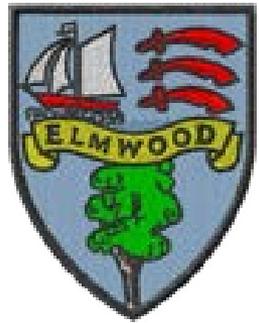




# Context



- ▶ I am a Year 4 teacher, member of SLT and English co-ordinator at Elmwood Primary School.
- ▶ Elmwood Primary School is located in South Woodham Ferrers. It is above average in size and most pupils are from a White British background.
- ▶ As a school, we are passionate about engaging children and promoting a life long love of reading. We work hard to foster pleasurable, exciting and motivating reading experiences for our children, from special theme weeks based on a book, to publishing our children's work and taking part in a range of reading challenges.
- ▶ This project aimed to develop home/school links with parents.

# Context

- ▶ When I read A.F Harrold's article in TeachPrimary entitled 'I met books and I met books and I met books...' I was encouraged to reflect upon my own reading journey. As a child, I hated reading. That should probably read...HATED reading. Reading for me involved sitting with a parent helper, in a gloomy room outside the classroom. I remember Roger Red Hat and Jennifer Yellow Hat. I don't remember talking about books or characters or storylines. I certainly don't remember laughing at a book. I was asked to sound out words. I remember an old tobacco tin in which I had a collection of words to read aloud and practise every night. I was actually a very fluent reader but I hated reading. It led to me sitting next to the parent helper (poor woman), folding my arms and refusing to read. If I heard one more story about Jennifer Yellow Hat out in the sunshine, out in town or out in the dark I would scream. If this was reading, then I'd rather not bother, thank you very much!

# Context

- ▶ However, I was lucky enough that my Mum read to us every night and I cherish the time I spent with her and my brothers, huddled in bed, reading about Alfie and Annie-Rose, listening to fairy tales and chanting rhymes together.
- ▶ This memory was what also re-ignited in me, as a teacher, the feeling that parents play a vital role in developing a love of reading and books in their children.

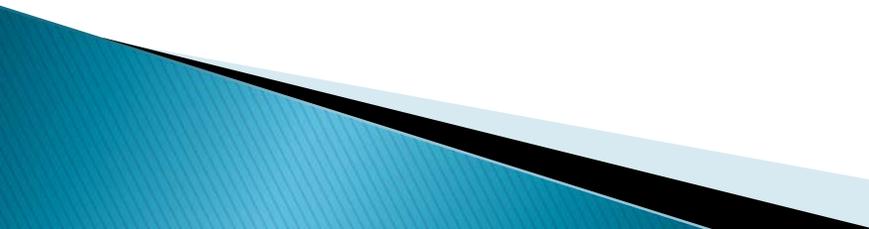
# OU Research inspiration and rationale

The particular strand of the TaRs finding that inspired me to further develop reading for pleasure at Elmwood was developing a reading community that was reciprocal and interactive. I wanted to create a safe, relaxed, engaging space where parents and children could read together. It also offered a good opportunity to offer advice to parents about how best to support their children at home.

# OU Research inspiration and rationale

The main research that informed this study was Cremin et al. (2009) *Teachers as readers: building communities of readers* where the importance of new social spaces and the role of parental support was highlighted:

*'Teachers came to appreciate the significance of the wider range of reading which children experience in their homes and communities.'*



# Aims

- ▶ To develop a new space where children and parents could discuss and share books
  - ▶ To improve reading fluency
  - ▶ To show children that their parents also read for pleasure and enjoyment, and the importance of doing so
  - ▶ To find out about the children's everyday reading practices and choices at home
  - ▶ To improve parents' questioning when reading with their children
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# Outline

- ▶ The project was undertaken over three years with a Year 6, Year 4 and Year 3 group of children and parents. In total, 18 children and 12 adults attended the Parent and Child Book Club – children were not excluded from the group if their parents were unable to attend.
- ▶ Throughout the three years, the content of the Parent and Child Book Club changed – in Year 6 there was more of a focus on reading comprehension skills and test technique in preparation for SATs, in the Year 3 group the focus was on improving boys' attainment in reading and in the Year 4 group, the focus was on fluency and fostering quality, in depth discussions between parents and children.
- ▶ Children who were identified as working on the cusp of 'below' and 'within' age related expectations were identified and then invited along to the club, which took place every week between 3.30-4.30pm for a year.
- ▶ Data collected included: baseline and end of project assessments, children and parent questionnaires, comments and reflections of parents and children in Home/School Reading Logs, teacher observations

# Children were sent special invites to the book club

**Year 4 Book Club, Every Monday, 3.30 – 4.30pm**

Dear \_\_\_\_\_

You have been invited, alongside your parents, to attend Mr. Eagleton's Book Club on a Monday afternoon in 4ES from 3.30-4.30pm. The first session will start on Monday 26th September 2016 and continue until the end of the Spring term. It is a great opportunity to read lots of new and exciting books, poems and non-fiction texts with your parents and take part in lots of fun activities relating to the books we will be exploring.

Parents are welcome, and indeed encouraged, to attend to read alongside your child and take part in the sessions. If you cannot attend, your child is still able to come along to the club and take part – I appreciate it is sometimes difficult to do so due to a range of commitments.

If you would like to attend, please return the slip by Friday 23rd September 2016.

Many thanks,



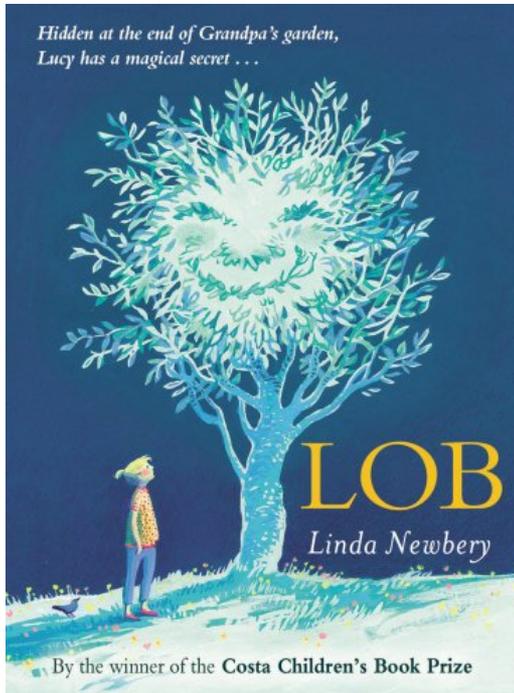
Mr. Eagleton

# Impact

- ▶ Better supported parents in helping their child read at home – parents were able to ask questions beyond simple retrieval
- ▶ Better interaction between children and parents
- ▶ Supported children in reading more challenging texts
- ▶ Fostered enjoyment and excitement – the club was meant to finish in the Spring Term but continued until the end of the Summer Term – the children (and parents) were desperate to see if Lob and Lucy would be reunited!
- ▶ Spent more 1:1 time with children and parents and modelled how to read with expression and for meaning
- ▶ The club fostered a warm, welcoming atmosphere where children and parents felt safe to share their reading, and life, experiences.
- ▶ Comments made in Home/School Reading Logs showed parents developed their questioning skills
- ▶ Gave me a glimpse into the relationship between the children in my class and their parents and how I could support them
- ▶ All children made excellent, accelerated progress and are now 'within' or 'above' age related expectations

# Impact

- ▶ This year, we explored and read 'Lob' by Linda Newbery – a moving story about grief, loss, nature and believing in what you cannot see. This was a challenging text for the group, in terms of themes and also vocabulary. The small group set up and support of the parents every week has meant that the children have developed a mature understanding of the relationships and characters and improved their vocabulary.

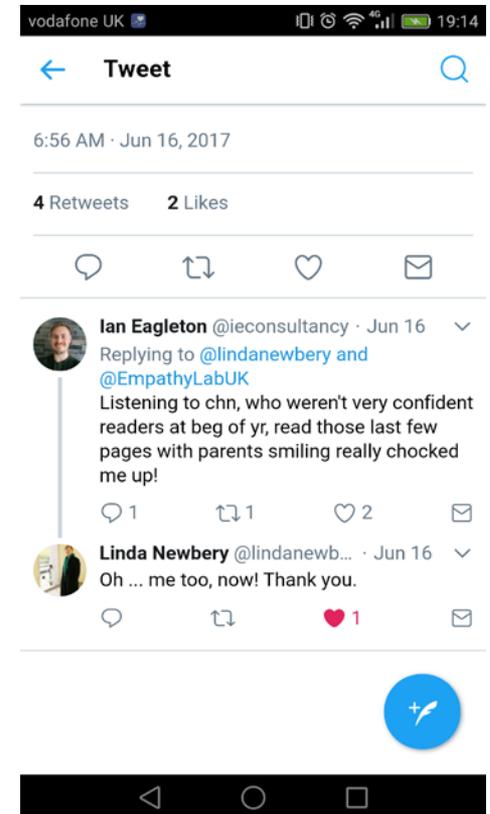
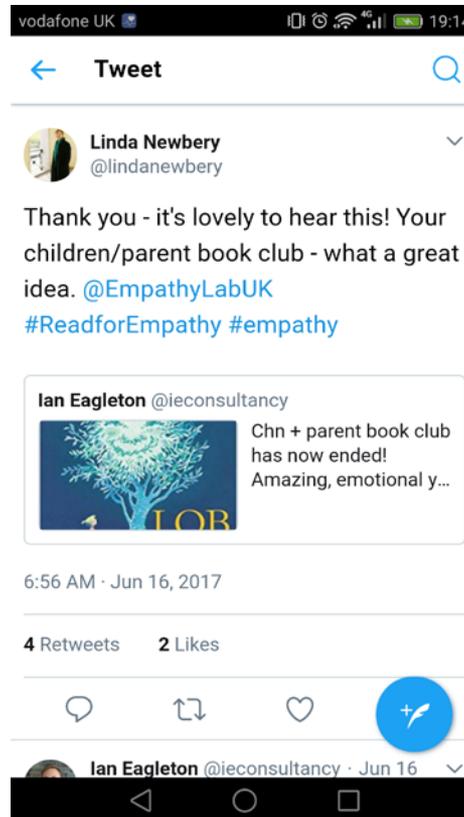


# Impact

- ▶ If there has been any deeper learning and progress during the Parent and Child Book Club, it has certainly come from sharing a story together, discussing it and enjoying it – making connections. Not the games and worksheets I produced to go alongside the book.
- ▶ I will always remember the moment when one of the mums broke down in tears whilst we were reading 'Lob'. She told the group how it reminded her of losing her own father. It was a very poignant, special moment and just goes to show the power of children's books to move and unite.
- ▶ The children loved reading to their parents and the parents loved joining in, reading aloud and seeing the progress their children have made.
- ▶ At the beginning of the session, we all shared a Kit-Kat and orange squash (the staple of any primary school club!). The children told their parents about their day and showed them their work and the parents told me about their new jobs and family. Then we read. We were a little community of readers. It was perfect and one of my favourite parts of the week.

# Impact

- ▶ We even received a series of Tweets from Linda Newbery, when our Parent and Children Book Club ended!



# Impact

- ▶ This year, the children and their parents planned, wrote and typed up their own storybook so they could share it with their brothers and sisters at home! Their story was based on the animation 'Whistleless' by Siri Melchoir and also served to improve their typing and ICT skills.

Children painted their own front covers for their story books



# Impact

## ▶ Children's views

Children's comments

What I have enjoyed about the Book Club

I have enjoyed reading Lob and I thought it was really good. I also enjoyed writing Whistleless and showing my family.

It would be even better if....

we could carry on until the term has finished.

# Impact

## ▶ Parents' views

Parent's comments

What do you feel you have got out of the book club?

I have learnt to ask [redacted] more questions on the book she is reading. What words mean, how the characters might be feeling, what will happen next etc.

How do you feel your child has progressed? What have you enjoyed the most?

I've enjoyed watching [redacted] confidence grow throughout the year. It's so great to see [redacted] pulled into the story she's reading. Thank you so much for giving your time every week to help encourage [redacted] progress in her reading.

How do you think it could be improved next year?

- ▶ I have written more about '**Creating a community of readers**' here:
- ▶ <https://ieconsultancy.co.uk/2017/05/18/creating-a-community-of-readers-some-practical-ideas/>

# Reflections on impact the TaRs research had on practice

Realising the need to continue to further develop the reading relationship between teachers, children and parents has been a key outcome of the project

An improved understanding of how to build a new social space for exploring books has also been an outcome, as has how to support parents when they read with their children

The model for the development of shared reading lives has also helped me to identify next steps and areas of improvement for the project

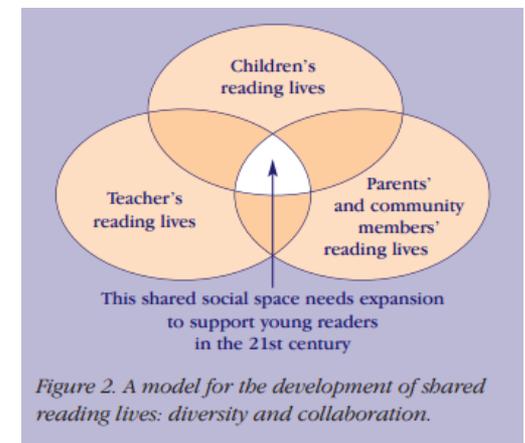


Figure 2. A model for the development of shared reading lives: diversity and collaboration.

# Reflections on impact the TaRs research had on practice

## Next steps:

- ▶ Hold a book vote at the beginning of the Parent and Children Book Club to select a book and further engage participants
  - ▶ Train other members of staff and share the process, so they can set up their own Parent and Children Book Clubs for their year group
  - ▶ Build in more time, each session, for children to share their own books, magazines etc with parents
  - ▶ Continue to explore a range of challenging books to include in the club, to also include picture books
  - ▶ Invite parents to bring in their favourite childhood book or the book they are currently reading to share with the group
  - ▶ Include more art and drama activities across the year, to ensure children have the opportunity to respond to the books in a variety of ways
- 