

Supporting My Child at Home

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Head of English

What is Literacy?

Literacy is defined as the ability to read, write, speak and listen in a way that lets us communicate effectively and make sense of the world.

Why reading is so important

- Strengthens neurons and builds connections in the brain.
- Improves communication between the left and right sides of the brain.
- Repeated reading helps the brain store words for recall next time.
- Reading helps the brain learn sentence structures.
- Reading build vocabulary in context.
- New words are stored in the memory.
- Reading fiction develops empathy and emotional understanding.



At Bensham we...

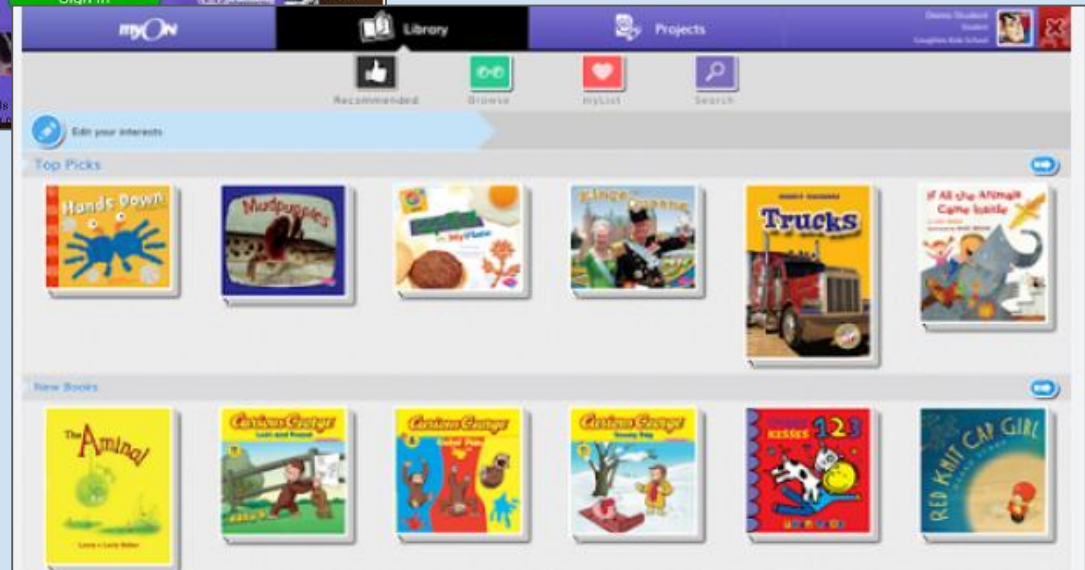
- Phonics assessment in Year 7 and support through school.
- Every lesson 5 all students read independently.
- Students are also listened to when they read, by a TA, class teacher Year 9 and 10 students during this time.
- Students are assessed on their reading ability and they choose reading age related books from our library.
- Our library is open every lunchtime to all students.
- Specialist Literacy intervention with our English specialist TA and our SaLT team.
- Students have access to myOn at school and at home.

Accelerated Reader

- We use a reading programme called Accelerated Reader
- Supports and encourages students to read
- Assessment each term
- Allocates a reading range and a reading age to each student (ZPD)
- Students can then choose books within their reading range
- Take quizzes - green sticker - 2 merits
- myOn



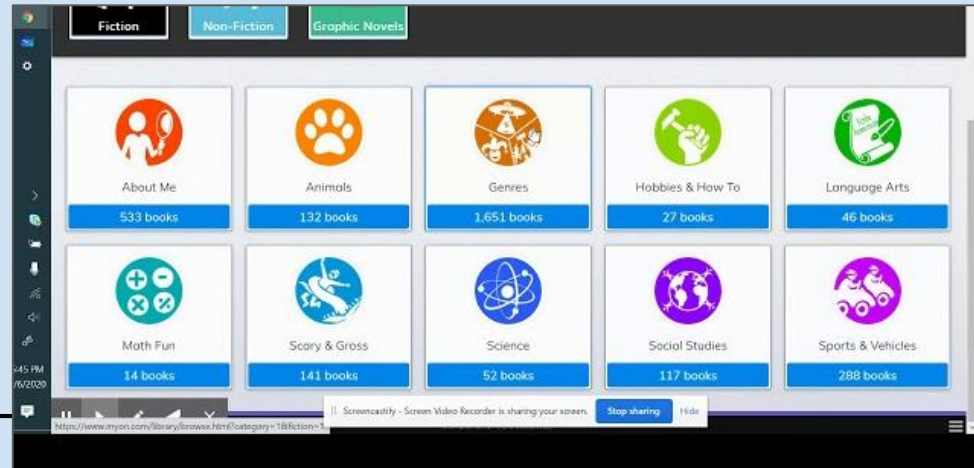
myON is an online reading platform that gives our students hundreds of books matched to their level.



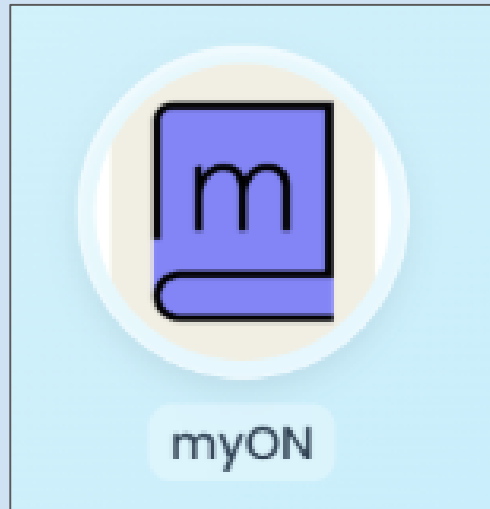
- **Digital library** with thousands of books
- Students can read books **on a laptop, tablet or phone**
- It is **personalised**
- The system suggests books based on a student's **reading level and interests**
- Students can read **anytime and anywhere (24/7)**

It includes **tools to help reading**, like:

- audio (books can be read aloud)
- highlighting and note-taking
- a built-in dictionary
- quizzes to secure understanding



Accessing myOn at home - it's easy!





BENSHAM MANOR
School

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09:15

Safe, Ready, Kind



Google Search



School Email



Google Drive



myON



Typing Practice



MyMaths



Renaissance

See Every Student.

Bensham Manor School

Choose Your Role



I'm a Student



I'm a Teacher/
Administrator

Bensham Manor School

Student Log In

[I'm not a student](#)

Username

asimmons

Password

....



[Forgot Password?](#)

Log In

Home

Practice



Accelerated
Reader



myON

Star Assessments

English



EL

Star Early
Literacy

Time Spent Reading

A purple circular icon with a white zebra's head.

This week
0 minutes

Goal
40 minutes

A small blue link icon.

This week

Books in Your ZPD

A book cover titled 'What Can You See in Winter?' showing a snowy landscape.

A book cover titled 'All About Rain Forests' showing colorful parrots.

A book cover titled 'Community Helpers at School' showing a group of children.

A book cover titled 'Life in a Desert' showing a fox.

Continue Reading

A book cover titled 'Taking Care of My Hands and Feet' showing a child's hands.

A book cover titled 'Brown Food Fun' showing a child eating.

A book cover titled 'Max va de compras' showing a child shopping.

[See all](#)

Non-Fiction

A book cover titled 'Polar Bears' showing a polar bear.

A book cover titled 'Trucks' showing a blue truck.

A small, partially visible book cover at the bottom.



**Be a
reading
role model**

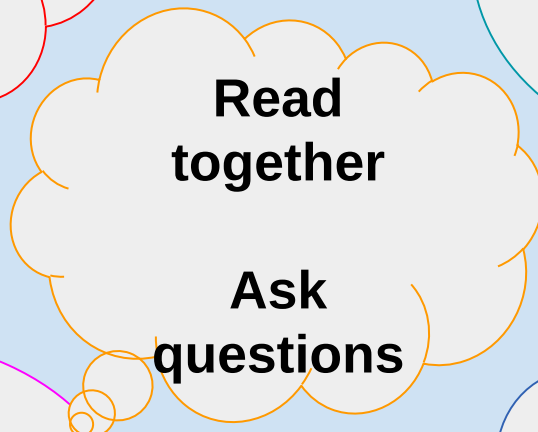


**Use
audio
books**



Start small

**Set small
goals**

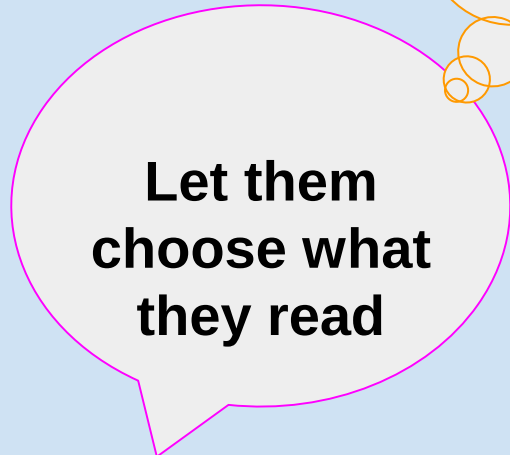


**Read
together**

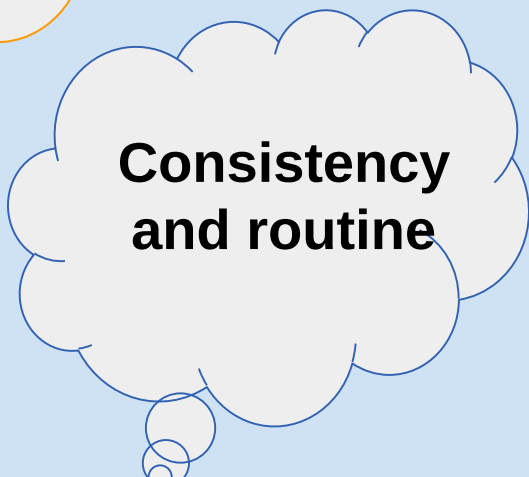
**Ask
questions**



**Keep it low
pressure**



**Let them
choose what
they read**



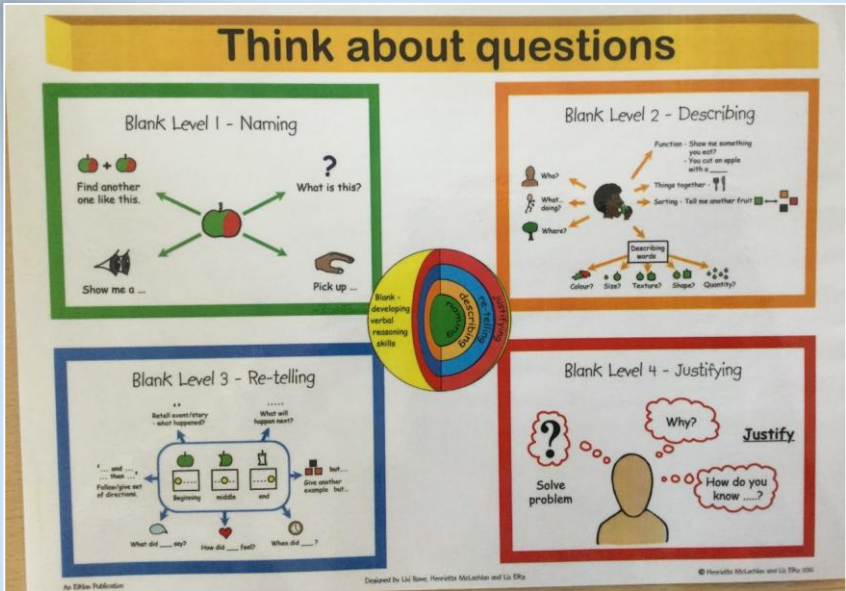
**Consistency
and routine**

How do I know what questions to ask my child?

At Bensham, we use **Blank Levels of Questioning.**

There are four levels that support the development of the students' understanding of language.

There are sets of questions which go from concrete (Level 1) to abstract (Level 4).



Blank Level 1 - Naming



Find another
one like this.



What is this?

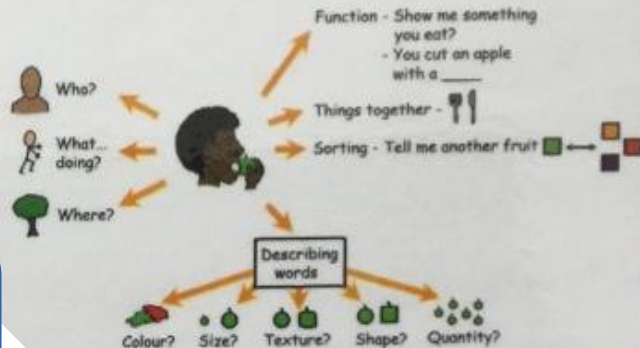


Show me a ...



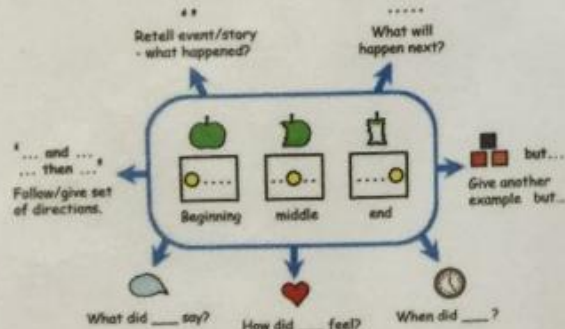
Pick up ...

Blank Level 2 - Describing

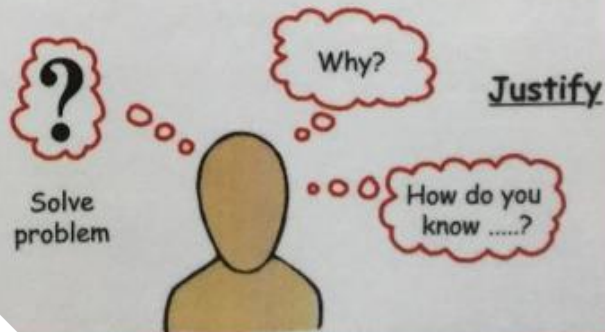


**Developing
verbal reasoning
and inference
skills.**

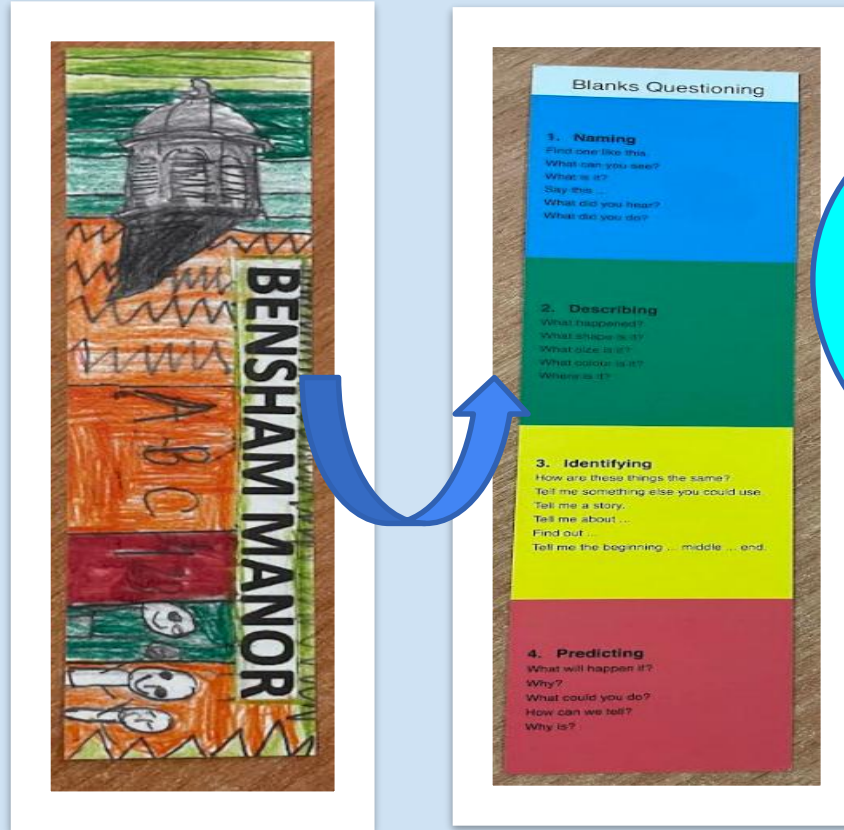
Blank Level 3 - Re-telling



Blank Level 4 - Justifying



Every student has a bookmark which has Blank Level questions printed on the back of it.



Students are asked these questions during/after reading.

The type of question asked, depends on their level of understanding.

Knowing what type of questions to ask my child.

1. Naming

Find one like this.

What can you see?

What is it?

Say this ...

What did you hear?

What did you do?

2. Describing

What happened?

What shape is it?

What size is it?

What colour is it?

Where is it?

3. Identifying

How are these things the same?

Tell me something else you could use.

Tell me a story.

Tell me about ...

Find out ...

Tell me the beginning ... middle ... end.

4. Predicting

What will happen if?

Why?

What could you do?

How can we tell?

Why is?

If you are not sure - start at Blank Level 1 and work your way up. If your child is a confident reader then they will probably be at Blank 3 or 4. You can always challenge them with a higher Blank Level.

Here's an example of some questions to ask a student working at Blank Level 1 or 2.



- **What** can you see?
- (point to the moon) **What's** this?
- **What** shape is the moon?
- **Show me** another moon?

Boffin Boy and the Ice Caves of Pluto by David Orme

Here's an example of some questions to ask your child if they working at Blank level 3 or 4.

If you think sleeping rough's just a matter of finding a dry spot where the fuzz won't move you on and getting your head down, you're wrong. Not your fault of course - if you've never tried it you've no way of knowing what it's like, so what I thought I'd do was sort of talk you through a typical night. That night in the Vaudeville alcove won't do, because there were two of us and it's worse if you're by yourself.

So you pick your spot. Wherever it is (unless you're in a squat or a derelict house or something) it's going to have a floor of stone, tile, concrete or brick. In other words it's going to be hard and cold. It might be a bit cramped, too - shop doorways often are. And remember, if it's winter you're going to be half frozen before you even start. Anyway you've got your place, and if you're lucky enough to have a sleeping bag you unroll it and get in. Settled for the night? Well maybe, maybe not. Remember my first night? The Scouser? 'Course you do. He kicked me out of my bedroom and pinched my watch. Well, that sort of thing can happen any night, and there are worse things. You could be peed on by a drunk or a dog. Happens all the time - one man's bedroom is another man's lavatory. You might be spotted by a gang of lager louts on the lookout for someone to maim. That happens all the time too, and if they get carried away you can end up dead. There are the guys who like young boys, who think because you're a dosser you'll do anything for dosh, and there's the psycho who'll knife you for your pack. So, you lie listening. You bet you do. Footsteps. Voices. Breathing, even. Doesn't help you sleep.

And don't forget the cold. If you've ever tried dropping off to sleep with cold feet, even in bed, you'll know it's impossible. You've got to warm up those feet, or lie awake. And in January, in a doorway, in wet trainers, it can be quite a struggle. And if you manage it, chances are you'll need to get up for a pee, and then it starts all over again. And those are only some of the hassles. I haven't mentioned stomach cramps from hunger, headaches from the flu, toothache, fleas and lice. I haven't talked about homesickness, depression or despair. I haven't gone into how it feels to want a girlfriend when your circumstances make it virtually impossible for you to get one - how it feels to know you're a social outcast in fact, a non-person to whom every ordinary everyday activity is closed. So. You lie on your bruises, listening. Trying to warm your feet. You curl up on your side and your hip hurts, so you stretch out on your back so your feet stay cold and the concrete hurts your heels. You force yourself to lie still for a bit, thinking that'll help you drop off, but it doesn't. Your pack feels like a rock under your head and your nose is cold. You wonder what time it is. Can you stop listening now, or could someone still come? Distant chimes. You strain your ears, counting. One o'clock? It can't be only one o'clock, surely?

- **How** do you think Link feels being homeless?
- **What** do you think will happen next in the story?
- **How** can we tell that Link struggles in the cold weather?
- **Why** is it dangerous sleeping on the streets?

Stone Cold by Robert Swindells

Useful Websites to support your child at home

<https://wordsforlife.org.uk/>

<https://www.booktrust.org.uk/books-and-reading/bookfinder/>

<https://home.oxfordowl.co.uk/>

<https://readingagency.org.uk/get-reading/our-programmes-and-campaigns/reading-well/reading-well-for-teens/>