

WCoSP Charitable Trust donation to London School October 2015

Thanks to an award from our Trustees the students of Prendergast Vale School in Lewisham will be able to add to their library of 'graphic novels'. Whilst the school is located in a challenging catchment area, school librarians Frances Currie and Samantha Matthews readily draw attention to the many students with a hunger to learn and better themselves. For example a child in year 7 (who is still only 11) who has read Wolf Hall and several other Hilary Mantel books. Another year 7 boy from a poor, working class background reads everything in the library on philosophy and politics, clearly a potential King's College graduate!

Graphic novels benefit a wide range of readers. Researchers have found that students clearly enjoy them, have a better understanding of storylines and become enthusiastic about learning. Graphic novels are particularly helpful for struggling readers because of the larger print and pictures that are used to illustrate concepts. They are also a way for parents to boost a child's interest in reading while sparking their imagination and creativity. As a student's reading ability develops the images diminish and the text increases in quantity and complexity.



Samantha (seen in the photograph with Ray taken by year 11 pupil Aleah Granville) said "There are graphic novels in a wide range of topics, including the classics as well as non-fiction such as science. We believe graphic novels promote and encourage reading. We choose books that support the national curriculum, for example Noughts and Crosses by Malorie Blackman for Year 8. Anthony Horowitz is also very popular." Other books in the library include

Shakespeare's 'King Lear' and 'A Study in Scarlet' by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, which is perhaps very appropriate for WCoSP.

Ray learnt that during the course of a year each graphic novel will be read by around one hundred and fifty students. The award from the Trustees of the Worshipful Company of Security Professionals has enabled additional copies of the most popular books to be purchased, so that in that important moment when a disadvantaged young person hits upon the desire to read, their chosen book will be available. If it is not, that turnaround opportunity in their education and life may be gone forever.

Ray Williams
Liveryman