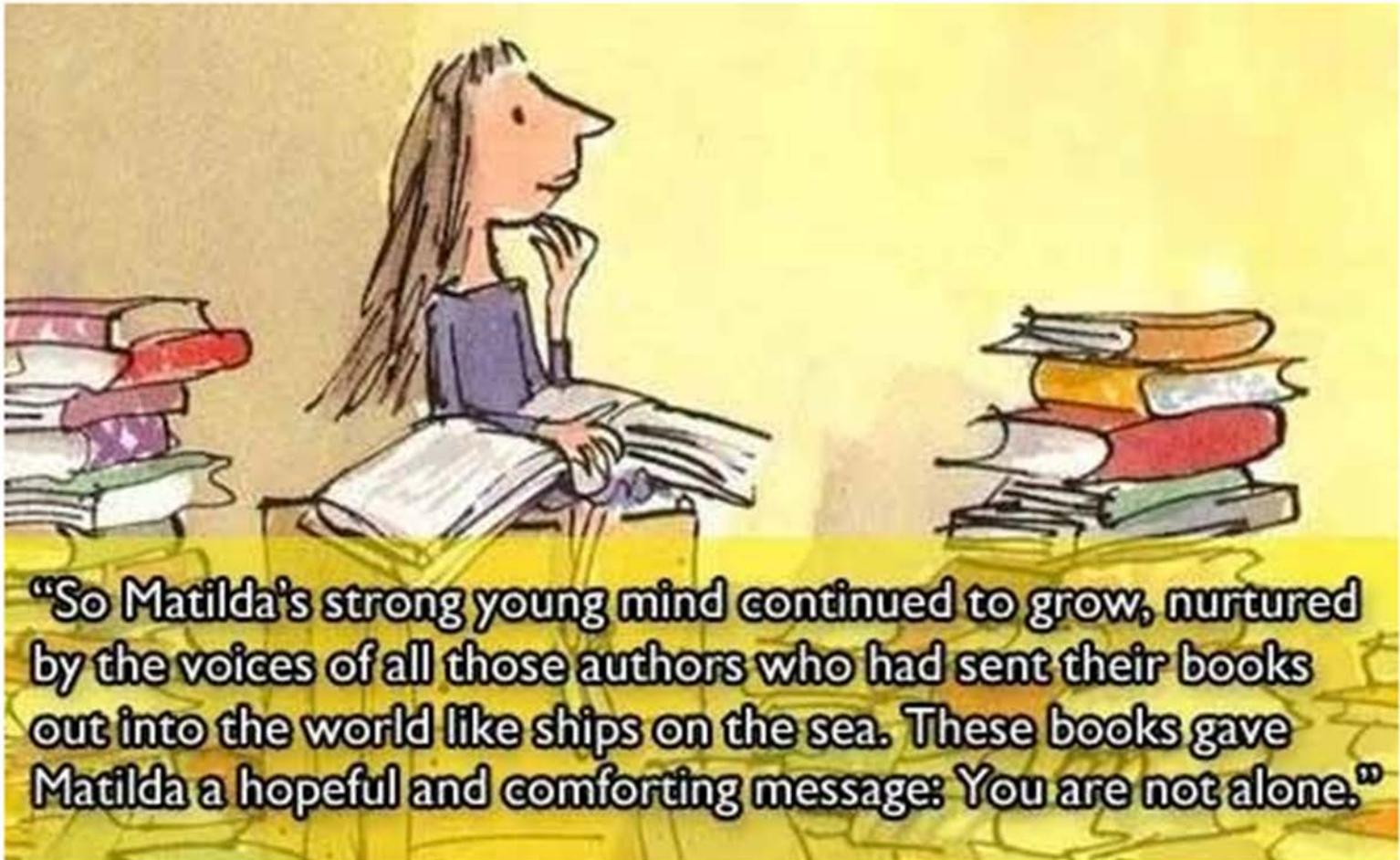


INVESTIGATION INTO CHILDREN'S READING PRACTICES

THOMAS SKINNER, JUNE 2018



“So Matilda's strong young mind continued to grow, nurtured by the voices of all those authors who had sent their books out into the world like ships on the sea. These books gave Matilda a hopeful and comforting message: You are not alone.”

CONTEXT

- ❖ Knockhall Primary is a three form mixed school for children aged 3 - 11 years of age.
- ❖ There are 566 pupils on register, as of 2017.
- ❖ I am working with a Year 2, mixed ability cohort of 22 pupils.
- ❖ Knockhall is one of 4 (soon to be 5) schools in the Woodland Academy Trust.
- ❖ The school works in collaboration with The University of Greenwich.



Woodland Academy Trust



OU RESEARCH INSPIRATION AND RATIONALE

Whilst many teachers know their children's reading scores/levels, their targets and the colour band they were given to select books from, many readily acknowledge they know little about the children's preferences as readers, their favourite genres, authors or their everyday reading practices at home. So even with knowledge of children's literature, we were not in a position to recommend particular texts to children (OU Research Rich Pedagogies, 2018).

Teachers should be aware that 'no two readers are the same' (Cliff Hodges, 2010) and that it is vital to match the text to the child and recommend reading which will motivate and inspire.



“We know much more now about the children – their histories – where they are coming from. I can tell you what the children like – their tastes in reading – I can’t believe that I didn’t know these things. It’s just been pushed out. There didn’t seem any time for this sort of chat.”

- Teachers as Readers (TaRs) teacher, Birmingham via OU
Research Rich Pedagogies



AIMS



- ❖ Research and discover more about the children as readers.
- ❖ Encourage the children to share experiences.
- ❖ Encourage the children to take ownership for widening their reading experiences and think about reading as not just books.
- ❖ Introduce new experiences e.g. 20% of the class have never been to a library.

RESEARCH

Do you like reading?

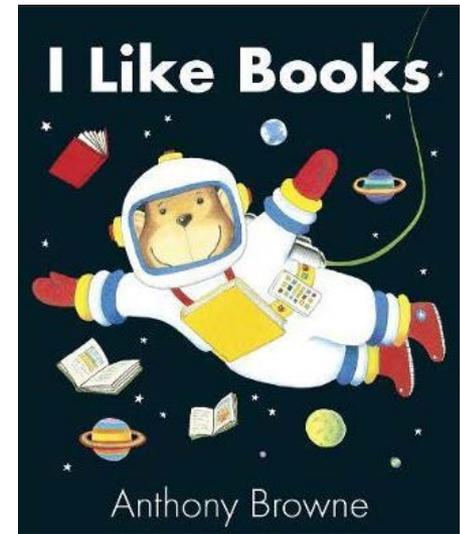
81% of class say they love reading

14% said they are not bothered about it

5% said they didn't like it

Of those who love it, they said it makes them happy/sleepy/laugh; they like learning things; they are excited to see the end of the story.

Those who didn't like it said they only like books with few words so you don't have to read, like comics.



RESEARCH

Are you a good reader?

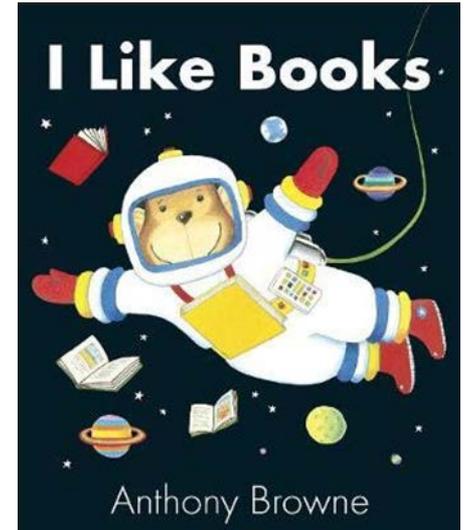
71% said 'I'm a very good reader'

14% said 'I'm a good reader'

10% said 'I'm okay'

5% said 'I'm not a very good reader'

Interestingly most children judged themselves on colour band. 'I'm on Stage Gold and never sound words' or 'I found it easy until I moved up to purple books'. Others judged on speed or ability to sound and blend to decode text.

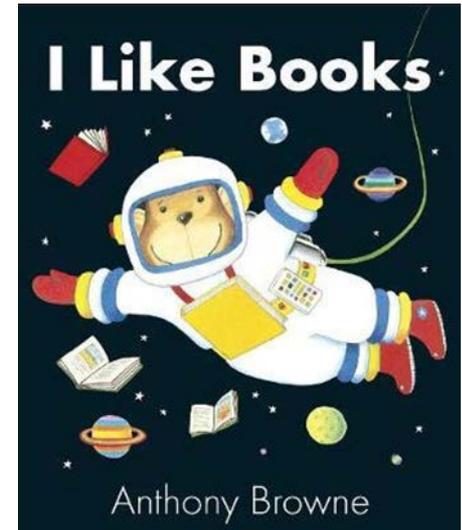


RESEARCH

Where do you prefer reading?

76% preferred reading at home, either because parent's and siblings are around to support, they had their own personalised selection of books or found it more relaxing.

24% preferred reading at school because teachers and adults can help.

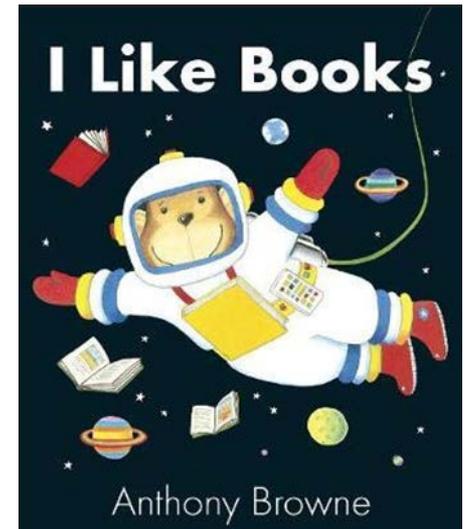


RESEARCH

Do you read with anyone at home?

48% said yes, reading with a parent, sibling, grandparent or other family member.

This means more than half are not getting any support with reading at home.



RESEARCH

Do you enjoy reading these types of books?

Story books 71%

Joke books 57%

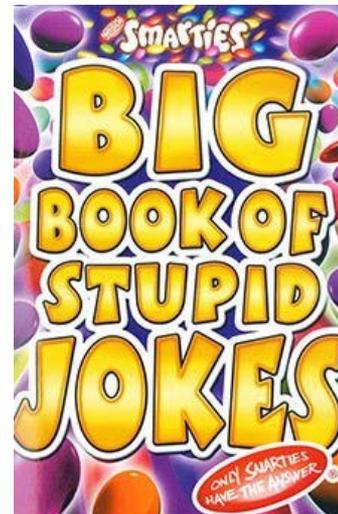
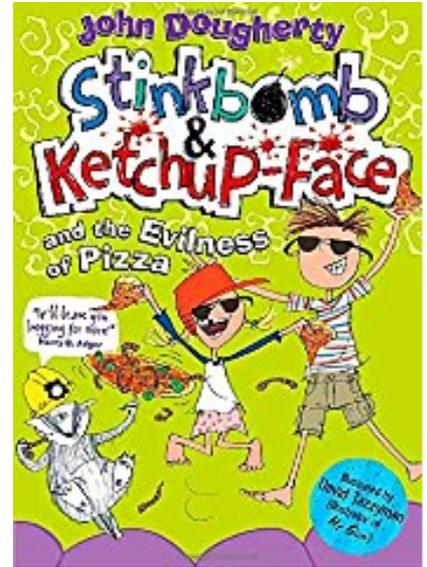
Picture books 52%

Magazines 33%

Non Fiction 14%

Comics 10%

Poetry 10%



POPULAR AUTHORS AND TITLES INCLUDE:

- ❖ Roald Dahl
- ❖ David Walliams
- ❖ Horrid Henry series (Francesca Simon)
- ❖ Tom Gates series (Liz Pichon)
- ❖ Captain Underpants series (Dav Pilkey)
- ❖ Where's Wally? (Martin Handford)
- ❖ Owls of Blossom Wood series (Catherine Coe)
- ❖ Stink Bomb & Ketchup Face series (John Dougherty)

Outline

- ❖ I observed that children were keen to make opportunities to discuss their reading practice with friends.
- ❖ How can this be developed?
- ❖ Can I introduce autonomous ways for peer to peer discussion and book recommendation?



- ❖ Introduced Class Reading Assembly – ‘show and tell’ with reading for pleasure materials.
- ❖ Children keen and motivated to discuss reading and even take questions from peers!
- ❖ Not overly structured but clear modelling of the sort of information expected with the talk.
- ❖ Children motivated to bring books in that they want to tell the class about – see photo above of front table with a wide variety of reading!



- ❖ Introduction of 'Author of the term', based on popular author with the class and changed termly.
- ❖ Liz Pichon (Tom Gates series) - popular with all, including emerging and reluctant readers.
- ❖ Able to make connections with author, reading, features of books and other works.



- ❖ ‘Shelfies’ – what’s good on our bookshelves?
- ❖ Peer to Peer recommendations via ‘Woodpeckers Recommended Reads’ slips – children can fill in and stick up on wall.
- ❖ Children also drew book cover/ designed an alternative one.



Shelfies



The Giant Book of Silly, Funny Jokes!



Author of the term:

LIZ RICHON
My Mom My Mom
About Me
KIT LUCKY TOM GATES
TOM GATES
Doodles

Reading inspires us to dream - Dolly Parton



IMPACT

The impact of this project has been that as a teacher, I have a much better idea of what the children enjoy reading which has increased my ability to recommend books.

The research has also informed the types of texts I have used for English planning to ensure lessons are engaging and relevant.

It has also created more opportunities for peer to peer recommendations, which has introduced children to a wide range of texts liked by their classmates.

The Author Of The Term approach has created a sense of awe and wonder around that author, with children keen to investigate and read books by that author as a class.

The children are all motivated to get involved and are excited to tell the class about what they are reading. It has encouraged further opportunities for informal book talk – some have even wanted to take books out to break and lunch to share!

Woodpeckers Recommended Reads

Book Title: Horrid Henry and the Secret Club

Author: Francesca Simon

You should read this book because:

It is funny at the start because Horrid Henry
said "AAGghh!" "AAA gggg whh!!! "AAA gggghh!"
The book is a good book because it has ninety
six pages so it will last you a long time.
There are lots of other Horrid Henry books.

My rating: 

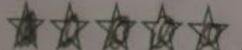
Woodpeckers Recommended Reads

Book Title: Pokemon!

Author: ppp

You should read this book because:

team rocket is
funny and who
touches Pikachu
gets thunder
bolts.

My rating: 

What the children say

Woodpeckers Recommended Reads

Book Title: boy in the dress

Author: David Walliams

You should read this book because:

The third chapter is the
the funnest chapter in
David Walliams history.

My rating: 

Woodpeckers Recommended Reads

Book Title: gangsta granny

Author: David Walliams

You should read this book because:

it is a masing and I just love it
I love it to the moon and back

My rating: 

Recommended by: [unclear]

REFLECTIONS ON IMPACT THE TARS RESEARCH HAD ON PRACTICE

The TaRs research had a big impact as it had already identified areas for development and research around them. This meant I was able to pick up and apply this to my own situation.

The research created:

- Increased ownership by the children of reading area and choices.
- Children better able to make informed choices as recommendations were coming from their peers who share the same interests and culture.
- Motivation and excitement about reading for pleasure.
- Reluctant readers motivated and supported with reading by higher ability peers.

