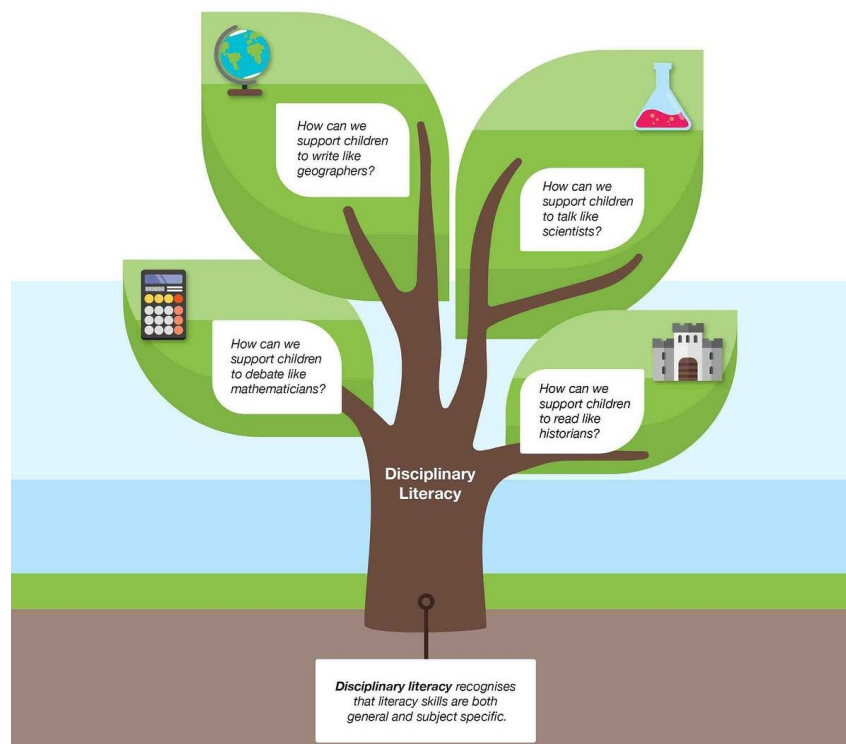


Looking at non-fiction in school

Disciplinary reading has been introduced into secondary schools, a welcome shift away from generic literacy lessons and towards developing the ability to read, write and communicate well in all subject areas.

This diagram from the Education Endowment Foundation (EEF) helps put it into context.



[EEF blog: Demystifying disciplinary literacy – A root and...](https://www.educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/blog/demystifying-disciplinary-literacy-a-root-and-branches) | [EEF \(educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk\)](https://www.educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk)

What are we doing in our primary schools to prepare pupils for this expectation at KS3? Although the branches of the tree will become more distinct throughout their secondary education a love and familiarity with non-fiction texts will provide a good basis from which this can develop.

Within our classrooms we know there are children who limit their reading choices to their detriment. The pupil who will only read books by specific authors such as David Walliams or insists that the books must be about horses or be funny. Our job as librarians and stewards of the school's book collections is to open up opportunities away from these restrictive habits and tempt them to broaden their reading repertoire.

This includes encouraging pupils to read non-fiction, for pleasure and for information.

Non-fiction books in the library or class book corner - if you take an honest look at your non-fiction collection what message do you think it conveys?

- When did you last look at it?
- Is it an untouched and unappealing area or does it invite readers in with clear guiding and changing displays?
- Are there lots of books or just a few?
- Is its organisation a barrier to use?
- Have you added new books?
- Have you weeded out the faded, unappealing and outdated books?

Using non-fiction

- Promote non-fiction for leisure reading, larger books are great to share at a table with a partner.
- Search out engaging texts that can become a reading book. Size and format counts so invest in some smaller series such as Amazing Gross Facts. If you use Accelerated Reader encourage pupils to choose non-fiction as their additional text.
- Design lessons to look at the components of non-fiction to give pupils the skills and vocabulary to navigate information texts (captions, index, page numbers etc). Introducing pupils to non-fiction is part of the statutory requirements of the national curriculum.
- Actively look for opportunities to weave texts into their curriculum.
- Display topic related texts and encourage pupils to read more about the topic in their own time.
- Peer Influencers (from The Reading Framework): Maintain 'top ten' lists of non-fiction (and fiction).

“The curriculum should include books and other texts to support the content in each history, geography, and science lesson. Without books to read, pupils are dependent on remembering what the teacher says”.

p88 [The reading framework \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk)

Choosing new books

The aim of non-fiction is to inform accurately and interestingly.

In response to competition from on-line formats publishing is increasingly improving the way non-fiction is presented, look out for texts to engage today's children.

Do you subscribe to topic boxes? If so, are they being used to the full extent? Does everybody know how to order them?

Storing and displaying non-fiction

Are there plenty of eye-catching forward-facing books, and do they change regularly?

Do books have to be arranged in a particular order? Who maintains this and is it manageable by children?

If your library is unmanned, consider switching to the DSLS simplified Dewey system.