

The Reading Review: Ben King (MrBKing1988)

Giving parents and teachers the knowledge to feel comfortable discussing, sharing and enjoying books. Aiming to review a small range of books each half term as well as provide a list of recently released books that are not to be missed. We will also cover non-fiction books and hear from an author in each instalment.

The Kingslea Review

Welcome to the first issue of The Kingslea Review. This newsletter will highlight a few books each half-term that we feel your children will love. In addition to this, it will also direct you to some recently-released books that we are sure will be big successes. We will also hear from Mr Conway who will tell us which children's books he has been reading recently.

Year 3-4 Recommendation

The Last Wild by Piers Torday is a wonderful adventure story set in a futuristic land very similar to earth. A young boy called Kester escapes from his island prison to help rid the planet of the dreaded 'Red Eye', a deadly virus that has wiped out all living creatures. Having been sent there by his father, Kester is confused and alone and is unable to speak. However, he can communicate with animals. This special skill sets him on a collision course with the authorities but makes him the last hope of the animal world.

This fantastic story takes the reader on a rollercoaster ride of emotions and suspense and is followed up by two further stories in the trilogy, **The Dark Wild** and **The Wild Beyond**.



Mr Conway's Corner

The book I'd like to recommend is **Malala's Magic Pencil** by Malala Yousafzai. Many of our older children have heard about Malala and this book tells the story of Malala's life in a way that is accessible for all primary aged children. At school, we read the book in assembly, with pages projected onto our screen in the hall so the children could follow the words and see the illustrations. The story allows parents and children to explore ideas and speculate about themes in the book, for example: what would you do if you had a magic pencil, how do you help others and what does fairness mean?

Year 5-6 Recommendation

Ned's Circus of Marvels by Justin Fisher, takes the reader into a dark world of killer clowns and dastardly demons determined to destroy a barrier between the world of darkness and the mortal realm. There are strong similarities between this and Phillip Pullman's Northern Lights and clear elements of Narnia in Justin Fisher's writing. The hero, Ned, thinks his life is dull and ordinary. He bemoans his Father as the dullest man in the world. How wrong he is and before he knows what is happening, Ned is being chased across the sky under the protection of a circus ringmaster and a giant talking gorilla. Magic and futuristic settings build a world of imagination and wonders and this definite page turner is sure to go down a storm.



Non-Fiction

Women in Science by Rachel Ignotofsky.

This wonderful book charts in chronological order 50 influential female scientists from Hypatia in 350BC to Maryam Mirzakhani 1977-17. This wonderfully illustrated book provides an insight into each woman's life and accomplishments in a highly child-friendly way. Great for budding scientists out there. Suitable for children 9+



The Great Fire of London by Emma Adams.

The illustrations alone make this book worth its cost. Add in the fantastic retelling of the famous night in 1666 and this non-fiction wonder turns into a real page turner. Only 45 pages, long Adams has included building guides that show the reader which structures survived the fire and detailed illustrated maps to show where the major events took place. Suitable for children 7+



Recent releases

Sky Song by Abi Elphinstone

The School for Good and Evil by Soman Chainani

Women in Sport by Rachel Ignotofsky

Flamingo Boy by Michael Murpurgo

Wings of Fire (Graphic Novel) by Tui T. Sutherland



Year 5-6 Recommendation

Sky Song by Abi Elphinstone follows up Elphinstone's wonderful **Dreamsnatcher** series and provides a new tale full of magic, ice and wonderful characters. This fantasy story follows Eska, a girl who is trapped in a music box by the wicked Ice Queen. Once freed by Flit, a boy who carries a fox cub in his hood, they journey through frozen Erkenwald.

A frozen land ruled over by the evil ruler who has the country under her spell. The different tribes that live in Erkenwald are fighting for survival and for their futures as the Ice Queen attempts to track down and capture every living soul. There are huge elements of Narnia in this wonderful story that is sure to be a favourite for years to come.



Non-Fiction

Lots: The Diversity of the Earth by Nicola Davies takes us on a journey through our world. Looking at flowers, birds, insects and fish in their natural habitats. Focussing on how each of these different kingdoms interact with each other and yet keep their own identity, Davies has produced a book that is perfect to share as a family. Beautifully illustrated by Emily Sutton, this is a real gem.



A World of Cities by The Walker Studio (illustrations by James Brown) is a guide to some of the major cities of the world. Through wonderfully illustrated pictures, we are shown an instantly recognisable location in each of the cities with cleverly-positioned facts dropped throughout. This is a really interesting way of learning about different places and what they are recognised for. Do take a look if you get a chance!

Recent Releases

Twister by Juliette Forreest

Meet the Twitches by Hayley Scott

The Eye of the North by Sinead O'Hart

Tin by Padraig Kenny

A Spoonful of Murder by Robin Stevens



Context

I currently work at Kingslea Primary School in West Sussex and lead Reading for Key Stage 2. Despite getting good reading results in KS2 Sats I felt that the quality of the books being read was not as high as I thought possible. Therefore I set about creating a way of informing parents of a small number of high quality texts and giving enough detail about them to promote conversation in the home about them. I also felt it important for parents to recognise that teachers are readers of these books too.



Research inspiration and rationale

Informal book talk, inside-text talk and recommendations are the back bone of what we are doing as the TaRs research found. Promoting book talk is a key skill to fostering a love of reading. Research shows that children that come from a reading environment at home are more likely to succeed academically than children that have a parent with a degree but don't read. We aim to ensure that as many parents and children as possible are reading and discussing books as much as they can. This is closely linked to the Teachers as Readers Research that shows that book talk is essential for developing communities of engaged readers.



Lisa B @LBrace1 · Jan 19

Replying to @MrBKing1988

And take it from a ks2 parent it was hugely enjoyed...and the Amazon shopping is taking place tonight!



Aims

- To provide a short list of high quality texts for parents to discuss with their children.
- To inspire children to read more.
- To develop an interest in newly released books both fiction and non-fiction.

The Corpus Christi Reading Review

"Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path." (Psalm 119:105)

Welcome to the first issue of the Corpus Christi Reading Review. This newsletter will share updates on reading within school, as well as highlight recommended books, each half term. Children, staff, governors and parents are all invited to review books. We hope this newsletter will help to further promote a love of reading across our school community.

Reading Diaries

Your child's reading diary plays an integral part of their home learning and forms a record of their reading habits and progress. Attached to this newsletter are suggested comments and activities that can go into the reading diaries. Once in Year 3, children are expected to write their own comments but parents are encouraged to work with the children on these. As we have highlighted previously, reading with your child every day will significantly improve their life chances. Thank you, as always, for your support.

Spring Term 1 Reading:

- Y1: Three Billy Goats Gruff
- Y1: Dogger
- Y2: The Little Green Dinosaur / Stone Girl, Bone Girl
- Y3: The Secret Garden
- Y4: Kensha's Kingdom
- Y5: Fantastic Beasts and Where to Find Them.
- Y6: The Green Book

Year 5/6 Book Club

Year 5/6 Book Club is now into its second term. We thoroughly enjoyed reading Who Let the Gods Out? by Maz Evans, last term. Maz will be visiting school on Tuesday 13 March (during our whole school Book Week) and will meet the book club for a Q&A session over lunch. Last week, book club members voted for Sky Song by Abi Elphinstone as their spring read! Abi has very kindly sent each member of the book club a signed bookmark.



If you loved Who Let the Gods Out?, why not read the second book, Simply the Quest? There is a copy available in the school library as well as plenty at your local Bournemouth libraries.

Sky Song is the current Waterstone's Book of the Month. Each member of Book Club has their very own copy and meets each Monday to discuss the book, as well as online via our Google classroom.

Moorlands Reading News

Welcome to the second issue of Moorlands Reading News. We'll be sharing updates about what we're doing to promote reading across the school, as well as highlighting some of our favourite books. Mini-book reviews are very welcome from pupils, staff, parents and governors. We hope that this newsletter will further help to promote a love of reading within our school community.



Jo Cotterill visit

On National Empathy Day, we were lucky enough to have a visit from author Jo Cotterill. She delivered a fantastic assembly to Key Stage Two, where she talked the importance of empathy and listening. She also led some exciting writing workshops in Year 6, met with interested parents, and signed and sold copies of her books, including her brand new publication, Jelly. It was a wonderful day!

A reminder



Mr Ruddick's Top 5 Graphic Novels



1. Bone - An exciting series of books full of adventure and mystery. There are lots of twists and turns along the way.



2. Amulet - These stories are full of wonder and mystery from the very beginning. An enthralling story that grips you and doesn't let go.



3. Nightlights - This story is all about encouraging creativity and imagination, it also has a range of stunning illustrations that help bring another world to life.

Mr Ruddick is our school graphic novel expert. He's picked out five of his favourite books and series that children from Year Three upwards will enjoy.



Catherine Skinn @skinn69 · Jan 19

Replying to @MrBKing1988

This is great empowers children in reading. Would love to know more about the process you went through to achieve this.



Outline

The school wished to show parents the wealth of children's literature that is being released regularly and to give them a specific insight into a small range of texts. The aim being that this would promote a range of book talk in the home and would broaden children's reading away from their usual 'type' and into perhaps more adventurous subject matter.

We did this by producing our Reading Review document. This 2 page document was sent to parents directly via ParentMail and was put on our school Twitter page. The 2nd version, soon to be released, also includes a review from a children's author directly.

Impact

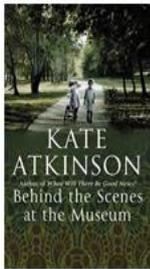
The feedback from parents has been overwhelmingly positive with many tweeting in directly to our account to share images of both them and their children enjoying the reviewed books. Furthermore the image was shared numerous times and ended up being viewed by nearly 50,000 people. Since the original document was produced a dozen other schools have also produced their own version of the Review including Jenna Lucas (@JennaLucas81) and Jon Biddle (@jonnybid) their reviews can be seen above.

Reflections on impact the TaRs research had on practice

The resource has promoted stronger links between parents and the school in terms of what is being read and promoting the idea of adults as readers as well as teachers. By demonstrating to parents that teachers also read children's books we have been able to promote discussion and group reading.

Mrs Burrell's Book Review

My favourite adult book that I have read this year is 'Behind The Scenes At The Museum' by Kate Atkinson. It is a great story about a girl called Ruby, told from the moment of conception through her entire life. It travels through different generations of her family in flashbacks and covers the points of view from different family members. While reading, I made my own family tree of Ruby's family to help me keep up with the relationships between the characters. It had me captivated from the very first pages.



Poetry Awards

We were delighted to be one of the schools involved in this year's CLIPPA poetry awards and were thrilled to be sent a set of Joseph Coelho's latest poetry collection, Overheard In A Tower Block. Thank you!



Joseph Coelho visit

Just before Easter, we had our very first visit from our Patron of Reading, Joseph Coelho. He spent a very enjoyable day working with Squirrels, Hedgehogs and Rabbits classes, sharing and performing some wonderful poetry. We can't wait until he comes back in September. A huge thank you to the Friends of Moorlands for supporting us with the cost of this, because author visits have a huge impact on children's attitudes to reading.



The Kingslea Review

Welcome to the third issue of The Kingslea Review. In this edition, we will take a close look at some of the most exciting children's books available at the moment.

We will hear from Mr Conway and Mrs Payne, and also from debut author, Veshti Hardy whose wonderful book Brightstorm is reviewed in this issue.

We will be taking a look at some of the brand new releases that will soon be filling the shelves in your favourite book stores.

Year 3-4 Recommendation

Sky Chasers by Emma Carroll is a fantastic adventure story based on the real life Montgolfier family and their quest to be the first people in the world to create a hot air balloon. The story follows Maggie, a young thief, who is employed by a shadowy figure to steal the Montgolfier's plans. However things don't go quite to plan and with faithful pet cockerel Coco coming along for the ride, Maggie enters a world of suspicion, mystery and science. Embarking on a desperate race against time to make sure that the French not the English are the first nation to take to the sky Maggie also has to keep her dark burglar past secret from those around her. Can she do it and will she ever take to the sky?



Recommended by Brightstorm author Veshti Hardy

I would like to recommend *Alex Sparrow* and *The Furry Fury* by Jennifer Killick. If you've already read *Alex Sparrow* and *The Really Big Stink*, you'll already know that you're in for a gigglingly great read. Alex and Jess are back, and their embarrassing super powers are out in force as they try to solve the mystery of why the animals at the local sanctuary are terrified, alongside other strange events such as squirrels turning mean. What I love most about book 2 is that we see Alex and Jess's characters develop; beneath their often prickly relationship there is a real and warm friendship.

You'll love the animals too, especially Bob the Goldfish and Mr Prickles the hedgehog! The Alex books never fail to make me shoulder-shake laugh, but most of all, this story is about the power of kindness. I think there are lots of young readers out there for who this could ignite a real love of story. This book is divided into short, readable chapters, each one ending on a cliff hanger, with illustrations throughout. You will be on the edge of your seat and you will never see the natural world the same way again.

