

SERVICES FOR SCHOOLS

Reading Journal Guidance for Secondary Schools

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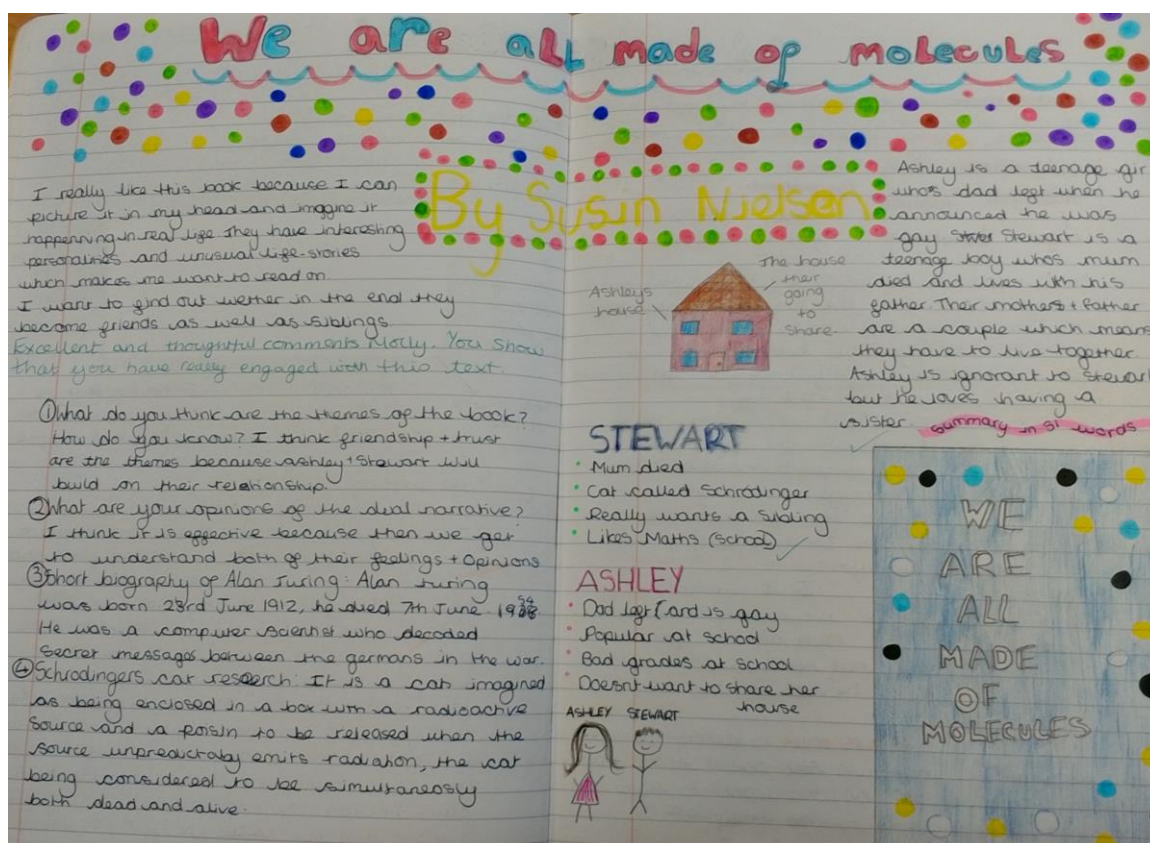
Suggested activities linked to Hampshire KS3 Assessment Model domains

Reading Journals

Reading journals allow pupils to respond to a variety of texts in different ways, ensuring that reading comprehension is evidenced through a wide range of approaches. The Reading Journal model can be particularly effective in supporting teachers to assess how pupils' comprehension skills and processes are developing. They provide space for reflection and evaluation as well as speculation and exploration of ideas, giving teachers valuable insight to pupils' thinking as they engage with text.

There are many formats for reading journals and it is not necessary to have a separate book for this purpose. Much will depend on the age and needs of the pupils, personal preference and how reading is organised. It could be a book or folder but might also be kept as an audio diary or on a computer. Particularly in the initial stages of introduction, it could be a whole class book where the teacher takes responsibility for the writing process and pupils concentrate on articulating ideas and responses. Collaborative group journals can also be used. The intention is to build pupil confidence in the application of key skills and in approaching activities and tasks, so that they can complete tasks independently in school and at home. A scaffold or model of expectations helps pupils achieve this across the year.

Pupils can use a journal for fiction or non-fiction texts and there are a number of objectives in the National Curriculum that support and guide this aspect of reading, such as the requirement that pupils build understanding of 'increasingly challenging texts through...making inferences and referring to evidence in the text' and by 'making critical comparisons across texts (DfE, 2013: p. 4).





Some Example Outcomes

'Think Alouds': Making Thinking Visible

The Education Endowment Foundation has identified meta-cognition and self-regulation approaches as having, 'consistently high levels of impact with pupils making an average of eight months' additional progress.' Metacognition is defined in the Oxford English Dictionary as 'Awareness and understanding of one's own thought processes'. This awareness of process is clearly fundamental to our ability to learn, hence why metacognition is often referred to as 'learning to learn' or 'thinking about thinking' and why the National Curriculum Programmes of Study make it clear that, 'by the end of each key stage, pupils are expected to know, apply and understand the matters, skills and **processes** specified in the relevant programme of study.' In English, these processes are often hidden and a key part of helping pupils to progress is to make these implicit skills explicit to pupils so that they can reflect on their own learning.

'Below are examples of pupils annotating texts to exemplify their thinking processes when comprehending a text. This provides an excellent insight into the pupils' strengths and needs in terms of reading comprehension. The approach has been used as part of teacher modelling, shared reading and collaborative group work and also works effectively as a fishbowl activity. Thinking aloud is one of many strategies aimed at developing metacognition.

The image shows a student's handwritten annotations on a text. The text is enclosed in a yellow box and reads: "Three friends. Raphael, Garbo and Rat. Living on a heap of trash, a lifetime of sifting rubbish. One day they find something extraordinary - a deadly secret. From that moment they are hunted without mercy. With danger snatching at their heels, the boys are chased from the city's dirty gutters to its wealthy avenues. But they can't run for ever. They need a miracle." The student has written several annotations in different colors: pink, blue, and yellow. A pink arrow points to the text "Three friends" with the question "Who is family?". A pink cloud contains the text: "There are two names that sound like the boys are important. But then there is just rat. Rat might be small, weak and quiet. Rat might be left out." A blue cloud contains the text: "If they are being hunted without mercy then they must of found something very valuable." A red box contains the text: "Deep trouble." A blue cloud contains the text: "Also, if they are being hunted, then it must mean that the people hunting them will go to any measures to get what they want." A yellow box contains the text: "They are running out of time and energy. The people chasing them must be getting near." A red arrow points from the text "They need a miracle" to the red box "Deep trouble." A blue arrow points from the text "They need a miracle" to the blue cloud "Also, if they are being hunted...". A pink arrow points from the text "They need a miracle" to the pink cloud "There are two names...". A blue arrow points from the text "They need a miracle" to the blue cloud "If they are being hunted...". A red arrow points from the text "They need a miracle" to the red box "Deep trouble." A blue arrow points from the text "They need a miracle" to the blue cloud "Also, if they are being hunted...". A yellow arrow points from the text "They need a miracle" to the yellow box "They are running out of time...".

Thursday 20th October

Think Aloud in a Cloud

'snorting' she was out of breath
 I like the word 'astonishment'
 Why is she turning away from the train?
 Who is 'I'?
 1960's
 A baby?
 What is a foal?
 Intriguing

I shall never forget the first train that ran by. I was feeding quietly near the pales which separated the meadow from the railway, when I heard a strange sound at a distance, and before I knew whence it came - with a rush and a clatter, and a puffing out of smoke - a long black train of something flew by, and was gone almost before I could draw my breath. I turned, and galloped to the further side of the meadow as fast as I could go, and there I stood snorting with astonishment and fear.

Could Joe a bad memory
 'whence' Not sure of the definition
 It was going fast.
 Wasn't familiar to the sound.
 'rush' and 'clatter' - good description
 Predict - There was someone in the train she didn't want to see.
 "Puffing out of smoke" It was an old steam train.
 Narrator is a horse
 Juxtaposition

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 ✓ Excellent 'Think Aloud in a Cloud'!

This is an extract from the publication Reading Journal Guidance for Secondary Schools. The full version is available on Moodle+.