

A vibrant tropical beach scene. In the foreground, two large palm trees with lush green fronds frame the view. The sun is shining brightly from the upper right, creating a warm, golden glow and lens flare effects. Below the palms, a pristine white sandy beach stretches across the frame. The ocean is a brilliant turquoise color, with gentle waves lapping at the shore. In the background, a dense green forest covers a hillside that meets the water. The sky is a deep blue with scattered white clouds.

Creating a Book Island

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Context:

- We are primary PGCE trainees at the Faculty of Education, University of Cambridge
- As part of our initial, four week placement, we complete a project based on reading for pleasure
- For this placement we were based in a Year 6 class

Research inspiration and rationale

We were inspired by the TaRs research which informed us of the Importance of teachers' knowledge about texts: knowledge which can help teachers to understand more about children's interests and preferences and help to build communities of readers.

We were particularly inspired by the findings about the importance of developing knowledge of children's reading practices through creating spontaneous, informal reciprocal book talk opportunities which can help children to open up about reading and to see it as something beyond the school context.

→THEREFORE...



Our Aims...

- to develop our knowledge of children's literature and other texts
- to engage in a conversation with children about reading and about their favourite books to find out about their reading practices
- to develop an understanding of children's views on reading for pleasure



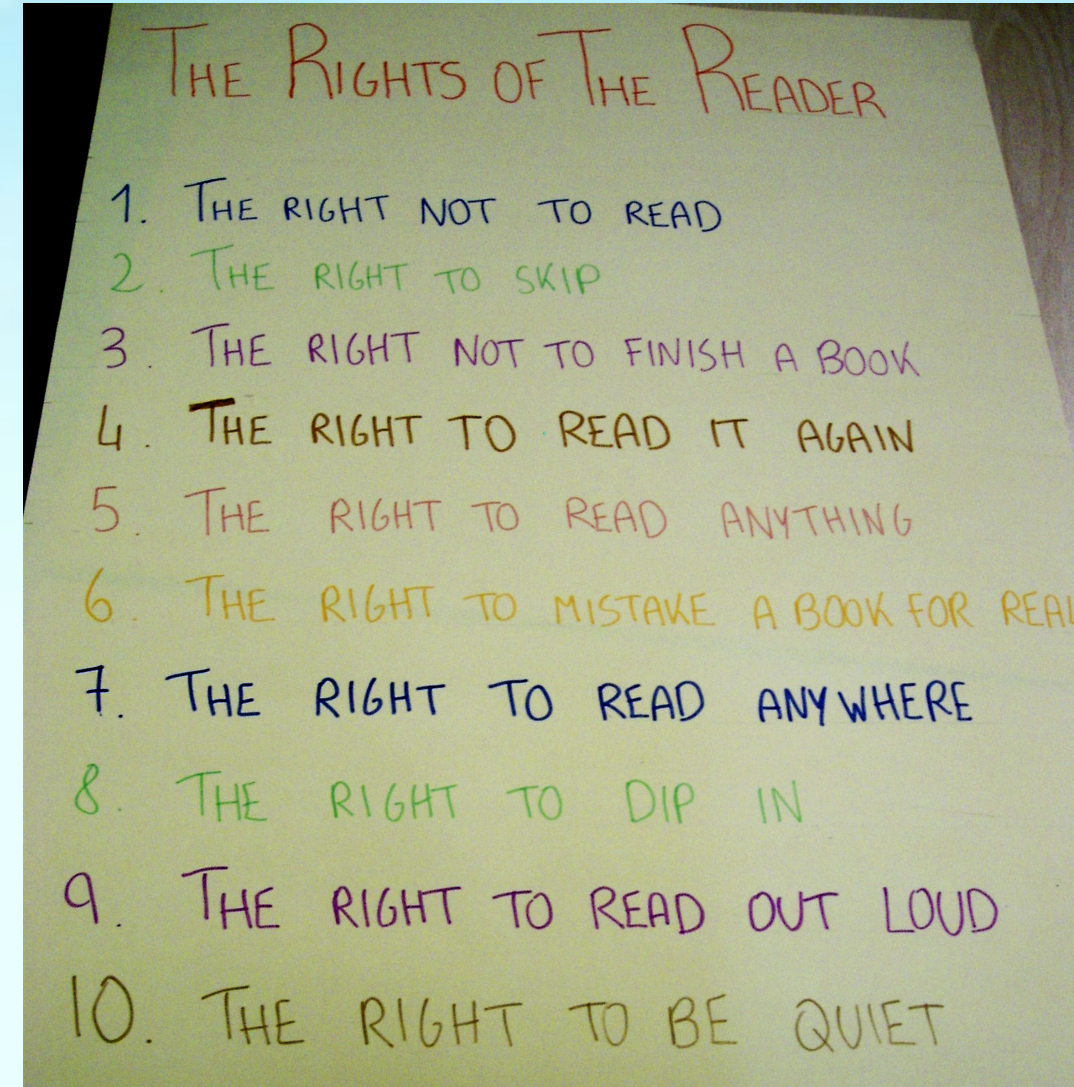
Outline:

Our plan of action to elicit children's views:

1. Read the 'Rights of the Reader' by Daniel Pennac (2006) and introduce the project.
2. Share and discuss our favourite books.
3. Mindmap around the question: what makes a great book?
4. Create book cards.
5. Share ideas and comments.
6. We created a 'Book Island' display to share the project with the rest of the class.

Specifics:

- We worked alongside seven Year 6 children for half a day; the children were chosen in collaboration with the class teacher and included a wide range of readers.





Knowledge of children's reading

Children shared their favourite books by commenting what they liked about the book, what the book was about, their favourite part, and their favourite quotations.

The books were:

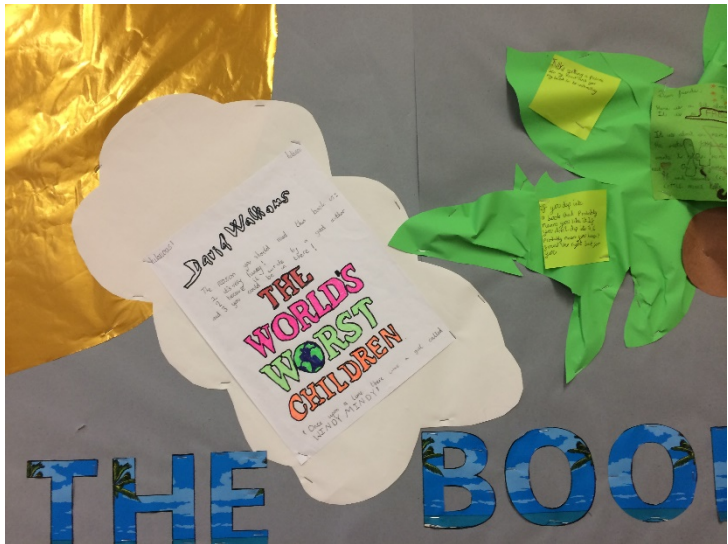
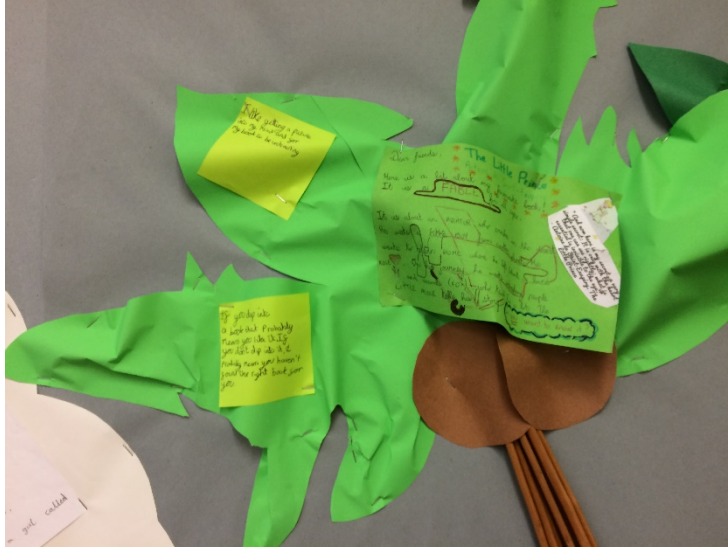
- *The World's Worst Children* by David Walliams
- *Edie the Garden Fairy* by Daisy Meadows
- *Ratburger* by David Walliams
- *Girl Online: On Tour* by Zoe Sugg
- *Charlotte's Web* by E.B. White
- *Lewis Hamilton: A Dream Comes True* by Brian Belton
- *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone* by J.K. Rowling

Impact:

Book conversation

- Children's conversations about what they thought makes a great book included:
 - "that in the end you learn something"
 - "for it to include pictures so you can really get it"
 - "a good book should have a story to it"
 - "if you can relate it to your life"
 - "if it is a comic strip"
 - "exciting title that draws you in"
 - "ambitious vocabulary"
 - "it has a fun fact"

The Book Island



Reflections and implications on future practice

- Taking forward the TaRs research about the importance of knowledge about children's reading practices, we will consider how better to provide texts children *want* to read and the right not to read
- We will include opportunities for children to share their thoughts about reading, about texts they love, especially those they read at home and want to share with each other

