

Our Little Pop-Up Book Hut

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Context:

Avenue is a large, four form entry primary school in East London with a diverse intake. In April, 2018, we had 373 children (some 40% of the number on roll) who were eligible for Pupil Premium funding.

The development of reading is a whole school priority.

OU Research inspiration and rationale:

In "Building Communities of Engaged Readers: Reading for Pleasure" (2014), Teresa Cremin and others review the research into the effects of book ownership on reading. Children from homes where reading is valued and books are present are more engaged as readers (Baker and Scher, 2002). Clark and Douglas (2011) found that children who owned books were twice as likely to read daily, while young people without books were more likely to

say that they never read. 80% of the pupils in this study who read above the expected level for their age owned books, whereas the 19% of children who had never been given a book were more likely to read below the expected level. Evans et al (2010) found that having books at home has as much impact on children's attainment as the educational level of their parents. However, Clark and Douglas' research suggested that 3% of children in the UK do not have any books at home.

Aims:

The aims of the project were:

- To increase book ownership among our pupils.
- To engage children and their families in reading for pleasure.

Outline:

The London Children's Book Project is a fantastic charity which collects lightly used second hand books and redistributes them to children in less affluent areas. They lend Little Pop-Up Book Huts to London schools for half a term, and donate free books to stock



the huts. We received around 1200 books, which included fiction, information and a few poetry books, suitable for all ages from Nursery to Year 6. Alternatively, The London Children's Book Project will provide schools with free books and resources to hold

a Pop-Up Bookshop. Before our Little Pop-Up Book Hut arrived, children put up posters all around the school, and the Book Hut was also promoted in assemblies as part of the preparations for World Book Day. This generated so much interest that when Liberty drove into the school car park with the Book Hut on her roof rack, the children in the playground screamed with excitement!

I recruited a team of children to help me set up the Little Pop-Up Book Hut initially, and these pupils then took most of the responsibility for keeping the Book Hut tidy and restocked for the rest of the half term.

The Little Pop-Up Book Hut was open every day before and after school. Children and their families were able to browse and choose a book to keep or bring back a book and swap it for a new one. A few children also donated books they had grown out of.

Impact:

The Little Pop-Up Book Hut increased book ownership among our children and their families, and inspired them to begin to collect books.

Everyone was keen to use the Little Pop-Up Book Hut. During the first week, pupils and parents queued for up to half an hour to have a look and choose a book!

Every child in the school had the opportunity to choose and own at least one book.



Parents also browsed and chose books for younger siblings who don't yet attend school.

"My family is going to get a bookshelf!" (Year 5)

Books from the Little Pop-Up Book Hut promoted reading for pleasure, and had an impact in other areas of school life.

"A lot of my children were very excited about the book hut. It encouraged them to read and made getting a new book a fun experience." (Teacher)

"I can't wait to read my new book!" (Year 1)

"After choosing a book from the Little Pop-Up Book Hut, some children subsequently dressed up as a character from the story on World Book Day." (Teacher)

"One child found two books with phoneme wheels in the Little Pop-Up Book Hut, and he is now much more focussed during school Phonics sessions." (Teacher)

"Can I take all these Space books for my friends? It's our Topic." (Year 5)

"The Little Pop-Up Book Hut was a great way to inspire young readers across the school. It was a mechanism for our pupils to share and discuss what they had read." (AHT)

"I wonder what books will be in there today for me to swap."
(Year 5)

"Have you seen any Percy Jackson or Harry Potter today?" (Year 6)

Overall, "The Book Hut was a great addition to our school. It created a buzz amongst the children and got them all talking about the books on offer, the book they had taken home and reading in general. We are now looking into replicating the book hut to be a permanent feature of our school!" (Deputy Head)

Reflections on impact the RfP research had on practice:

The RfP research showing how book ownership impacts children's reading influenced my decision to undertake this project. Owing to the huge impact of the Little Pop-Up Book Hut on book ownership, attitudes to reading for pleasure, family engagement and informal book talk, we are now planning to buy a permanent Book Hut for the school.



With many thanks to the London Children's Book Project for lending us the Little Pop-Up Book Hut and gifting us 1200 books.

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