



Lauren Haines
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Creative Classroom Libraries and Reading for Pleasure

Gloucester Road Primary School

Lauren Haines and Myfanwy Pepperell



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Context

We have been a part of Cheltenham Literature Festivals' Reading Teachers = Reading Pupils programme. This project aims to:

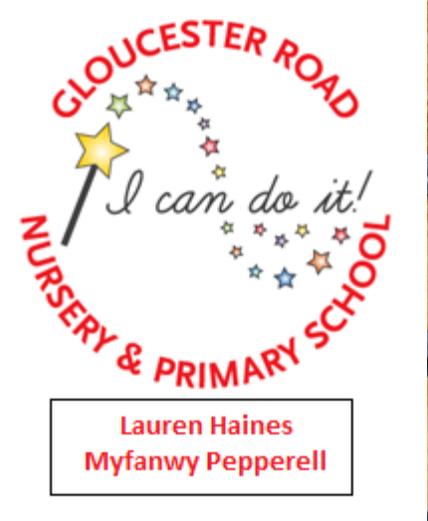
- Increase teachers' enthusiasm for and knowledge of high quality children's literature
- Increase teachers' use of novels and other literature to provide an enriched curriculum (a rich context for learning) for their pupils
- Build and resource a local network of Teachers' reading groups

To find out more, visit Cheltenham Festivals' website at <https://www.cheltenhamfestivals.com/education/take-part/reading-teachers-reading-pupils/>



Context continued

Gloucester Road Primary School is smaller than average-sized, local authority maintained school. Two fifths of the pupils are known to be eligible for pupil premium, which is above average. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is above average. A third of pupils speak English as an additional language, which is well above average. The proportion of pupils who have special educational need and/or disabilities is above average. The proportion of pupils who have an education, health and care plan is also well above the national average. The number of children entering or leaving the school at other than normal times is well above the national average.



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OU Research Inspiration and Rationale

'Social reading environments were seen to be key to creating richly reciprocal reading communities in the Teachers as Readers research. Physically engaging, the most successful environments tempted children into texts and offered spaces to relax, browse, and read for pleasure'. (Cremin et al, 2014)

Having had our own passions for encouraging children to read for pleasure reignited by RT=RP, we were inspired to creating an exciting and engaging social reading environment for our children in years 5 and 6. We wanted our children to be tempted by our reading environments to read more often, read more widely and engage in more discussions about books.



Aims

We wanted to:

- Inspire children to read a wider variety of books both classics and modern fiction, alongside poetry and non-fiction too
- Encourage children to read more often
- Create an environment which encourages book talk between the pupils as well as between pupils and staff
- Help to elevate the importance of reading in our classrooms



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Outline: how did it all start?

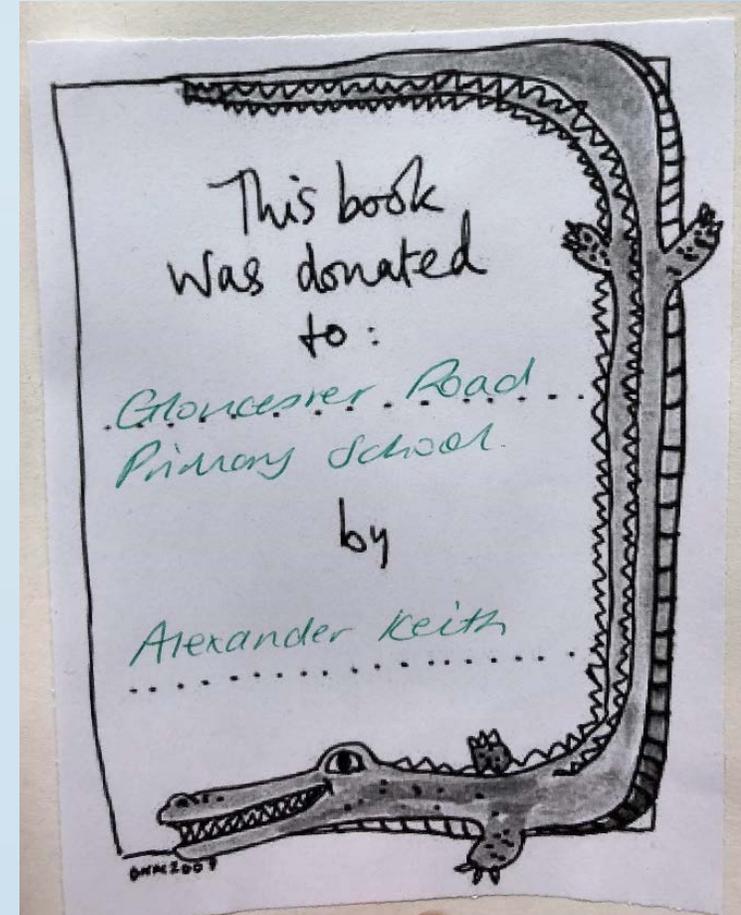
- We wanted to reinvent our class libraries to create exciting and inspiring social spaces for reading but we had no budget to fund such a project!
- We wanted to implement something quickly so that it would impact our current classes.
- We decided that we would have to rely on fundraising to fund our vision so we decided to speak to our children about what we wanted to do and bounced ideas around together for how we could raise the funds. The children were excited from the get go!
- We shared the year 5 and 6 reading for pleasure lists from www.booksfortopics.com with our classes and used them as a starting point to create our own list of books for our wish lists.

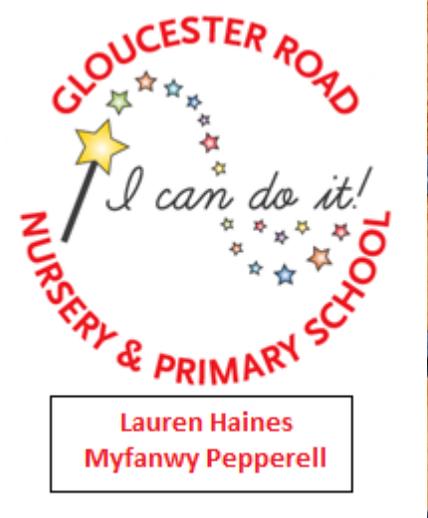


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Outline: fundraising

Our first step was holding a book pledge event. We put a copy of the book cover for each of the 100 books that we wanted to get out on tables in our hall and invited families to come and pledge to buy the books. The families took the front cover away with them so that they knew what book to buy and then they filled in a book plate for the book so that every person who reads and enjoys that book will know that it is thanks to them! We managed to get just over $\frac{1}{4}$ of the books from this event.





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Outline: fundraising

Our next event, as suggested by the children, was to have a sponsored read-a-thon! The children in our classes asked their friends and family to sponsor them to read as many pages as possible in an afternoon.



Mrs H
@MrsHgrps

We're working hard to earn that sponsorship money! All money must be in by Monday. Thank you for Your Support! 📖 💰



17/04/2018, 14:31



Outline: fundraising

Our classes' next idea was to sell ice lollies and ice creams after school as we had been having some lovely sunny spring weather! We did this for 3 days and raised lots of money!

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Outline: fundraising



Mrs H
@MrsHgrps

Super proud of years 5 & 6 who have raised an amazing £428 to revamp and restock their book corners, with a bit of help from school and hopefully our governors looks like we will be able to get everything from our wish list! Well done guys!! [#readingforpleasure](#)

26/04/2018, 20:48

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Outline: when they arrived...

When every delivery arrived we stopped the two classes, brought them together and opened the boxes. They found this incredibly exciting – we took them time to look at the covers, read the blurb and sometimes we indulged ourselves and read the first chapter too! This really helped to increase the levels of excitement in the class and create a real buzz around the books.



Our books have started to be delivered 📖😊
#readingforpleasure #readingteachers #rtrp

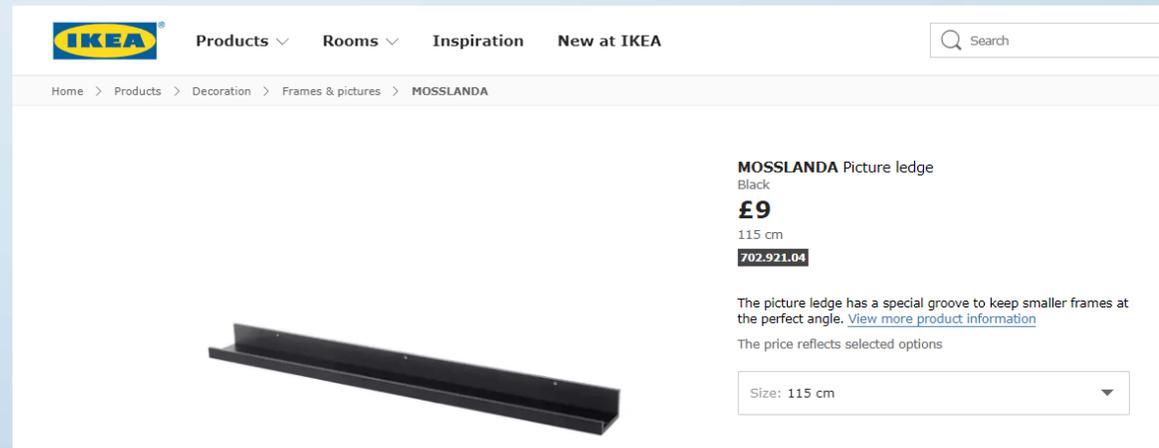




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Outline: creating the social reading environment

- Having heard Pie Corbett talk about how forward facing books on display are far more enticing for children than a tradition spine facing bookshelf, we were keen to create an environment which allowed us to display the books forward facing.
- We found these bookshelves in Ikea and let our creativity flow when coming up with the design!





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Outline: creating the social reading environment

- At our school we work with flexible working spaces, meaning that we are free to use a range of furniture to create learning spaces for the children. We have tables at different heights, bean bags and cushions with clipboards, sofas and stages which provide opportunity for standing and sitting. We needed to ensure that our new classroom libraries would fit alongside this and enhance it further.



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Outline: putting it all together...

- We painted the wall behind our stages with black board paint before putting up the shelves. We then decorated the walls with quotes from the books, quotes about reading and pictures using chalkboard paint.
- This created an amazing display that will last all year long. We plan to change the chalkboard decorations every year to prevent them from just becoming wallpaper.
- Each morning the children were so excited to see what decorations we had added the previous evening.

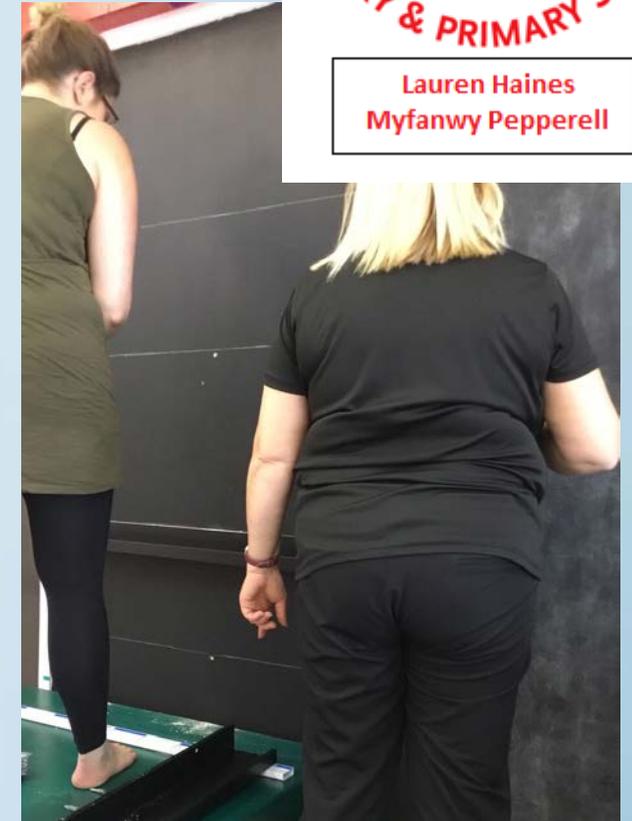
Putting it all together...



Putting it all together...



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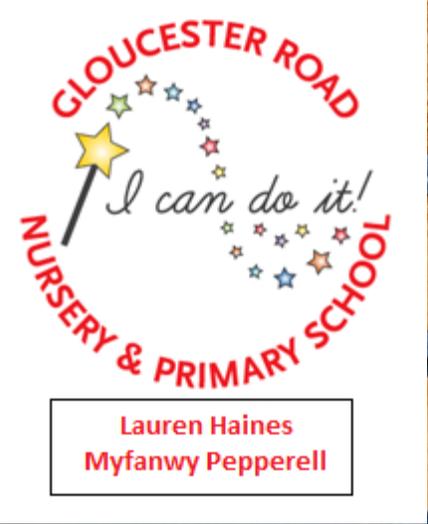
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Putting it all together...



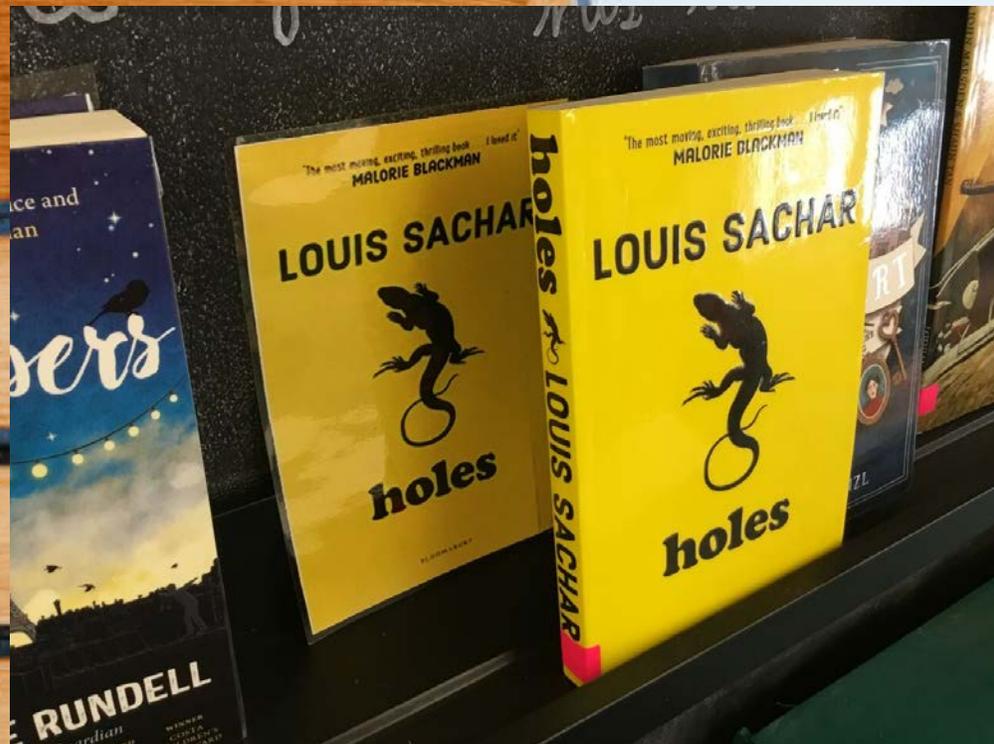
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Outline: final touches...

- We put laminated copies of the front covers behind the books on the shelves so that the children would not only know where to put books back once they have finished reading them, but it also meant that children can see what books will be available to read soon even if someone else is reading it at that moment.





Outline: final touches...

- Each child and member of staff in that year group were given a card with a number on, when they have taken a book to read they put their number on the laminated copy of the cover so that we can keep track of who has which book.
- We also added some fairy lights that were made of clips so that children could clip up book reviews to share their recommendations with each other





Impact on children

- The children were so excited about using our new social environments for reading. They could not wait to be allowed to borrow the books and the conversations that they were having between themselves about which book they wanted to read first in the lead up were amazing!
- Every child in the whole of years 5 and 6 borrowed a book straight away and we saw a dramatic increase in the amount of home reading that was happening.
- Children were reading more and they were reading a greater variety of genres and styles, finding new authors to fall in love with.





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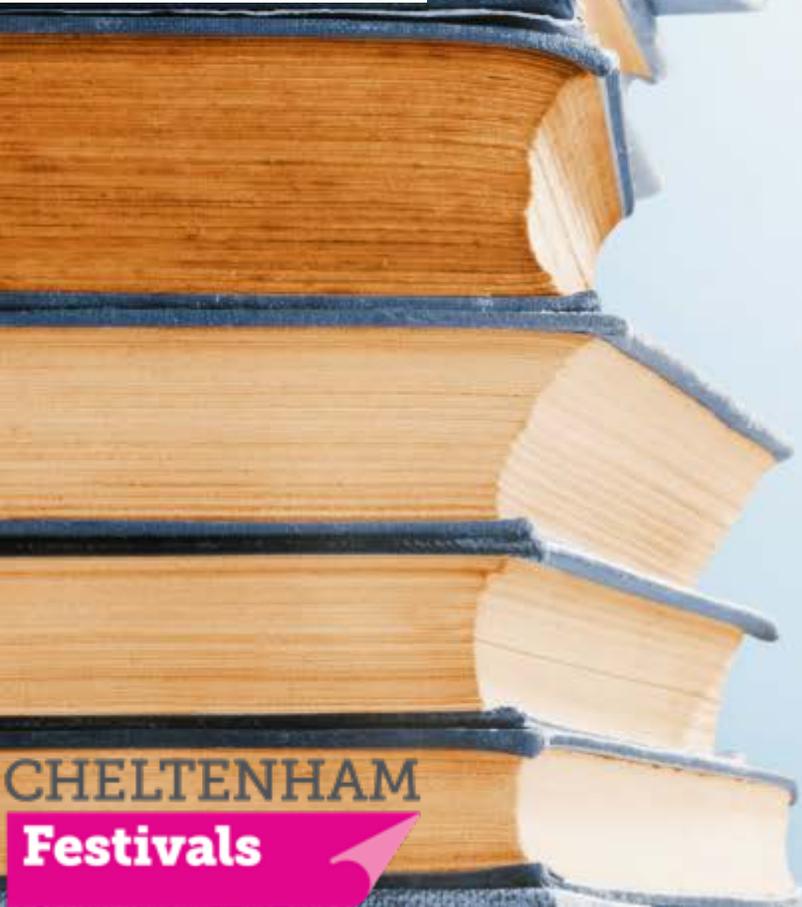




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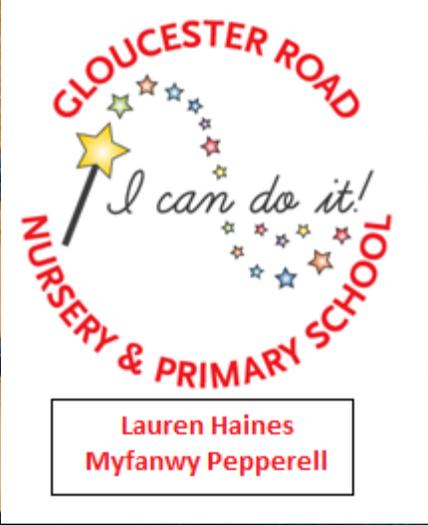
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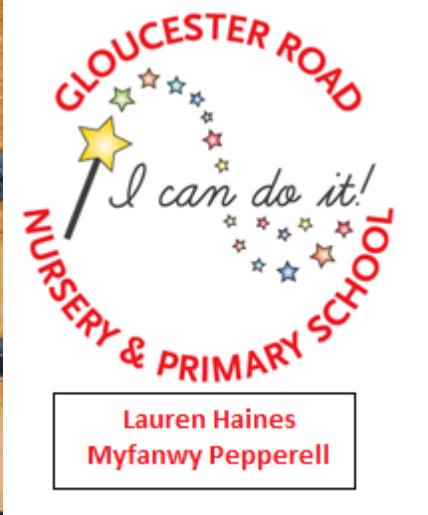




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Impact on children...

"It has made me want to read more as there are now lots of new books to choose from. I found it really hard to decide which to read first as there were so many lovely ones that I wanted to read – I just want to read all of them."

"This project has really made me want to read more because I love all of the quotes on the wall and I want to read the books and find out which ones they have come from, its much easier to choose a book with them facing forward as I can see them much better than the old shelves."

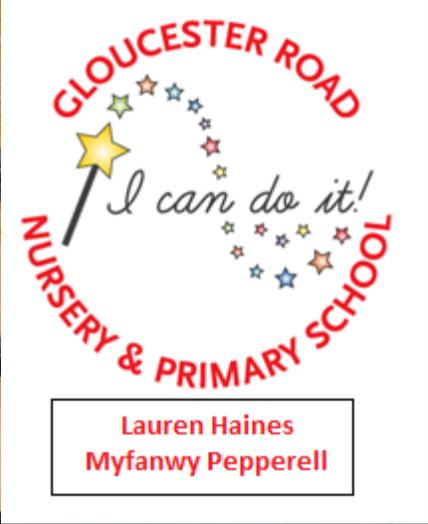
"Sharing book recommendations in our new classroom libraries has really inspired me to read more, I like hearing about what my friends have read and thinking about whether it sounds like the kind of book that I would like to read to."



Impact on children...

"This project has really encouraged me to read more because it is really exciting. Everyone is so excited about reading them and that makes me more excited. I really like talking about the books with my friends and we now have so many more books than we had before, its great.

"This project has made me really want to read books, before I didn't really care about books but now I want to read more and more and more.



School-wide impact

- We have really inspired the other teachers to create their own exciting social reading spaces in their classrooms.
- We have created a wish list of books for each class, and every year group is planning to complete their own fundraising to fund these projects.



Reflections on impact the TaRs research had on practice

- The TaRs research has had a huge impact on our understanding of the importance of having social reading environments for our children. We understand the significance of these environments being exciting, engaging and accessible for all of our pupils.
- We now have many more children engaged with reading in upper KS2. There is much more book talk in class with children sharing recommendations, discussing what they have been reading and making connections between books.
- Children are reading much more at home and also reading a wider variety of books.



Reflections on impact the TaRs research had on practice

- We now want to create similar exciting reading environments in all of the classrooms in our school.
- We want to increase the amount of book talk happening across the school.
- We are in the process of setting up a parent and child book club for the coming school year to encourage this love of reading even further!
- We will be continuing to attend Cheltenham Festivals' Reading Teachers = Reading Pupils to ensure that we are finding out about great literature to share with our children.