

Dear Families,

Research shows that students who enjoy reading and read often:

- do better in writing, spelling, grammar and maths
- have a broader vocabulary
- have greater confidence as a reader

Reading FAQs

1. How often should my son/daughter read?

Ideally, students should read for 15 - 30 minutes every day. Reading frequently for a short amount of time forces readers to recall details and develops memory techniques.

2. Why should students read novels? Can't they just read non-fiction?

People choose to read from their interests. Some prefer factual information however research shows that students who read fiction have:

- a greater general knowledge
- a better understanding of other cultures
- a greater insight into human nature and decision making

Talking with others about books can develop social and oral skills leading to increased social interaction and oral language development.

3. Does it matter if I am not a good reader myself?

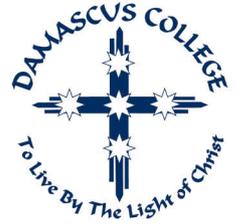
No. You don't have to be a great reader. What is important is encouraging reading at home and setting up an environment where reading is valued.

Some ways you could do this are:

- making a comfortable space, without distractions, for reading
- talking regularly with your son or daughter about they are reading
- having newspapers, magazines or books at home
- by using public libraries outside school time. You can borrow all sorts of magazines and books for free
- Listen to audio books
- Access eBooks

DAMASCUS COLLEGE LTD ACN 609066775

1412 Geelong Road, Mt. Clear 3350 P 03 5337 2222 F 03 5330 2366 E info@damascus.vic.edu.au www.damascus.vic.edu.au



4. What should I do if my son/daughter doesn't want to read?

People often need help to find the right book; the "magic book", the book which excites the reader and draws them into the story. Teacher Librarians are skilled in helping students find their magic book. The reading program for Years 7, 8 and 9 students gives regular opportunities for students to access the help of Teacher Librarians. They are also available before and after school, during recess and lunchtime.

You can make reading fun at home.

- Read aloud and together -your child can listen to you and you can listen to them
- Take turns - you read one sentence, paragraph or page and your child can read the next
- Tell stories -your child will develop the habit of listening and engaging with a story
- Keep it interesting - make sure that your child likes the book they are reading. They can read fiction or non-fiction
- Talk and laugh about books
- Avoid judging - don't say 'good reading' or 'getting better' instead say 'I like how you read on when you came to a difficult word.' 'I like how you changed your voice to be the character in the story', 'I noticed that you reread the bit that did not make sense'
- Share the excitement - of reading with your child, show them you are enthusiastic

Some parents think they should stop reading to their children when they can read for themselves but that's not the case. Young people enjoy being read to and they can relax into the story.

"To be 'literate' is to be able to understand, and make yourself understood."

Literacy allows a person to access and create information and to communicate effectively in a variety of different situations. Being literate is supported by the development of subject-specific knowledge, attitudes and skills including the ability to apply, interpret, analyse, create, interact and evaluate.

One strategy teachers are using to develop understanding includes the following four skills - predicting, questioning, clarifying and summarising. You can use this strategy at home by using the following question starters to begin a discussion around the novel or text they are reading.



<p>PREDICT Make a prediction:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At the end of a chapter or section • When you learn new information about the character <p>Prediction prompts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Based on what I know so far, I predict...will happen • I think the main character will... • I think the next chapter or section will be about... 	<p>QUESTION Ask questions while you read:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Who is ...? • Why is this significant? • When/where is...? • Why is this character saying/doing that? • What did this character mean when they said/did...? • What if...happened? • Should he/she have said/done that?
<p>CLARIFY Clarify when:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You don't understand • You can't follow the text • You don't know what a word means <p>Clarifying prompts</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What does...mean? • One word/phrase I don't know is... • Who is telling the story here? • When is this happening? 	<p>SUMMARISE Bring together all the information you know about a character, a situation a chapter. Pick out only the essentials.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Look for who, what, when, where, why and how • Imagine you had to give a headline for this story <p>Summary prompts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This book is about...(main character). He/she is • The following things happen to her/him...In the end...

College Reading Program

Every student in Year 7, Year 8 and Year 9 takes part in the Reading Program. This takes place in their English class once a fortnight.

In the Reading Program lessons:

- students have a Reading Conference (individual meeting with a teacher) to discuss their reading
- teachers record student progress in their Reading Log
- students read quietly in the Library
- students can borrow a new book from the Library collection or extend the loan of their current book
- Teacher librarians help students to select a book that suits them

To develop the habit of reading regularly, and to improve reading ability, all students are expected to read for 15 - 30 minutes five times a week on their chosen novel. This is an expectation of the English Department.

SMRC Resource Centre Team
English Department, Damascus College

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