



# Beaumont School

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Dear Parent/Carer,

## #BeaumontReads - *Animal Farm* by George Orwell

I have been thrilled by how many enthusiastic members of the #BeaumontReads community have been asking after this year's choice. For those of you who are new to Beaumont, the scheme encourages the entire school community - staff, students, parents and governors - to read, respond to and get involved in the cross-curricular events related to a specific novel each year.

Previous Whole School Reads have included: *Apple and Rain* by Sarah Crossan; *Counting by Sevens* by Holly Goldberg Sloan; *The Giver* by Lois Lowry and *I Have No Secrets* by Penny Joelson (all of which are still readily available from our school library). Reading, reviewing and collecting our book related badges has become a happy tradition, with many Year 7 students reading the back catalogue and wearing their badges with pride.

I am excited that this year, we are reading a classic: *Animal Farm* by George Orwell. This allegorical tale was originally entitled, *Animal Farm: A Fairy Story* (partly ironically) 'and Orwell was especially pleased when he heard from friends such as Malcolm Muggeridge and Sir Herbert Read that their own offspring had enjoyed reading the book.' (Introduction to *Animal Farm*, Christopher Hitchens, 2010). As he clearly intended for his novel to be read by a wide audience it is my hope that this year's #BeaumontReads will have something for everyone. It can certainly be understood and interpreted on multiple levels.

Being a classic, first published in 1945, some of the vocabulary might seem challenging. It would be fantastic if we could take this opportunity to reap the rewards of reading together. Studies have proven that being read to helps to develop the 'language' neural connections in our brains, increasing receptive language (the words we recognise and understand in context) by a massive 40%. And all without any specific teaching of vocabulary! Our brains are pretty amazing. My dearest wish is that this year's choice will provide families with the opportunity to read (or listen) together.

This year, we are launching the Whole School Read on **Thursday 14 November 2019** and are coinciding the launch with **DEAR** day. For approximately 10 minutes of each lesson, teachers will Drop Everything And Read: reading to, reading with and listening to our specially recorded audio book (featuring the vocal talents of Beaumont teaching staff). We hope to have shared a good section of the novel by the end of day, sending students home fuelled and enthused with the momentum to keep on reading.

As usual, we have bought fifty copies of the book for the school library in order that as many people as possible can access the book. I am pretty sure that there may be some dusty copies sitting on bookshelves across St Albans, and it would be wonderful if students could bring them along on the launch day so that they can follow with their teachers. As always, there will be a range of opportunities to get involved in cross-curricular activities and events over the forthcoming months. Details will be available on the #BeaumontReads Google Classroom which students can join using the code: **g75c0l**

We look forward to your support in making this initiative a success. It would be a privilege to have as many students, staff, parents and governors share in the magic and memories that the world of a good book creates.

Yours faithfully  
Mrs S Cripps  
Literacy Coordinator

