



Highly Commended  
Egmont Reading for Pleasure Award  
In partnership with the OU and UKLA 2020  
Experienced Teacher Category

# Creating a book-filled childhood

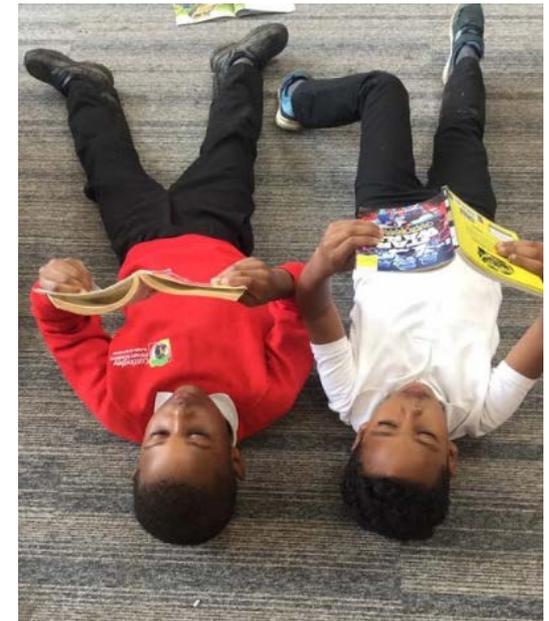
By Hannah Marshall



@MissMarshall15  
Cottingley Primary Academy  
@CottingleyPA

# Context

- Cottingley Primary Academy is a large primary school in an area of high social and economic deprivation in Leeds.
- When I took over as English lead in 2017, I was aware that many of our children do not have books to read at home and many of our parents lack confidence in their own reading ability and do not become the reading role models our children need.
- I am a book-lover and was very fortunate to grow up surrounded by books; this was what I wanted to create for our pupils.



# Our research inspiration and rationale

In 2019, I was fortunate enough to hear Teresa Cremin speak at an AET English conference. Listening to her passion for Reading for Pleasure further embedded everything I believed in and everything we had been working towards. This guided me to do further reading of my own, particularly of Building Communities of Engaged Readers to see what I could do embed a culture of Reading for Pleasure in school.

Our pupils needed to see reading beyond something that's only for passing tests and something to do because it's enjoyable. When I first gave the reading surveys, many children answered, "I'm not good at it" when asked why they didn't enjoy reading.

My knowledge of our families made it clear that our reading for pleasure pedagogy must centre around reading being a social activity. We needed environments that invited children to read and to see it as a social activity. Many of our parents are not confident readers so reading aloud is an integral part of our school community: children need to have opportunities to read aloud and they need opportunities to listen to stories being read to them.



# Aims

- To provide pupils with the childhood memories of books that every child deserves
- To create a culture of Reading for Pleasure by removing the stigma and fear of reading and showing that it is an enjoyable, social activity
- To build reading communities within our school between staff, children and their families.
- To ensure that children have a wide range of high quality texts to choose from

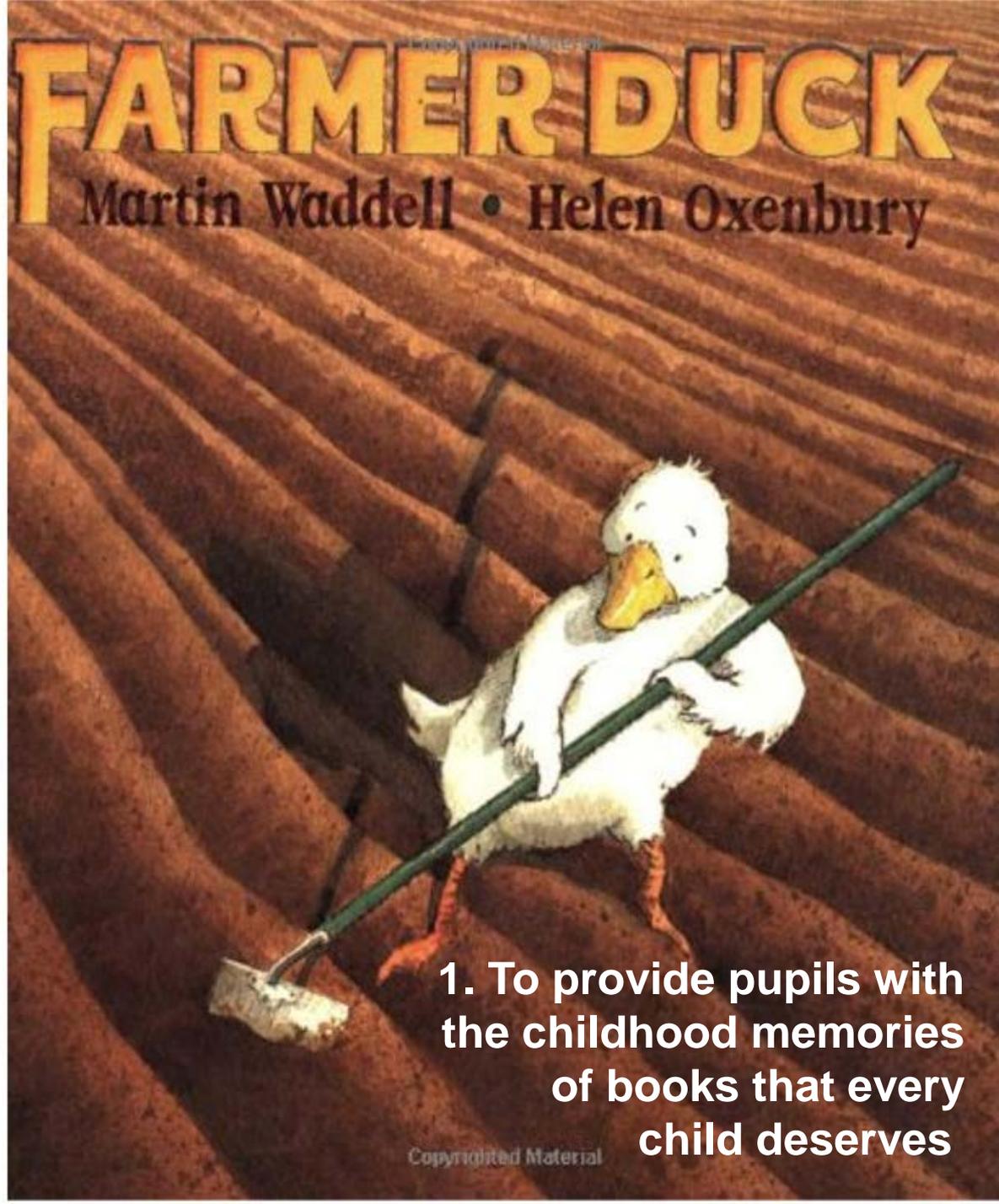
# Outline

In my own Year 6 class, it all started with my own childhood favourite: Farmer Duck.

I'd called, "*How goes the work?*" and instead of being met with "*Quack!*" as I expected, I was met with silence and slightly confused (and bemused) faces to be then told, "*I've never read Farmer Duck.*" Two children were promptly sent to the library with strict instructions not to return without a copy of Farmer Duck.

Based on my reading of "Building Communities of Engaged Readers" (Cremin et al, 2014), I knew the importance of building reader relationships within school.

And so our new routine began.



**1. To provide pupils with the childhood memories of books that every child deserves**

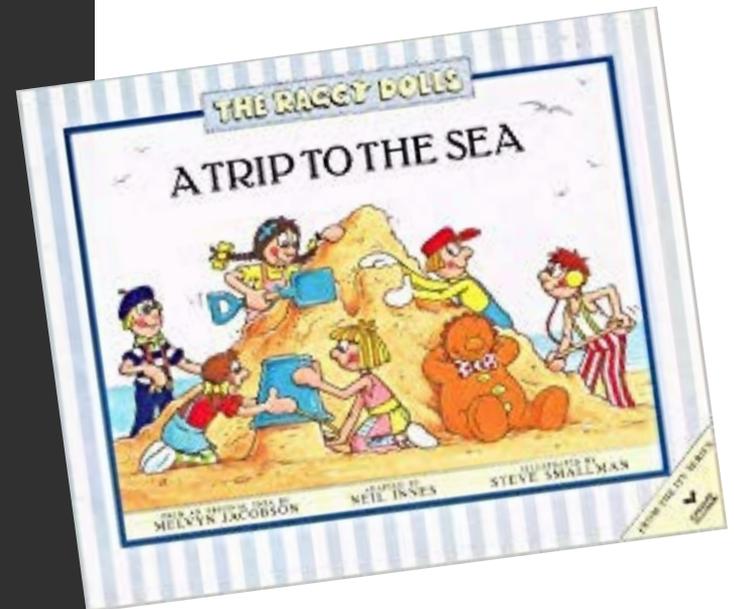
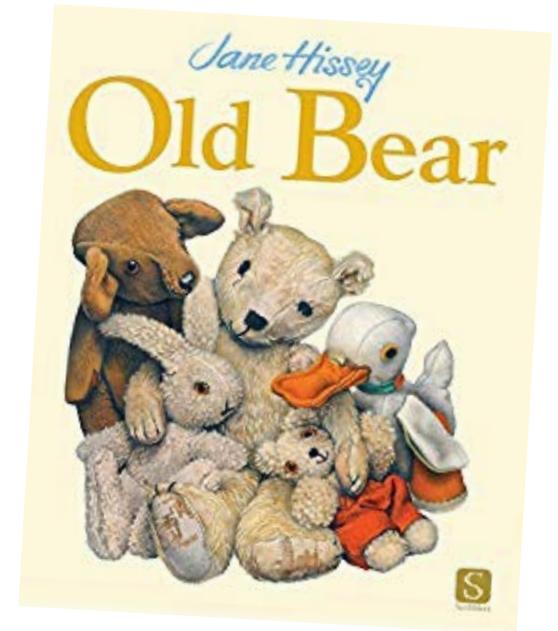
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1. To provide pupils with the childhood memories of books that every child deserves

I disappeared into my parents' loft and came back with a pile of books from my childhood and each afternoon, we get the blankets and teddies and I read one of my childhood favourites.

And I tell them the story behind every story. Who gave me the book? Who read me the book? What does it remind me of? Was it one that I raced into the library for and renewed week after week?

I've sung them the theme of Old Bear (more bemused looks); I've asked other passing teachers who their favourite Raggy Doll was (cue excited shrieking); I've shown them the picture of the Emperor's bottom in Bedtime Stories which I always thought was the rudest thing I'd ever seen. I've even shed a tear or two.



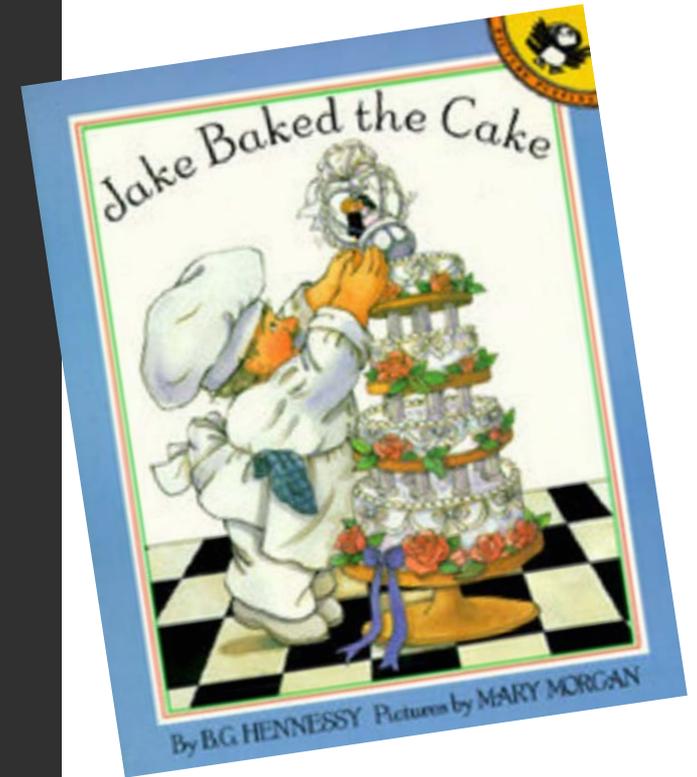
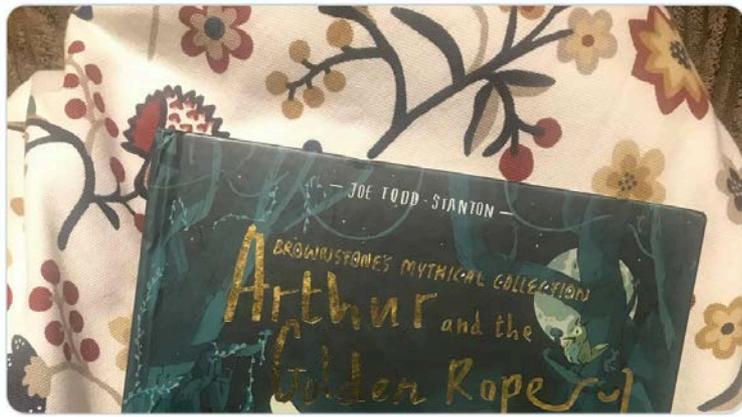
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1. To provide pupils with the childhood memories of books that every child deserves

30 11-year olds sit transfixed as they “rumpeta, rumpeta, rumpeta all the way home” and chant “...while Jake Baked the Cake”.

Every teacher in school now has a “Special Book Box” in addition to their classroom reading area. It’s filled with their childhood favourites or new books they’ve discovered; any books they choose- but special books ready to share and discuss with the children.

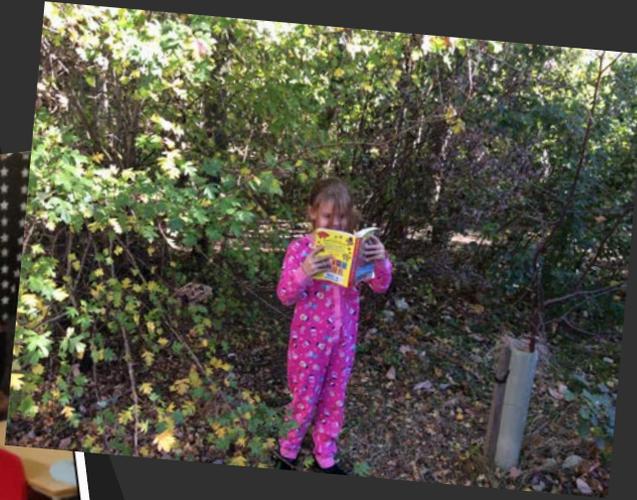
Miss Patel @MissPat10354768 · Dec 9, 2019  
Looking forward to introducing this beautiful book to our book shelf tomorrow!!! #reading4pleasure #reading @toddstanton1



# Outline

2. To ensure that children have a wide range of high quality texts to choose from

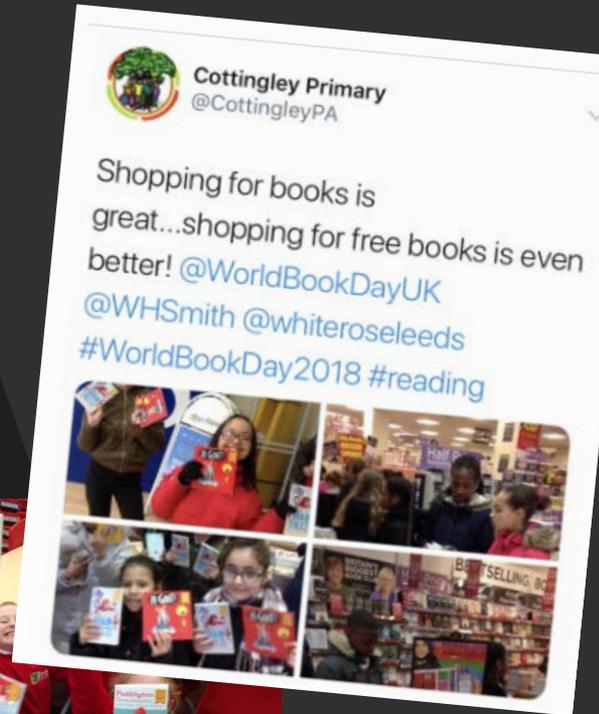
A key project has been getting books into homes.



1. We held a "Bring Back Bedtime Stories" day where the children spent the day in their pyjamas enjoying stories with their teachers and parents whilst we highlighted the importance of bedtime stories. We gave away donated second-hand books so that every child (and every grown up) went home with a new book to read.

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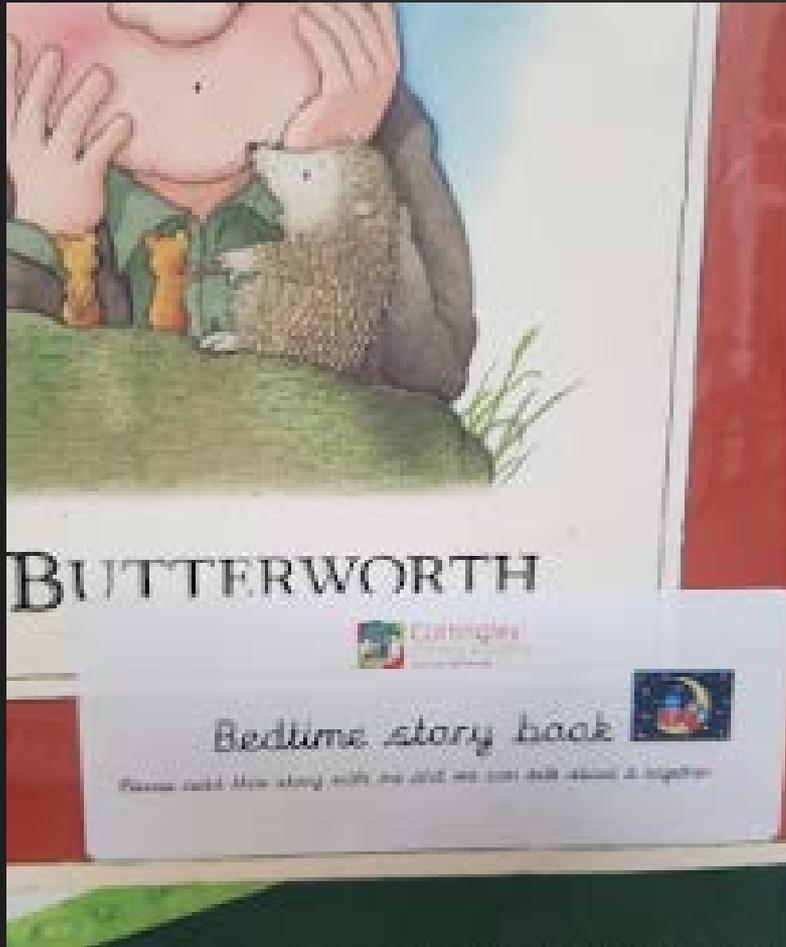


2. **World Book Day shopping**  
Since 2017, I have arranged for every child in school to be taken the local shopping centre to spend their own voucher- meaning every child in school had at least one brand new book in their house.



# Outline

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## 3. EYFS Sharing Stories

In Early Years, we have a "Sharing Library" full of books for parents to share with their children. They are encouraged to borrow a book, read it together as a bedtime story and change it regularly.

# Outline

2. To ensure that children have a wide range of high quality texts to choose from

**Miss Marshall** @missmarshall15 · Mar 5, 2019

Lots of lovely new books have gone into our Accelerated Reader book cabinet this morning. Who will be the first to win one?



## 4. Rewards

Whilst we want the love of books to be intrinsic for all of our pupils, this isn't always immediate for them all. We have different initiatives with rewards linked to Accelerated Reader where the prize is always a brand new book from my Prize Book Cabinet. This, again, ensures that every child has at least one book that is their own.

# Outline

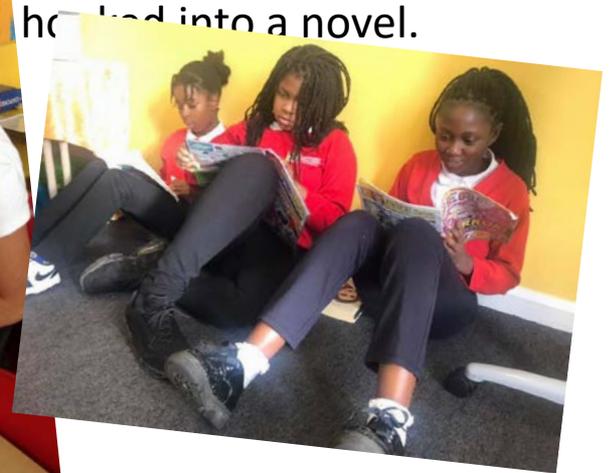
3. To create a culture of Reading for Pleasure by removing the stigma and fear of reading and showing that it is an enjoyable, social activity

*“A Reading for Pleasure pedagogy contains four core practices: reading aloud; social reading environments; book talk and recommendations; and independent reading.” (Cremin et al, 2014)*



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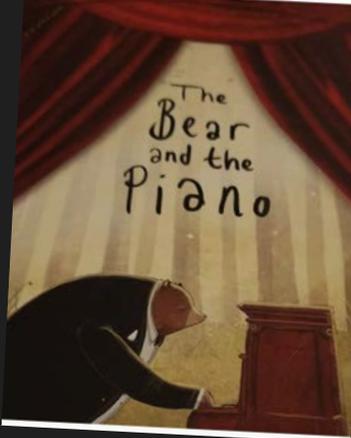


## Dedicated time

Across school, in addition to our reading lessons and weekly library time, every class has daily dedicated Reading for Pleasure time. During this time, the children can read independently or with a friend; they can read at their table or get comfy somewhere else; they can read a picture book, poetry, explore non-fiction or get hooked into a novel.

# Outline

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## Book Talk and Reading Recommendations:

Teachers facilitate the reading in different ways, through engaging in discussions about books, recommending books, sharing books or getting stuck in to their own novel. It is crucial for our children to see adults as readers and discuss books with adults. This has seen an increase of children bringing in their own books from home to recommend and share.

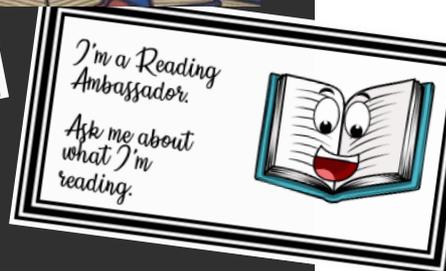
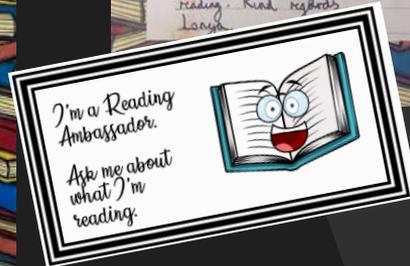
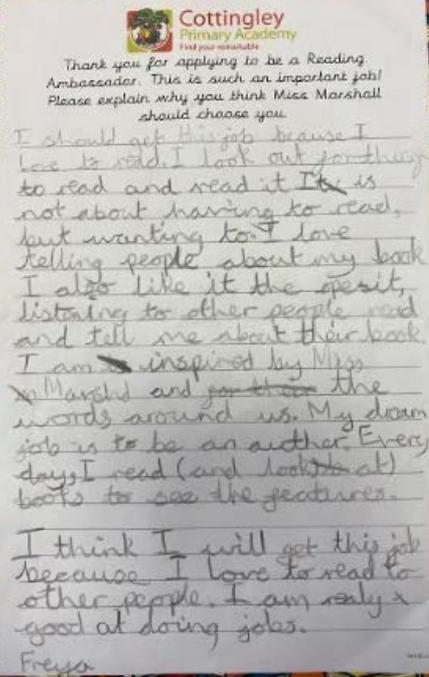
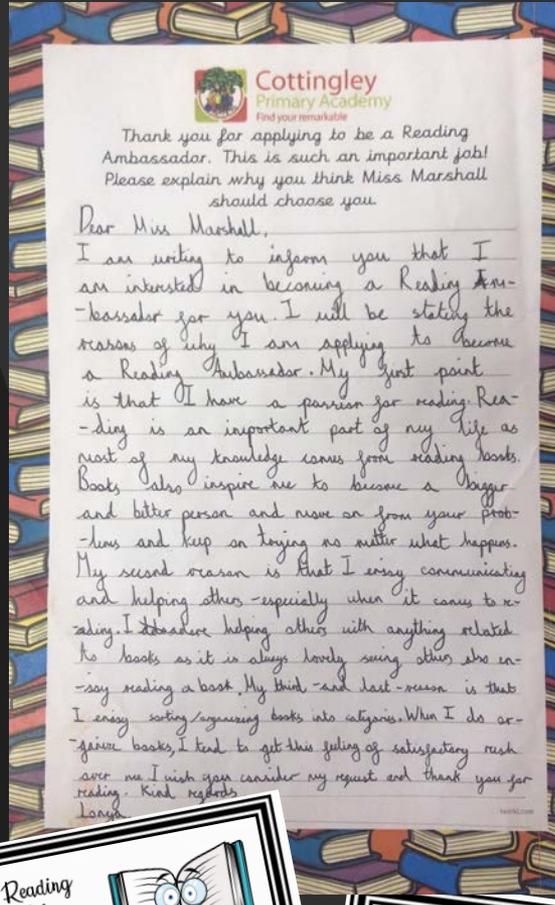
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Dear Miss Marshall,

I am writing to inform you that I would like to become a reading ambassador. I will be stating the reasons of why I should become a reading ambassador. My first reason is that I have a passion for reading. I enjoy reading because it is like creating a world of your own and discovering new possibilities. My next reason is that I enjoy reading with my friends. Reading with my friends cheers me up all the time. In addition, I would like to explore the world of books and find new things to read as I believe that I need to expand my choice of books.

-Lauren



**Reading Ambassadors:** Children in Year 6 were invited to apply to be Reading Ambassadors. They wear their badges with pride. They support younger classes with using the library and make their own recommendations as well as going into younger classes, listening to them read and reading to them too.



# Outline

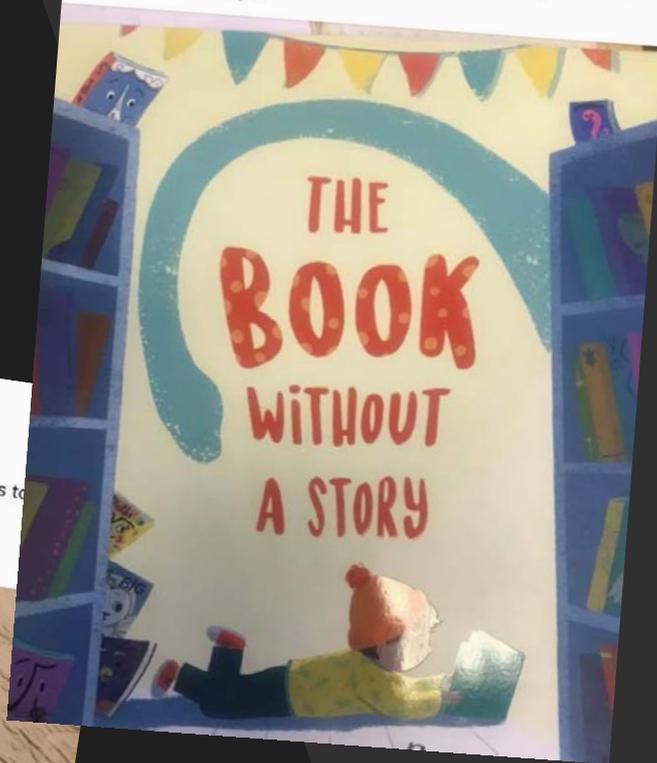
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Cottingley Primary Academy

Posted by Kelly Bentley  
16 December · 🌐

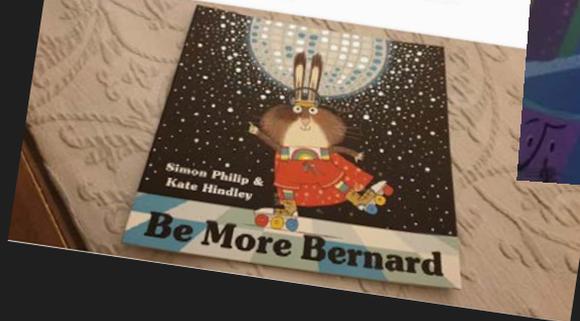
This morning in assembly we read this story which is all about books that are waiting to be read in the library. The children are very excited to do lots of reading over the Christmas holidays!



Cottingley Primary Academy

Posted by Kelly Bentley  
9 November · 🌐

Mrs B has been shopping for new assembly books to  
Can't wait to share this one on Monday morning!  
#FindYourRemarkable #BeUnusuallyBrave  
#DiscoverWhatsPossible



## Reading aloud:

Every teacher from Nursery to Year 6 reads aloud to their class. As well as this, our headteacher has a Story Assembly where she reads a picture book linked to our school values to the whole school. As a result of this, children are now asking to read to their class.



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**Social reading environment:** I have ensured that every classroom and shared space around school has an inviting, cosy place to read. This is for sharing stories, talking about books, looking at new possibilities together or reading alone.



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Cottingley Primary  
@CottingleyPA

Last week, some incredible people kindly bought us some poetry books for our new library. We are so grateful and want to say a big thank you!

[@Biggreenbooks](#)  
[#BuyAStrangerABook](#)



Cottingley Primary Academy

Posted by Kelly Bentley  
15 November · 🌐

We had a very cosy time in the library today.



In our new building, the **new library** was a priority. It is a bright, inviting, comfy space for children to enjoy reading.



Cottingley Primary  
@CottingleyPA

Picture books, novels and non-fiction all going into the new library to be read and loved over and over again. Thank you [@sdowdtrust](#) [@philiphowardbks](#)



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## Reggie the Reading Dog

Our school dog, Reggie, loves being read to. He visits children in the library and their classroom and the children will proudly read to him, practising the skill of reading aloud and developing their fluency without realising they're doing it.

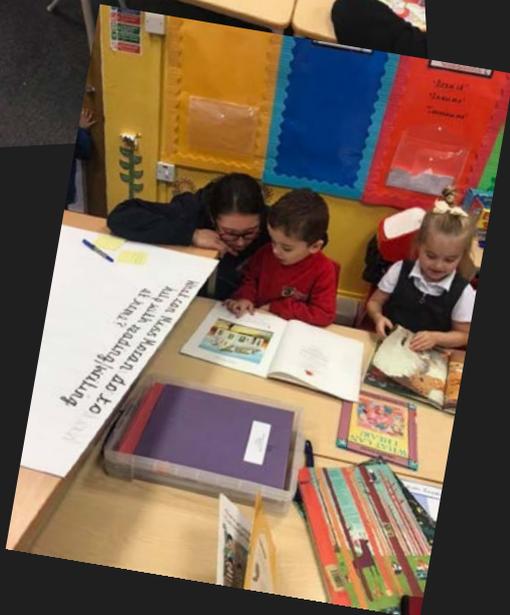
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## Parent Workshops:

Involving parents has been integral to our development of social reading environments as we wanted to ensure this was continued at home. We regularly invite parents in for workshops, time to read with their child and other book-related events.



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Neil Griffiths visited school and was inspirational in his approach to choosing texts. While we recommend books to children, we also foster their love of whatever they choose to read: there is no book snobbery! Because of this, we have ensured we have a range of texts available, so they have a varied diet of what they are reading. Each classroom contains non-fiction, magazines, poetry, brochures, leaflets and, of course, books.



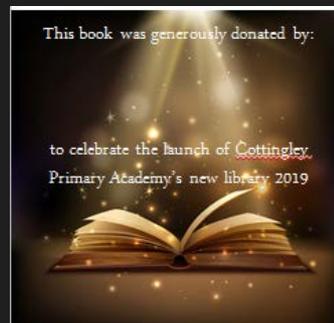
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I am constantly on the lookout for ways to get more books into school for our pupils to enjoy.

This has included:

- Being successful in our application to Siobhan Dowd funding and taking a group of pupils to a bookshop to buy new books for the library.
- Setting up an Amazon Wishlist and asking parents to buy a book for the library- including a special sticker inside with their child's name to leave a legacy.
- Lots of pleading on @BigGreenBookshop's #BuyAStrangerABook Day



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- **Authors**

We have been fortunate enough to have had Skype calls with Cressida Cowell, Tom Palmer, Jessica Butterworth and Helena Duggan. This inspired the pupils to read their books; A Place Called Perfect is the most borrowed book in Year 6.

- **Staff CPD**

All teachers had training delivered by Ruth Baker-Leask on the importance of Reading for Pleasure. She shared different books to inspire teachers to use a range of the “old and the gold” and “the new and the bold” and expand their knowledge of children’s literature.



**Reading for Pleasure**

Ruth Baker-Leask



PearCottingleyPA  
@PearCottingley

Thank you to [@tompalmerauthor](#) for speaking to us on Skype and answering all of our questions to help us with our author research.



14:41 · 01/03/2019 · Twitter for iPhone



PearCottingleyPA  
@PearCottingley

Thank you to the wonderful [@Heldideas](#) We loved talking to you about your amazing books!



14:48 · 14/12/2018 · Twitter for iPhone

# Impact

The impact of our Reading for Pleasure is evident across school. It can be seen by walking into classrooms- where books take centre stage. Children are keen to talk to adults about books, about what they are reading and about what they want to read next.

Pupils:

*"You have helped me love to read by letting us just read and getting books that I've never read before. I didn't have many books before but I do now and I keep them in my room on the shelf so they don't get ripped and I can keep reading them."* Tashaun Y6

*"You've helped me to collect more books- it helps me to learn more words and to love reading more"* Hollie Y6

I enjoy sharing my love for books with everybody but I also love it when my teacher shares her ~~favorite~~ favorite childhood books. They make us realize that no matter what, books will always be part of our life. I love it when my teacher gets to recommend me some books that she thinks I may like. I believe reading as a child will make you successful in life.

Reading for pleasure is my favourite time of day. We go listen to stories from our teacher. I enjoy this because we can follow along in a book. Sometimes in the afternoon, we can read with friends. If we don't want to read with friends we can read alone. There is many ways places to read to make us ready to read. Marshall likes to read us stories from her childhood. My favourite book of Miss Marshall's childhood is 'Take baked the cake'. ~~When~~ have topics and books to go with them.

14. Do you like it when your teacher reads aloud?  
(Tick one box)

I love it  It's okay  I'm not bothered  I don't like it

Why do you think this is?

I love it because not just me that can hear every body can hear

I love reading with pleasure. This is because I love it when Miss Marshall reads one of her childhood. and when I also like reading with pleasure because it is fun when I get to read with my friends or by myself. <sup>is also fun</sup> because I read with my friends I get to explore want books they like and what book they will recommend to me.

1. Do you like reading?  
(Tick one box)

I love reading  It's okay  I'm not bothered  I don't like reading

Why do you think this is?

It gives your imagination muscles and takes you to a whole different world.

1. Do you like reading?  
(Tick one box)

I love reading  It's okay  I'm not bothered  I don't like reading

Why do you think this is?

Reading gives fills my head with ideas!

14. Do you like it when your teacher reads aloud?  
(Tick one box)

I love it  It's okay  I'm not bothered  I don't like it

Why do you think this is?

It inspires me to read more books.

## Staff:

I am enjoying developing the children's enjoyment of reading. It's been really nice buying 5 books for £1 from charity shop and surprising the children with them- their reaction gets me excited to show them. The children are so much more engaged and always asking to read a story. 'Which one are we reading next Miss Moran?!' I've particularly noticed an improvement in boys' enthusiasm. Even though they're only in Year 1, the children are showing so much more ownership in the choices they are making. The children have come on so much in being able to talk about their favourite books and express their opinions about them.

Y1 teacher

During reading for pleasure, there are no restrictions on what the children can read or where they can read. The children (and teachers) get comfortable and just enjoy reading. With this freedom, the children are more aware of the books that they enjoy reading and their preferred author. The biggest difference I have seen is how much they enjoy sharing books with one another. It is nice to see the children talking about books and recommending books to each other (something they didn't do at the start of the year). I have seen an increase in the number of boys in particular, who are reading more often because they enjoy reading - there is no pressure to answer 'teacher' questions or read a 'levelled' book.  
- Y5 Teacher

Reading has significantly changed in school. Classrooms have improved across school with a love of reading now the main focus. In my class alone I feel reading is now the center of all learning.

The training inspired me to freshen up my own books and feel excited about reading to my children again.

I love how excited my children get by new books they haven't seen. A group of children have set up their own book swap within the library and each Friday you can just see the excitement. The children are also bringing books in from home to share with the class, this has shown great interest from all children.

I have seen a huge impact on my children enjoying reading. At the start of the year they didn't even want to look at the front cover of a book. Now they look at the cover, the blurb and even read a couple of pages to get a taste for it. They enjoy sharing a book with others, enjoying one on their own and I have a queue of them wanting to read to me. Parents can't stop telling me how their children have started reading at home either to themselves or to their younger siblings. My favourite part of the day is our reading for pleasure time as it is enjoyable to watch the children be so engaged in something they once found so challenging. I've seen a growth in confidence in reading and a general love for books.

**Parents:** At Parents' Evening, many of the parents commented on the improvement to reading at home.  
"Children don't need to be told to do their reading, they get their book because they want to."

What improvements have you seen in school and at home since we started promoting Reading for Pleasure?

Tia Nancy has improved massively with her reading thanks to Mrs Dixey and Mrs Walter. They are the most amazing teachers and are a credit to the school. Tia loves reading every day, as does Lauren in year 6. Both girls confidence have grown this past year.  
Thank you.

What improvements have you seen in school and at home since we started promoting Reading for Pleasure?

I have noticed that it has helped my son with wanting to read more. It has also made him have to let more confidence when reading at home with me. I think that we made a massive improvement.  
Thank you

What improvements have you seen in school and at home since we started promoting Reading for Pleasure?

Seen a massive in my daughters reading. She generally enjoys reading and it improves her confidence. Also I think the reading books are brill.

What improvements have you seen in school and at home since we started promoting Reading for Pleasure?

Logan can read but doesn't enjoy it. But since been in Miss Marshall's class he has even asked for new books at home. Thank-you for making reading exciting.  
Adele

What improvements have you seen in school and at home since we started promoting Reading for Pleasure?

Happy to read and enjoying it more  
more choice of books which keep them interested

## Visitors:

"The impact [of the work on Reading for Pleasure] can be seen in the classroom environment and the attitudes of the children. I saw the best reading for pleasure practice I have ever seen in years 5 and 6! FANTASTIC JOB!" Ruth Baker-Leask

# Reflections on impact the TaRs research had on practice

- Following @OpenUni\_Rfp on Twitter has been integral to developing my practice. The sharing of good practice, ideas and research has kept me up to date and constantly evolving what we are doing in school.
- Teachers have become much more aware of their own role as readers and are now more aware of the gaps in their own knowledge of children's literature. Based on the finding that effective teachers of reading require sound subject knowledge of children's literature (Cremin, et al., 2014; Flynn, 2007; Dreher 2003; Hunt,1993), all teachers have- through their own choice- set themselves a reading target this year to broaden their knowledge of children's literature.
- We have even more planned for this year including celebrating National Storytelling Week where each teacher, parent and child will produce their own Reading River.
- We will continue to find more and more ways to promote Reading for Pleasure to get every single child- and teacher- in school hooked on books.
- At the end of the year, teachers will complete the OU RfP survey to see the impact on their own knowledge.