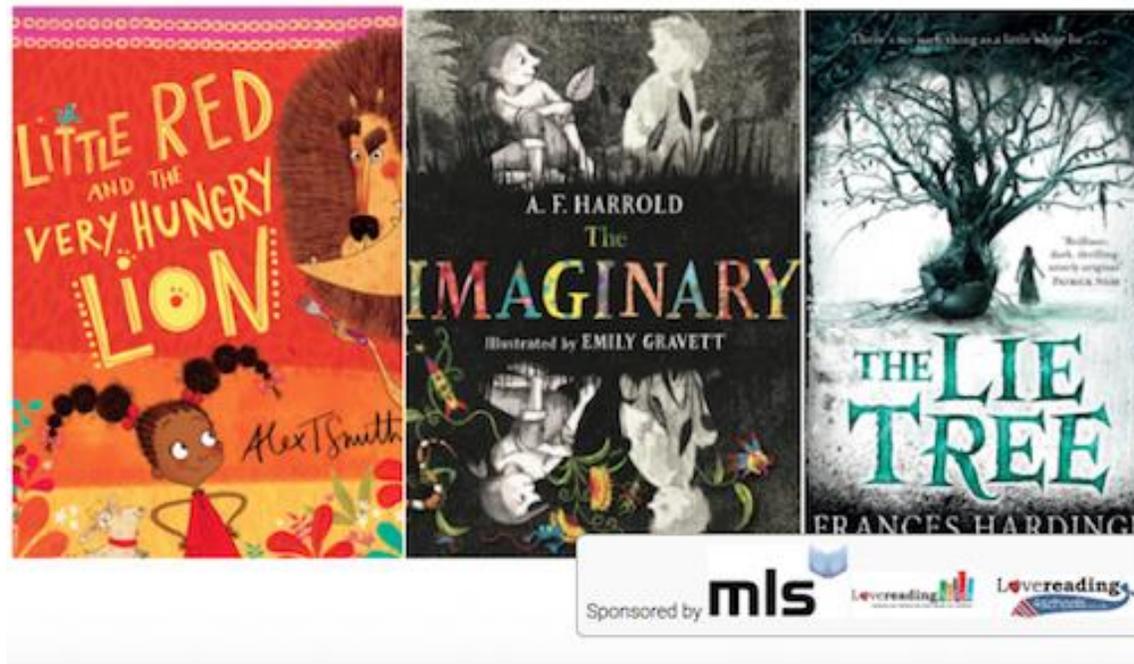


Increasing my repertoire: exploring the UKLA Book Awards

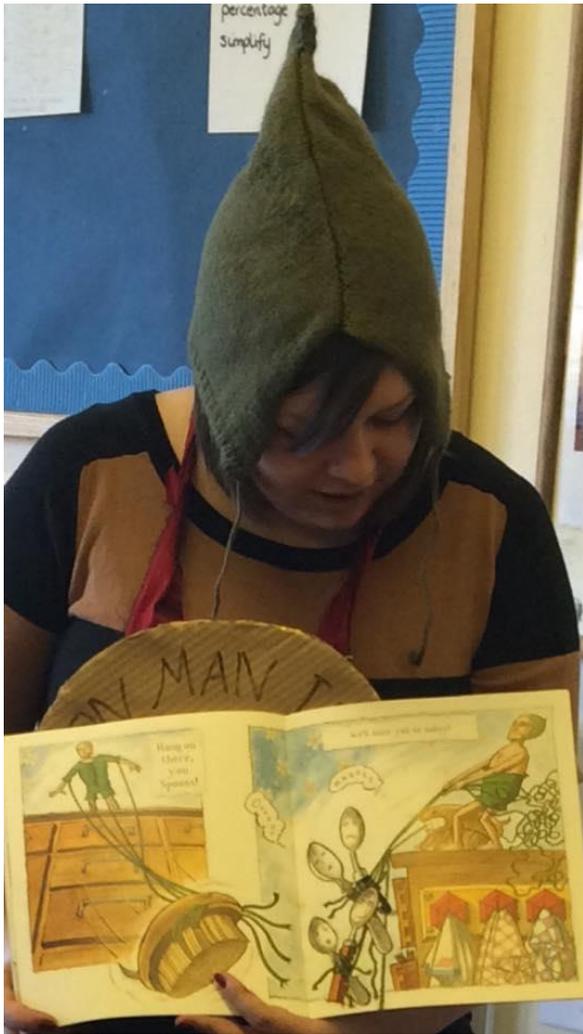
UKLA Book Award

Celebrating children's books



Claire Williams, St. Andrew's C of E Primary School





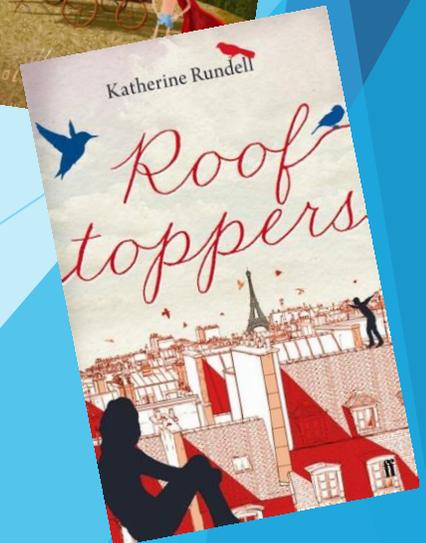
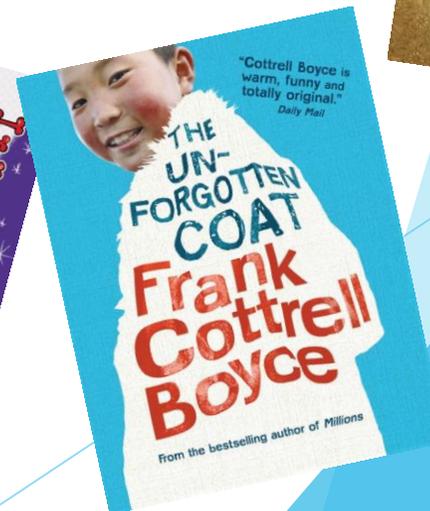
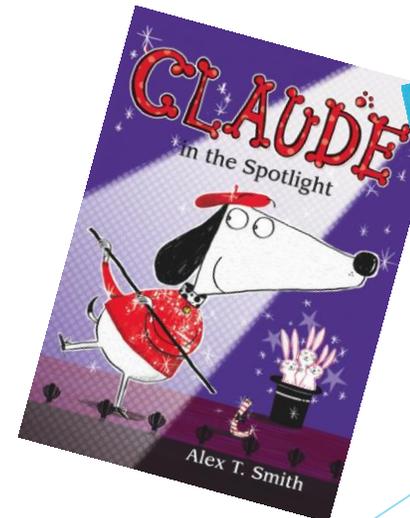
Context:

- ▶ I am the Year 4 teacher and Reading Coordinator at St. Andrew's C of E Primary School, a one-form entry primary school in North Essex.
- ▶ As a school, we are committed to developing our school community as a community of engaged readers and we are continuously striving to develop our reading for pleasure pedagogy.
- ▶ Each year, my own reading, both professional and personal, has been shaped, enriched and extended by the longlist and shortlist for the UKLA Book Award. In addition to those that were already part of my repertoire, it has introduced me to recently published, high-quality texts by authors and illustrators with whom I was not previously familiar.

Sharing an all-time favourite picturebook, *Traction Man Is Here*, with some children at school in a knitted green bonnet ... but not matching all-in-one romper suit!

Context:

- ▶ As Reading Coordinator, I am involved with selecting and buying new books beyond my own classroom; for example, for our collection that the children choose from for their independent reading, for Guided Reading sets and for topic packs. To ensure that our collections are being updated with a diverse range of contemporary, exciting texts over time, it is vital that my repertoire of children's literature is being constantly updated.
- ▶ Before becoming Reading Coordinator, my knowledge was far more in-depth for the age of the children I was teaching in UKS2 so it has been particularly important to develop my knowledge across other age ranges.
- ▶ The UKLA longlists have been and continue to be a brilliant way of doing this and have been my first port of call when I've been asked for recommendations for new books for the school.



Context: about the UKLA Book Award

The UKLA Book Awards seek to celebrate children's books in order to:

- ◆ Encourage teachers to increase their professional and personal knowledge of recently published high quality children's books. As the only Book Award judged by active classroom teachers, the books selected for the award are books that teachers can share with children as a 'focus of study'. With this in mind, the long- and shortlists have also been an exciting starting point for identifying rich and inspiring texts to have at the heart of several topics.
- ◆ Promote the place of books for young people in all educational settings from nursery to key stage 4

The books selected for the award will be titles that teachers can share with pupils as part of regular classroom experience, e.g. to:

- ◆ Read for pleasure in the teacher's read aloud programme to the whole class
- ◆ Inspire extended response from learners (through discussion, creative interaction or understanding the wider curriculum)
- ◆ Be the focus of study (set books, shared and guided reading)
- ◆ Enhance all aspects of literacy learning and literary study

Selection committees and teacher judges are asked to look, first and foremost, for well-written, engaging 'reads' and, where appropriate, outstanding illustration and design.

www.ukla.org/awards/ukla-book-award

Research Inspiration and Rationale:

- ▶ The TaRs research highlights that **a considerable and constantly updated repertoire of children's literature** is fundamental to successfully fostering reading for pleasure.
- ▶ This repertoire should include the work of a diverse range of authors, illustrators, poets and graphic designers.
- ▶ The impact of this in-depth subject knowledge included enabling teachers to engage enthusiastically and reciprocally as readers in school, making one-to-one reader recommendations tailored to specific children and building reciprocal and interactive reader to reader relationships with staff and children.
- ▶ **How did these findings of the TaRs research inspire me?**
Having shadowed the United Kingdom Literacy Association Book Awards as a Student Shadower during my PGCE course, the TaRs research led me to reflect on the impact that this had on my subject knowledge of children's literature. Motivated by the TaRs research, I was keen to see how exploring the titles, both long and shortlisted for the UKLA Book Award each year would continue to develop my repertoire of children's literature – of contemporary texts in particular – and, in turn, my ability to successfully foster RfP.

Aims:

Through exploring the titles, both long and shortlisted, for the UKLA Book Award each year, I aim to:

- ▶ Continue to enrich and update my repertoire of children's literature
- ▶ Further develop my knowledge of contemporary authors, illustrators and texts
- ▶ Explore new ways of using my enriched subject knowledge to enhance children's RfP and reflect on the impact of doing so

Outline:

- ▶ I browse the UKLA Book Award long list and read most of the 7-11 titles myself
- ▶ I then feel more confident about making recommendations to individual children from the long- and shortlisted titles
- ▶ As well as recommending specific to individual children, I share the long- and shortlists with parents each time they have been released.

In other news, huge congratulations to the Owls for winning Reading Stars for the third week running - another lovely, new book to add to our class bookshelf and so fabulous to see so much excitement about reading! Keep up the incredible effort that you are putting into reading at home, everybody, and remember that your Guided Reading homework counts too! Let's go for a record-break next week!

The United Kingdom Literacy Association have announced the long list for their Book Award this week, an award which celebrates high quality children's literature. I have added a link at the bottom of our class page - it is well worth a look at the books that have been longlisted. Several of them are on our bookshelf already and more will no doubt appear over the coming weeks!



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[UKLA Book Award 2015 Longlist](#)

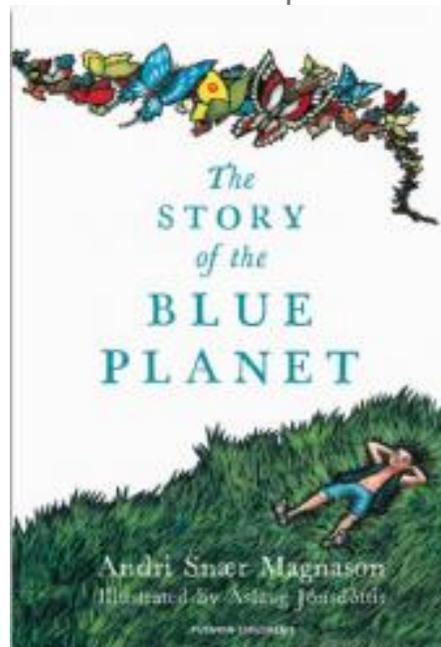
Outline:

- ▶ For example, I first discovered, devoured and fell in love with *The Story of the Blue Planet* when it was longlisted for and subsequently won the Book Award for the 7-11 category in 2014.
- ▶ Having reflected on what I knew about the children in my class as readers, I then selected *The Story of the Blue Planet* to be our class novel at the heart of our 'To Infinity and Beyond' topic the following term, confident that it would be a rich text that would create excitement and support learning across the curriculum.

This half term's 'To Infinity and Beyond' topic is now in full swing and not a day goes by when I don't finish the day feeling excited by the fabulous work that the Owls have produced!

Work around *The Story of the Blue Planet*, by Andri Magnason, has continued in Literacy; originally published in Iceland, this novel won the UKLA Book Award 2014, which is an award that celebrates high quality children's texts. The groan that I am often met with when I close the book suggests that the Owls agree with the judges' choice of winner! You can find out more by clicking on the picture of the below, which will take you straight through to the author's website:

Lots of drama, role-play and talk have provided inspiration for the children's writing ... and my goodness, what fantastic Big Writes this week, Owls! I have had so many 'fall off my chair' moments marking them this weekend! Congratulations to this week's Goal Scorers:



Year 5 Goal Scorers of the Week!

The planet was dark for a moment. Although, when it grew lighter, it seemed ... empty. There was no fun, no screams of delight.

Oliver

As quick as a flash, Brimir jumped to his feet. "Let's go!"

Eleanor

Brimir and Hulda spiralled through the water; it was cold and dark, it made it almost impossible to swim.

Zac

Hulda and I fell from the sky like a rocket.

Louis

Brimir was dexterously trying to manipulate the wire so the connection was good.

Will

The children got so mad like magma bubbling at its hottest.

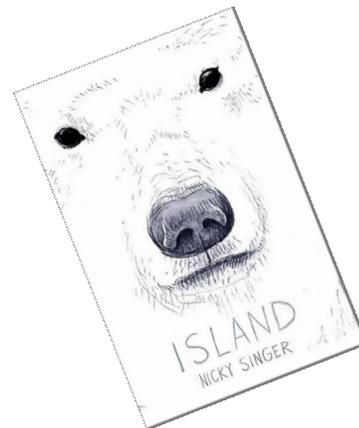
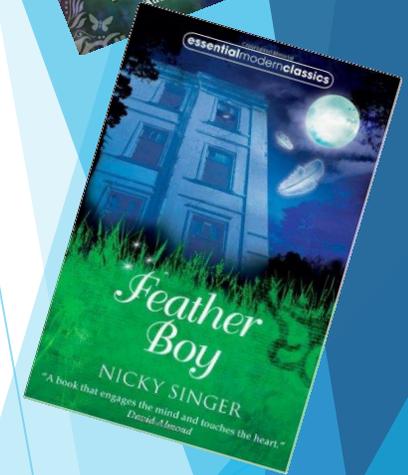
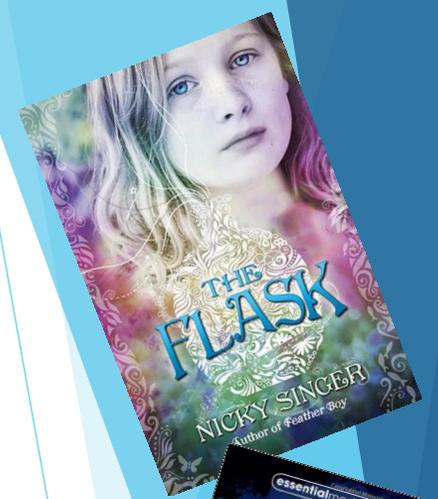
Reece

Impact:

- ▶ Each time the long- and shortlists have opened my eyes to an author or illustrator with whom I wasn't previously familiar, I have then developed my subject knowledge further by finding out about other texts they have had published, following them on Twitter where possible and keeping an eye out for any future publications. This, too, has had an impact on the repertoire that I am able to draw on when making recommendations to children, on the new books that I recommend for school and on the books that I select for read alouds and a 'focus of study'.

For example:

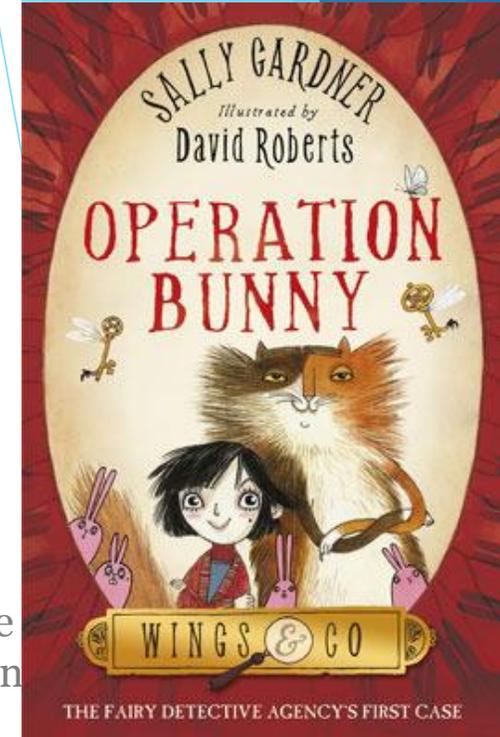
- ▶ I first discovered Nicky Singer's writing when *The Flask* was shortlisted for the Book Award in 2013. I went on to read *Feather Boy*, which we then ordered as a Guided Reading set, and have made tailored recommendations of both to individual children, before becoming involved with the Kickstarter campaign and launch for Nicky's latest novel, *Island*, last year.



Impact:

Reflections on the impact that my subject knowledge, enriched by the UKLA Book Award, has had on nurturing reading for pleasure:

- ▶ Together with my knowledge about each individual child's reading interests and preferences, my enriched subject knowledge has enabled me to make recommendations to individual children with diverse interests and needs from a much more diverse repertoire – and to do so with greater confidence.
- ▶ Having a much more diverse repertoire of children's literature on which to draw has enabled me to make one to one reader recommendations tailored more specifically to individual children. In some cases, single books that I had discovered through the UKLA Book Award had a significant impact on the reading identity of the individual children that I recommended and lent them to.
- ▶ At the beginning of the year, a parent of a child in my new class approached me concerned her daughter never 'wanted' to read. Having discussed her reading interests and preferences with her, I introduced her to and lent her my copy of *Operation Bunny*, a series I'd come across through the UKLA Book Award. A week later, she had read *Operation Bunny* from cover to cover and asked her Mum if they could go to the library to borrow the next in the series because another child in my class was reading my copy at the time and she couldn't wait! As the year progressed, she grew in confidence, developed a positive reading identity and read significantly more for pleasure – and it started by having *Operation Bunny* as part of my repertoire to recommend!



Year 5 parent:

“You have worked your teaching magic already!”

“You have turned our household into a reading household.”

Impact:

- ▶ The reading autobiographies created by the children in my class at the end of the year as they reflected on their journeys as readers highlighted how some of them viewed a *single text* that had been recommended to them as critical in developing their pleasure in reading. Again, my subject knowledge, as enriched by the UKLA Book Award, had given me a much more diverse, exciting repertoire on which to draw when selecting texts to foster individual children's reading for pleasure; titles from the long- and short-lists were among those mentioned.

For example, reading *Rooftoppers*, which I discovered when it was on the 2014 short-list and subsequently recommended to a girl in my class, had this impact:

What is the best book you have read this year? Rooftoppers/The Girl Savage
What is your reading/book-related highlight of the year? The fact that when I enjoyed Rooftoppers, I recommended it to Miss Williams' old teacher and they wrote back.

I dreaded [reading]. But then I started a bit more and I realised a big improvement on my writing ... and now I read by choice.

This also highlights how being able to build a reciprocal and interactive reader-to-reader relationship with another member of staff was a critical incident for this child.



Dear Mary, Anne!

I am writing to you to tell you why I would recommend *Roof Toppers*!

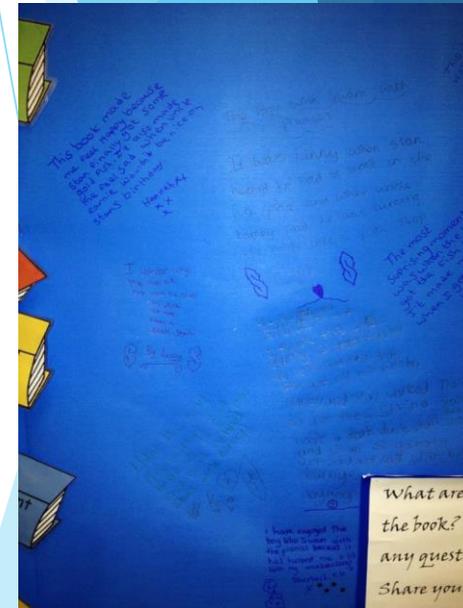
I have only just got up to page seventy four of chapter eight, right when Sophie and Charles had gone to a hotel and Sophie said that she had never felt so at home in a hotel normally they spend her I really like some of the words ChoiSeB Katherine Rundell used like beautiful, razzle-dazzle she described his eyes as fifty per cent silk and that they had magic in them!

I would definitely so far give it a five star rating because its filled with adventure, delight, curiosity and love. I also think that somewhere hidden in the words of this book is a message about how to live a life of love but I can't work out what it is yet but I can tell! I hope you enjoy it as much as I am!

your sincerely
Kiera one of the top team!

Impact:

- ▶ As I have read the texts from the UKLA Book Award that I have recommended myself, I have been able to engage reciprocally with the children as a reader; when individual children have known that I've read a text myself and, as somebody who knows about their individual reading interests, that I am recommending it specifically to them, they have often been keen to share and talk about it. Rushing up on the playground as soon as they see me in the morning or coming to find me at lunchtime – “You know the part when ...”, “Wasn't it exciting when ...?”, “What did you think was going to happen when ...?”
- ▶ Children who have enjoyed a book that I've recommended to them have often, in turn, recommended it to another child, engaging enthusiastically and reciprocally as readers themselves. As well as informal, spontaneous inside text-talk amongst themselves, children have asked to share books from the UKLA Book Award that I've recommended to them with the whole class, reviewed them in our 'Star Ratings' book and suggested other books by the same author when we've had the chance to buy new books for our class-room. A diverse, rich repertoire of texts and in-depth subject knowledge, enriched significantly by exploring the long- and shortlisted titles each year, has been key to this.



Our Graffiti Wall for *The Boy Who Swam With the Piranhas*, longlisted for the 2014 Book Award.

Reflections on impact the TaRs research had on practice:

- ▶ The TaRs research highlights that a considerable and constantly updated repertoire of children's literature is fundamental to successfully fostering RfP. Through exploring the impact that reading the UKLA Book Award (longlists and shortlists) has had on my repertoire of children's literature and, in turn, my ability to successfully foster RfP, I endorse this.
- ▶ Reflecting on the influence of my enriched subject knowledge on RfP, I think the most significant impact came from having a more diverse repertoire of high-quality, rich texts on which to draw when making recommendations tailored to individual children with different interests and needs. Having so many texts at my fingertips that I had read myself and could confidently and enthusiastically recommend and share has had an impact on the pleasure in reading of reluctant readers, but also on children that were already avid readers, to whom I could recommend texts that they may not have come across before or chosen to read themselves. In addition, my enriched subject knowledge enabled me to engage more reciprocally as a reader in school, which resulted in more spontaneous text talk between both myself and the children and the children themselves.
- ▶ I am already enjoying reading books that have been longlisted for the 2017 UKLA Book Award, for **personal pleasure but also professional pleasure** in the knowledge that this will continue to enrich my repertoire of children's literature and, ultimately, nurture children's pleasure and engagement in reading.