

# FROM THE DEAN OF BOYS' EDUCATION

## BOYS AND LITERACY

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Evidence from around the globe has been clear for some time; boys, in general, demonstrate weaker literacy skills in comparison to girls. However, at Trinity our emphasis is on 'which boys' rather than 'all boys', acknowledging the individual needs boys bring to their literacy learning, as well as their unique social and cultural backgrounds. Given that literacy is at the 'core' of learning, we constantly aim to challenge societal notions that limit boys' development of literacy skills. We do this to ensure they have every opportunity to achieve the best educational outcomes in all areas of their schooling life.

The School continues to develop and extend teachers' professional knowledge and skills in explicit teaching for boys' literacy development. In response to four years of NAPLAN data, and other assessment information, a Trinity Literacy Scope and Sequence has been developed which specifically addresses the learning needs of our boys in a focussed and developmental way from K to 10. In Years 11 and 12, our goal is to see that these literacy skills have greatly enhanced boys' learning opportunities in their significant final years of schooling.

Parents can have a profound impact on their son's literacy learning, especially in relation to reading. Parents are essential in delivering the 'reading for pleasure and purpose' message to boys which is so important. Some key strategies which have been shown to work with boys in supporting their reading at home include the following.

- > Have a wide variety of books (fiction and non-fiction) and other forms of reading material available throughout the house. Boys tend to like reading stories that reflect the image they have for themselves. Graphic novels, books in series, humour, action and adventure books engage many boys. The School's library website promotes a range of different books for boys at: <http://trinity.nsw.libguides.com/books>
- > Allow your son choice over his reading, and value this choice, regardless of the perceived quality or educational value.
- > Have regular conversations, in a casual and non-judgemental way, about the books your son is reading as well as the books you are reading. Showing your son the importance that reading has in your life can have a positive impact.
- > Talk with your son about the purpose and role that the book he is reading for School has in relation to his learning. This is especially important when the book doesn't necessarily fit within the genre that he is typically engaged with.

Researchers also comment on the critical role fathers and male adult role models play in a boy's literacy development. Of key importance is the role modelling that is shown towards reading at home, not just magazines and newspapers. If boys don't see the male adults in their lives reading and discussing the books they are reading, they're not receiving key messages about the importance reading has to the lives of boys and men.

It is important that we continue to work together, School and home, in providing the very best learning environment for our boys to enhance their literacy skills, and for them to grow and develop into fine young men.



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