

The importance of reading

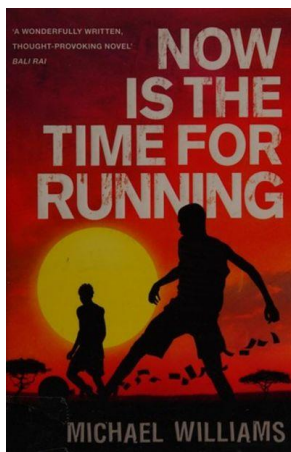
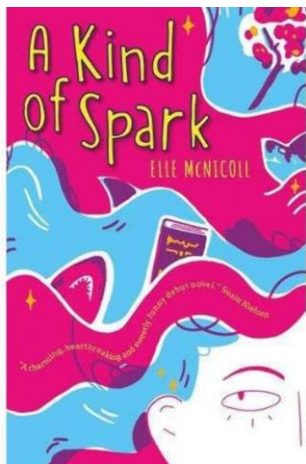
Reading is central to life at PA High because we believe that all students, regardless of their background, must have access to the best of what has been thought and said. We understand that reading is central to accessing the curriculum, therefore, reading is prioritised to ensure that when students leave PA High, they do so with real options: to go to the best universities and pathways and succeed there. We endeavour to foster a love of reading, so that PA High students reach for books to explore new worlds, to develop their interests and to find enjoyment. The benefits of reading, both in academic study and for pleasure, are multi-fold. Sullivan and Brown (2013) show that 'reading for pleasure is more important for children's cognitive development than their parents' level of education and is a more powerful factor in life achievement than socio-economic background.' The positive impact of reading on affective factors are also made clear in the literature, with Billington's large-scale reading study showing that 19% of readers say that reading stops them from feeling lonely. Additionally, 'children with reading difficulties are at greater risk of developing mental health problems later in life, including depression, anxiety, behavioural problems, anger and aggression.' Lastly, we know that reading opens up worlds for our students, and enables them to access all areas of the curriculum. It is this research, coupled with the context of our school and students, which forms the basis of our whole-school reading strategy for PA High.

We read for pleasure.

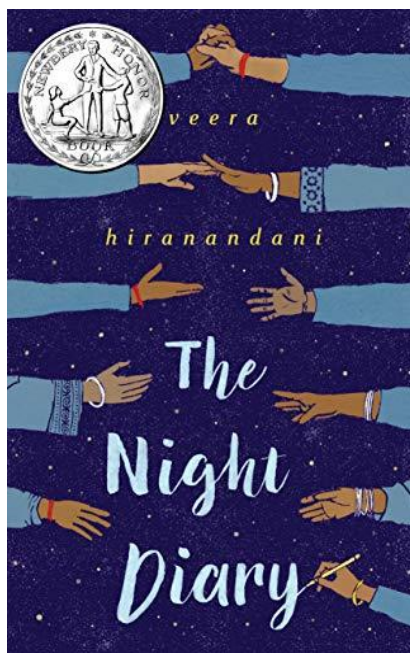
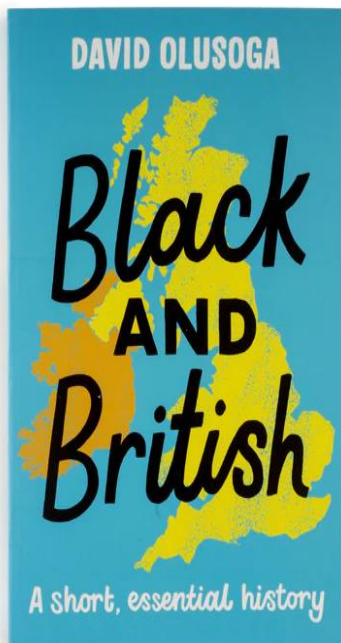
All students carry a book and are encouraged to read regularly at home and at school. They are supported to access our library at various points in the day to exchange their books and take time to read. Reading forms a core element of our daily form time activities. Students are given the opportunity to read diverse, enriching texts alongside their tutor and engage in thoughtful discussions about what they have read. In service to each other, PA High students submit book reviews to encourage each other to read widely. They also engage in a range of reading competitions and are challenged to read for at least 20 minutes at home every day. All students receive support to become well-read individuals.

Books that are being read during form time:

Year 7

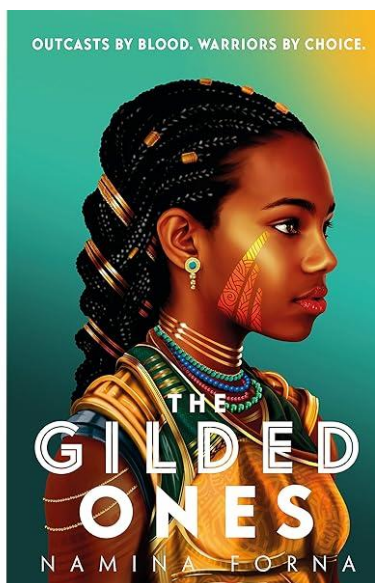
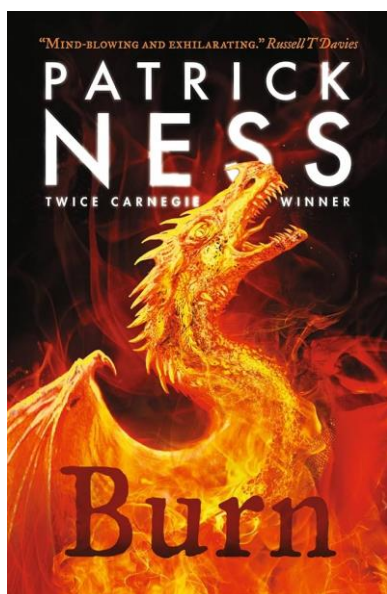


Year 8



library

Year 9



We support reading age development.

We understand that if students are not able to read at an age-appropriate level and fluency, their ability to access the curriculum is jeopardised and they are at risk of falling behind their peers. We therefore provide targeted intervention for students who need additional support. All students complete a reading age assessment twice a year; from this we identify students who need additional intervention. By pinpointing where these students are in their reading journey, we place them on the appropriate pathway to accelerate their progress with reading and literacy. We have invested in tried and tested programmes such as Lexia and 'Read Write Inc: Fresh Start' phonics programme.

We develop disciplinary reading.

As our students progress through our ambitious and highly specialised curriculum, there is a growing need to ensure that students are trained to access the academic language and conventions of different subjects. Our understanding of disciplinary literacy is informed by the Educational Endowment Foundations meta-study analysis 'Improving Literacy in Secondary Schools'. Our subject leaders understand that each subject has its own unique language; ways of knowing, doing, and communicating. Therefore, they carefully plan how to support pupils to develop literacy specific to their subject. We understand that it is through disciplinary literacy that we support students to develop relevant 'disciplinary habits of mind'.