

Literacy Policy

1. Purpose

- The purpose of the Literacy policy is to enable all staff at Carr Hill High School & Sixth Form Centre to share in the responsibility of promoting literacy across the curriculum. Literacy is at the heart of successful learning in every area of education and includes speaking, listening, reading and writing. Literacy provides the students with the necessary skills to comprehend text, articulate, explain and justify their ideas and understanding.

2. Application

2.1

All staff have a crucial part to play in supporting students' literacy development. The staff at Carr Hill High School & Sixth Form Centre are committed to developing the literacy skills of all of our pupils because:

- Literacy and learning can have an impact on pupils' self-esteem, motivation and behaviour. Literate students learn independently. Literacy is empowering.
- Pupils need vocabulary, expression and organisational control to cope with the cognitive demands of subjects.
- Reading helps us to learn from sources beyond our immediate experience.
- Writing helps us to sustain and order thought.
- Language helps us to reflect on, revise and evaluate the things we do and the things others have written, said or done.
- Responding to higher order questions encourages the development of thinking skills and enquiry.

2.2 As a **school** we aim to:

- Develop pupils' higher order literacy skills
- Improve the teaching of writing across the curriculum
- Develop a culture of reading across the school
- Develop a whole school approach to the teaching, learning and assessment of spelling, punctuation and grammar
- Further develop speaking & listening skills across the curriculum

2.3 In order to achieve these aims we believe that **ALL teachers** need to:

Promote Reading

- Use the Hub, where appropriate, to promote active reading and research strategies that involve negotiating an index or the contents of a book.
- Use the Hub, where appropriate, to promote reading through the provision of stimulating reading material incorporating both fiction and non-fiction texts suitable for all reading ages.
- Ensure students to make use of different reading techniques such as skimming, scanning or reading intensively according to the nature of the task.
- Ensure students to retrieve and locate information from a text so they select or note only what is relevant.
- Incorporate, where appropriate, opportunities to develop reading and comprehension strategies for example: retrieving information, concluding, identifying fact and opinion, establishing cause and effect,

sequencing, predicting, establishing points of view and purpose, summarising, identifying similarities and differences and understanding new words.

- Subject leaders should make available subject specific texts in class rooms or subject specific reading lists.

Promote Writing

- Follow the feedback and marking policy, literacy errors should be corrected using the literacy and marking code in their planners.
- Ensure that following a mark, students demonstrate in their books that they understand the error and have practised the skill/misspelling until they can execute it correctly.
- Regularly checking spellings as a focus of self and peer assessment during starters and plenaries
- Identify and display key vocabulary
- Concentrate on key and high frequency words being spelled correctly within teachers' own subject area.
- Ensure that at the beginning of every unit of work, key topic words are introduced. Individual Clusters should ensure that these key topic words are corrected in students' work when misspelled.
- Students should be encouraged to use dictionaries which will be made available in all classrooms to look up correct spellings.
- Ensure students structure their work with paragraphs to signal a change of topic, change of speaker, change of time and change of place.
- Ensure students use punctuation, including full stops, commas, semi-colons, question marks, apostrophes, quotation marks and speech marks correctly.
- Ensure all students begin sentences and proper nouns with capital letters. Again, mistakes should be identified by staff and corrected.
- Ensure students use discursive markers or connectives, such as 'finally' and 'however', to signal the development of an argument or their opinion, or their consideration of another's opinion. These connectives should appear in formal written work in order to aid clarity and understanding by the reader.
- Actively encourage students to plan, organise, draft, edit and reflect on their writing. Writing frames can be useful to promote extended writing. Offer pupils a model for writing in unfamiliar forms or for unfamiliar purposes.

Promote Speaking and Listening

- Ensure students use formal Standard English in their writing and oral work as appropriate.
- Identify and correct use of "text speak", inappropriate informalities and abbreviations such as "gotten".
- Develop specific opportunities for individual, pair and small group speaking and listening activities. Discussion can be used to explore and evaluate, to ask and answer questions, to plan, discuss and evaluate their own speaking and listening and to solve problems collaboratively.

2.4 And **Students** need to be encouraged to:

- Read and write beyond the curriculum requirements.
- Write answers to questions using full and complete sentences.
- Respond orally to questions during lessons using full and complete sentences.
- Spell words correctly and use support materials (e.g. dictionaries, word walls) to help spell words they may find difficult.
- Use thesauruses to develop the use of ambitious vocabulary.
- Structure work with paragraphs to signal a change of topic, change of speaker, change of time and change of place.
- Using punctuation, including full stops, commas, semi-colons, question marks, apostrophes, quotation marks and speech marks, correctly.

- Begin sentences and proper nouns with a capital letter.
- Use discursive markers or connectives, such as ‘finally’ and ‘however’, to signal the development of an argument or their opinion, or their consideration of another’s opinion.
- Plan, organise, draft, edit and reflect on their writing.
- Use formal Standard English in their writing as appropriate.
- Not use “text speak”, inappropriate informalities and abbreviations such as “gotten”.
- Through their reading and writing, become increasingly familiar with the key vocabulary of each subject.
- Take pride in the presentation of their work.
- Write the title and date of all work in full.

2.5 **Parents** can support the implementation of this policy by:

- Reading with their children and encouraging them to read more widely.
- Buying books as presents.
- Visiting libraries or literacy events.
- Reading through the comments written by teachers regularly.
- Supporting the school in checking that students are correcting spellings.
- Supporting the school in providing a bag that can accommodate books comfortably.
- Making every effort to attend Parents’ Evenings when requested.

2.6 **ICT is used across the curriculum to support and develop literacy by:**

- The use of electronic media e.g. fiction, non-fiction, drama texts, magazines, encyclopaedias, newspapers, reference books, dictionaries/thesaurus, internet, e-mail.
- The availability of the IT resources to students including use of spelling and grammar check, Word Processors, Desktop Publishers, limited internet access, etc. Students should be encouraged to use checking facilities effectively.

Section 3: Appendices to support the implementation of this policy.

Appendix 1: Planning: TAP (Task Audience Purpose)

Appendix 2: Reading: PEA (Point Example Analyse), SIS (Shows Implies Suggests)

Appendix 3: Writing: VCOPSS (**V**ocabulary, **C**onnectives, **O**peners, **P**aragraphing, **S**entence structures, **S**pelling)

Appendix 4: Homophones

Appendix 1: Planning: TAP (Task Audience Purpose)

We should encourage pupils to **plan**. Even though we are moving towards exam only courses, pupils should still learn the life skills of planning, drafting and re drafting. Pupils should understand that sometimes a detailed plan may be required to complete tasks such as research projects or business reports. However, in an exam, quick but efficient plans are needed.

How to plan

Deconstruct **the question** step by step – highlight and annotate key words.

Use **TAP** to work out **Text**, **Audience** and **Purpose**. TAP can be used for most written tasks across all subjects.

Next, go back to the annotations and break them down.

Successful planning should start with **TAP**

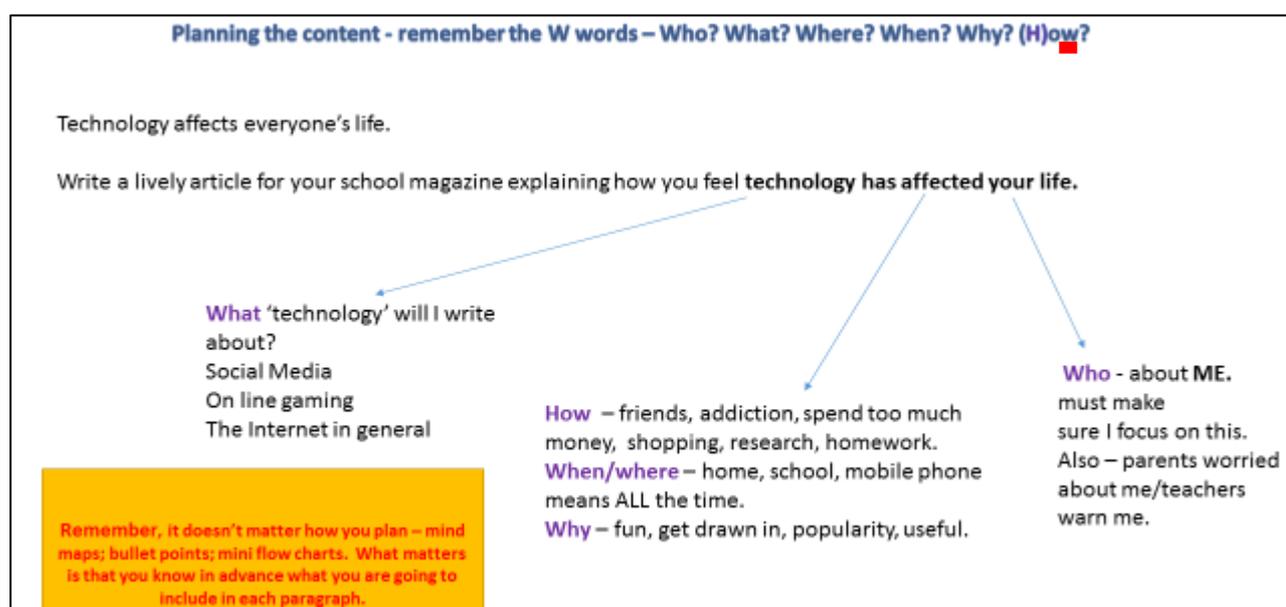
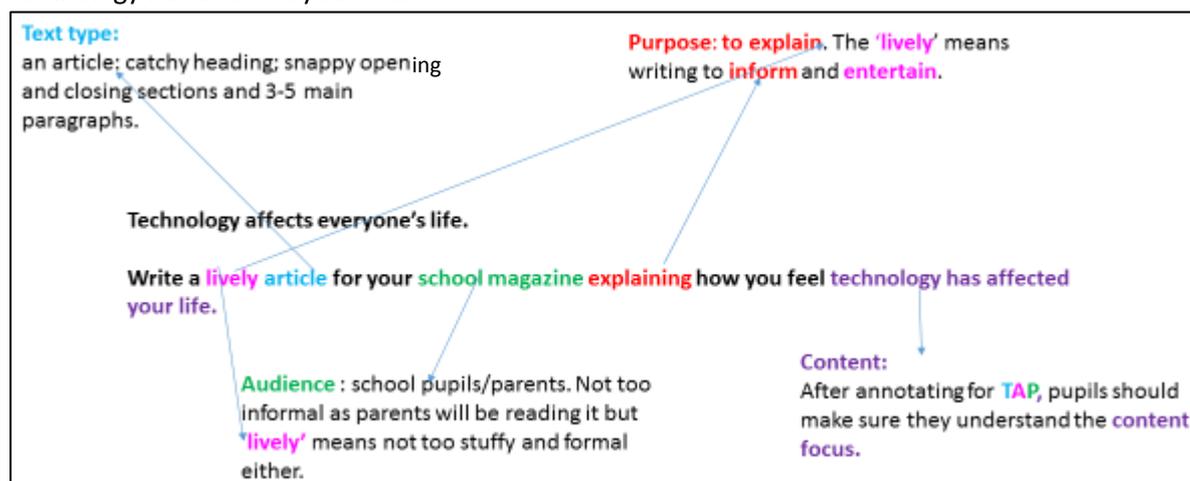
Text type – what type of text, layout and language is needed?

Audience – who is it for?

Purpose – why are you writing?

Example:

Technology affects everyone's life. Write a lively article for your school magazine explaining how you feel technology has affected your life.



Appendix 2 - Reading skills: PEA (Point-Example-Analyse) and SIS (Shows-Implies-Suggests)

The following reading skills are practised in English and maybe useful to adopt in other subjects. Reading and being able to respond to written material are core literacy skills. Students practise the following techniques:

Track the text – responding to points in the text in the order that they are made by the writer. This technique encourages students to evaluate the development of ideas in a text and consider structure.

Active reading – in exams and when appropriate in class, students **highlight** key words / phrases which are relevant to answering the question.



The point – example/evidence – explain technique has previously been used. In order to develop skills of analysis and evaluation, PEA is used:

Point

Example

Analyse

This technique is used judiciously so that students are encouraged to embed key quotations and examples in to their work.

In order to develop close **analysis** of key words / phrases in reading texts, students use the following technique:

SIS is your best friend

(Shows Implies Suggests)



Examples from English

Example Exam Text

What do you learn about Buddy and Hazel and the relationship between them in these lines?

Key quotations are highlighted:

Buddy was a **lot older** than I was. He was **eighteen** and he'd **quit school** long ago to work at a garage. He had his own car, which he kept spotlessly clean and shining. He smoked, and **drank beer**, though he drank beer **only when he wasn't out with me** but was with other boys his own age. He **made me anxious**, because I didn't know how to talk to him. Our phone conversations consisted mostly of **pauses and monosyllables**, though they went on for a **long time**, which was infuriating to my father, who would walk past me in the hall, snapping his fingers together like a pair of scissors, meaning I had to cut it short. But cutting a conversation short with Buddy was like trying to divide water, because Buddy's conversations had **no shape**. I hadn't yet learned of any of those **stratagems** girls were supposed to use on men. I didn't know how to ask leading questions, or how to lie about certain kinds of things. So mostly I said **nothing**, which **didn't seem to bother Buddy** at all.

I knew enough to realise, however, that it was a bad tactic to appear too smart. But if I had chosen to show off, Buddy might not have minded: he was the kind of boy for whom **cleverness is female**. Maybe he would have liked a controlled display of it, as if it were a special kind of pie or a piece of well-done embroidery. But I never really figured out what Buddy **really wanted**. I never figured out why Buddy was going out with me in the first place. Possibly it was because I **was there**.

Example Full Mark Answer

The student tracks the text, embeds examples / quotations and uses **shows/implies/suggests** to analyse and evaluate what is learnt about the relationship.

I learn that Buddy was a “lot older” than Hazel. He was “eighteen” and had “quit school” to work in a garage. He “drank beer” but only when he wasn’t out with her which **shows** that he understands the age difference and to keep her safe. He made her “anxious” because she didn’t know how to talk to him. Their conversations were mainly “pauses and monosyllables” which **shows** that they didn’t really know what to say to each other. They were on the phone for a long time, much to her father’s annoyance, saying nothing. Buddy’s conversations had “no shape” which **suggests** he didn’t know what to talk about that would interest a girl so much younger than him. As she had not yet learned “the stratagems” for dealing with men, she mostly said “nothing” and it didn’t bother Buddy at all which **suggests** he is easy going. Buddy thinks “cleverness is female” which **suggests** he isn’t very smart and wants his girlfriend to be clever. Hazel never knew what Buddy “really wanted” which **suggests** that it wasn’t an equal relationship. And that they weren’t really close. She thinks he chose her because she “was there” which **suggests** that they were going out for the sake of it and it was convenient for Buddy.

A Level example of PEA

As the only woman in the play dominated by male characters, Bennett gives us a glimpse into Mrs Lintott’s isolation in the choice of metaphor, “They kick their particular stone along the street and I watch” where the contrast between the pronouns ‘I’ and ‘they’ serves to mark her apart. Through the use of soliloquy, we learn her sense of frustration at being trapped in the role of the long-suffering woman in whom everyone confides. The choice of low-frequency vocabulary, such as ‘predilections and preoccupations’, shows us an articulate and intelligent woman. However, in the opening line “I have not hitherto been allotted an inner voice”, Bennett makes a witty allusion to the fact that Mrs Lintott is not real but Bennett’s creation.

GCSE Example of PEA

Curley’s Wife uses the fact she is a vulnerable female against Crooks and is very racist towards him. “Well you keep your trap shut then, Nigger. I could get you strung up on a tree so easy it ain’t even funny.” This is a definite threat to Crooks which shows that the social attitudes at the time were extremely racist. She chooses him because he is the most weak and least able to defend himself. She was going to accuse him of sexual assault and his black skin would add to the problem. Despite the fact that her unpopular husband actually makes her an outcast on the farm, this comment gives her some status and power.

KS3 Example of PEA

The final line, “It had been First Mate Di Chou, his father’s killer” creates suspense. The reader realises that Di Chou has carried out the threat to visit Haoyou’s mother and the word ‘killer’ is a dramatic and emotive ending to the chapter as it suggests that Di Chou remains a threat.

Appendix 3: Writing: VCOPSS

Within English, we use a number of strategies to help with writing skills. One such strategy is VCOPSS.

Vocabulary

Connectives

Openers

Paragraphing

Sentence structures

Spelling

These are the elements that we look to improve in our writing and it helps students to remember things that they need to pay close attention to.

It is a way for students to look at areas they can improve themselves in their work and also peer mark in others. We use VCOPSS as a focus for our writing and marking.

As it is commonly used in Primary schools, the pupils are used to VCOPSS. We show students how to develop these writing techniques using exemplars.

Appendix 4: Homophones

There are hundreds of homophones in the English language and they can often be the reason for misspelt words. Homophone means 'one sound.'

We have words in our language that sound the same but are spelt differently.

Best practice is to learn the different spellings and remember when to use them.

A spell checker on a computer will not pick up a homophonic error.

The most common homophones misspelt:

they're, their and there

Some people find these three **homophones** cause them difficulty. Try to make sure that you know which is which:

"they're" is perhaps the easiest to remember. It is the shortened form of **"they are"**.

For example: **They're** catching a flight at 11.45.

"their" means **"belonging to them"**

For example: **Their** house is in Broad Street.

"there" is used in 2 ways:

1) to mean a **place**

For example: The post office is over **there**.

2) with the verb "to be" (in phrases like "**there is**", "**there are**" etc.)
For example: **There are** 26 letters in the alphabet.

Its and it's

These two homophones are often confused. You can see them spelled incorrectly every day. Try to make sure that you know which is which:

"**it's**" is the shortened form of "**it is**" or "**it has**".

For example: He's replacing his computer because **it's** very old. **It's** become very unreliable.

"**its**" means "**belonging to it**".

For example: The dog wagged **its** tail.

two, too, to

Some people find these three **homophones** cause them difficulty. Try to make sure that you know which is which:

"**Two**" is always a number - the number 2

For example: The **two** boys shivered in the cold.

"**Too**" can be used in 2 ways:

to mean "**excessively**" e.g. **too** far, **too** expensive

to mean "**also**" or "**as well**" e.g. Will you be skating **too**?

"**To**" is used in 2 ways:

to show **direction** e.g. He passed the ball **to** his brother

as **part of a verb** e.g. He wanted **to** read the new Harry Potter book.

Other common homophones:

-
- | | |
|-------------------|-------------------------|
| 1. to too two | 16. new knew |
| 2. male mail | 17. there their they're |
| 3. weak week | 18. where wear |
| 4. so sew sow | 19. waist waste |
| 5. no know | 20. piece peace |
| 6. leak leek | 21. hire higher |
| 7. by bye buy | 22. aloud allowed |
| 8. paw poor | 23. flour flower |
| 9. tail tale | 24. site sight |
| 10. our are | 25. we're weir |
| 11. pore poor | 26. key quay |
| 12. bean been | 27. cent scent sent |
| 13. vain vane | 28. check cheque |
| 14. bored board | 29. weather whether |
| 15. through threw | 30. serial cereal |

Policy details

Date of policy: January 2016

Date of next review: January 2018

Signature (Chair of governors)

Signature (Chair of PCS Committee)

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