

# NUNTHORPE NEWS

## LITERACY EDITION

### WORDS MATTER: BUILDING A CULTURE OF LITERACY TO LAST A LIFETIME



**BUZZ BOOKS:** Key Stage 3 students have been exploring different Science Fiction stories this half-term.

### Generating a buzz

As part of our Academy's dedication to fostering a love for reading, every Year 7 student has been gifted a free book through the Book Buzz programme. This inspiring initiative, organized by the Book Trust, allows students to pick from a diverse range of engaging titles, giving them the opportunity to explore stories that speak to their interests.

The excitement was palpable as students browsed the selection and chose their books, each one a step towards developing independent reading habits. Not only does this initiative encourage reading for pleasure, but it also helps build students' confidence in selecting books and discovering genres they might not have explored before. We hope this experience brings joy and broadens their understanding of the world through different perspectives, ultimately igniting a lifelong passion for reading among our young learners. Through programmes like Book Buzz, we aim to support literacy and nurture a community of enthusiastic readers within our school.



**LOVING LITERACY:** Students across the Academy have been engaged with all things 'literacy' this half-term.

## Booked for student success

Nunthorpe Academy's literacy programme, launched last term, has already shown promising results across all year groups, enhancing students' reading, writing, speaking, and listening skills. Spanning from Year 7 to Year 13, the initiative is tailored to each stage: Key Stage 4 students focus on literacy linked to core subjects like Maths, English, and Science, while Key Stage 5 students build bespoke literacy skills relevant to their specialised courses. Teachers report that students are engaging more deeply with texts and showing increased confidence in expressing their ideas.

Next term, KS3 students will dive into a thrilling new theme—Gore and Horror—exploring age-appropriate thrillers designed to captivate and engage while strengthening key literacy skills like comprehension, vocabulary, and critical thinking. This theme aims to make reading fun and accessible, helping students develop positive reading habits that will benefit them across all subjects. By integrating literacy into everyday learning, Nunthorpe Academy is fostering a community of confident, articulate students equipped for academic and future success. The school remains dedicated to creating a culture where every student is empowered to reach their full potential through strong literacy foundations.



Nunthorpe  
Academy

### IN THIS ISSUE

**NUNTHORPE  
ACADEMY  
LITERACY DRIVE**

**MEASURING  
READING ABILITY:  
THE NGRT**

**FOCUS:  
NUNTHORPE  
ACADEMY LIBRARY**

**LITERACY ASSESSMENT**

**NGRT**

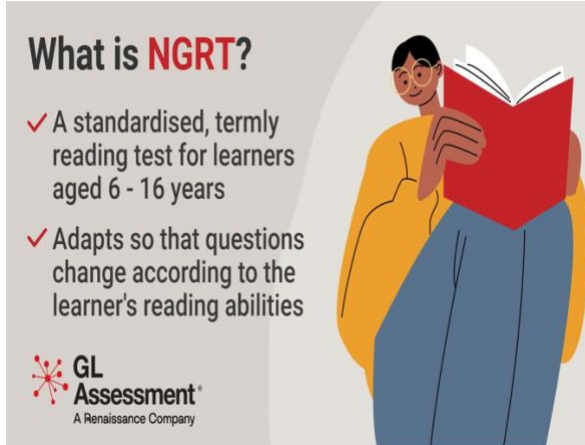
*Key Stage 3 students across the Academy have been sitting the NGRT.*

In an effort to better understand and support student literacy, all Key Stage 3 students have recently completed the NGRT (New Group Reading Test), a national assessment designed to measure reading ability. This valuable tool enables educators to gain insights into students' reading comprehension and vocabulary, allowing them to tailor teaching strategies to individual needs.

The NGRT is a standardised test that covers a range of reading skills, from understanding vocabulary in context to interpreting and analysing information. By using this assessment, teachers can identify areas where students excel and highlight any aspects where further support may be required. The primary aim is to ensure that every student can reach their full potential in literacy, which is crucial for success in all academic areas.

The NGRT scores are presented as Standardised Age Scores (SAS), which provide teachers with a clear understanding of each student's reading level relative to national averages for their age group. An SAS score typically ranges from around 70 to 130, with a score of 100 representing the average reading ability for students of the same age. Scores above 100 indicate above-average reading proficiency, while scores below 100 may suggest areas where additional support or targeted intervention could be beneficial. For students scoring significantly below the average, the Academy uses the YARC to ensure students are receiving targeted and quality intervention.

Students with lower SAS scores may require tailored strategies to strengthen their reading foundations, such as focused vocabulary development or additional reading comprehension support. On the other hand, students who achieve significantly above-average scores might benefit from more challenging reading materials or advanced comprehension exercises to expand their critical thinking skills and vocabulary. This data enables teachers to provide personalised guidance, ensuring that every student's reading development is effectively supported and enhanced throughout Key Stage 3.



**NGRT: Students in Key Stage 3 have been sitting the NGRT to measure their reading ability.**



**YARC: Students with an SAS score of less than 80 will complete the YARC (York Assessment of Reading for Comprehension) to ensure students receive targeted and quality intervention.**



**INTERVENTION: Students with lower SAS scores will receive targeted and quality interventions such as 'Catch Up Literacy', Sixth Form mentoring and many more.**

**WHAT DO THE 'SAS' SCORES MEAN?**

The SAS (Standardised Age Score) in the NGRT shows how well a student is reading compared to other students their age. A score of 100 means they're reading at the average level for their age. If the score is above 100, they're reading above the average; if it's below 100, they might need some extra help with reading. The scores help teachers understand each student's reading level so they can support everyone in the best way possible.

Description	Very Low	Below Average	Average	Above Average	Very High		
Standard Age Score (SAS)	70	80	90	100	110	120	130

**PARENTS/ CARERS**

*How can I help?*

Parents can play an active role in supporting their teenager's reading development, even in secondary school. One way is to encourage conversations about books, articles, or topics their child finds interesting, as discussing ideas can deepen understanding and spark curiosity. Visiting libraries, bookstores, or encouraging access to e-books can help expose them to a variety of genres, authors, and writing styles. Additionally, setting aside time for reading together as a family or suggesting books on topics that link to their interests, hobbies, or school subjects can make reading feel more engaging and less like a chore. Regular reading habits help strengthen vocabulary, comprehension, and critical thinking skills, all of which are key for success in school and beyond.

**STUDENT SIXTH FORM**

*Building skills for the future*

**HANNAH SPEARS**  
**STUDENT VICE PRESIDENT**  
**SIXTH FORM**

I think that incorporating literacy into our timetables is the best thing that has ever happened to me. It gives me the chance to learn and understand new vocabulary, which I am then able to use within my exam answers to enhance my terminology and convey my points with utmost precision. I'm also allowed the opportunity to read around my subject, and in being allowed a wider range of context around certain events, I'm able to reach more valid conclusions and form more educated arguments. I think especially in younger years, literacy is vital to enhance even general communication skills which are important for ventures into the world of work. A huge part of school is to help students build skills which set them apart from others and allow them a competitive advantage, and Nunthorpe Academy's literacy scheme, in being relevant, engaging, and above all important, helps pupils to achieve this. Literacy is the key we can use to unlock the world!

**LIBRARY**

# Why our library is key to unlocking young minds

**BILLY SIMPSON**

The school library is often one of the most underappreciated spaces in our school, yet it is a vital tool in shaping inquisitive, engaged, and imaginative minds. With a vast range of books—from comedies to dystopian novels—our library is more than just a collection of stories; it’s a gateway to worlds that challenge, entertain, and teach. My goal this half term is to encourage students to explore these worlds, not only to improve their reading skills but to ignite a passion for books that will last a lifetime.

Reading is a powerful tool. It teaches us about the world, gives us fresh perspectives, and, crucially, enables us to question the way things are. I have seen firsthand how engaging with a book can spark students’ curiosity and inspire them to think critically. We know how fast-paced today’s world is, with everything condensed into quick clips or short posts, but books give students something screens simply can’t: a chance to immerse themselves, to understand characters deeply, and to explore complex ideas at their own pace.

For students unsure where to begin, here are a couple of books I believe would make an excellent start. First on the list is *The Hunger Games* by Suzanne Collins—a dystopian story that is as thrilling as it is thought-provoking. Set in a future where the elite exploit the powerless, the book follows Katniss Everdeen, a young girl who risks everything to protect her sister. It’s a gripping adventure that presents themes of

resilience, social justice, and courage, all while keeping readers on the edge of their seats. It’s an ideal choice for students who want to dive into a story that combines action with real-world reflections on inequality and defiance.

Next is a classic: *1984* by George Orwell. A more challenging read, yes, but an essential one for any young person. In Orwell’s fictional world, ‘Big Brother’ monitors every move and thought of its citizens, instilling fear and suppressing individual freedoms. This prophetic vision of government surveillance is more relevant than ever, with modern technology enabling a kind of visibility Orwell could scarcely have imagined. For students navigating an increasingly digital world, *1984* reminds them of the importance of critical thinking and protecting personal freedoms.

Our library is open during break, lunch, and after school, allowing students to sit down, unwind, and explore these stories on their own terms. Alternatively, students are welcome to loan books for up to two weeks at a time, giving them the flexibility to dive into stories at home. The process is simple, accessible, and, hopefully, the beginning of a lifelong habit of reading.

In a school where academics often take the forefront, I urge both students and parents to consider the value of reading beyond the classroom. The books we read shape how we see ourselves and the world around us. So, this half term, let’s make a resolution: let’s get lost in a good book, let’s discover something new, and let’s see where these stories can take us

## NUNTHORPE ACADEMY LIBRARY

### NUNTHORPE ACADEMY LIBRARY

“A library is not a luxury but one of the necessities of life.” — Henry Ward Beecher



## VISIT NUNTHORPE LIBRARY TO FIND YOUR STORY

**Week 1**

		Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Break 1	10.40 – 11.05	Y10	Y8	Y10	Y8	Y10
Break 2	11.05 – 11.30	Y9	Y7	Y11	Y9	Y7
Lunch 1	12.30 – 13.00	Year 8	Year 10	Year 8	Year 10	Year 8
Lunch 2	13.00 – 13.30	Year 7	Year 7	Year 7	Year 7	Year 7
Lunch 3	13.30 – 14.00	Year 11	Year 9	Year 11	Year 9	Year 11
After School	15.00 – 16.00 (Friday 15.00 – 15.30)	Closed	Whole School	Whole School	Whole School	Whole School

**Week 2**

		Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Break 1	10.40 – 11.05	Y8	Y10	Y8	Y10	Y8
Break 2	11.05 – 11.30	Y7	Y9	Y11	Y7	Y9
Lunch 1	12.30 – 13.00	Year 10	Year 8	Year 10	Year 8	Year 10
Lunch 2	13.00 – 13.30	Year 7	Year 7	Year 7	Year 7	Year 7
Lunch 3	13.30 – 14.00	Year 9	Year 11	Year 9	Year 11	Year 9
After School	15.00 – 16.00 (Friday 15.00 – 15.30)	Closed	Whole School	Whole School	Whole School	Whole School