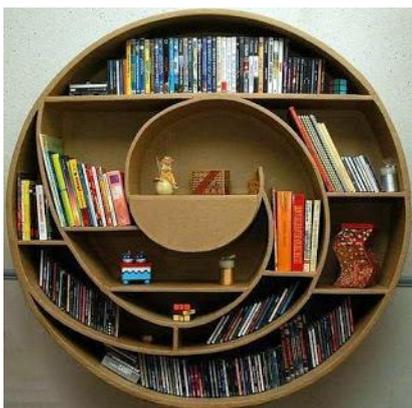


The roll-out of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategy in Lucan Community College as in all schools involves evaluating students' progress in these areas and implementing strategies to improve these skills. Many students will be recording keywords and formula across all subject areas. We hold an annual reading week in the school and operate paired reading initiatives and hold a word or phrase of the week campaign. In addition you can see useful literacy tools included in our student journal this year and all students are being asked to convert their fraction test result into a percentage to kick off our numeracy strategy. You will also have heard plenty of discussion about Project Maths in the media and of the increased focus on problem solving and understanding in the Maths classroom.

While we at Lucan Community School will endeavour to constantly develop and implement strategies to improve the literacy and numeracy of our students, it would be of great benefit to every student if parents developed and implemented some of their own strategies to help to nurture literacy and numeracy skills in their young people. While many parents already encourage their children to read and write for pleasure and help their child to engage with numeracy in everyday life, some parents may benefit from guidance as to how an interest in reading and numbers could be stimulated in their child in the home.

To promote **literacy** in the home it is suggested that you might:



- Provide a 'text-rich' environment at home. Display books in the home and promote newspaper and magazine reading. Leave interesting books in various rooms around the house. Provide bookcases in your child's bedroom so they can store and display their own books. Perhaps you may consider purchasing broadsheet newspapers rather than tabloid papers because broadsheet newspapers have more in-depth analysis of news and current affairs and are generally written in a more formal style of language with a higher readability level.
- When out and about with your child, visit bookshops and browse the different sections. Tell your child to find an age

appropriate book of interest to them and purchase that book if it is affordable. Follow up on this purchase by discussing the book as your child is reading it. This parental interest helps to positively reinforce literacy for your child.

- When giving your child presents for birthdays and Christmas, you might include book tokens as part (or all) of the gift. You might follow up by bringing them to a bookshop to purchase books with the tokens, and then positively reinforce by discussing the book with your child as they read.
- Enquire as to your child's interests and hobbies and provide stimulating literature on their area of interest. Most people will read about topics in which they have an active involvement.
- Encourage your child to join a good library, and become a member yourself. For instance, the Lucan Library (<http://www.southdublinlibraries.ie/find-library/lucan>) in the Supervalu centre has close links with Lucan Community College and 1st year students are brought to visit the library during our annual reading week. There is also a facility to borrow e-books.



- Encourage your child to read material other than their homework at least once a day. Many young people like to read for a while in bed before they go to sleep. Helping your child to develop such a ritual would make a significant difference to their literacy in later life.
- Try to take an interest in reading yourself. You are an educational role model for your children so if they see you reading, they may well develop an interest themselves. If you have friends or extended family who read, ask them to take an interest in your child's reading by swapping and discussing books with them.
- Involve your child in literacy activities such as crosswords and word searches in the newspapers. Play word games with them such as *Scrabble*, *bananagrams*, etc.
- Encourage your child to write for pleasure and to enter into competitions for creative writing (see local library). Encourage them to write letters to newspapers to express their views publicly, or to send their writings into magazines and literary publications.
- Give your child the opportunity to see an age appropriate play performed live by professional actors. This will help the child to become more familiar with the process of the writing, staging and performance of plays which are an essential part of the Junior and Leaving Certificate English courses. It should also reinforce the idea that literature is to be enjoyed in many different contexts and is not just school-based. Remember that we have an annual TY musical and events during Arts Week that provides this opportunity for your child also.
- Discuss films and media with your child in terms of type/genre, plot, acting, characters, structure, function etc. This helps to develop your child's faculty of critical thinking, which is also examined as part of Junior and Leaving Certificate examinations.
- Have a dictionary and thesaurus in the home and encourage your child to use them to find the meaning and spellings of words that come up in books and conversation. The *Oxford English Dictionary* and the *Oxford English Thesaurus* are considered the most comprehensive and are available in all good bookshops. This practice will help to develop your child's vocabulary and spelling.
- Try to identify books that are appropriate to your child's comfort with reading and to your child's emotional development. Use website such as www.lovereadng4kids.co.uk and www.childrensbooksireland.ie to find reviews of books.



To promote **numeracy** in the home it is suggested that you might:

- Give your child an input into some of the 'number-based' decisions made at home. Involve them in costing a home improvement project or keeping a simple budget sheet for pocket money, grocery shopping, birthday party, etc.
- Encourage your child to keep a timetable for school, homework, other activities so that they can learn good time-keeping skills. Even a simple task like monitoring how long homework takes every night (as we do in our homework policy) can make them

more aware of time and can provide useful feedback to the school regarding the amount of homework being assigned.



- When out and about with your child, wear your 'mathseyes' (<http://www.haveyougotmathseyes.com/>). Look out for examples of numeracy in the work around you. This parental interest helps to positively reinforce numeracy as an everyday activity for your child.
- When giving your child presents for birthdays and Christmas, you might include number and shape puzzles as part of the gift.
- Use your child's natural interests and hobbies to raise awareness of numeracy e.g. sports (measuring pitch size, league tables, keeping score, etc.)
- Discuss attitudes to numeracy with your child. Anecdotal evidence suggests that parents attitude to numeracy can have

a real influence on their children. Avoid statements like 'I was no good at maths in school.' Students need to have an 'I'll give it my best shot' attitude in the maths classroom and in all numeracy situations.

- Involve your child in numeracy related activities such as Sudoku, Number puzzles, checking their change, recognising shapes, measuring height/waist before shopping for clothes etc.
- Have a calculator in the home and encourage your child to use it to work out every day numeracy questions such as 'Which item is better value?' This practice will help to develop your child's ability to see numeracy as an essential everyday skill. The process of guess (estimate an answer), press (use the calculator to get an exact answer) and check (that your answer makes sense) should be something that our students are familiar with from maths classes.
- Try to identify websites and apps that can be used to practice numeracy skills. Use websites such as <http://www.haveyougotmathseyes.com/>, <http://www.coolmath-games.com/>, <http://www.maths-games.org/>, and <http://www.mangahigh.com/> to find maths games that can reinforce basic literacy skills.
- Have fun! Being a confident user of literacy and numeracy skills depends very much on having a positive attitude.

Thank you for your support as parents/guardians in supporting your son/daughter to use and improve their literacy and numeracy skills.

