



# St Bede's

Catholic School  
& Sixth Form College

Serving Families in North West Durham

## WHY READING MATTERS

Research shows that a student needs to join secondary school with a knowledge of around **25,000 words** to manage the demands of the curriculum but many students start with less than 12,000 words.

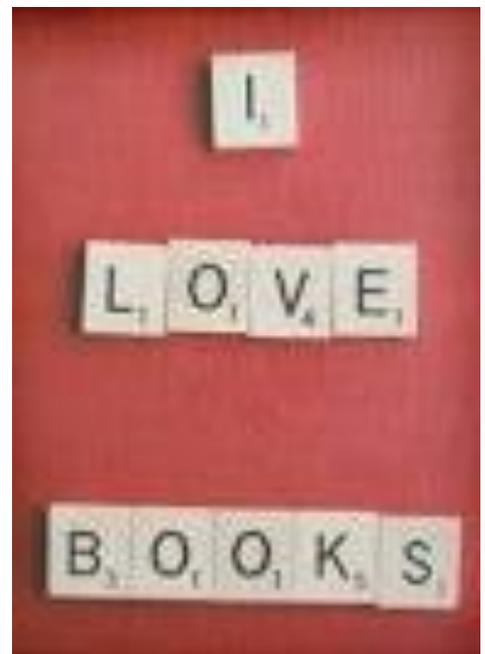
The average reading age of a GCSE paper is 15 years and 9 months which means that your child needs to be at their chronological reading age by the time they do their exams in year 11. Many questions are inaccessible to students with a low reading age.

**Your child's reading age is not fixed—it can easily go up.**

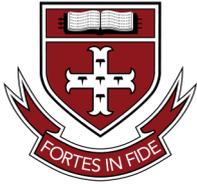
**See over for what we are doing in school to help,  
and what we're asking you to do at home.**

**The most efficient readers employ a range of strategies which are acquired in the following ways:**

- They enjoy watching and listening to someone else read with enthusiasm
- They discover the world of reading themselves
- They are taught how to read effectively—we explain, we demonstrate, we instruct, they practise, we listen and respond







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## 5 strategies to support your child's reading

### 1. Read to your child

*Hearing a fluent reader helps children to develop their understanding of words and punctuation, as well as their comprehension of the text.*

### 2. Read with your child

*Hearing your children read aloud develops their confidence with pronouncing and deciphering new words and punctuation marks.*

### 3. Talk at the dinner table

*The more you talk about reading—fiction and non-fiction texts—the better! This helps foster children's love of reading and vocabulary.*

### 4. Ask them questions about their books

*Use the questions overleaf to get children talking about their favourite stories and characters.*

### 5. Be positive!

*Coming across new vocabulary can be scary and challenging; help your children to work out the meanings of new words by looking at them in the whole sentence or looking up their meanings. It's okay to get the pronunciation wrong!*

## Questions to ask when reading:

- *What has happened so far/in the section that you have just read?*
- *Who is your favourite character and why?*
- *How do you feel towards the main character(s) and why?*
- *Can you describe a scene that you have read in your book today?*
- *What do you think will happen next and why?*
- *What is the most important part of the story so far? Why?*
- *Are you able to connect with one of the character in the book? How so?*
- *What questions would you want to ask the author at this point?*
- *From the pages that you have just read, would you have reacted in the same way as the character? Why? How might you have acted differently to them?*
- *What advice would you give one of the characters in the book? Why? Do you think they would be receptive to the advice? Why or why not?*
- *Do you think there is a lesson to learn from the story? What do you think it might be?*