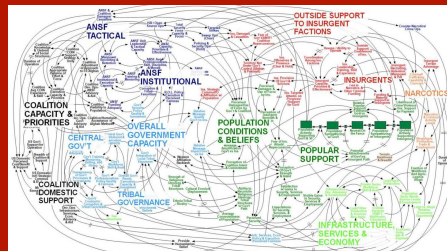


**Hello Dollar
you look nice**

Welcome!



Clean Up Your Mess

ResearchEd Scotland

I'm Robert Macmillan and I teach modern studies at Inverkeithing High in Fife.

Honoured to have been asked to give a wee input into today's event and I'm grateful to everyone for coming.

My talk today is about highlighting what I see as ways in which we create unnecessary barriers to learning in the materials we present to pupils and our peers.

Clean Up Your Mess

Influences

Mistakes

So what?

Clean Up

I want to firstly and briefly talk about what has influenced my thinking on this in the past.

To then turn to the mistakes that I wish to highlight.

Give reasons as to why this matters.

And finally suggest ways in which we can do better.

Influences

Growing up I was like many others, into music in a big way. And so much of that experience was enhanced by magnificent album art.

SIMPLE
MINDS

Simple. Clear. and So Bold.

SIMPE
MINDS
LIVE
IN THE CITY OF LIGHT



Terry and Gerry

When I was at university in 1st year. Terry was a sociology lecturer.

He put typed transparencies on the overhead projector. Densely typed OHTs. In Geneva.

And whipped the one you were still taking notes from away - to then put on another densely typed OHT.

Gerry was a politics lecturer.

He handwrote his slides.

He only put the framework on the slide.

He only revealed the relevant part of the slide.

We got great, structured notes.

We preferred Gerry.

As I'll later show, we should be more Gerry and be less Terry.

**The life of a
designer is
a life of fight
against the
ugliness.**

Massimo Vignelli

My final initial influence to highlight is this.

My main motivation is to reduce what I consider to be the ugly and the vulgar in what we see in our classrooms.

Mistakes

So, to start the main points of my talk: what are the mistakes that we make?

Clutter

The first is clutter.

We have seen people talk the contents of word documents and simply pour them into a default powerpoint slide.

Also as a result of lessons designed to satisfy tick-box cultures.

The burdensome content raises a fundamental question:

What should I focus on?

What do you wish your audience to pay attention to?

Here are some examples:

Learning Intention:
To *describe* what 'Development' is.
To be able to *give examples* of how countries are *organised* by levels of development.

| | |
|--|--|
| <p>SUCCESS CRITERIA</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Say what development means and be able to give examples of developed and developing countries. Describe what aspects of our lives are effected by development. | <p>SKILLS DEVELOPED</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Thinking Skills: problem solving, describing information, explaining information *HWB: working effectively with others * LITERACY: discussion and debate, listening, reading, writing |
|--|--|

STARTER TASK: Reflection Statement:
'For most people living in Scotland and the UK, life is better today than it was for our grandparents'
TASK: What evidence is there to support the above statement?

Leaving aside the efficacy of the LI/SC, I'd simply say that there is far too much going on here.

These could and should be broken up into separate slides.

Also the boxes are achieving nothing.

As do the starred bullet points.

The 'task' is perhaps the most important thing here but it is at the foot of the slide and obscured due to the colour scheme.

TODAY WE HAVE FOUND OUT. . .
(any volunteers to give us an example?)

Click to add text

1) We can *describe* what 'Development' is
2) We are able to *give examples* of how countries are *organised* by levels of development.

SKILLS DEVELOPED TODAY INCLUDE:

- ***Thinking Skills:** problem solving, describing information, explaining information
- ***HWB:** working effectively with others
- * **LITERACY:** discussion and debate, listening, reading, writing

Similarly:

Bits have been left in which then add to the clutter. The desire to cram everything in has meant that the skills section can hardly be made out.

22/09/2019 S1 History: Invaders and Settlers

Learning Intention: to be able to decide how useful a piece of historical evidence is; to use some evidence to learn about the past.

| | | |
|--|---|---|
| <p>Skills:</p> <p>Today we will be developing your:</p> <p>Teamwork Writing Evaluating Vocabulary</p> | <p>Success Criteria:</p> <p>You will be able judge how useful a source is by using the W.A.C system.</p> | <p>Starter Activity:</p> <p>List as many different sources of information that we have in 2016. They can be electronic or other means.</p> |
|--|---|---|

High School – Social Subjects Faculty

This is a good way of helping you.

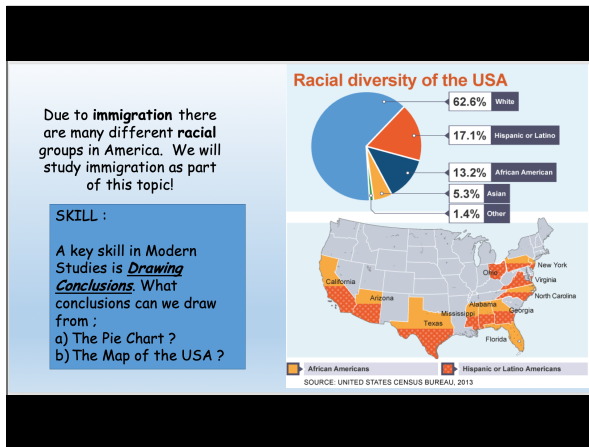
If you have forgotten the date.

Or the course.

Or where you work.

The clip art adds clutter not clarity.

At least the different sections are in separate boxes.



Finally, again there is too much here - with too much irrelevant text.

As I have shown these slide examples, I have noticed a pattern:

Your eyes are always attracted to the screen.

What's more, you want to read what's there.

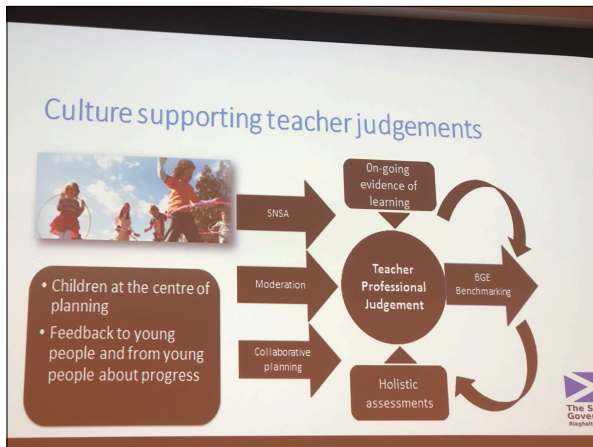
By now you have started to read the text to yourself and as a result of this, will pay little to no attention to what I am actually saying.

Worse still, if all I do is start to read this out you'll be getting bored and will want to move on. By this stage you've finished reading it, and will now fidget, check your phone etc.

Despite the fact that we all know this to be the case, we still persist with text-heavy slides that are read out to the audience.

Having said that, at least it's just text that is part of the same message here and not one where there are confusing or mixed messages like this:

Now imagine what it's like for a poor reader.

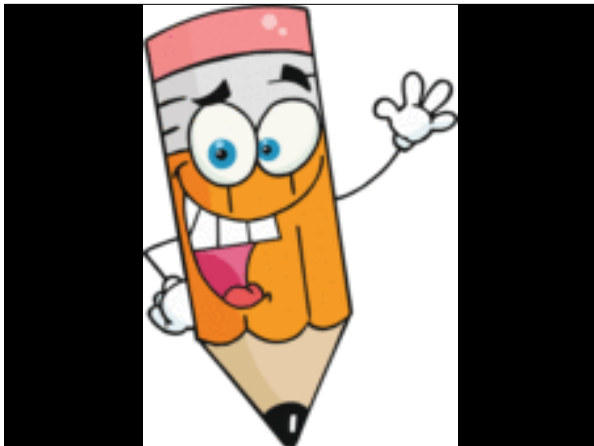


“children at the centre of planning”?

What is the images for - are the SNSA hoops for the children to jump through?

Are the arrows causal links?

Which parts are the cultural supports?



It's 2019.

We have HD cameras/4K cameras/yet crap 1990s clip art still permeates...

Further, there are still a number of folks who squash and squeeze an imported image - instead of changing the size of it:



It's 2019 and somehow people cannot change the size of an image without squashing or squeezing it.

This is a feature of both Word and Powerpoint which I had to specifically open in order to do these.



Supreme Leader Kim is the only one who looks even semi-normal?

A further issue is playing around with text but doing so in a way that compresses the letters too much.

This can lead to unintended consequences:

Slow Animations

Really

Really

Really

Bug your audience.

Just because you can use an animation does not mean that you have to.

So What?

As I said earlier - the more clutter, the more potential for confusion.

We are doing many of our pupils a disservice.

Further, this is an age of austerity in finances and plentiful workload:

There is no longer
room for irrelevant
things. We have no
longer got the
resources. Irrelevance
is out.

Dieter Rams

This is the first line.

This is the second.

This is the third.

An indicator only has value when it is indicating something.

If you are going to have things appear - have only on show the things that matter at that time.

Waste of time

Distracts pupils

Adds to cognitive load

Clean Up

You

don't

need

everything

on

the

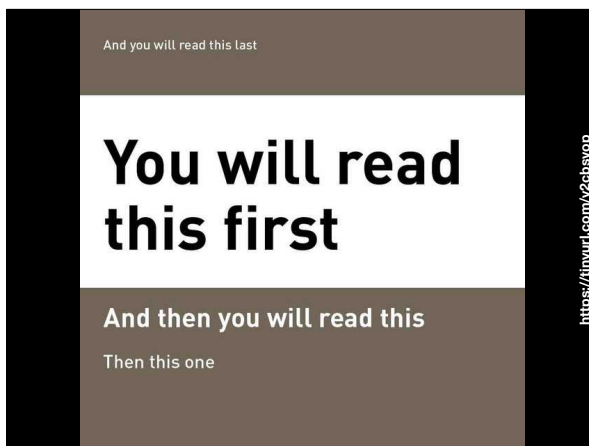
one

slide.

**Images can have
more impact.**

The *right* image can have even more impact.

We can even determine where the audience will look.



We attach prominence through size.

Use size consistently for similar elements.

The primary focus should have most prominence.

Tips

I'm drawing heavily on the work of Daniel Higginbotham in this part.

If the visual elements and their relationships are not accurate and obvious, the audience will get confused.

I would like a volunteer to do a wee test.

purple blue green
yellow red red
purple green yellow
blue blue yellow
green red purple
yellow blue green
red purple

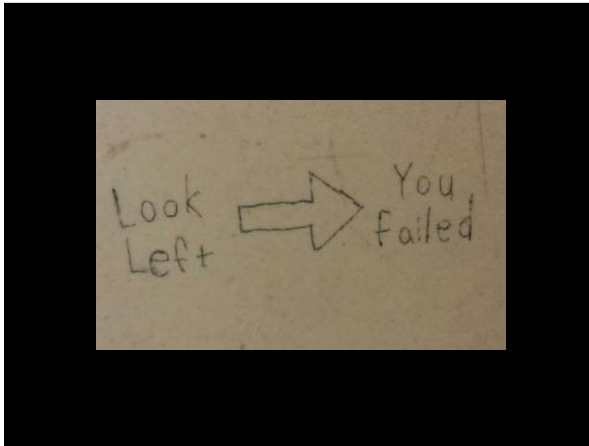
Try saying the colours of the words on the slide. For example, for the first word you would say "red". Now, try saying the words themselves. Does your brain hurt yet?

purple blue green
yellow red red
purple green yellow
blue blue yellow
green red purple
yellow blue green
red purple

Consistency of elements makes understanding easier.

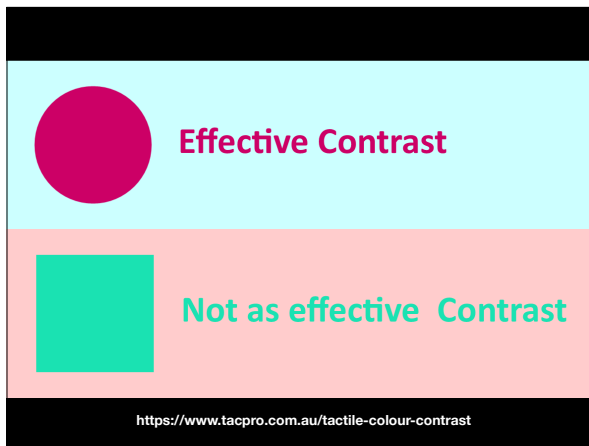
You have to avoid conflict between perceived meaning and actual meaning.

Your images have to complement the message - not conflict with it:



Use strongly contrasting colours.

In slides, dark backgrounds with lighter text are also better.



The kittens on the right are more easily identified as being in two groups as they share an area with a clearly defined boundary.

In this case, a larger amount of white space is used to form the border between the groups.

Notice also that the space in-between each kitten group, helps distinguish them!



Alignment

You don't have to centre everything.

It may in fact be better to have your text left or right justified, as this avoids 'jaggy' lines at either side.

Experiment with contrasting alignments!

First

By now you have started to read the text to yourself and as a result of this, will pay little to no attention to what I am actually saying.

Second

Worse still, if all I do is start to read this out you'll be getting bored and will want to move on. By this stage you've finished reading it, and will now fidget, check your phone etc.

Third

Despite the fact that we all know this to be the case, we still persist with text-heavy slides that are read out to the audience.

I've also brought in columns in order to break down the content.

This raises the possibility of replacing the third paragraph on this slide with an image...

First

By now you have started to read the text to yourself and as a result of this, will pay little to no attention to what I am actually saying.

Second

Worse still, if all I do is start to read this out you'll be getting bored and will want to move on. By this stage you've finished reading it, and will now fidget, check your phone etc.



Of course, it should be relevant rather than Rachel.

Third

Despite the fact that we all know this to be the case, we still persist with text-heavy slides that are read out to the audience.



Catherine says hello.

Content

Do you need all that text anyway?
Is what you have overly complex?

Slide text gets read.

It's boring.

You do it anyway.

Stop it.

Here is the essential point.

Be more Gerry
Be less Terry

Here is the essential point.

Gayle Gorman added: "The reason for saying thank you could be for a number of reasons, from helping your child settle in, last year's class teacher, helping you through a difficult time or for helping you when you were struggling. But it is important that we take time to recognise the hard work of teachers across Scotland and I would encourage people to get involved in this campaign to let teachers know just how much they are appreciated."

<https://education.gov.scot/news-and-events/news/thank-a-teacher-campaign-launched-in-scotland>

Here is an example from a press release earlier this week:

A useful tool is the Hemingway App site.

It helps you to take complex sentences and break them up to make it easier to read.

The screenshot shows the Hemingway Editor interface. The text from the press release is pasted into the editor. The tool has analyzed the text and provided several readability metrics:

- Readability:** Grade 13, OK. Aim for 9.
- Words:** 79, Show More
- Adverb:** 1 adverb, meeting the goal of 1 or fewer.
- Passive Voice:** 1 use of passive voice, meeting the goal of 1 or fewer.
- Complex Phrases:** 1 phrase has a simpler alternative.
- Hard to Read:** 0 of 3 sentences are hard to read.
- Very Hard to Read:** 2 of 3 sentences are very hard to read.

Identifies adverbs, the use of the passive voice, and hard to read sentences.

It then helps you to cut them down.

hemingway.com

Bold Italic H1 H2 H3 Quote Bullets Numbers Link Site Edit

Hemingway Editor

Gayle Gorman added: "The reason for saying thank you could be for many reasons. A teacher might have helped your child settle in. Or, they may have helped them through a difficult time. Or, they helped you when you were struggling. It is important that we take time to recognise the hard work of teachers across Scotland. I would encourage people to get involved in this campaign. Let teachers know how much they **are appreciated.**"

Readability
Grade 5
Good


Words: 75
Show More ▾

- 0 adverbs. Well done.
- 1 use of passive voice, meeting the goal of 2 or fewer.
- 0 phrases have simpler alternatives.
- 0 of 8 sentences are hard to read.
- 0 of 8 sentences are very hard to read.

Not only is this useful for reducing text on slides, it's really useful for making documents clearer. This could be the worksheets you prepare for pupils to differentiate them or communications with parents/carers.

If it is not needed - don't include it - whether it is text, crap images, animations, lines, squiggles, noises

AIKIDO



Aikido is a unique martial art that integrates body, mind and spirit. Graceful and powerful, it emphasizes peace and harmony over aggression and violence.

BEGINNER CLASS

Starts Sunday, April 27, 2008
1:00 - 2:00 p.m.
8-week course – \$95

Adult class (12 and older).
No martial arts experience necessary.
Call to reserve a space.

Regular Classes
Tuesday 7:30 p.m.
Thursday 7:45 p.m.
Sundays, 1:00 & 2:15 p.m.

PLEASE COME AND VISIT ANY OF OUR CLASSES TO DETERMINE IF AIKIDO IS RIGHT FOR YOU!


PORTSMOUTH AIKIDO
at the Seacoast Family Y
550 Peverly Hill Road
Portsmouth, NH
CALL 603-431-8560
www.PortsmouthAikido.com

The use of justified text means the vertical lines are no longer needed.

Related elements are clearly grouped.


The most relevant information is the most obvious.

AIKIDO



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Graceful and powerful, it emphasizes peace and harmony over aggression and violence.



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Thursday 7:45 p.m.
Sunday 1:00 & 2:15 p.m.

Come Visit
Please come and visit any of our classes to determine if Aikido is right for you!

Portsmouth Aikido
at the Seacoast Family Y
550 Peverly Hill Road
603-431-8560
www.portsmouthaikido.com

Fonts

A couple of points regarding fonts.

The font choice should reflect the function of the message you are communicating. Similar to other visual elements, it should not get in the way of the audience making sense.

1. BuryEm
Funeral
Services

Bozo!
Children's
Party Clown
for Hire

The text on your slide should be 30pt as a minimum.

Keep in mind that some fonts are bigger/smaller than others!



30 pt minimum



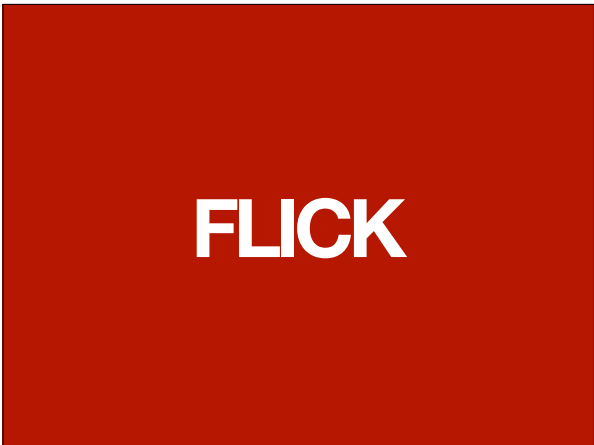
80 pt



140 pt



But do be careful...



Incidentally, I had another example of this. But my wife suggested that by using CLINT might go beyond a line...

Before I sum up - I cannot mention fonts without mentioning the devil's font.



 **Moonpig**
@MoonpigUK

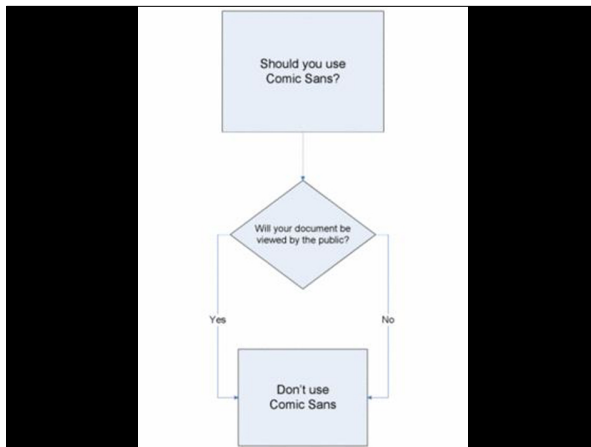
Apology: we've been getting a lot of complaints about not having comic sans available as a font to use in our cards. We would like to take this time to apologise for not allowing you to ruin our cards with that terrible font, and hope your design tastes improve.

| | |
|---------------------|----------------------------|
| 3,116 Likes | 660 Retweets |
| 7 Jun 2019 at 12:40 | via Twitter Web App |

**It's not more
readable.**

In and of itself, it is not (yet?) demonstrated that it's more readable.

In any case - over-filling handouts, slides indeed anything with too small text renders so many things unreadable and ugly.



It is useful for demonstrating little other than your own lack of taste.

It is a virus and needs stamped out.



Use a grid.

It will help you to place elements without having to rely on more visual mess to keep things apart.

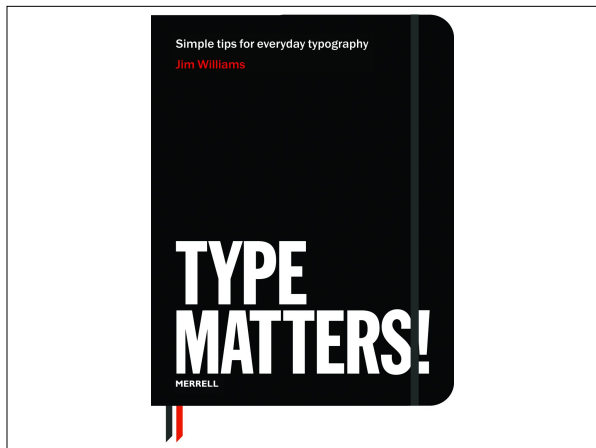
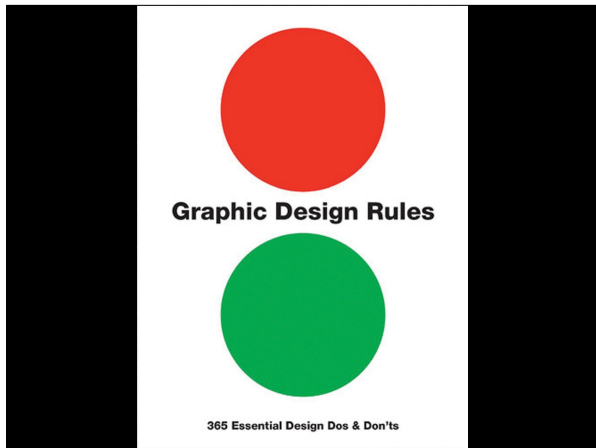
You can place 'invisible' grids that allow you to structure things but do not appear in the document or the presentation.

Don't just use the given templates - as they are often the reason for so much of the clutter.

Help?

Finally, some sources for you to consider exploring this further.





A John Catt Publication

DUAL CODING WITH TEACHERS

OLIVER CAVIGLIOLI
MEd

Author

Andrew Sweet, Early Years
 Ben Reynolds, History
 Gail Howard, Psychology
 James Cox, Religion Education
 J. Lumbard, Sci.
 Gary Lamb, Maths
 Caroline Roberts, PE
 Mike Jenkins, Primary
 Steve Palmer, Philosophy, PE
 Mark Egan, Geography
 Mike Tate, Physical Education, PE
 Peter Richards, Science
 Patrick Richards, Science
 Richard Cunniff, English
 Ruth Kettle, Science
 Simon Perry, Religious Education

Teacher-Developers

Andy Burt, Leadership
 Christine Green, Collaborative Design
 Dan Williams, Initial Teacher Training
 David Edwards, Research Development
 Emma McCook, English, Maths
 Nigel Kelly, Science
 Gary Redden/Wood, Training
 James Bayliss, English
 Nicky Shepherd/HGA, History
 Ruth Swales, Consultant Early Years
 Tracy Hales, Intervention/Primary

Project-Developers

Paul Smith, Research Consultant
 Catherine Muggill, School Co-ordinator
 Maggie Summers, Staff/Head of Dept.
 Paul Redden, PE
 Tracy Redden, Primary, Learning Support

Teacher-Writer

Francis Miller, Book Reviews
 Nicky Shepherd/HGA, English/Primary
 Peter Hains, Curriculum/PE
 Sheila Harris, English/Primary
 Trevor Potts, Science

WHY? The theory and evidence behind the benefits

WHAT? Discover 12 different ways and how they work

HOW? Develop your skills with clear step-by-step ideas

WHICH? Take notes and principles of effective ideas

WHEN? Identify the best moments and setting for each activity

WHO? Enable your pupils and staff to work together

WHERE? Enhance and measure its impact on learning

Main Purposes

- 1 To encourage a self-disciplined and self-motivating attitude to study.
- 2 To allow for the completion/consolidation/extension of work begun with the teacher in class, or for the preparation of a new topic.
- 3 The development of good work habits and independent study skills in pupils.

Organisation

- 1 Year 3 pupils will not be set formal prep but will be given, as appropriate, learning opportunities to improve their spelling, handwriting and times tables recall. They are expected to read each evening.
- 2 Years 4 & 5 pupils are set one Maths and one English prep each week. These may be, when appropriate, supplemented by Science or Humanities preps. Tasks are set based on an expectation of 20 minutes per subject.
- 3 Years 6, 7 and 8 pupils will be given prep according to the prep timetable. In Year 6, preps are based on an expectation of 20 minutes per subject for the Autumn and Spring Terms, rising to 30 minutes per subject in the Summer Term. In Years 7 and 8, preps are based on an expectation of 30 minutes per subject.

Policy**The prep**

- 1 Wherever possible, the prep should be a specific, self-contained piece of work, which is clearly identified in planning documents.
If the prep is a part of an ongoing project, pupils should be given clear guidelines as to what they are to achieve by the end of the prep session; assistance should also be given to the pupil to structure the work and checks made at regular intervals to support and encourage progress.
- 2 The prep should be appropriate to the ability of each pupil to allow completion on their own, with minimal help from staff (if done at school) or parents (if done at home). Differentiation is essential. The time spent on homework should not be dictated by ability.
Teachers should make clear to pupils that they are not expected to struggle on preps well beyond the allocated time. If a prep is incomplete due to difficulty with it, the record book can be used for an explanatory note from parents.
- 3 The prep should be relevant to the work being covered in lessons and suitable for completion in silence.

Homework Policy

At Durston Court, we refer to homework as prep.

Overview

The main purpose of prep is to encourage self-discipline and a self-motivated attitude to study.

Teachers will use their professional judgement when deciding on the best prep task to further learning. They may set different preps for different children that they teach.

Prep could be a continuation of classroom learning, an opportunity to extend and reinforce learning, research, the preparation for a new topic/subject learning. It may involve copying work in books, or paper or online, in preparation for assessment, prep may also take the form of revision.

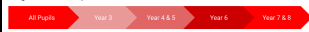
Prep tasks - teachers will ensure that:

Every effort is made to set prep when timetabled and that pupils note their prep in their record books. If prep is not set, pupils should be told the reason and record 'NOT SET' in their record books.

All pupils understand the prep set to bring through the work in class beforehand. Additional information, when relevant, will be shared on Google Classroom.

Pupils understand the amount of time to spend on prep, the deadline for completion, and that they are not expected to struggle on tasks well beyond the allotted time.

Pupils complete their prep on time and to a satisfactory standard. Parents are informed of any consistent problems with the completion of prep.

Organisation of Prep

Prep will be set according to the prep timetable.

Prep will be set according to the prep timetable.

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Prep will be set according to the prep timetable.

Prep will be set according to the prep timetable.

Prep will be set according to the prep timetable.

Home/School partnership

Parents should be made aware of the Homework Policy and prep timetable at the start of the year and ensure that they regularly check the Prep Record Book, signing it on a weekly basis. Parents should ensure that they note if a prep is incomplete for any reason, preferably via the record book or email.

Reviewed and updated September 2019 (R)

@bobbyjack

**Fight against
the ugliness.**

Thank you.

@robmac
robmac.com

