young Jewish boy, Felix, who is determined to escape the orphanage where he lives.

In this extract, Felix witnesses Nazi soldiers destroying books in the orphanage library. Read the extract and answer the questions on the next page.

Mother Minka was complaining to us library monitors only last week that the library was very messy and needed a tidy-up. She must have got sick of waiting for us to do it and called in professional librarians in professional librarian armbands. They've reorganised the library and now they're burning the books that are left over.

No wonder Mother Minka is so upset. I bet she didn't give them permission to do that.

Me and Mum and Dad would have taken those books. We love all books, even old tatty ones.

I can't watch anymore.

I turn away from the smoke and flames and hurry down to Mother Minka's office. Rather than risk mentioning Mum and Dad out there, I'll wait for her to come back inside.

I stand by her desk.

Suddenly a voice yells at me. It's not Mother Minka, it's a man's voice, and he's shouting in a foreign language.

I turn, trembling.

In the doorway stands one of the librarians. He's glaring at me very angrily.

'This isn't a library book' I say, pointing to my notebook. 'It's my notebook'

The librarian scowls and takes a step towards me.

I'm confused. Why would Mother Minka call in foreign librarians? Perhaps people who don't speak Polish are faster library tidiers because they don't get tempted to read the books before they tidy them.

Mother Minka hurries into the room. She looks very unhappy. I'm starting to think this isn't a good time to ask her about Mum and Dad.

'What are you doing here?' she demands.



Word Watch

Orphanage - a residential institution for the care and education of those without parents.

Librarian - a person in charge of or assisting in a library

Nazi - a member of the National Socialist German Workers' Party. This group of people began WWII and carried out the Holocaust.

Holocaust - the mass murder of Jewish people under the German Nazi regime during the period 1941–5.

Questions:

- 1.) In the first paragraph which words suggest that the new librarians might not really be there to look after the books?
- 2.) What phrase tells you that Felix is upset by what he sees happening in the library?
- 3.) Choose the word that suggests Felix is feeling scared. Explain why it suggests he's feeling scared.
- 4.) When the new librarian steps towards Felix what do you think he is going to do?
- 5.) Why do you think Mother Minka is so angry with Felix being in the library?

Challenge:

Continue the story with what you think happens next to Felix in the library....

Week 2

Below is an extract from the novel *Pigeon English* by Stephen Kelman. It is the story of Harrison who moves from Ghana to a London estate with his mum and older sister. His Dad, Grandmother and baby sister remain in Ghana. Harrison finds adjusting to life in the London difficult and thinks of home often.

In this extract, Harrison is remembering a time when he helped his father build the family shop in Ghana. Read the extract and answer the questions on the next page.

I made the roof for Papa's shop proper strong. Papa loved it, you could tell. He said it would last longer than him and me put together. It will keep everything dry when it rains and Papa nice and cool when it's sunny. We made the roof out of chemshi and wood. Papa made the frame of wood and then we put the chemshi on top. I put the bolts on. He only helped me with the first one, I did the rest on my own. It was easy. When it rains the noise is mighty loud. It makes the rain feel even stronger. You feel safe under the chemshi. You feel strong because you made it yourself.

It took donkey hours to build the roof. When we finished the shop looked more dope-fine than before. Me and Papa drank a whole bottle of beer to celebrate. Papa had most of it but I had one bit. I didn't get boozed, it was just lovely, it made my burps taste like burning. Mamma and Lydia and Agnes and Grandma Ama all came to greet the new shop. They loved it as much as we did, you could tell. Everybody was smiling from ear to ear.

Mamma: 'Did you make that all yourself? Clever boy'

Me: 'Papa helped me'

Grandma Ama: 'Was he a good worker?'

Me: 'He's a bit lazy.'

Papa: 'Eh! Gowayou!'

Me: 'I'm only joking'

We hung a lantern from the roof so the shop can stay open at night. The lantern was Agnes's favourite bit. Babies always love things that hang or swing. They always try to touch it even if it's hot. She cried when the lantern burned her fingers. I sucked them all better again. I'm the best at sucking them better, my spit has healing in it.

Papa makes the best things. His chairs are always the softest and his tables are strong enough to stand on. He makes them all from bamboo. Even if the drawers are wood, the frame is still bamboo. Bamboo is the best material because it's very strong and light at the same time. It's easy to cut with a machete or a saw. You have to saw with care so you make a straight cut. You have to imagine everything you make is your best.



Word Watch

Chemsi

Papa – Another word for Father or Dad.

Lantern - a lamp with a transparent case protecting the flame or electric bulb, and typically having a handle by which it may be carried or hung.

Bamboo - the hollow jointed stem of the bamboo plant, used as a cane or to make furniture

Questions:

- 1.) How do you think Harrison feels about the work he has done with his Papa? Which phrase best shows this feeling?
- 2.) In the second paragraph what words are used by Harrison to show he is trying to fit in on the new estate that he lives on now?
- 3.) How does Harrison feel about his baby sister Agnes? Which words/phrases suggest this?
- 4.) In the last paragraph how do you know that Harrison really misses his Papa?

Challenge:

Think of a time when you have been somewhere that is new and unusual to you. Write a description of the place and how it left you feeling.

Week 3

Below is an extract from the novel *Animal Farm* by *George Orwell*. It tells the story of a farm that is taken over by the animals. The animals hope that by taking over the farm they can create a better life for themselves as they won't be ruled by humans.

This extract is from the opening of the novel and introduces us to all the animals as they gather for a meeting. They haven't yet taken over the farm.

Mr Jones, of the Manor Farm, had locked the hen-houses for the night, but was too drunk to remember to shut the pop-holes. With the ring of light from his lantern dancing from side to side he lurched across the yard, kicked off his boots at the back door, drew himself a last glass of beer from the barrel in the scullery, and made his way up to bed, where Mrs Jones was already snoring.

As soon as the light in the bedroom went out there was a stirring and a fluttering all through the farm buildings. Word had gone round during the day that old Major, the prize Middle White boar, had had a strange dream on the previous night and wished to communicate it to the other animals. It had been agreed that they should all meet in the big barn as soon as Mr Jones was safely out of the way. Old Major (so he was always called, though the name under which he had been exhibited was Willingdon Beauty) was so highly regarded on the farm that everyone was quite ready to lose an hour's sleep in order to hear what he had to say.

At one end of the big barn, on a sort of raised platform, Major was already ensconced on his bed of straw, under a lantern which hung from a beam. He was twelve years old and had lately grown rather stout, but he was still a majestic-looking pig, with a wise and benevolent appearance in spite of the fact that his tusks had never been cut. Before long the other animals began to arrive and make themselves comfortable after their different fashions. First came the three dogs, Bluebell, Jessie and Pincher, and then the pigs, who settled down in the straw immediately in front of the platform. The hens perched themselves on the window-sills, the pigeons fluttered up to the rafters, the sheep and cows lay down behind the pigs and began to chew the cud. The two cart-horses, Boxer and Clover, came in together, walking very slowly and setting down their vast hairy hoofs with great care lest there should be some small animal concealed in the straw. Clover was a stout motherly mare approaching middle life, who had never quite got her figure back after her fourth foal. Boxer was an enormous beast, nearly eighteen hands high, and as strong as any two ordinary horses put together. A white stripe down his nose gave him a somewhat stupid appearance, and in fact he was not of first rate intelligence, but he was universally respected for his steadiness of character and tremendous powers of work. After the horses came Muriel, the white goat, and Benjamin the donkey. Benjamin was the oldest animal on the farm, and the worst tempered. He seldom talked, and when he did it was usually to make some cynical remark – for instance he would say that God had given him a tail to keep the flies off, but that he would sooner have had no tail and no flies.



Word Watch

Scullery – a small kitchen or room at the back of a house used for washing dishes and other dirty household work.

Boar – domestic male pig.

Ensnconced – establish or settle (someone) in a comfortable, safe place.

Majestic – having or showing impressive beauty or scale.

Benevolent – well meaning and kindly.

Tushes – long pointed teeth

Stout – rather fat or of heavy build.

Mare - the female of a horse.

Questions:

- 1.) In the first paragraph which phrase suggests that Mr Jones is not a responsible farm owner?
- 2.) What do the other animals on the farm think of Old Major? How do you know this?
- 3.) Select words and quotations that suggest Old Major thinks he is very important?
- 4.) From reading the description, which animal do you think is seen as the least important on the farm and why?

Challenge:

Write a description of your family. Describe the way they look and how they behave. Focus on describing every little detail about them so that your teacher can really imagine what they look like.

Week 4

Is literature better for you than self-help? New research suggests that traveling into the mind of another person is more helpful than studiously trying to understand our own thinking.

We have told each other stories for thousands of years.

Tales of **strife**, romance, and bravery have illuminated minds since the dawn of history.

In the centuries before Xbox and Netflix, novels provided us with distraction from the real world.

But a major, new book based on important new academic research confirms what many experts had long suspected: a good novel is far more than simply escapism – it is a key part of leading an enjoyable existence.

Professor Philip Davis is the author of *Reading for Life*, published last week by Oxford University Press.

The book highlights studies showing that reading great novels can be better for mental health than reading **self-help** texts.

By studying the behaviour of people's brains while they were reading, Davis concludes that the complex language involved in classic works of fiction can help to relieve depression, **chronic** pain, and **dementia**.

While self-help books might offer tips as to how better to manage one's time, or how to avoid thinking of upsetting situations, they do not trigger any new behaviours in our brains.

"If you're just scanning for information, you go fast, it's very easy, it's automatic," Davis says. "But when literature begins to do something more complicated than that, the brain begins to work. It gets excited, it gets emotional."

Studies have shown that reading or hearing stories stimulates the parts of our brains which are involved in social and emotional processing. Reading fiction makes it easier to understand what others are going through.

"It teaches us about other people and it's a practice in empathy and theory of mind," says Professor Joseph Carroll at the University of Missouri-St Louis.

The science shows that fiction breaks down the barriers that we draw up between ourselves and the rest of the world. It allows us to enter the minds of different people from all periods of history and all walks of life. Through literature, we can travel through time and across the whole range of human experience.



Word Watch

Strife - Difficulty, drama.

Self-help - Non-fiction books that focus on how to improve the reader's life.

Chronic - That lasts for a long time or that keeps coming back.

Dementia - A disease of the brain which affects memory and reasoning, more commonly seen in old age.

Activities:

1. Think of an experience you have had over the last few weeks. Rewrite it as a story with characters (be as creative as possible).
2. Remember the plot of the most recent novel you read and sketch it out in bullet-points. Now, rewrite those bullet points as if they were lessons from a self-help book.

Week 5

Were we happier in the Stone Age? 4,500 years ago, a thriving culture in Neolithic Britain built vast structures with only stone tools. Experts think we have been going downhill ever since.

A lost world lies buried beneath the bucolic English countryside. Yesterday, archaeologists announced an astonishing discovery less than two miles from Stonehenge.

The circle of up to 30 deep shafts is the “largest prehistoric structure” in Britain. Each pit is 10-metres wide and five-metres deep, an incredible achievement for Neolithic people with only stone, wood, and bone tools at their disposal.

Archaeologist Vincent Gaffney says the find “shows an even more complex society than we could ever imagine” flourishing 4,500 years ago. The precision and planning required to build the site shows people with a counting system and a sophisticated religious and social life, long before the ancient Egyptians built the pyramids.

Though we know relatively little about the people who dug these shafts and built Stonehenge – because, unlike the ancient Egyptians, they wrote nothing down – some experts believe Stone Age people were much happier than we are today.

We are normally taught that history has been a long march of progress from savagery to civilisation. Life expectancy in the Neolithic period was below 35 and, without modern medicine and technology, disease and famine were an inevitable part of life. If sickness and starvation didn’t kill you, a wild animal or a hostile tribe might. Life was short, scary, and dangerous.

Today, we can expect to live well into your seventies and beyond. We are inoculated against most infectious diseases and we are unlikely ever to experience starvation. War and violence are in decline, and we have hunted most dangerous animals to extinction.

But historian Yuval Noah Harari believes we are less happy.

He argues that we have inherited a cave-dwelling brain that is better suited to hunting mammoths than it is to scrolling through Instagram. Happiness is a biochemical reward for achieving goals. Hunter-gathers’s main goal was to stay alive: so as long as they were finding food, they were feeling great.

It is much more difficult to stay happy in the modern world, where most of our basic needs are taken care of and we often live with very little human interaction. By contrast, our ancestors relied on close-knit relationships to survive cold winters, long journeys, and dangerous hunting expeditions.

Our more advanced goals – love, wealth, and success – *should* make us happy. But social scientists warn happiness is based on expectations. News and social media allow us to compare our lives to all the world’s celebrities. Compared to them, we will always feel dissatisfied.



Word Watch

Bucolic - The pleasant aspects of the countryside and country life.

Stonehenge - Despite its popularity with modern-day pagans, it was built between 3000BC-2000BC, long before the era of Celtic druids. The most fascinating mystery surrounding the henge is how these giant stones were brought 150 miles from southwest Wales to Salisbury Plain before the invention of the wheel.

Neolithic - The New Stone Age was the last period before the development of bronze and iron technology. During this period, humans began to settle in tribes, farm the land, and domesticate animals.

Pyramids - The Great Pyramid of Giza, constructed between 2580BC-2560BC is the only one of the Seven Wonders of the ancient World still standing and, at 146.5 metres, was the tallest man-made structure for over 3,800 years.

Wrote - Writing developed in the Bronze Age (3000BC-1200BC) to help in the trading of agricultural goods and taxation.

Inoculated - Vaccinated.

Precarious - Unpredictable; uncertain.

Activities:

1. Draw a cave painting that shows what happiness means to you.
2. You are doing a cultural exchange with a time-traveller from the Stone Age. Write them a helpful introduction to staying safe and happy in 2020.

Week 6

Is our obsession with space wrong? Elon Musk's company SpaceX has triumphed with its first manned US space rocket in a decade. But many believe humans have a moral duty to focus on Earth.

There was no going back. The astronauts Robert Behken and Douglas Hurley felt a huge surge of power as the countdown finished and the Falcon 9 rocket ignited beneath them. Moments later, they were being thrust up through the Earth's atmosphere and into the cold infinity of space.

Yesterday's flawless operation as the Dragon capsule – supplied and operated by the SpaceX company – attached to the bow section of the orbiting International Space Station (ISS) lab, 422km above China, was not only the first time that a commercial company had sent astronauts into orbit.

It was the latest triumph for the South African entrepreneur Elon Musk. His ambition, he says, is to “grow a rose on Mars”, and his Twitter feed carries a quote from Queen's song Bohemian Rhapsody: “Open your eyes. Look up to the skies.”

On this Demo-2 mission, which could last for as long as four months, astronauts will carry out experiments before returning to Earth. If everything goes smoothly, Nasa will approve the spacecraft's use for future missions.

SpaceX is just one of Musk's projects. He is also the man behind Tesla electric cars; he is developing a device called the Neuralink to allow people to communicate via microchips in their skulls, and he is pressing ahead with the Hyperloop – a high-speed transport system using pods that travel through a system of tubes.

To some, he is a visionary, a latter-day Leonard da Vinci. To others, he is more like Icarus – a man destined to be brought down by hubris.

His ultimate ambition is to colonise Mars – which raises a big moral issue. Should private ownership apply when exploring the vastness of the cosmos?

But there is another question which is perhaps even more profound: does gravity have a moral purpose? Was Nietzsche right when he said, “Remain true to the earth?”

Many believe that humans have a duty to remain on and care for our planetary home – and each other – instead of pursuing a project that would allow an elite few to be transported to another world.

In fact, rather than being regarded as heroic, space exploration could be seen as a form of escapism – a desire to avoid the challenges posed by our mistreatment of the Earth. In other words, cowardice.



Word Watch

International Space Station - Run jointly by five space agencies representing the US, Russia, Japan, Europe, and Canada, the ISS has been manned continuously since 2000.

Nasa - Set up in 1958, the National Aeronautics and Space Administration is part of the US government responsible for the space programme, as well as space research.

Visionary - A person with original ideas about what the future will or could be like.

Leonard da Vinci - An Italian artist and inventor (1452-1519), considered to be one of the world's greatest geniuses. He painted the Mona Lisa and designed an early flying machine.

Icarus - In Greek mythology, Icarus's father Daedalus invented wings of feathers held together with wax, so that the two could escape from Crete. But Icarus ignored Daedalus's warning not to fly too high – the heat of the sun melted the wax and he fell into the sea.

Hubris - Pride or dangerous overconfidence. In Greek tragedy, it was seen as the fault most likely to bring about a person's downfall.

Nietzsche - Friedrich Nietzsche (1844-1900) was a highly influential German philosopher. One of his most famous sayings is: "That which does not kill me makes me stronger."

Shirk - To avoid or neglect (a duty or responsibility).

Activities:

1. Make a diagram of the SpaceX craft and label the different parts of it.
2. Imagine that you are an astronaut due to take off on a mission tomorrow. On one side of a piece of paper, record the thoughts going through your head.

Recommended Reads

We'd like you to take the opportunity to dive into some of our favourite books. Choose from the list below and keep a note of what you've read on the next page.

Animals

- Dumb Creatures - Jeanne Willis
- The Butterfly Lion – Michael Morpurgo
- Anna Sewell, Black Beauty
- The What on Earth? Wallbook Timeline of Nature – Christopher Lloyd
- The Crowstarver – Dick King-Smith
- Lionboy - Zizou Corder
- Tiger Wars – Steve Backshall

Spooky/Mystery

- The Haunting - Maragret Mahy
- Mokee Joe Series - Peter J Murray
- Cirque Du Freak - Darrren Shan
- Vampirates series - Justin Sompter
- The Thousand Eyes of Night - Robert Swindells
- Eren – Simon P Clark
- Abomination – Robert Swindells
- The Weathermonger – Pete Dickinson Humour
- Aliens Don't Eat Dog Food - Dinah Capparucci
- Killer Mushrooms Ate My Gran - Susan Gates
- Trust Me I'm a Trouble Maker - Pete Johnson
- Jones Charmed Life - Diana Wynne
- Night of the Living Veg - Phillip Reeve
- Night of the Living Dead - Phillip Reeve
- Harry and the Wrinklies - Alan Temperley
- Fruit and Nutcase – Jean Ure
- Granny – Anthony Horowitz

Adventure/Action

- Treasure Island - R. L, Stevenson
- The Adventures of Tom Sawyer - Mark Twain
- Around the World in 80 Days - Jules Verne
- An Angel for May - Melvin Burgess
- The Young Bond books - Charlie Higson
- Alex Rider series - Anthony Horowitz

- Kensuke’s Kingdom – Michael Morpurgo
 - Orange’s in No Man’s Land – Elizabeth Laird
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Reading Record

Week 1:

What I read:

What I enjoyed about it:

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Week 2:

What I read:

What I enjoyed about it:

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Week 3:

What I read:

What I enjoyed about it:

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Week 4:

What I read:

What I enjoyed about it:

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Week 5:

What I read:

What I enjoyed about it:

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Week 6:

What I read:

What I enjoyed about it:

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