

## Inspiring the love of reading

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Submission for the Egmont 2020 RfP Awards: Experienced Teacher Award

### Context

- Victoria Road Primary School, Northwich (Part of the Aspire Trust)
- Our small community school wanted to create a love of reading amongst our children, and it formed part of our school Academy Development Plan in 2019 to ensure we develop this.
- As an experienced year 5/6 teacher, and someone who also has a love of reading, I wanted to embed this love in my own classroom setting and in turn being able to have wonderful 'book blether' discussions with my class on a daily basis, both my children and I being excited by book talk and book reading each day.



Victoria Road  
Primary School

### OU Research inspiration and rationale

The Open University's Teachers as Readers findings which inspired me were the significance of Teachers knowledge of children's literature and being a Reading Teachers. I have a considerable amount of knowledge of children's literature and quality texts; keeping up to date and reading them myself. I also use Twitter to communicate with authors and bring books to life in my classroom and inspiring my children to read their books – 'putting a face' to the book they became so engrossed in. In recent years, I have also used Skype to communicate with authors, again bringing them into the classroom.

Using the EEF research Literacy in KS2, I was able to have a clear understanding of the importance of reading aloud daily, as not only would it ignite a love of reading and reduce the lack of interest in books and reading, but by exposing my children to a wide range of texts, with an appropriate level of challenge, would develop their language capability. It would motivate and engage them and want to talk about the author techniques in an exciting way – creating this class 'book blether'.

### Aims

My aim was to inspire my children to enjoy reading, be inspired by me, as their teacher, wanting to read and having books in my classroom that I would just sit and read for pleasure. I wanted them to talk to me about the books they were reading, and to be excited to ask me about my books.

I wanted to create a culture in my classroom where we could recommend books to each other and to be brave in saying when a particular book just wasn't working for them 'its ok to not fall in love with every book' ethos. I wanted to be able to read books aloud them, use

voice expressions, change our classroom setting lighting moods etc and become enthused to read their books in such a way to each other or those at home.

## Outline

To achieve my aim, I kept up to date with children's literature and ensured I read them and became familiar with the gist so that I was able to recommend them to children in my class to whom I knew would love reading them just as much as I had. I attended the Matt Tobin workshops on picture books and also the RfP day by Teresa Cremin as part of the Aspire Trust as well as use the quality text recommendations by Bob Cox. These enabled me to really develop a knowledge of children's literature as well as quality texts to open the doors for my children and to see a shift from reluctant readers to a class full of excited individuals, with a real love of reading regardless of what they chose to read.

I used ideas from the RfP sessions, and at the start of each term I would **recommend books to each child in my class, leaving the book and a note on their desk** as to why I was recommending the text to them – this created excitement and a love of reading instantly. On occasions, I have been able to tweet authors to get them to send the child a personal note about the book I'm recommending to them – again all supporting the drive of wanting to read for pleasure.

**At Christmas, instead of giving the children a small confectionery treat, I trawled charity shops and was able to purchase next to new texts** and once again wrap them up and leave them on the desks for the children to find, unwrap and become excited about. The books were chosen for that child based on what I knew, as their teacher, about their reading habits etc.

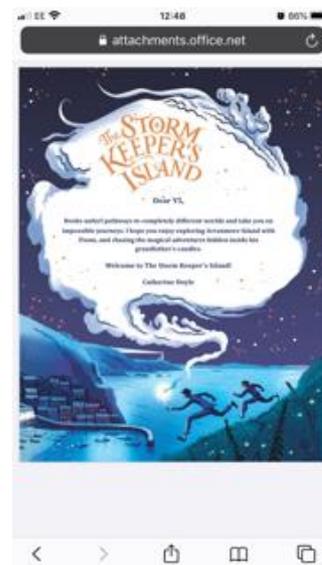


**I use our class Twitter to pin the books that I'm reading at home during the holidays** – the

children and their parents can then see that I'm a teacher that reads and I encourage them to upload the books they are reading together at home. I then bring my books into school and leave around my desk – these disappear within minutes by the children just picking them up and wanting to read them also! This creates a wonder 'book blether' as we are then able to discuss the books.

I also have a reading wall where we display our reading rivers and have photos and information about our '**author of the month**' this is also displayed on our class website for parents to become engaged with as well.



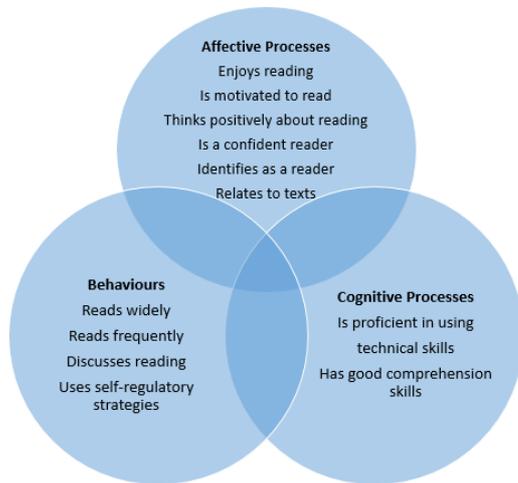


## Impact

The impact of being a 'teacher reader' and having a vast knowledge of children's literature, is the fact that I have been able to visually see a whole class ethos of children who love just reading for pleasure. At every opportunity, my class have a book out on their desk or are sat somewhere in the room reading. I hear their giggles, their book talk and I see them enjoying reading the books that I have in my classroom – books I have brought myself and have available for them. The children and their parents talk to me about their reading – recently one of the parents grabbed me in the playground to tell me she that she was ready to order the 4<sup>th</sup> book in the Peter Bunzl series as it went live the next day as her son has loved reading the

others I have given to him. In fact his dad and nan had also enjoyed listening to him read them aloud at home that they were excited to read the next book!

### Reading...



ROGO model evidence base National  
Literacy Trust 2017, page 2

As a teacher, who buys, reads and takes books into class, I see the children sneak and take the books from my desk and sit reading them, it's wonderful to see and I love it when they come over, after seeing new books on my desk and ask me about them and if they would also like them!

Inheriting my current class, I had 3 reluctant readers but by the first half term in October they were reading daily and their parents came to me saying how they had seen so much excitement about reading at home after finally finding books they enjoyed – this, as a teacher made me delighted that now I have a whole class of enthusiastic readers!

## Reflections on impact the TaRs research had on practice

On reflection, I believe it is crucial for teachers to have knowledge of a vast range of children's books and quality texts. We are currently looking at Wilkie Collins 'Woman in White' and Michael Morpurgo 'Why the whales came' and because I have this knowledge I am able to recommend linking texts to children who enjoy these ones.

It's important for teachers to share their own love of reading with the children, the children love to know that their teacher reads and at times does just stop in class and sits and reads!

Using twitter to communicate with authors with paramount as it enables the children hear from the author and ask questions about the books.

My next step is to cascade my own classroom ethos throughout school as I believe my own approach, based on the research has truly developed RfP.