In your son’s Library Reading Lesson, he will be introduced to the theory behind why he should engage in the self-directed reading program and what the expectations are each week.

Each lesson, he will learn a specific strategy or skill that will cover orientation to the library and the use of the online library resources [Infiniti (our Library Management System), Sora (our Overdrive ebook and audiobook collection) and the iCentre (our library website)].

Each week, he will utilise his Reading Journal to monitor his reading progress. He will use strategies to select a book and then engage in quiet, individual, self-directed reading.

Below is important information about the Self-Directed Reading Program at Villanova College. Also, there are some suggestions on how you can support your son to engage with and benefit from the program.

1. Why is it important that your son engages in self-directed reading?

   At Villanova College, reading is recognised as an important part of learning. Research reveals extensive benefits for students when they regularly engage in self-directed reading. These benefits include:

   • academic achievement; and
   • social, emotional and health benefits.

   Even more importantly, reading is entertaining, engaging and it makes us happy.

2. How does Villanova College support your son in his self-directed reading?

   Villanova College has made considerable investments in further developing our reading culture and supporting your son to become a life-long reader.

   • Villanova has two full-time Teacher Librarians who have Masters qualifications in Teacher Librarianship and who are dedicated to supporting your son in reading and research.

   • The Library has a Library Manager and two full-time Library Assistants who are an integral part of providing quality service for your sons. They too are dedicated to working closely with your son on all matters reading and research.

Figure 1: The learning and reading spaces - Tolle Lege Library
- Years 5-7 have one lesson per week in the Library, dedicated to the self-directed reading program.
- The Tolle Lege Library has recently undergone extensive renovations to make the space more usable for reading and research classes.
- The library has an extensive collection of fiction books as well as online audiobooks.

3. **How can you encourage your son to read more often and enjoy it?**
For your son to gain the most from the reading program, your support is crucial.

- At home, encourage your son to commit to reading daily. At night, before sleep, we suggest no screens for at least 30 minutes and instead, read for at least 15 minutes.
- Take the opportunity to discuss your son's reading choice and engage in conversations with him about the story. This is a great topic for the dinner table.
- Ask to see his Reading Journal. Your son is expected to record information about the books he chooses to read. He needs to bring his journal to every reading lesson.
- Engage in conversations about the books he has chosen. Ask him why he chose the book. What it is about the book that he likes? Encourage him to read the book to the end. If he does not want to continue reading it, ask him why. Remind him to try something different next time and to use the strategies that he has been taught in class to choose his next book.

4. **How can you help your son to enjoy reading more?**
It is important that you encourage your son to read, even if he says that he does not like it.

- Reluctant readers can love reading too. They just need the right book to start them on the “*Reading Spiral*”. We can help him find a book that interests him. Contact his Library Teacher and share your observations. Together, we can help turn your son into a reader.
- If your son wants to read a book that we do not have in the library, he can request it and we will purchase the book for the collection. After all, if he wants to read it, it is very likely other boys will too.
- If your son has a reading difficulty (such as dyslexia) seek professional help but still, encourage him to read. We can help find the right book for your son and we have books specifically for those who have reading difficulties as well as a wide range of audiobooks.
- At night, your son could listen to an audio book. The timer can be set to turn off after 30 minutes. What a great way to fall asleep.
- On road trips, you could Bluetooth an audiobook to the car and the whole family can listen; a great way to stop the bickering in the back seat.
- Let him see you reading too. If you take the time to read and show him that you enjoy reading, he is more likely to do the same. Family reading time is a great way for you all to engage in silent reading. You could even read the same book as your son, and discuss the story as you both progress through the book.
Your son is welcome to borrow books for you too. We often have boys tell us that they finished a book and now their dad is reading it! We also have boys borrowing books to read to their younger brothers and sisters; we have a wide picture book collection.

Continue to encourage him to read every night. Even if he argues, insist that he must read before bed. Do not let him use a screen at bedtime. He has the option- read or stare at a wall. Your son will eventually get bored with the wall.

Limit screen time during the week. Set the rules and insist he follow them. After all, between co-curricular, homework, assignments and reading, there is no time for screen.

Ensure that as he grows older, the books he is reading are also written for an older audience. Many adolescent boys get stuck reading the “little boy” books they loved when they were younger and that they feel comfortable with, but quickly get bored with them. Your son needs to be challenged (see Figure 3). The longer books are generally more interesting and have more mature themes. Just think about the kinds of movies he likes.

Encourage your son to read widely by exploring different genres (Figure 4) and non-fiction books for interest.

Access the Read resources on the icentre: icentre.vnc.qld.edu.au/read

Contact the Library, we are here to help and work with you.

It is important to support your son in self-directed reading during the upper primary and middle years of schooling. You, along with his teachers, are crucial in enabling him to develop and continue a love of reading. Together, we can support your son in his development into a life-long reader.

You don’t have to burn books to destroy a culture.
Just get people to stop reading them.

-Ray Bradbury