

## Pillow beds - creating inviting reading spaces

Kelly Grove

### Context

I teach in a 5-form entry infant school (Altmore Infant School) that is federated to a junior school and forms part of the Altmore and Lathom Federation in East Ham, London. My school is privileged enough to have a Children's Centre on site, which every day is visited by a wide range of the community.

I am the Reading Leader for the infant part of the Federation.

Developing reading for pleasure and comfortable reading spaces in each classroom and around the school has been one of my many focuses this year as we felt as a school there weren't enough spaces for the children to relax and read.



### Research inspiration and rationale

I was inspired by the TaRs research which revealed that as one part of a robust Reading for Pleasure pedagogy teachers needed to create relaxed reading environments that were physically attractive but also socially inviting, tempting children to curl up with a book and read. Like the teachers in the original project, I reflected upon where I liked to relax and read at home and found my comfort was key - being able to stretch out in bed or lounge in a chair. I began to explore connections to our school spaces and realised we could do more to make our book corners more inviting and comfortable spaces that children would want to go to - to read and talk about texts.

### Aims

My aims were and still are to foster a love for reading and to create a school where reading is exciting and enjoyed by ALL children. In particular, in this development work I wanted children to have a book corner in their classroom which was exciting, inviting and yet also potentially relaxing, creating a safe space for reading. Teaching children that reading can be a social event and having book corners which promoted this 'social' aspect were high on my priority list. This is why I decided to get pillow beds in school for all classrooms and reading areas around the school and to document their use and value.





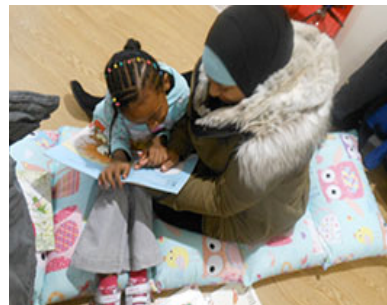
## Outline

As part of getting classrooms ready at the beginning of the academic year, teachers were asked to further develop their reading areas/book corners and to focus on making them into 'alive' reading areas that looked inviting and exciting to children. Within the school's pillow bed focus, all the teachers were presented with a choice of different fabric/designs and were able to choose a pillow bed that they felt would look good in their book corner and which they thought their children would be interested in and excited by. The beds were ordered and made for us and on delivery day staff as well as children were excited.

The pillow beds are easy to move around and can be moved outside when the weather is good or moved to a quieter place if the classroom is too noisy.

## Impact

Children **LOVED** the pillow beds. They are constantly asking to go into the book corner to read a book on the pillow bed and often you will find children lying on the beds, with other children, talking about and enjoying texts of their choice. I wondered if the initial novelty of having pillow beds would wear off, but it hasn't. They remain popular and are often used for comfortable seats for adults reading to children (parents, carers and community members). Staff continue to report that children regularly go to the reading corner now during free choice time, which was not so common before we introduced these.



## Reflections on impact the TaRs research had on practice

Using the TaRs research has enabled me as a teacher and a Reading Leader of a very large infant school to think about and further develop reading spaces for children to relax and explore texts, share favourites and talk spontaneously about their reading experiences. Developing reading spaces in my school has developed children's control of their own reading as they can and do now choose to read more often and in these spaces there is more talk about their books. I feel that through reviewing the conditions conducive to reading and introducing these pillow beds, we are developing and more relaxed reading communities in our classrooms.

To find out more/order: <https://www.facebook.com/Rainbow-Bobbin-Bows-1583878171832894>



### Pillow Beds

Made to order

\* Relaxing  
Anywhere... Any place... Anytime  
as it is easily movable/foldable

\* Funky  
Looks lovely in a room as part of  
the decor- choose your colours

\* Ideal  
Ideal as an extra bed for children's  
sleep overs & watching tv

\* Practical  
Folds away & easily stored  
Easy to clean

Adult sizes also available

\* Pillows are not included\*

**£25**  
INCL POSTAGE