



St Christopher's

Reading Bulletin - Half Term 3

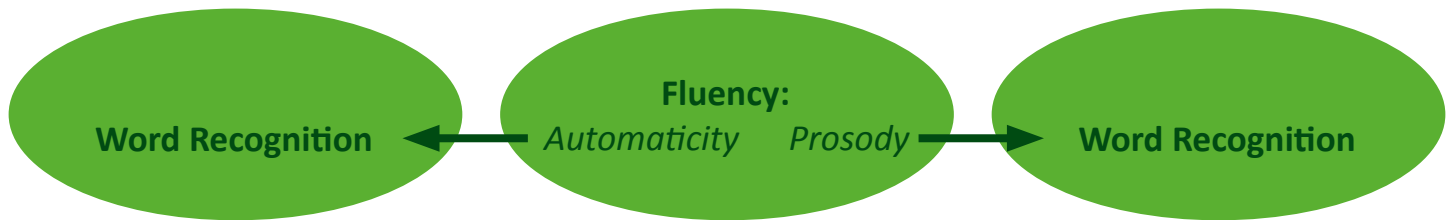
January 2023

'The reading and writing of Standard English, alongside proficient language development, is the key to unlocking the rest of the academic curriculum. Pupils who struggle to read struggle in all subjects and the wonders of a knowledge-rich curriculum passes them by unread.'

Ofsted Reading Framework 2021

The theme of this half term's reading bulletin is

'I don't get it: what inhibits our pupils from reading'.



Try any of these top tips to engage our pupils to embrace reading.
Got a great idea? Share it with us!

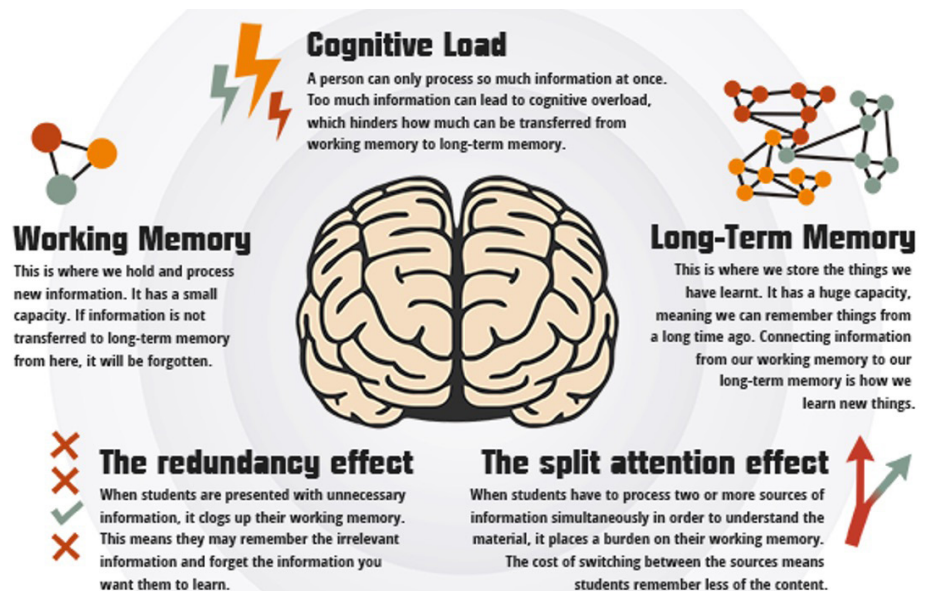


The Working Memory can hold between 4 - 7 bits of information. If it can process these bits of information, connect them with stuff in the Long Term memory and create new schemas then hey presto, we have learned something. However, if the working memory is overloaded by there being too many new or extraneous bits and pieces, the working memory can be overloaded, it will struggle to make connections with the Long Term Memory and learning will be limited.

West Somerset Teaching School, 'Supporting Reading in Secondary School', 2022

If a student is reading something new, be it a new word, new idea or a complex sentence, then the reading will have high cognitive load and processing it will be a challenge. If a reader cannot read a word fluently, has to stop to break the word up into parts (de-cod-ing), then it limits the capacity of working memory. This act in itself may prevent the sentence being processed. The same principle applies to anyone who is reading and forced to stop and grapple with new or complex vocabulary or syntax.

It is likely, your subject will be presenting new content and new vocabulary. Throw in a few other words that they don't know and all of a sudden, any reading becomes a real challenge.



How do we meet the challenge of cognitive overload?

- Activating prior knowledge.

Bring forth things that already exist in the Long-Term Memory making it easier for our students to make connections.

- Use images

Talk through an image before delving into the reading. Use an image or diagram with no text. Be careful though, images and diagrams with text alongside can again place unwanted burdens on the working memory.

- Pre-teach vocabulary.

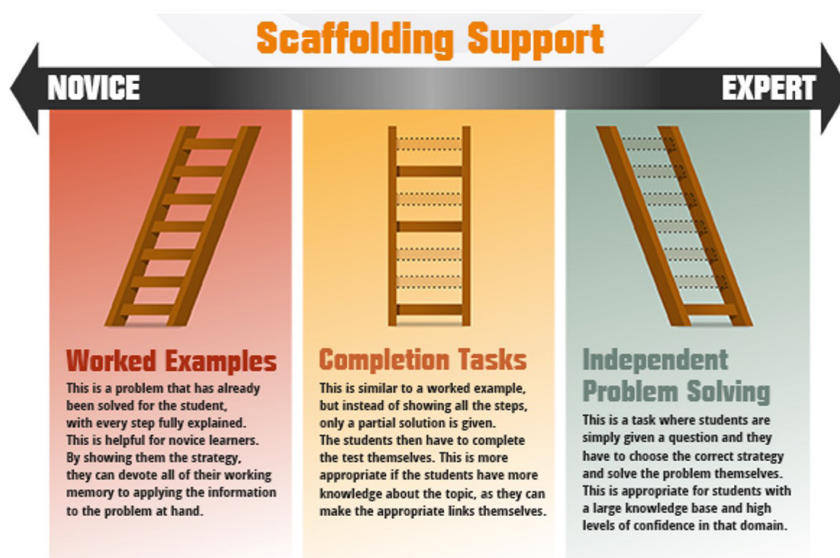
New words need to be introduced prior to reading. It only takes a few minutes to run through a glossary of new terms.

- Use retrieval practice for vocabulary

Yes, I know you covered it last lesson but chances are they've forgotten it. A quick quiz on the words you've introduced previously would be a great way to start your lesson and increase the chances of them being retained for next time. Also, revisiting prior learning, identifying gaps in understanding, cementing new concepts will all help reduce the cognitive load of reading.

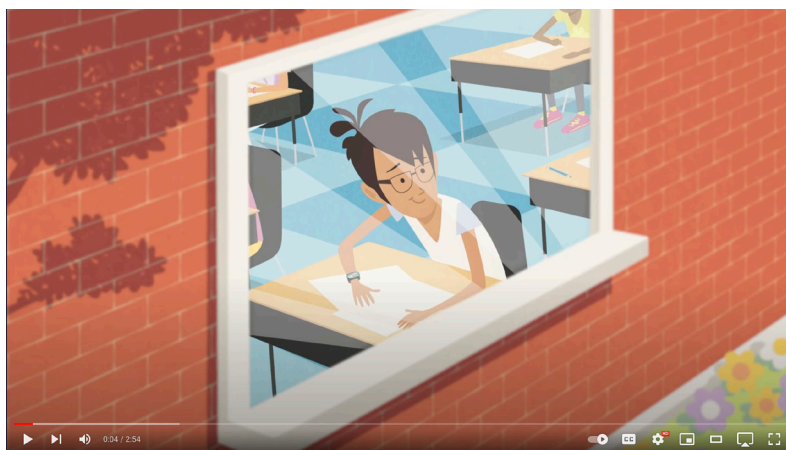
- Insist on silence

If there is something you want them to read, create the conditions for them to be able to do just that. A few minutes of silence to read the handout before they begin could make a real difference. Also, if you're reading something, don't insist they follow along. They can either listen or read themselves, not both.



Want to know more?

Watch this short clip to find out more about Cognitive Load Theory.



Follow this [link](#) to find out more about Cognitive Load and its application to teaching.

Check out our Library resources:

[Recommended Reading for KS3](#)

[Challenging Reading for KS3](#)

[A Guide to Support Reading at Home for Parents](#)