



SIR THOMAS FREMANTLE SCHOOL

A CO-EDUCATIONAL SCHOOL FOR STUDENTS AGED 11-19

BUCKINGHAM ROAD
WINSLOW
MK18 3GH
(01296) 711853

WEB: WWW.SIRTHOMASFREMANTLE.ORG

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Dear Parent/Carer,

RE: Improving articulate talk and wider knowledge

I hope you are all keeping safe and well in this challenging time. I want to begin by saying that the students in year 7 have really done themselves proud since the swap to online learning. I have had nothing but positive feedback from other teachers regarding engagement, work completion and continued general respect and politeness from students within lessons. Thank you for your support and patience with both us and your children as it is a big jump to move to online learning at such an early stage in a new school but all students are taking it in their stride and adapting to the change.

On another note, I think it is significant to address the steps that both parents/carers and teachers can do to support the students as much as possible to try to minimise the gaps in development as much as possible. Articulate talk is a vital skill that enhances children's language development, vocabulary and writing skills. Due to the sustained period that students have and are continuing to miss from school due to lockdown it has become apparent based on the recently conducted CAT's tests that students are not currently as developed as they could be in some areas and we want to try and put a real focus onto these areas.

To help with this I would like to request your assistance in helping to boost student's confidence. I have outlined below some mini activities that can be completed at home which we hope will have a positive impact for the students. I do appreciate most of you probably engage in some of these activities anyway through general conversations with your children but I just wanted to give a bit of guidance on some activities that may differ from your general conversations.

Topic talk time: We would ask during this 'talk time' that you encourage, as many members of the family to take part in a discussion and that there are no distractions e.g the television is turned off. Ideally, it might take place seated around the dinner table while you are eating your evening meal. First your child should give their opinions on the topic being asked to discuss, being encouraged to give reasons for their opinion. This gives your child the chance to think through their thought process, discuss their ideas and for other members of the family to share their ideas, which will support your child's writing in turn. All of this is purely through quality talk and discussion.

Vocabulary 'WOW' words: It would be great if you could work with your child to look at a new, interesting or 'wow' word each day or each week. This could be logged in their vocabulary logbook and if they could use this new word in their work, they can inform me and I can award them a ClassChart point – but more importantly, they will hopefully feel a sense of achievement and ownership of how they have taken something new and applied it. If your child would like a WOW word record book, please direct them to me and I will provide them with one.



News time: You could sit down at a convenient time one evening a week to watch the news and see the current events that are prevalent in the world. This could be a great discussion point to see students portray their opinions, understanding and wider knowledge to you. It is also a great chance to hear the articulate and range of language used in a range of varied contexts.

This is not just a focus for English lessons but a wider school contribution – every lesson a student takes part in at STFS, they will be encouraged to think, compare, challenge and justify, and the wider knowledge and exposure will only support them in achieving.

Some 'talk time' topics:

- **If you could be any animal, what animal would you be?**
- **Which character in a book best describes who you are?**
- **If you could cook for me what would it be?**
- **If you were granted three wishes from a genie what would you wish?**
- **What does the word "success" mean to you?**
- **What would be your dream job?**
- **What are the qualities that make a good friend?**
- **What was your favourite toy when you were little?**
- **What is the most enjoyable thing our family has done together in the last three years?**
- **Name two things we should do as a family this weekend?**
- **If you were going to have a weird, unusual pet, what would it be? Why would you want that pet?**
- **What would you do if you were invisible for a day?**

Thank you for your continued support.

Yours faithfully,

Miss Rath

Learning Lead for Year 7

