

Success in English

Helping your child at home

What are the key skills needed to be successful at GCSE English?

Reading	Writing
Comprehension	Adapting writing for audience and purpose
Interpretation	Vocabulary
Analysis	Imaginative, interesting & detailed ideas
Evaluation	Whole text structure
Synthesis	Sentence structures
	Accuracy of spelling and punctuation

SCARBOROUGH'S READING ROPE (2001)

LANGUAGE COMPREHENSION

BACKGROUND KNOWLEDGE
(facts, concepts, etc.)

VOCABULARY
(breadth, precision, links, etc.)

LANGUAGE STRUCTURE
(syntax, semantics, etc.)

VERBAL REASONING
(inference, metaphor, etc.)

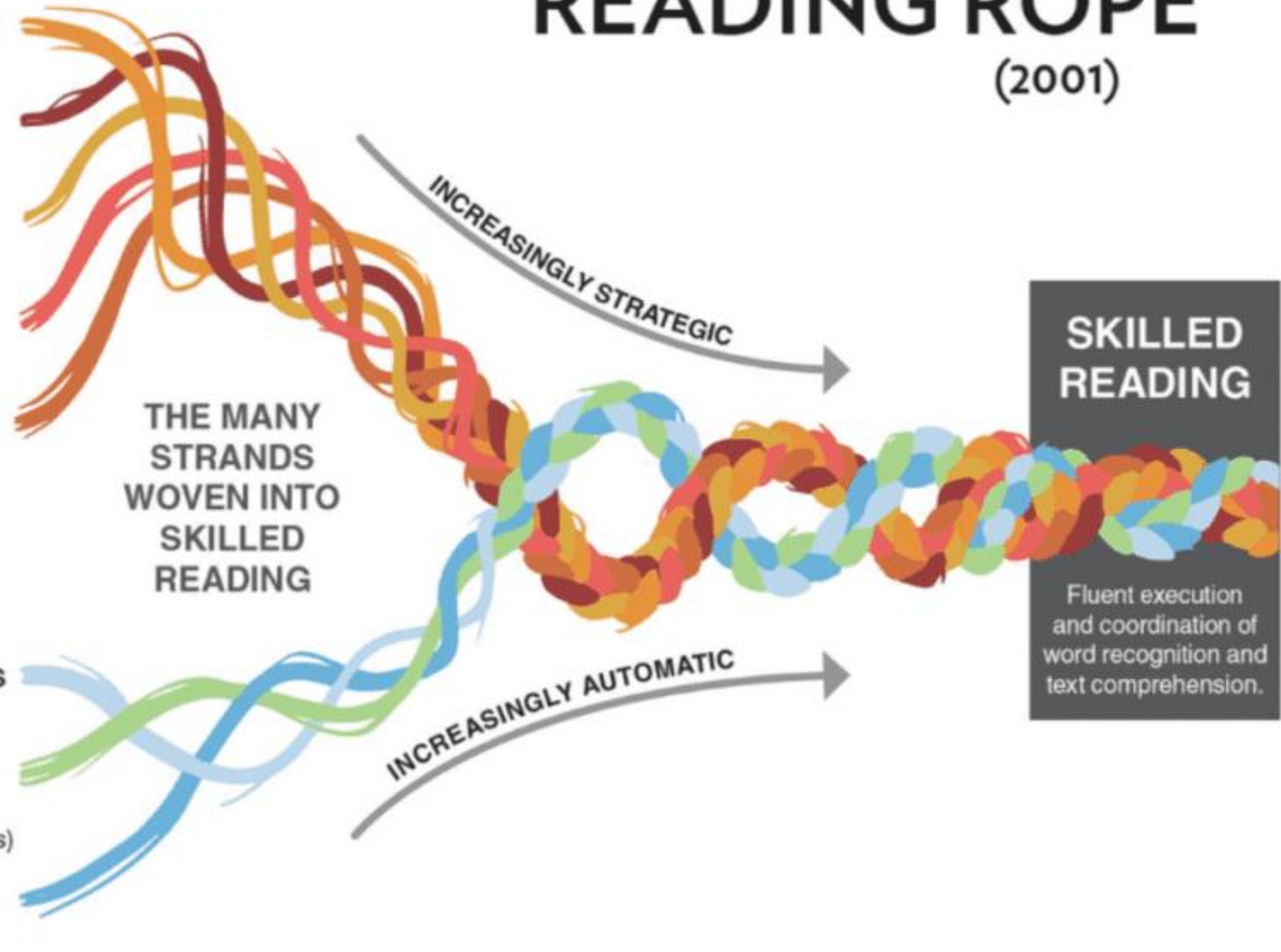
LITERACY KNOWLEDGE
(print concepts, genres, etc.)

WORD RECOGNITION

PHONOLOGICAL AWARENESS
(syllables, phonemes, etc.)

DECODING
(alphabetic principle,
spelling–sound correspondences)

SIGHT RECOGNITION
(of familiar words)



What are the key stumbling blocks to success in English?

Weak vocabulary

Weak accuracy

Lack of general knowledge

Poor imagination

The importance of general knowledge

- *This extract is from the opening of a novel by Daphne du Maurier. Although written in 1936 it is set in the past. In this section a coach and horses, with its passengers, is making its way through Cornwall to Jamaica Inn.*

It was a cold grey day in late November. The weather had changed overnight, when a backing wind brought a granite sky and a mizzling rain with it, and although it was now only a little after two o'clock in the afternoon the pallor of a winter evening seemed to have closed upon the hills, cloaking them in mist. It would be dark by four. The air was clammy cold, and for all the tightly closed windows it penetrated the interior of **the coach**. The leather seats felt damp to the hands, and there must have been a small crack in the roof, because now and again little drips of rain fell softly through, smudging the leather and leaving a dark-blue stain like a splodge of ink.



The importance of a wide vocabulary

We need to know 90-95% of the words in a text in order to understand it ([Nagy & Scott 2000](#).) This may seem high, but 5% would be about 10-15 words a page.

The chief place of resort in the daytime, after the public-houses, is the park, in which the principal amusement is to drag young ladies up the steep hill which leads to the Observatory⁴, and then drag them down again at the very top of their speed, greatly to the derangement of their curls and bonnet-caps, and much to the edification of lookers-on from below.

Dickens

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Dickens

The magic wand!

Download more graphics at www.psdgraphics.com



The positives of reading

Maths advantage for pupils who read for pleasure

By Katherine Sellgren BBC
News education reporter
11 September 2013

'The Reading Trial' research

Of those providing data, 156/369 (42%) people in the intervention group felt their sleep improved, compared to 112/405 (28%) of those in the control group, a difference of 14%.

Reading for pleasure 'boosts social relations'

BBC 3 August 2015

Could reading stories help you live longer?

Cosy up with a novel and you could give yourself a surprising wealth of health benefits. It can improve your stress levels, help with depression, strengthen your social skills and it could even help you live longer!



Evidence from National Literacy Trust Study

Figure 17: Average (mean) age-standardised reading score by whether or not young people aged 11 to 14 read daily³



Again, looking at this differently, Table 6 shows that twice as many young people who don't read daily read below the average expected for their age compared with their peers who read daily. Conversely, nearly three times as many young people who read daily read above the expected level compared with their peers who don't read daily.

Table 6: Reading skill by whether or not young people aged 11 to 14 enjoy reading

	Below expected level	At expected level	Above expected level
Read daily	6.1%	56.3%	37.6%
Don't read daily	11.2%	74.5%	14.2%

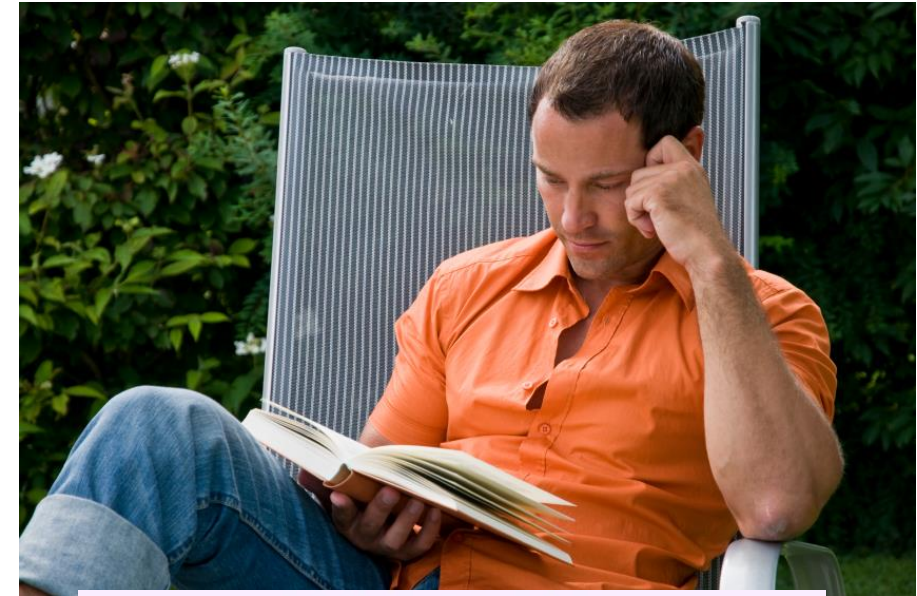
How long should my child read outside of school?



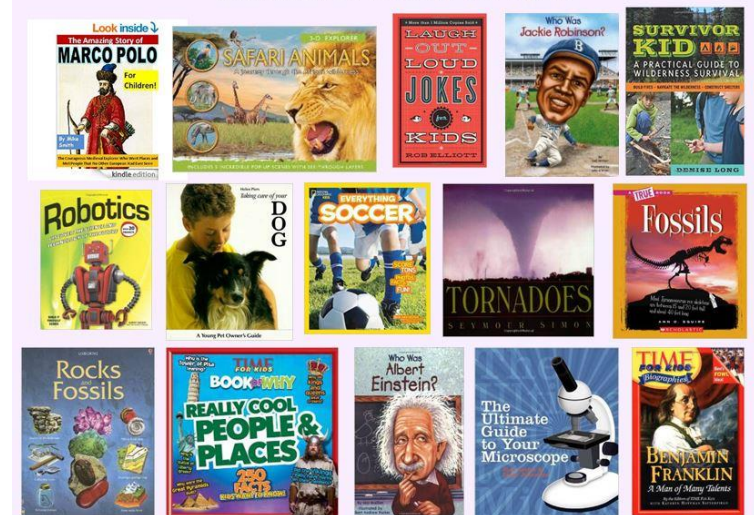
Daily time spent in class = 300 minutes

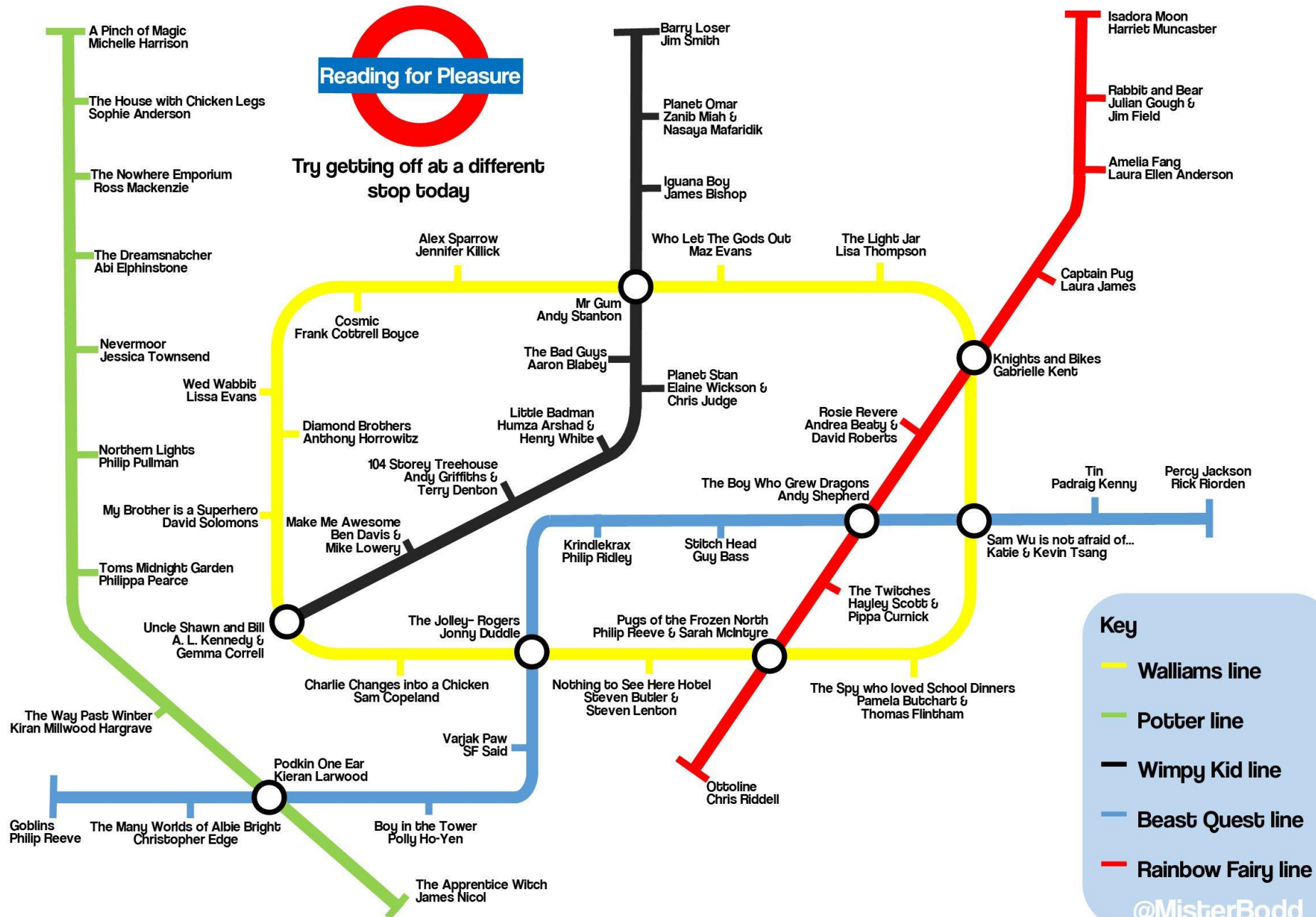
Minutes reading a day	Total minutes spent reading a year	Extra class time
20 minutes	7300	24 days
5 minutes	1,825	6 days
1 minute	365	1 day

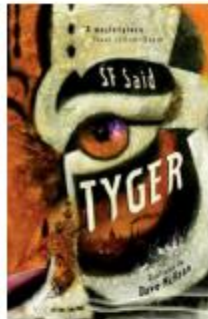
Tips



Desirable Non-Fiction Book Topics







Read for Empathy collection 2023

Books to build empathy – for young people aged 12–16
#ReadForEmpathy

How does empathy work?

Graphic and Verse Novels

Poetry

Non-Fiction

Novels

Top tips

GCSE writing topics

- Education related topics
- Fast fashion
- Travel and the environment
- Animal welfare
- Transport and the environment

