



10th November 2022

Dear Parent/Carer,

We all know how important it is for our young learners to be able to read and to read well. This year we are working hard to engage and encourage our students to read widely and often across the whole school, not just in their English lessons.

Did you know...

- The average GCSE paper has a reading age of 15 years and 7 months...
- The average GCSE student has a reading age of 13 years...
- In Year 3 students read an average of 36 books a year...
- By Year 10 this is an average of 5 books a year...

What can we do?

- Reading for 6 minutes a day can reduce stress by 68%
- Read for 20 minutes a day and you'll read 1,800,000 words per year.
- Children who read 1,000,000 words a year are in the top two percent of reading achievement.
- Children learn between 4,000 and 12,000 words per year through reading.

We will be introducing our new 'Tutor Reads' programme across school from Monday 14th November. Please see the next page for an outline of the novel chosen and the themes that are included in it.

What is Tutor Reads?

- Each year group were given a choice of two novels to read. The whole year group will read the same novel, at the same time in their individual tutor groups.
- Form tutors will read the novel aloud each morning during tutor time.
- Students will follow along using bookmarks to track the story and ensure they are fully engaged in the novel.
- Students will be given reading logs to note down important questions, discussion points and any other ideas they may have as they read along
- Students will also be asked to note down any new vocabulary they come across, there will be a dictionaries and thesauri in each tutor room for students to use.

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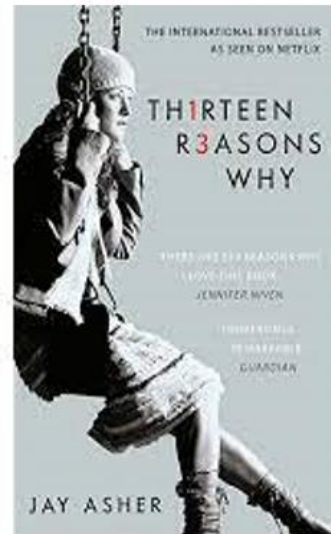
Email: office@smhs.staffs.sch.uk

13 REASONS WHY

*You can't stop the future.
You can't rewind the past.
The only way to learn the secret . . . is to press play.*

Clay Jensen returns home from school to find a strange package with his name on it lying on his porch. Inside he discovers several cassette tapes recorded by Hannah Baker—his classmate and crush—who committed suicide two weeks earlier. Hannah's voice tells him that there are thirteen reasons why she decided to end her life. Clay is one of them. If he listens, he'll find out why.

Clay spends the night crisscrossing his town with Hannah as his guide. He becomes a firsthand witness to Hannah's pain, and as he follows Hannah's recorded words throughout his town, what he discovers changes his life forever.



The book that year 11 are reading has a number of sensitive themes within it. It is really important that you are aware of these before we read.

- Suicide awareness
- The importance of being kind to others (small things can make a big difference)
- The effects of bullying
- The effects of sexual assault

As a school we aware that there may be some people that have been through or who are going through some of the issues that we will see in the novel. We will ensure that these issues are approached and discussed in an appropriate, sensitive and mature way at all times.

If you or your child have any questions or queries about the issues raised, please feel free to contact me at any time.

Yours sincerely

F. Gurmin
Head of English & MFL Faculty
Whole School Literacy Lead