

Summer Term 2025 – A Celebration of Growth, Resilience, and Achievement

As we close the chapter on another vibrant and inspiring school year, we are proud to share with you the highlights of the Summer Term at Compass. This newsletter is a celebration of the incredible journeys our students have taken, academically, personally and creatively.

From the determination shown by our Year 11 students in their final exams, to the curiosity sparked in a science lab and the creativity expressed in catering and careers exploration, this term has been filled with moments of growth and transformation. Our students have tackled trigonometry, explored the ethics of genetic engineering, learned about careers and their possible next steps in life, and even climbed Dartmoor's tors as part of the Jubilee Challenge.

We've welcomed visitors who've shared real-world insights - from magistrates and theatre groups to first aid trainers, careers advisors, and internationally renowned educational researchers - each enriching our students' understanding of the world beyond the classroom. Our reading initiatives have expanded, our outdoor learning spaces have flourished, and our young people continue to demonstrate resilience, leadership, and a hunger to learn.

Our Year 11 students completed their exams in June, approaching them with thoughtfulness and maturity. They have truly been one of our most dedicated cohorts. We eagerly await their results in August. Among many personal triumphs, one student became the first in their family to complete Year 11 education, while another arrived on their final day, legally, driving a tractor borrowed from their agricultural apprenticeship employer. We are incredibly proud of these two, as we are of all our students.

We thank those with whom we have partnered this year to enrich the educational opportunities for all. Many are mentioned in this newsletter, and just to highlight others here : **Dorset Trade Skills, Future Roots, The Stables, Weymouth College, Max Events, and Dorset Council.**

This newsletter is also a tribute to the dedication of our staff and committed team of Governors, the support of our families, and the spirit of our students. Whether it's through academic success, life skills, or simply learning to trust and try again, every achievement is meaningful and one more step along the journey of life.

We hope you enjoy reading about the many ways our school community has grown this term. Thank you for being part of the journey and shaping our future through your feedback and ongoing support.

Wishing you all a restful, joyful, and sun-filled summer.

The Compass School Team

READING AT COMPASS



To encourage and support our students to engage with reading, Compass is accessing various resources including Accelerated Reader, Star Reading tests, and has joined the Hampshire Schools Library Service (HantsSLS). We have updated our stock of physical books to include the latest titles, and all our students now have access to the SLS Virtual Library, which contains thousands of eBooks, Audio Books, Magazines and Comics to read or listen to in school and at home on personal devices.



A formal launch to students will take place at the start of the Autumn term, in the meantime if you or child would like see more about the SLS Virtual Library, this is available via the SORAapp, which can be downloaded from the Apple App Store or Google Play. If you are using a browser navigate to soraapp.com.

More tips on using technology to boost reading skills can be found on page 12.

The school will be linking with local public libraries going forward, and they too offer various initiatives to support reading, including the Summer Reading Challenge -

<https://summerreadingchallenge.org.uk/>

LOOK OUT FOR MORE DETAILS IN SEPTEMBER!

However, if you or your child have any questions, please do contact the school.

SUMMER HOLIDAY ACTIVITIES FOR STUDENTS

Students can access a variety of summer holiday activities available across the Dorset area. There are lots of different activities to enjoy including art, music, nature and sport. More details are available via the following link -

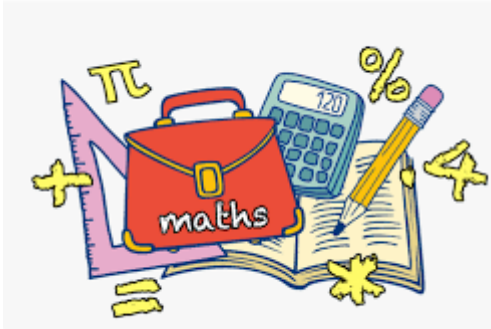
<https://www.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/w/haf-programme>



If you would like any support on how to access any of the offers available, please contact us on 01305 206530.

MATHS

As the summer holidays approach, I wanted to take this opportunity to say **WELL DONE** to our Year 11 students for their hard work and determination tackling three maths exam papers!



In the last few weeks, students in Year 10 have been tackling some challenging maths in the form of Pythagoras' Theorem and even progressing further into this ancient Greek maths with some technical work on trigonometry. This is one of my favourite areas to teach and I admire our students for attempting this challenging area where it may feel, at times, more like a lesson in foreign languages with all the subject specific vocabulary.

Year 9 students have worked hard this term getting further practice with their understanding of fractions, decimals and percentages and then with some geometry work on reflections, rotations, enlargements and translations.

Alison Gr

END OF TERM

The last day of this academic year for students is **Tuesday 22 July**, normal time.



The normal school timetable will be in place,

with ice lollies for students (and staff) at 2.30pm.

YEAR 11 EXAM RESULTS DAY



Year 11 exam results will be released on **Thursday 21 August 2025**. The school will be open between **9.00am – 11.30am** for the students to collect their results; please be aware that results are not given out over the phone.

Results not collected will be posted out first class the next day.

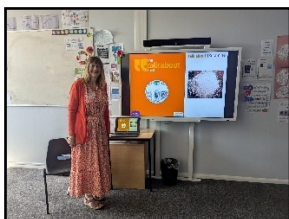


LIFE SKILLS

Magistrate Visit: Thank you very much to **Freda Ellis JP**, who gave up her time to come to talk to Years 9 and 10 students about her role as a Magistrate. It was a very informative and interesting talk, and our students had the chance to ask her questions about her work and about the justice system in general in this country. The group have been invited to visit Weymouth Magistrates Court to have a look around which we hope to do soon.



Talk about Trust: Karen from Talk About Trust talked to students in Years 9 and 10 about the risks of Ketamine. Our young people responded very well to her and her style of delivery which was very relaxed, informal and responsive to the students' questions and needs. Year 9 especially were engaged in what she had to say and asked lots of questions about Ketamine and other drugs, which Karen was able to answer fully. They appreciated her non-judgemental attitude and relaxed and friendly nature, and felt able to talk to her about their experiences. Thank you Karen. We would love to have you back again to talk to our young people.



We were also lucky to have **Reach** in to work with Year 9 this term. They talked about risks of different drugs including Ketamine and Cannabis and how being under the influence puts young people at risk of being victims of violence and crime.



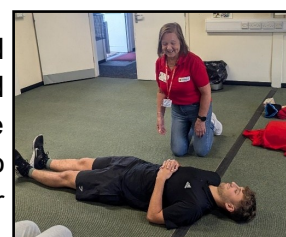
Vita Nova returned this June with their play *The Wasps Nest*. We were pleased to welcome them back to deliver this play that tackles the themes of county lines, drug use and knife crime, written through dialogue with young people and those with first hand experience. Well done to Year 9 and some Year 10 and Year 11 students for being an excellent audience for what is an intense theatrical experience.



First Aid KS3: We have been focusing on our First Aid skills in KS3 this term as part of Life Skills lessons. I'm pleased to say that our young people know what to do when they first arrive on scene of an incident, understand how to assess a casualty, deal with severe bleeding, choking, breathing issues and cardiac arrest and have practised doing CPR on 'annies', putting people into the recover position and a bandage on themselves. Great participation KS3!

First Aid Year 10: As part of our Experience of Work week, Chris from Red Cross delivered a First Aid at Work session for Year 10 students. We used problem solving skills to work out how to treat common injuries with what we had around us, then learnt to put someone in the recovery position, how to deliver CPR to a casualty and how to use a defibrillator. Thanks for your time Chris and thanks to Henri for being a casualty!

Kate J



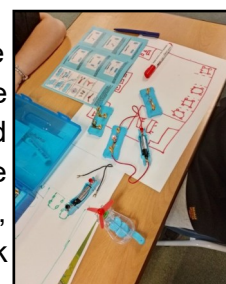
CAREERS

Year 9 students demonstrated excellent resilience at the careers fair at Kingston Maurward Campus in May. It was a hot day in a glass building, but, despite the heat, they asked questions and listened well to employers and Post-16 and apprenticeship providers from the local area. Highlights were the reptile people, PGL, submarines and BAE systems. Thanks Kingston Maurward and Dorset Careers Hub for organising the event.



BAE SYSTEMS

Aureos <https://aureos.com> came in to school, to work with Year 9 and some Year 10 students to give them an experience of what work is like in the construction and energy sector. We designed our own site layout which helped us to think about what people would need during a day at work on site, and the different job roles there are. Our second activity was to build an electrical circuit, which we were all pleased we achieved! Thanks to Aureos and Dorset Work Explore for arranging the experience for us.



Year 10 Experience of Work Summer 2025: Students in Year 10 have had lots of opportunities to explore different careers and Post-16 study options this summer.

KMC Careers College: Students (and staff!) had the opportunity to try out courses at Kingston Maurward as part of Careers College. Blacksmithing, construction and animal care were big hits with our students. We hope that this will have inspired some of our young people to apply for Post-16 course with them.



Joanne from Ask Apprenticeships inspired our Years 9 and 10 students by sharing with us the many local opportunities there are to learn and be paid at the same time after GCSEs. If you have time over the summer, look at this apprenticeship site to see if there is anything that inspires you! <https://www.gov.uk/apply-apprenticeship>

Amazing
Apprenticeships

Careers College was attended by some students across years 9 and 10. Bricklaying, childcare, electrical installation, teaching and catering were all excellent sessions and lots of our young people really made the most of the opportunity to try out career ideas for their futures and experience what it is like to study at Weymouth College.



/continued

Careers continued....

Tilbury Douglas have supported us again this year. Thank you to Phoebe for giving up her time to talk about the many different careers in construction and thanks to the team at the Dorchester Hospital site for allowing us to visit to see a working construction site.



Work Experience: Congratulations to our Year 10 students who, despite many challenges, managed to secure a work experience placement. They demonstrated problem solving, listening and speaking, resilience, aiming high, staying positive and teamwork skills in their placements.



Careers Advisor: We are pleased to announce that we have **Helen Bull, Careers Advisor**, coming on Thursdays to see Year 11 then Year 10 from October. We will be encouraging all Year 10 and 11 students to see her to discuss their future careers and Post-16 options.

Skills Builder: We have been introducing Skills Builder this year to help our students prepare for the world of work. Skills Builder focuses on 8 core skills that all employers are looking for in young people. In Life Skills we will be learning about these skills and teachers will be looking for examples when our students are using these skills in their lessons and off-site activities so that when students leave Compass they will have a portfolio of evidence of skills they have.



This term our focus is Leadership and Teamwork, working together to achieve goals. Teachers and support staff will be looking out for students using this skill in school and off site.

Careers Information: If you would like to discuss future skills and career options with your child, there are lots of useful websites that help with this. We have been using these in school with Year 10 this term:

<https://www.lmiforall.org.uk/cm2/> = comparing jobs

<https://careerswales.gov.wales/buzzquiz> = personality quiz and career match up

There are other useful websites on our website:

<https://www.compass.dorset.sch.uk/gatsby-career-benchmarks>

<https://www.gov.uk/apply-apprenticeship> = Apprenticeships

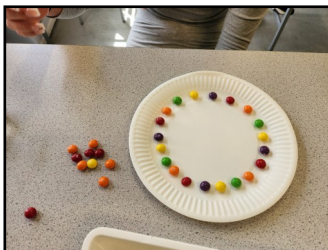
Kate J

SCIENCE

Exciting Experiments and Hard Work in Biology.

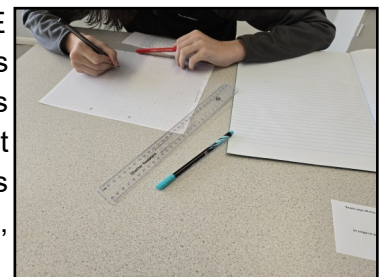
It's been a fantastic term in the Science department, with students across Key Stages 3 and 4 engaging in a wide range of exciting and challenging topics.

Years 7 and 8 students have been exploring atoms, elements, compounds, and chemical reactions. Through fun and engaging practical work, they've deepened their understanding of how substances interact. Highlights include creating rainbow patterns with Skittles to learn about diffusion, and making polymer slime to explore the properties of polymers in a hands-on way.



Year 9 students have been investigating the world of genetically modified organisms (GMOs). They've explored how genetic engineering is used in agriculture and medicine, while also discussing the ethical implications of modifying living things. These lessons have sparked thoughtful debate and critical thinking around modern science and its impact on society.

Students in Year 10 have continued to work hard on their GCSE Biology content, building solid foundations for their final exams. As Biology involves a significant amount of mathematical skills, students have been practicing how to produce accurate line graphs, interpret data, and apply mathematical reasoning to biological scenarios. This important skill development will serve them well not just in science, but across all STEM subjects.



I am incredibly proud of the effort and enthusiasm shown by all our students. Their curiosity and commitment to learning continue to shine through in every lesson.

Bex

STAY SAFE IN THE SUN



As we continue to enjoy the lovely Summer weather, please remember to stay safe in the sun.....

Opposite are 5 Sun Safe Tips for staying safe when enjoying the great outdoors!



A Place of Transformation:

Reflections from the Governors

By Cate Field, Vice Chair of Governors

As Vice Chair of Governors at The Compass, I feel deeply privileged to share this end-of-year message with you. This school year, like so many before it, has reminded me what a remarkable place The Compass is. It is a place where young people are truly seen and supported, often during the most challenging moments of their lives. As I reflect on my own five years as a governor here, I remain inspired by the courage and commitment I witness every time I visit.

The staff team at The Compass are exceptional. Their patience, creativity, and belief in every learner is not just admirable — it is transformational. They provide not only education but stability, and consistent encouragement. In an ever-changing educational landscape, they remain calm, focused, and hopeful.

I want to pay particular tribute to the Senior Leadership Team. Their vision is clear and unwavering, and their leadership has steered the school through change, challenge, and growth. Under their guidance, The Compass continues to provide not just an alternative, but a brilliant and bold reimagining of what school can be.

And of course, none of this would matter without the extraordinary young people who walk through the doors each day. Their resilience, humour, curiosity, and strength never fail to move me. I have seen children who arrived in crisis begin to smile again, to trust, to try, and is a reminder that every small step is a victory. Every achievement is hard-won and deeply meaningful.

One of the most uplifting visits I've made this year was to *Compass Plus*, our outdoor learning area. Set across several acres, this remarkable space gives students the chance to learn backwoodsman skills, carpentry, animal care, and the art of building shelters, fire pits and fences. It was deeply moving to see young people fully engaged — focused, practical, and connected to the natural world in a way that clearly nourished both their confidence and their wellbeing.

To all parents and carers: thank you. Your support, questions, and insights help us as governors to better understand and serve this community. You are vital partners in this shared endeavour.

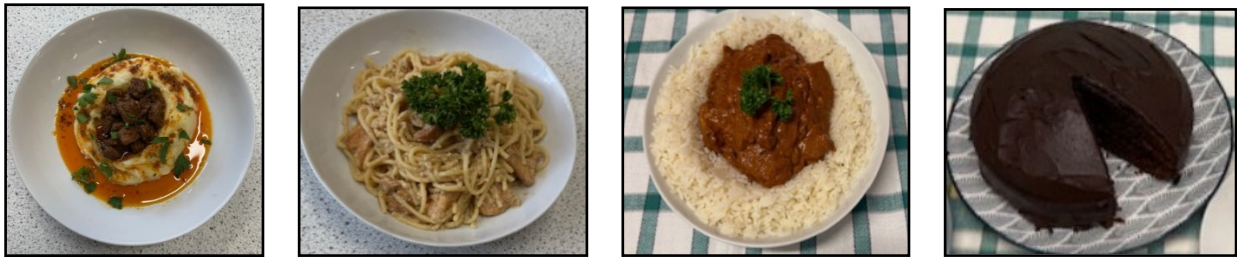
As I look to the year ahead, I do so with hope and confidence. The Compass is a place of renewal — not just for students, but for all of us who are privileged to be part of its journey.

Wishing you a peaceful and restorative summer.

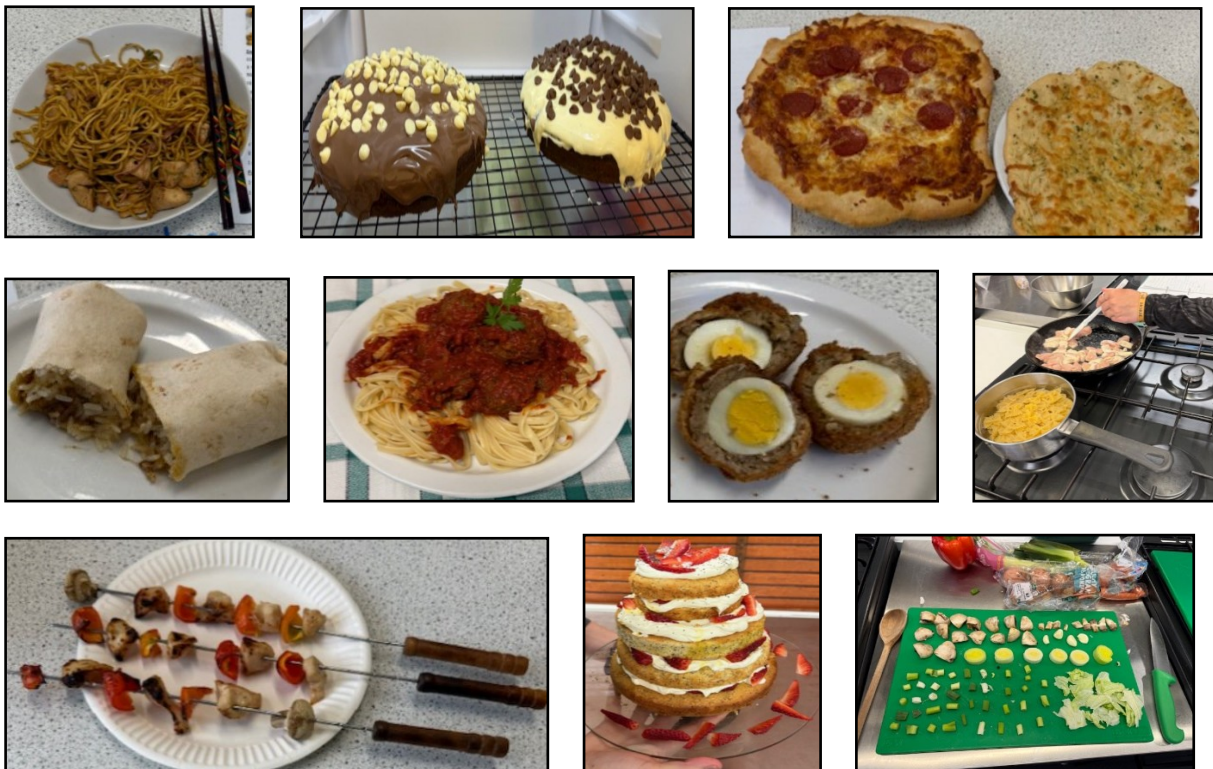
CATERING

Congratulations to Year 10 and Year 11 BTEC Home Cooking Skills students who have achieved their Level 1 or Level 2 qualification. The students worked hard this academic year to produce a portfolio of evidence to present to the awarding body. In addition to this, well done to those BTEC students who completed and passed their Level 1 or Level 2 Food Hygiene and Safety certificate. This is an extremely useful qualification to have for those students who are perhaps looking to take on some work over the summer season in the hospitality industry.

Here are some photos of the BTEC students practical assessment work:



For Years 11, 10, 9 and KS3 it's also been a busy term in the catering department with some fantastic food being produced. The students enjoy cooking their favourite dishes and they are always really keen to let their friends (and staff!) taste their food. The students gain confidence whilst in the kitchen environment and the increase in their abilities and skills is really encouraging to see. They are learning a valuable life skill and are producing some excellent food at the same time, here are some examples:



Catherine

JUBILEE CHALLENGE

In May 2025 we took part in our second Jubilee Challenge on Dartmoor. We all had a fantastic time and the weather was amazing, which always makes camping more enjoyable. We had five training walks before attending the event, where the students showed progress each time in their walking ability and team work. At the event, the students had to set up their camp on the Friday and then be up at 5am Saturday to pack away the camp and be ready for the start of the walk. The students each led part of the walks, showing good leadership and communication skills. In total we ascended and descended a total of 8 tors which was amazing.

The team did amazingly well and we completed our route without any issue. They were a credit and fantastic company.

I cant wait for next year. If you wish to take part, please see Mark.



TERM DATES 2025-26

Please see below the full calendar of term dates for 2025-26 including INSET days. Students return to school in September as follows -

Thursday 4 September 2025 -

Years 7, 8 & 10 students only

Friday 5 September 2025 -


Years 9 & students only

Monday 8 September 2025 -

ALL STUDENTS return to school as usual

The calendar of term dates is available on the school website -





https://www.compass.dorset.sch.uk/files/ugd/f48d24_a226ca32b1664352a73d1d5c8569f5be.pdf


**Dorset
Council**

Compass Learning Centre School Terms and Holidays 2025 – 2026 Academic Year

September 2025							October 2025							November 2025						
M		1	8	15	22	29	M		6	13	20	27		M		3	10	17	24	
Tu		2	9	16	23	30	Tu		7	14	21	28		Tu		4	11	18	25	
W		3	10	17	24		W		1	8	15	22	29	W		5	12	19	26	
Th		4	11	18	25		Th		2	9	16	23	30	Th		6	13	20	27	
F		5	12	19	26		F		3	10	17	24	31	F		7	14	21	28	
Sa		6	13	20	27		Sa		4	11	18	25		Sa	1	8	15	22	29	
Su		7	14	21	28		Su		5	12	19	26		Su	2	9	16	23	30	
December 2025							January 2026							February 2026						
M		1	8	15	22	29	M		5	12	19	26		M		2	9	16	23	
Tu		2	9	16	23	30	Tu		6	13	20	27		Tu		3	10	17	24	
W		3	10	17	24	31	W		7	14	21	28		W		4	11	18	25	
Th		4	11	18	25		Th	1	8	15	22	29		Th		5	12	19	26	
F		5	11	19	26		F	2	9	16	23	30		F		6	13	20	27	
Sa		6	13	20	27		Sa	3	10	17	24	31		Sa		7	14	21	28	
Su		7	14	21	28		Su	4	11	18	25		Su	1	8	15	22			
March 2026							April 2026							May 2026						
M		2	9	16	23	30	M		6	13	20	27		M		4	11	18	25	
Tu		3	10	17	24	31	Tu		7	14	21	28		Tu		5	12	19	26	
W		4	11	18	25		W	1	8	15	22	29		W		6	13	20	27	
Th		5	12	19	26		Th	2	9	16	23	30		Th		7	14	21	28	
F		6	13	20	27		F	3	10	17	24		F	1	8	15	22	29		
Sa		7	14	21	28		Sa	4	11	18	25		Sa	2	9	16	23	30		
Su	1	8	15	22	29		Su	5	12	19	26		Su	3	10	17	24	31		
June 2026							July 2026							August 2026						
M		1	8	15	22	29	M		6	13	20	27		M		3	10	17	24	31
Tu		2	9	16	23	30	Tu		7	14	21	28		Tu		4	11	18	25	
W		3	10	17	24		W		1	8	15	22	29	W		5	12	19	26	
Th		4	11	18	25		Th		2	9	16	23	30	Th		6	13	20	27	
F		5	12	19	26		F		3	10	17	24	31	F		7	14	21	28	
Sa		6	13	20	27		Sa		4	11	18	25		Sa	1	8	15	22	29	
Su		7	14	21	28		Su		5	12	19	26		Su	2	9	16	23	30	

Key:

	School Holiday
	Bank Holiday
	Term Time
	Inset Days

Compass Learning Centre INSET Days 2025-26

INSET Day No: 1 – Wednesday 3 September 2025 -	New Term Preparation
INSET Day No: 2 – Friday 24 October 2025 -	PDR /
INSET Day No: 3 – Friday 13 February 2026 -	Mid Year Reviews /
INSET Day No: 4 – Friday 27 March 2026 -	TADDs /
INSET Day No: 5 – Wednesday 22 July 2026 -	End & New Term Preparation

Bank and Public Holidays 2025-26

Christmas Day Bank Holiday
Boxing Day Bank Holiday
New Year's Day Holiday
Good Friday

25 December 2025
26 December 2025
01 January 2026
03 April 2026

Easter Monday
May Day Bank Holiday
Spring Bank Holiday
Summer Bank Holiday

06 April 2026
04 May 2026
25 May 2026
31 August 2026

*Replacement Bank Holiday day when the Bank Holiday falls on a weekend

10 Top Tips for Parents and Educators USING TECHNOLOGY TO BOOST READING SKILLS

The way we engage with text has changed dramatically over the years. Whether reading captions on social media, instructions in a video game or an e-book on a digital device, technology plays a major role in modern literacy. While traditional books remain invaluable, digital tools can enhance reading skills by making text more accessible, interactive and engaging.

1 CHOOSING THE RIGHT TYPE OF TEXT

Before integrating technology, consider the types of text that a child engages with. If they need help on occasion, digital reading pens can assist by scanning and reciting words or sentences. These tools are especially useful for students with reading difficulties, and can even be used in exams if they're part of their routine learning process. Proper training and practice are required, but they can be a great help when tackling printed text.

2 READING ON SCREEN

Many devices now allow users to customise text for better readability. Adjusting font type, size and background colour can significantly enhance comprehension. For many readers, white text on a black background is the easiest to see, whereas other styles – such as dyslexia-friendly fonts – are designed to help those who are struggling. Teaching children how to personalise text settings on their devices empowers them to read more comfortably and with greater confidence.

3 ACCESSIBILITY TOOLS

Most modern devices include built-in tools designed to support readers. These features can be found in Settings under Accessibility and may include text-to-speech, speech-to-text and screen magnification functions. Enabling these tools can make digital reading more user friendly, especially for children with learning difficulties or visual impairments, who might have an easier time with spoken language than the written word, or who might simply require a closer look at the text.

4 INTERACTIVE READING PROGRAMMES

Many digital reading devices, such as Kindle and other e-readers, offer features like word highlighting, adjustable text speed and built-in dictionaries. These tools help learners to break down complex words and phrases while maintaining an appropriate reading pace. Some programmes even allow users to track their progress, making reading a more structured and motivating experience.

5 VIDEO GAMES AND READING SKILLS

Many video games require players to read instructions, character dialogues and mission objectives, making them an unexpected but effective literacy tool. Games that involve storytelling, puzzles or problem-solving often include large amounts of text – encouraging children to read these texts aloud or discuss them can improve their comprehension and vocabulary in a fun, engaging way.

6 SUBTITLES AND CLOSED CAPTIONS

Watching videos with subtitles or closed captions is an effective way to enhance reading skills. As children watch their favourite shows or online videos, they can follow along with the text, gaining a better understanding of how written words sound when spoken aloud. This is particularly beneficial for reluctant readers, as it exposes them to words in a familiar, engaging context. Repeatedly watching content with subtitles reinforces word recognition and comprehension.

7 USING AUDIOBOOKS

Audiobooks are an excellent way to develop listening and reading skills simultaneously. Children can follow along with the text while listening to a narrator, reinforcing word recognition and fluency. For struggling readers, listening to an audiobook before attempting to read the text independently can boost their confidence and comprehension.

9 TEXT-TO-VOICE TECHNOLOGY

Text-to-voice software reads digital text aloud, making it easier for learners to follow along. Most smartphones, tablets and computers come with this function built in. When enabled, users can highlight a passage or sentence and press Play to hear it read aloud. This tool is particularly helpful for auditory learners and those who struggle with decoding written words.

8 VOICE-TO-TEXT FOR WRITING AND READING

Voice-to-text tools allow users to dictate words, which are then transcribed into text. This feature helps children see the connection between spoken and written language. By using text-to-voice to have their dictated words read back to them, learners can identify mistakes and improve their reading and writing skills simultaneously.

10 SOCIAL MEDIA AND PARENTAL CONTROLS

While social media provides opportunities for reading, most platforms have age restrictions of 13–16 years old, making parental guidance essential. Many social media videos include captions and comments that can encourage reading. However, it's important to use the platform's parental controls (such as time limits and content filters) to create a safe and educational online environment for children. Encouraging responsible social media use can ensure a balanced and productive approach to digital literacy.

Meet Our Expert

Catrina Lowri is a qualified special needs teacher and experienced SENCO. She recently launched her own site, Neuroteachers, which offers a library of short, 'how-to' and explanation videos for educators. Catrina also writes and delivers online training and events for multi-academy trusts, businesses, schools and training organisations.



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