

Year 8 Newsletter - What and *how* has your child been learning this term?

Research tells us that regular, effortful retrieval of knowledge is one of the most effective ways to secure learning.

Below is an overview of the learning your child has been doing this term. To help embed knowledge, there are some suggested activities you could do to help your child. Alternatively, you could just ask your child to explain their learning. If your child is insecure about some of the topic, you could use the advice in the final column to help support them over the next few weeks.

Subject:	Topic:	Key learning: (Knowledge/skill)	Building on.... Leading to....	Why? (Rationale):	How? (High Performance Learning):	What could parents do to support? What might accelerate progress?
Art	The Formal Elements in Art (students will focus on the four remaining Formal Elements, having studied the first four in Year 7). Students will mainly focus on "Tone" in Term 1.	Understanding "Tone", "Texture", "Pattern" and "Composition". Students will learn about these four Formal Elements, how to apply them practically to produce artworks and how to use combinations of them. Students will	Building on: The skills and knowledge learnt in Year 7 and to complete their understanding of all the Formal Elements in Art (students previously learnt about "Line", "Shape", "Form" and "Colour" in Year 7.	By learning about all the Formal Elements and how to use combinations of them, students will gain a greater understanding of how to produce a variety of competent artworks.	Meta-cognition: By understanding how they learn; students will be able to improve their research and analytical skills and be able to develop their ideas competently and confidently.	Parents could help with the research element into a variety of different artists (the context), which are usually set as homework tasks. Parents could also discuss the student's understanding of each of the Formal Elements, ensuring student's comprehension.

		focus mainly on "Tone" in Term 1.	Leading to: Fully understanding all the Formal Elements in Art and how to apply combinations of these whilst doing project-based work in Year 9.			
Computing	Department Rules. Networks and the Internet. Online Security. Build your own paper laptop.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Internet and WWW • Topologies – Ring, Star, Mesh, Bus • Hardware – Modem, router, Servers, NIC • LAN and WAN • Online threats (Malware, DOS/DDOS attacks, Viruses, hacking) • Prevention logical and physical (Anti-malware, firewall, anti-virus, encryption, biometrics, 	Clear understanding of department expectations relating to progress and behaviour. Understanding of High-Performance Learning Building on Year 7 learning – computer hardware and software. How computer networks use – hardware used.	Safe use of computing devices in the digital world. Ensuring data security. Careers in the real world: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cyber security specialist • White hat hacker • Network manager • IT Technician 	Linking: learning to the real world in terms of use of computers, networks and threats to data Meta Thinking: thinking about how computers work and how data is transmitted from one device to another. Understanding how computers and networks function.	If possible, please help students revise for end of topic test Homework will be set as an assignment on Teams, a quick check to make sure students have completed this would be appreciated

		<p>password, tiered levels of access)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Which components make up a computer 	<p>Keeping computing devices safe from online threats. Knowledge of the components that computers use.</p>		<p>Creating: a laptop made of paper (with components) Analysing: the different threats to data transmitted across networks Realising: how to keep data safe.</p>	
Drama	Charlotte Dymond	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Using Drama to explore and interrogate an historical event. • Dramatic tension • Dramatic pause • Mime and silence on stage • Stylised drama <p>Animated freeze</p>	<p>Year 7 drama skills</p> <p>An ability to translate a non-fiction 'text' for exploration and showing</p> <p>Using various drama techniques to "learn through imagined experience" (<i>Prof Jonothan Neelands</i>)</p>	<p>To allow the students to realise that real life can be explored through drama.</p> <p>To explore a variety of scenarios through imagination</p>	<p>Linking: how to use different techniques in a wide variety of situations and for different purposes Meta Thinking: Encouraging students to approach 'text' in a practical way. Creating: practical creation of work from</p>	<p>Watch various plays on platforms such as YouTube, BBC iPlayer etc.</p> <p>Ask students to share some of their practical work at home.</p>

					<p>written or aural sources</p> <p>Analysing: the effectiveness of our own work and the work of others</p> <p>Realising: putting ideas into practice.</p>	
English	The Gothic Genre	<p>Study of two drama texts:</p> <p>Room 13 by David Grant and Frankenstein by Phillip Pullman.</p> <p>Understanding character/plot/theme in a more challenging text.</p> <p>Analysing authorial intent in a more challenging text.</p> <p>Exploring dramatic staging and devices in a more challenging text.</p> <p>Practising creative and non-fiction</p>	<p>Building on:</p> <p>Study of simplistic plays in Year 7.</p> <p>Leading to: Very challenging texts in Year 9.</p>	<p>Links to whole year theme of Life in Different Times and Places.</p> <p>Engaging plots linking to modern horror texts.</p> <p>More exposure to classic authors and texts.</p> <p>Debate of science vs the supernatural.</p>	<p>Meta-thinking: Strategy planning for their own learning. Practice and perseverance on texts from literary heritage.</p> <p>Analytical skills and precise thinking.</p>	<p>Discuss the key themes (see English newsletter for more info.)</p> <p>Read and discuss relevant news items.</p> <p>Support with regular spelling tests.</p> <p>Suggested supported reading:</p> <p>The Graveyard Book by Neil Gaiman</p> <p>The Haunting by Margaret Mahy</p>

		writing skills using texts as a stimulus.				
Hums: Geography	Ecosystems	Students will learn the function and components of ecosystems, the role of the nutrient cycle & energy flows through this system. The following series of lessons will cover the location, structure, evolution of and threats to the Tropical rainforest with case studies examining its overuse and management. The curriculum will then move to contrast the TRF to a Polar ecosystem and introduce the ecology of the Arctic, it's use by humans and the potential threats and	Building on the Year 7 curriculum this scheme of work will introduce the topic of ecosystems but offer the chance to practice some of the analytical skills and map skills learnt in the previous year. The topic then moves onto introduce the Year 8s to the idea of Development and how we can measure quality of life, wealth and the causes of inequality.	The Geography KS3 curriculum is intended to be an exciting and challenging series of lessons which will allow students to explore the world around them and the processes which shape and direct it. The curriculum is designed to cover both Human and Physical aspects of Geography and directly ties into or feeds from the national curriculum. The intention is to inspire student's curiosity about how and why the world works in the way it does and to act as a	Discussion, videos, reading and the involvement of all the HPL traits.	Keep up to date with environmental and current news. If you visit anywhere, use an OS map. Practice symbols by looking at road signs and maps around the county. Looking at resources and sources – where are they from? How are you linked to the wider world?

		management of this biome.		solid grounding for the teaching of Geography at GCSE and A level. This means that students will have some precise background knowledge of certain topics by the end of Year 9 that they will have practised and applied Geography skills that the national curriculum deems as essential and students will have had the opportunity to improve their ability to break down questions and attempt exam questions which prepare them for future academic studies.		
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<p>Hums: History</p>	<p>Power and Conflict: Stuart Britain</p>	<p>Students continue to develop skills learnt in year 7. This term has a particular focus on significance, source enquiry and interpretations.</p> <p>This unit gives students the opportunity to explore key issues during the reigns of the Stuart monarchs. In particular, the Gunpowder Plot and the English Civil War. Second order concepts of cause and consequence are particularly strong in this topic.</p> <p>Students are encouraged to make links to their studies in year 7: relationship of Crown, parliament, and Church.</p>	<p>Building on: developed in year 7 History.</p> <p>Leading to: applying understanding of key concepts such as change and continuity, cause and consequence etc. to events in the past and linking these to the current day.</p> <p>Empathy for those in difficult situations. Seeing alternative perspectives and original thinking.</p> <p>Big picture thinking about life in different times and places</p>	<p>The study of History at KS3 is broadly chronological to allow students to be able to understand the relationship of events and how the world changed over time.</p> <p>Students will be able to track developments in social, political, economic and religious aspects of life.</p> <p>Skill developed from years 7& 8 will give students the foundations for success at KS4.</p> <p>We also use topical / current events to help students make connections with the past</p>	<p>Linking: Making links between past events and topical issues. E.g. Acts of terrorism, and protest.</p> <p>Analysing: e.g. Using primary material and factual knowledge to decide why the English Civil War started and its impact.</p>	<p>Discuss topics studied with your child.</p> <p>Keep up to date with issues raised in the news that link to historical events e.g. anniversaries of events, memorials, protests etc.</p> <p>Wider reading around the period being studied should be encouraged. Your teacher will have a reading list that can support in this.</p> <p>Use of online and printed KS3 History revision (BBC Bitesize and CGP) to consolidate and extend in class learning.</p>
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<p>Hums: Religious Studies</p>	<p>Islam (Rituals and Key beliefs)</p>	<p>The first unit looks at Islam and introduces students to where and when this religion began, the role of the Prophet and then moves onto examining key Islamic beliefs beginning with a focus on the five pillars and the moving onto exploring how this faith is applied in real life.</p> <p>The unit then moves onto cover the topic of Islamophobia, the role of Jihad and what this means within Islam. The second half of the unit is deliberately intended to take on a controversial topic</p>	<p>This unit is building on the topics covered in Year 7 looking at Judaism, Christianity and Buddhism. Islam completes the 3rd of the Abrahamic religions.</p> <p>The Year 8s will then be moving onto Environmental ethics. This will be examined from a Christian perspective and compared against Islam and some of the other major religions.</p>	<p>The Religious Studies KS3 curriculum is intended to allow students to know more about the religious beliefs of the world and instil a passion about culture. The curriculum is designed to cover most of the world religions, humanism and introduce some philosophical ideas but follows the Northamptonshire 2018-2023 curriculum with the biggest % of lessons focused on Christianity.</p> <p>The intention is to inspire student's curiosity about the faiths within our community and to act as a solid</p>	<p>Discussion, videos, reading and the involvement of all the HPL traits.</p>	<p>Conversations about BIG ideas such as the meaning of life, identity, what makes a religion etc.</p> <p>Homework will be set that builds on the lesson content.</p> <p>Encourage students to read the news and discuss stereotypes that are sometimes used in the media.</p>
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		and challenge stereotypes.		grounding for the teaching of RS and Philosophy at GCSE and A level.		
Maths	Ratio	Understand and use ratio notation. Divide into a given ratio. Work out parts and wholes. Use Pi as a ratio.	Leading to scale factors and proportion, unit pricing, compound measures.	Use of multiplicative reasoning to analyse and solve mathematical problems.	Meta thinking: using strategies to solve problems. Analysing and logical thinking. Linking.	Use recipes to show how this is linked to real life situations
	Scale and proportion	Use scale factors, currency conversion graphs, direct proportion graphs. Similar shapes	Building on ratio. Leading to scale drawing and inverse proportion	Thinking of multiplication as scaling leads to the important idea that a number can be transformed into another number both additively and multiplicatively. Proportional reasoning underpins many mathematical ideas and the fact that any two numbers can be connected and	As above.	Use maps to work out routes and distances. Use current exchange rates to convert from £s and back.

				compared using a multiplier.		
	Multiply and divide fractions	Multiplying and dividing fractions and mixed numbers	Building on four operations using integers and adding and subtracting fractions Leading to working with powers and roots and exact values	Understand that fractions are an example of multiplicative relationships and apply this to a range of contexts	As above.	Use video links on White Rose Maths website as discussion points
MFL: French	Chez Moi	Learning about describing use of technology in free time, including location, types of house, rooms, furniture and ideal house	Giving students the opportunity to develop their ability to express a range of justified opinions, prepositions to give precise locations and their use of the conditional tense to describe future intentions	The unit gives students the opportunity to use their newly acquired language for a relevant and real purpose, as well as providing a foundation for this topic at GCSE	Linking: This unit builds on the constant retrieval practise we give students to use and adapt their use of justified opinions and tense formation. Meta-thinking: Students are given the chance to peer and self-assess	Any written work will require students to use their sentence builders, which will be in their books. Students should always re-use the language they have been taught; never using a translator or dictionary to look up unknown vocabulary as this results in students not remembering the language taught and encouraging the

					<p>their written work to develop their precisions and critical thinking.</p> <p>Creating: Through the unit students will be asked to produce the new language in many different activities to help make the new language become more deeply internalised and more quickly re-called.</p>	<p>idea that they can just turn to a translator to do their work. This is not their work and they rarely understand any of the language. There is very little learning that happens when students use a translator. When students are revising for vocabulary and translation tests, they should ensure the list is broken down into manageable sections and revise 'little and often'. It is much more efficient to learn 10 words for 15 mins twice a day rather than 10 words in one block of 30 minutes.</p>
MFL: German	Bist du ein Medienfan?	Learning about describing use of	Giving students the opportunity	The unit gives students the	(As French above.)	(As French above.)

		technology in free time, including computer, music, TV and internet	to develop their ability to express a range of justified opinions and their use of the future tense and modal verbs to describe future intentions	opportunity to use their newly acquired language for a relevant and real purpose, as well as providing a foundation for this topic at GCSE		
MFL: Spanish	El insti	Learning about describing school, including school day, lessons, teachers, rules and primary school	Giving students the opportunity to develop their ability to express a range of justified opinions and their use of the imperfect tense to describe Primary school	The unit gives students the opportunity to use their newly acquired language for a relevant and real purpose, as well as providing a foundation for this topic at GCSE	(As French above.)	(As French above.)
Music	TV Themes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recognise the importance of Music for TV programmes. Analysing TV Themes using the Elements of Music. 	Year 7 music skills. The composition and presentation of a theme to an imaginary programme. Further development of musical skills.	To allow students to recognise, understand and create an everyday musical occurrence. To develop composing skills through a chosen stimulus.	Linking: how to use performing, composing and appraising in a wide variety of situations and for different purposes Meta Thinking: Encouraging students to	Discuss TV themes as they are watched. Encourage a wide listening approach and comment on the Elements of Music in the process.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Detailed musical planning of a theme to a chosen brief. Composing a TV theme using technology and/or acoustic instruments. 			<p>approach rhythm in a practical way.</p> <p>Creating: practical creation of work from written or aural sources</p> <p>Analysing: the effectiveness of our own work and the work of others</p> <p>Realising: putting ideas into practice.</p>	
Physical Education	Games. Speed Agility Quickness. Endurance. Orienteering.	Students will cover a range of activities including Rounders, Cricket, Tennis, Ultimate Frisbee, Speed Agility and Quickness, Endurance and Orienteering.	Building on: Prior knowledge of skills, transfer of skills to different activities. Ability to analyse and provide feedback. Leading to: Development of skills. Deeper understanding of	Physical Education is an important part of the school curriculum because it improves <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Personal Development. Social skills. 	<p>Meta Cognition: How we learn new skills.</p> <p>Strategy Planning: Considering ways to outwit an opponent in an activity.</p>	Parents can encourage students to be physically active outside of school. Where possible try to find time to do physical activities as a family. Ask your child about what they have done in PE this week.

		Incorporated within this is development of skills, analysis of performance, providing feedback and improving knowledge of health and fitness.	the areas mentioned above.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Health and emotional wellbeing. • Leadership skills <p>Academic achievement.</p>	<p>Linking: Understand how previously learnt skills can be applied to new activities.</p> <p>Analysing: Critical thinking skills required when analysing their own performance or that of their peers.</p>	Please also access the 'PE @ Home' section of the school website for further ideas and inspiration.
Technology	Electronics/res materials	CAD, iterative design, Ergonomics, producing a high-quality outcome, basic electrical circuits	Be able to use knowledge and understanding of ergonomics to design products which consider the end user.	Introduce basic electronics and be able to apply theory of ergonomics to everyday products	<p>Generalisation: apply learning to similar situations</p> <p>Intellectual playfulness: recognise rules and bend them to create new forms</p> <p>Speed and accuracy: the ability to work at speed and with accuracy</p>	Discuss how the layout of/products within the home are ergonomically designed to help with day-to-day tasks

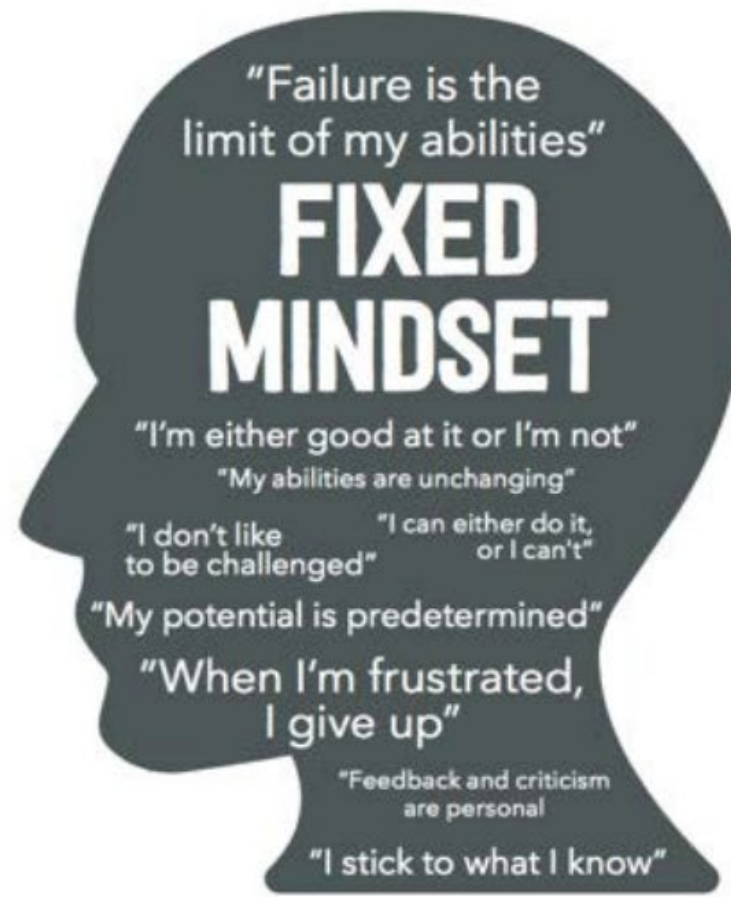
Technology	Textiles	Iterative design Hand stitching	Ability to use iterative design strategies to create original and innovative ideas	Increase confidence in designing and textiles skills	Self-regulation: monitor, evaluate and self-correct Fluent thinking: the ability to generate ideas	Practicing hand stitching/embroidery
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Our philosophy for learning is guided by the principles of HPL (High Performance Learning). We believe all students have the capacity to be a high performing learner... they just need the right mindset, tools and support.

Below are explanations of what we interpret as 'growth mindset' and the key elements of HPL. These include ACPs (Advanced Cognitive Performance Characteristics) and VAAs (Values, Attitudes and Attributes). When well developed, these equip children with the tools they need to be the best learners they can be.



What is a Growth Mindset?





Advanced Cognitive Performance Characteristics (ACPS)

META-THINKING



Meta-cognition	The ability to knowingly use a wide range of thinking approaches and to transfer knowledge from one circumstance to other.
Self-regulation	The ability to monitor, evaluate and self-correct
Strategy-planning	The ability to approach new learning experiences by actively attempting to connect it to existing knowledge or concepts and hence determine an appropriate way to think about the work
Intellectual confidence	The ability to articulate personal views based on evidence

LINKING



Generalisation	The ability to see how what is happening in this instance could be extrapolated to other similar situations
Connection finding	The ability to use connections from past experiences to seek possible generalisations
Big picture thinking	The ability to work with big ideas and holistic concepts
Abstraction	The ability to move from concrete to abstract very quickly.
Imagination	The ability to represent the problem and its categorisation in relation to more extensive and interconnected prior knowledge
Seeing alternative perspectives	The ability to take on the views of others and deal with complexity and ambiguity

ANALYSING



Critical or logical thinking	The ability to deduct, hypothesise, reason, seek supporting evidence
Precision	The ability to work effectively within the rules of a domain
Complex and multi-step problem solving	The ability to break down a task, decide on a suitable approach, and then act

CREATING



Intellectual playfulness	The ability to recognise rules and bend them to create valid but new forms
Flexible Thinking	The ability to abandon one idea for a superior one or generate multiple solutions
Fluent thinking	The ability to generate ideas
Originality	The ability to conceive something entirely new
Evolutionary and revolutionary thinking	The ability to create new ideas through building on existing ideas or diverting from them

REALISING



Automaticity	The ability to use some skills with such ease as they no longer require active thinking
Speed and accuracy	The ability to work at speed and with accuracy

Values Attitudes and Attributes (VAAs)

EMPATHETIC



Collaborative

The ability to seek out opportunities to receive responses to your work; present your own views and ideas clearly and concisely; listen to the views of others; be willing and able to work in teams; take a variety of roles and be able to evaluate your own ideas and contributions.

Concerned for society

The ability to know the contribution you can make to society for the benefit of those less fortunate; demonstrate citizenship and a sense of community ethos and recognise differences as well as similarities between people and peoples; be aware of your own and others' cultural heritage and sensitive to the ethical and moral issues raised by their studies.

Confident

The ability to develop a belief in your knowledge, understanding and action; recognise when you need to change your beliefs based upon additional information or the arguments of others; deal with new challenges and situations, including when this places them under stress.

AGILE



Enquiring

The ability to be curious; be willing to work alone; be proactive; keen to learn; show enterprise; think independently; challenge assumptions and require evidence for assertions; actively control your own learning; move on from the absorption of knowledge and procedures to develop your own views and solutions.

Creative and enterprising

The ability to be open-minded and flexible in your thought processes; demonstrate a willingness to innovate and invent new and multiple solutions to a problem or situation; adapt your approach according to need; surprise and show originality in your work, developing a personal style; be resourceful when presented with challenging tasks and problems, using your initiative to find solutions.

Open-minded

The ability to take an objective view of different ideas and beliefs; become more receptive to other ideas and beliefs based on the arguments of others; change ideas should there be compelling evidence to do so.

Risk-taking

The ability to demonstrate confidence; experiment with novel ideas and effects; speculate willingly; work in unfamiliar contexts; avoid coming to premature conclusions; tolerate uncertainty.

HARD WORKING



Practice

The ability to train and prepare through repetition of the same processes in order to become more proficient.

Perseverance

The ability to keep going and not give up; face obstacles and difficulties but never give up; persist in effort; work diligently and work systematically; not be satisfied until high quality, appropriate precision and the desired outcome are achieved.

Resilience

The ability to overcome setbacks; remain confident, focused, flexible and optimistic; help others to move forward in the face of adversity.