

Year 8 Information

Key Staff

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Year 8 Assessment calendar

Date	Activity
Thursday 16 th September	Year 8 Welcome Evening
Monday 15 th Nov – Friday 3 rd Dec	Assessment Window 1
w/c 13 th December	Assessment Data 1 Home
w/c 22 nd February	Assessment Data 2 Home
Thursday 3 rd March	Virtual Parents' Evening
Mon 25 th April – Fri 13 th May	Assessment Window 2
w/c 23 rd May	Assessment Data 3 Home

- Your child will sit at least one paper per subject over the assessment window.
- Each paper will cover content from what they have just studied and revisit topics / skills they have previously studied. This information will be shared with you and your child.
- These papers will be sat in examination conditions.
- You and your child will get detailed feedback on how they have done through their progress report. This will include areas for improvement and specific strategies to support.
- These will prepare students for the linear examinations in KS4 & 5.

A study demonstrated that “the effect of parental engagement over a student's school career is equivalent to adding two or three years to that student's education.” When parents and teachers work together to improve learning, the gains in achievement are significant”

Homework & feedback strategy

Subject	Homework (per Half-term)	Assessment
English, Maths and Science	4 Knowledge Organiser 2 Reading	Day to day assessment in lessons and Knowledge Retrieval Tests Formative assessments twice per half term including Assessment Windows are completed here also
Modern Foreign Languages, History, Geography, Art Design Technology	2 Knowledge Organiser 2 Reading	Day to day assessment in lessons and Knowledge Retrieval Tests Formative assessment once per half term including Assessment Windows are completed here also
RE, Music, Computing, Drama, PE	1 Knowledge Organiser 2 Reading	

This is the minimum homework requirement for our Year 7 students. Students will complete 2 reading homeworks per subject per half term as well as a number of knowledge retrieval tasks based on their subject knowledge organisers. Students will have a minimum of 1 week to complete reading homeworks / prepare for knowledge tests.

Knowledge organisers

Why are knowledge organisers important?

A knowledge organiser (KO) sets out the important, useful and powerful knowledge on a topic on a single page.

Knowledge Organisers (KOs) are used because:

- Students must have a foundation of factual knowledge, understand those facts and organise knowledge in order to retrieve and apply information. KOs enable this in a very systematic way.
- Our working memory capacity is limited, so by storing more in our long-term memory, we can free up working memory

How can I support my child with their learning homework?

‘When children’s parents are engaged in school life, then children pick up on it. They think, “School is important. My parents think it’s important,” and that increases their attachment to education, which translates into better achievement’

Preparation is key!

- Encourage your child to check Show My Homework every evening. Make sure that they check what is due for the week ahead so they can plan their time accordingly.
- Encourage your child to ask their teacher for support if they are unsure of anything – this is why it's important not to leave homework until the night before it's due!
- Make sure that they have all the necessary equipment to hand.
- Help your child to find a quiet space to complete their work (away from distractions such as mobile phones, TVs etc).
- Encourage your child to check their bag each night to ensure that they have all books and equipment necessary for the following day.

Top 3 Revision strategies

1) Look, say, cover, write, check

This is a strategy which most of our students will be familiar with from KS2. This revision method can be used to help them to remember all sorts of information, not just spelling!





- Read the word / phrase / piece of information and say it aloud a few times.
- Cover it up with a piece of paper or your hand.
- Write the information, from memory, next to the original.
- Check the knowledge organiser to see if you got it right.

2) Flashcards




- Help your child to make flashcards with the information they need to learn for their knowledge retrieval test.
- Keep information on cards brief and to the point.
- Try to include pictures or diagrams to jog their memory.

An example of a history flashcard:

<p>England <u>BEFORE</u> 1066 RELIGION - 4 facts</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Mainly Christian (Catholic)• Bishops ran the church • Peasants were very religious• Monks were educated :<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Kept records• Wrote chronicles
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They can put the question or a prompt on one side and the information they need to remember on the other.

An example of a PE flashcard:

<p>Flexibility</p>	<p>The range of movement around a joint</p> 
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They can put a word on one side and a definition on the other.

- Look at the flashcards and read aloud a few times. Then, look at the question / definition and try to remember the answer / description
- Shuffle the cards and do it again a couple of times.
- Now, try to look at the answer / description and try to remember the question / definition
- Shuffle the cards and do it again a couple of times.
- Put the cards that they know very well aside.
- Concentrate on the cards that they find harder. Write the information out several times using the look, cover, write, check method and then give them another go!

Get people at home involved! Even if you don't know a lot about rhythm or pitch in music, you can still use the information on the flashcards to support your child!!

3) Self-quizzing



Research about study tells us that one of the most effective techniques for revision is to self-test. We know that this is what the most successful students do!

Self-quizzing requires you to recall information from memory. This not only highlights what they do or don't know, but also strengthens their ability to recall that information.

There are many ways to test knowledge:

- Turn over / cover the section of the knowledge organiser they are studying and encourage them to write down as much as they can from memory as accurately as they can. Then flip over / uncover the knowledge organiser and help them to check the accuracy of what they have written down. Use a different coloured pen to correct any errors and fill in any gaps.
- Help your child to make your own quizzes and tests to complete the next day or 2 days later to check how much they can remember.

Here are some examples from P.E. & history

1. True or false...
A pulse raiser exercise slowly raises heart rate.
2. Name two types of stretching
- S
- D
3. Speed : The ability to _____ the body
or body parts _____
4. A marathon runner is an example of
_____ fitness.

1. Who ran the church ?
2. Who kept records and wrote chronicles ?
3. Fill in the blanks: Most people lived as _____ in _____ as towns were very small.
4. Who did England trade with ?
5. Two in every 100 people were what ?

- Encourage your child to create quizzes for their friends and swap
- Create a quiz based on the information your child needs to learn or encourage other family members to help out!

Reading

“The more that you read the more that you will know, the more that you learn the more places you will go.”

Why is reading so important?

Whether or not reading is something we enjoy, we cannot deny that the ability to read is a fundamental skill and to be able to read with confidence is very important. In a world where there are so many other things we could be doing with our time, reading often falls to the bottom of the pile. With a screen to entertain us, why would anyone take the time to pick up a book? Here is why.....

- **Reading increases vocabulary and helps to improve communication skills.**
- **Reading makes us better spellers and writers.**
- **Reading improves focus and concentration.**
- **Reading improves imagination.**
- **Reading reduces stress.**
- **Reading improves memory.**
- **Reading increases intellect and leads to academic success.**
- **Reading increases capacity for empathy.**
- **Reading is entertaining.**

Research suggests children who read books often at age 10 and more than once a week at age 16 gain higher results in maths, vocabulary and spelling tests at age 16 than those who read less regularly.

At Rainford High your child will be encouraged to read in different ways throughout the curriculum in lesson time. Your child will also be asked to read 12 articles per year per subject through homeworks set by subject teachers. They will be asked to take a short quiz after each of the articles to check their comprehension of what they have read.

How can I support my child with their reading homework?

- Read all the instructions on the homework carefully. Articles will either be on Google Classroom or there will be a link to the article on the school website [KS3 Reading Homework - Rainford High School](#).
- Read the article with your child if they are struggling and model how you would look for the correct answer in the text.
- Encourage your child to use reading strategies such as skimming and scanning to find the correct answer in the text. For example, if the question requires your child to find the name of a person, encourage them to scan the text for capital letters.
- Discuss your child's reading homework with them. What 3 key pieces of information did they take from the article? Can they summarise what they read in 10 words or fewer?

Below are the 3 Rainford Reading Strategies that we use in school to support our pupils in developing their reading. You can use these to further support your child when reading at home.

The 3 Rainford Reading Strategies

- Activate prior knowledge — what do they already know about a topic from reading or other experiences? This helps students to infer and elaborate, fill in missing information and to build a fuller 'mental model' of the text.
- Question — students generate their own questions about a text to check their comprehension and monitor their subject knowledge.
- Summarise — students summarise the meaning of sections of the text to consolidate and elaborate upon their understanding. This causes students to focus on the key content, which in turn supports comprehension monitoring.

ACTIVATE PRIOR KNOWLEDGE	QUESTION	SUMMARISE
BEFORE	DURING	AFTER
What is my goal? Why am I reading this text?	What am I finding difficult to understand? If I go back and re-read, what can I look out for?	What are the main ideas of what I have just read?
What might this text be about? (SKIMMING)	What connections can I make to things that I have read, watched or seen that is similar to this? In what ways?	What is the most important message or idea in the text?
What do I already know about this topic / author?	What does this word / phrase mean? What clues can I use to help me?	What other questions do I have about the text / topic?
What initial questions do I have about the text?	Why did the author write this?	What key vocabulary can I take from the text and use in my work?

Supporting your child with wider reading

What can I do at home to support my child's reading development and help them to reach that 15 years and 6 months reading age to access the GCSE paper?

- Encourage your child to download a book from our free school e-Library. You can find out how to do this on our school website www.rainford.org.uk/library.
 - Encourage your child to read whilst you are out and about or in the home. Ask them to read shopping lists, recipes, leaflets on days out, bus and train timetables, magazines etc.
 - Do as I do - If you want your child to master reading, you have to set the tone. Setting aside time to read a book is a powerful indicator to your children that reading is important.
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- Through reading, your child will be exposed to a wealth of vocabulary. Encourage your child to experiment with new vocabulary in their conversations with you. Talk to your child about the 'Word of the Week'. Can they use the word in a sentence? Can they explain the etymology and morphology of the word to you or give you a definition?

When parents read aloud to their children, they achieve better educational outcomes than children whose parents don't (Nicola, 2017).

Additional ways to support your child to have a positive learning experience

Learning at home with parents enables children to achieve more. When children talk openly with their parents about their day at school and other things, they will achieve more educationally than those who don't (Daniel, 2015).

A recent study identified key characteristics commonly associated with students who made good or accelerated progress during secondary school. We have summarised these characteristics into the following tips.

1. Get focused

Think!



- Am I organised?
- Am I conscientious?
- Am I determined to succeed?
- Am I concentrating when working at home or in school?

These are all important characteristics as they form the foundation for many students who make great progress!

How might you help your child?

- Use training in sport, practice and rehearsal in dance and music to demonstrate how focus and determination lead to improvement and success.
- Support with homework planning and provide incentives (and snacks!)

2. Accept and enjoy the challenge

Think!



- How do I react when I am asked to do something harder than usual?
- Am I prepared to work outside my 'comfort zone'?
- Will I sometimes take the harder option when given a choice?

Learning is rarely straightforward and so your son/daughter will come up against obstacles and difficulties.

How might you help your child?

- If your son/daughter describes their work as 'boring' or 'easy', encourage them to ask their teacher for something more challenging to try.
- Show your son/daughter how you enjoy a challenge by completing puzzles, crosswords or Sudoku together or do something different together – visit a gallery or museum, see a film or read a book - **then talk about it!**

3. Build on your strengths, work on your weaknesses

Think!



- How often do you reflect on your work?
- How often do you pin-point the things you need to work more on?
- How often do you tackle some of the harder pieces of work when you are fresh rather than

Your son/daughter knows probably better than anyone what he/she can do well and what is more difficult. Being honest and realistic about strengths and weaknesses is a key part of the learning process.

How might you help your child?

- Encourage your son/daughter to talk to you about the topics he/she finds difficult in different subjects.
- Help him/her to use the textbook and class notes for support and encourage your son/daughter to talk to their teacher as he/she will also want to help.

4. Learn to work on your own

Think!



- How do you work when you are on your own?
- Are you happy to work on your own at school as well as at home?
- Are you prepared to sort out things for yourself and use books and computer websites to help you?
- Do you have a few self-help strategies that work well for you?

Sometimes students just need to spend some time on their own to see if they can 'get their head round' what they are doing. They also need to know what to do if they get stuck.

How might you help your child?

- Encourage your son/daughter to make use of resources at school, e.g. from the department, library, website or learning resource centre
- Buy or borrow the revision guides the school recommends.
- Encourage re-visiting of lesson notes and re-reading of set texts.

5. Get the most out of working with others

Think!



- How do you get on when you are working with a group?
- Do you listen and make contributions?
- Do you try out your ideas and understanding on your friends and compare their approaches with your own?

Learning is often much more productive when you do it with others. Talking about ideas and comparing approaches can really help to improve understanding.

How might you help your child?

- If your son/daughter socialises with friends at home, encourage him/her to spend some time talking through homework together.
- Get your son/daughter to talk you through a piece of work, particularly if he/she is finding it challenging.

6. Stay positive – don't give up

Think!



- How do you react when your results are not as good as you'd expected them to be?
- If you don't achieve your targets this term how do you feel about next term's targets?
- How good are you at pulling yourself out of a bad patch?

Being resilient is really important. There will be times when things are just not working in certain subjects. Overcoming these difficulties can really motivate your son/daughter and help him/her to make even more progress in the future.

How might you help your child?

- Try to refocus your son/daughter on their longer term goals and targets and help him/her to identify the things to do to achieve these.
- Talk to you son/daughter about whether he/she need support from others to get back on track, e.g. their teacher or a learning mentor.
- Encourage your son/daughter to review his/her progress with you.

7. Be ambitious for the future

Think!



- What are your hopes and ambitions for the future?
- Do you have any idea of what you would like to do when you leave school?
- What qualifications are you likely to need to follow this aspiration?
- How far do you feel you are on track to achieve your aim?

Many students are motivated by career aspirations. Your son/daughter doesn't need to have a definite career in mind but it can be helpful to have some idea of what work in school might be leading to and whether he/she is on track to achieve his/her aim.

How might you help your child?

- Support your son/daughter in finding out about the qualifications needed to achieve his/her hopes and ambitions for the future.
- Encourage him/her to aim high – by trying to exceed the qualifications to keep options open.
- Talk to your son/daughter about your own career or the careers of other family members or friends.

8. Try and develop as many talents and interests as possible

Think!



- What do you like to do when you are not at school?
- Do you commit quality time to developing your talents or interests?
- Do you participate in any extra-curricular activities linked to the school?

Many students have talents and interests, such as those associated with music or sport. Committing time and energy to these can often have positive spin offs for other work in school. Extra-curricular activities can help to develop confidence, organisational skills, self-discipline and good communication skills.

How might you help your child?

- Encourage your son/daughter to continue with his/her interests or develop new ones.
- Encourage your son/daughter to participate in clubs or activities offered by the school.