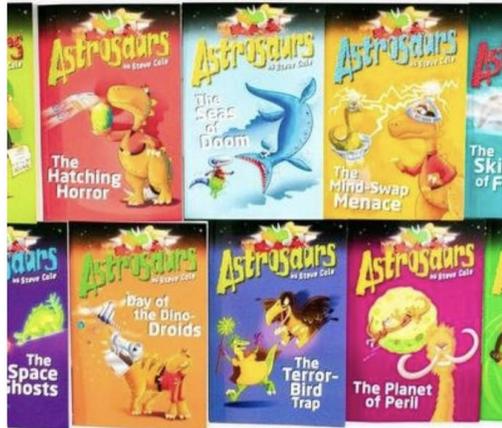


Supporting Book Talk Remotely

Miss Williams's post



Hi [redacted] I hope you have got the new AstroSaurus books okay - I know you were waiting eagerly for them and I thought of you as soon as I unpacked them! I hope they live up to The Riddle of the Raptors! Let me know what you think!



Like



Comment

Add a comment...

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Miss Williams's post



Just thought of you! I've just been reading about the sequel to Rumble Star, which is coming out in May! I still remember you rushing in the next morning after you'd taken Rumble Star home telling me that your pulse was still racing from the excitement!

Add a comment...

Send

Claire Williams
St. Andrew's C of E Primary
School





Context:

I am the Year 5 teacher and a Senior Leader at St. Andrew's C of E Primary School, a one-form entry primary school in North Essex. I lead Reading across our Trust.

As a school, and a Trust, we are committed to developing as a community of engaged readers and we are continually striving to improve our reading for pleasure pedagogy.

I am passionate about fostering a love of reading and giving children 'irresistible' experiences of reading that support their development as lifelong readers.

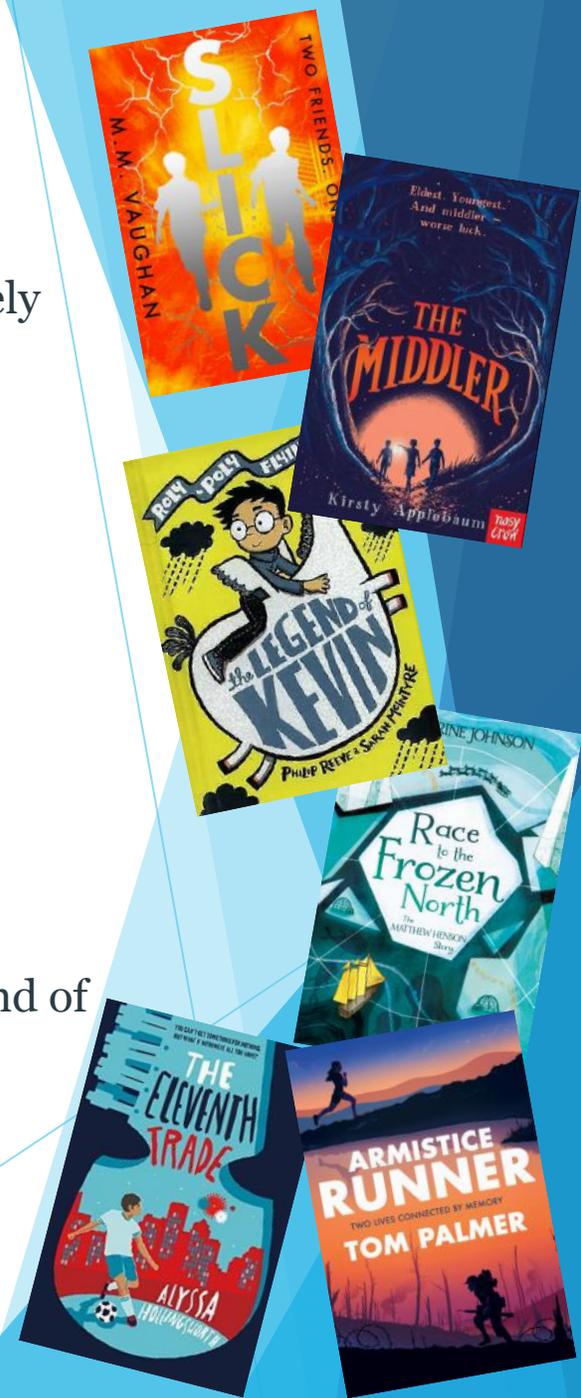
Illustration Credit: Sarah McIntyre

Research Inspiration and Rationale:

- ▶ The Teachers as Readers (TaRs) research revealed that talking about texts and talking about reading is fundamental to promoting Reading for Pleasure(RfP) – and that this booktalk is often informal and highly reciprocal in its nature (Cremin et al., 2014).
- ▶ The informal book talk and inside-text talk conversations documented in the research, grounded in a shared pleasure in reading and a genuine engagement with the views of others, played a significant role in children’s development as readers.
- ▶ The ability to promote such conversations was found to be dependent upon the teachers’ children of knowledge as readers, and of children’s literature and other texts.
- ▶ **How did these TARS research findings inspire me?**
I returned to this research following the announcement that schools were to close for many, to consider how I could continue to nurture RfP – finding a way to promote such informal, reciprocal conversations about texts and reading remotely would be key.

Aims:

- ▶ **To create time and space for rich informal book talk** and inside-text talk remotely and:
 - ❑ engaging children in this
 - ❑ creating two-way recommendations (teacher-child, child-teacher and child-child)
 - ❑ promoting discussion about current reading and reading practices
 - ❑ sustaining engagement and therefore enabling children to continue reading for pleasure
- ▶ **To be able to provide books** that have been recommended to individual children.
- ▶ **To develop my existing knowledge of children's literature and other texts**, and of the children as readers, to support me in promoting informal book talk effectively.



Outline:

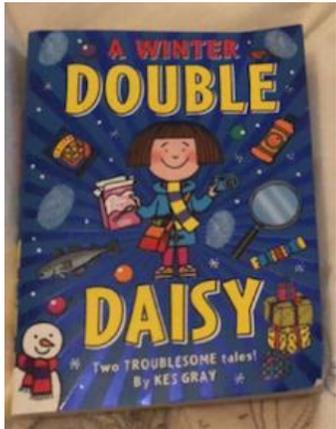
- ▶ Before school closed to many children, we spent time reflecting on the kinds of conversations we'd had about texts and reading over the year and the value of these. We explored the online communication platform (Class Dojo) that we'd be using and how it could help. I hoped that working collaboratively and giving children ownership would increase engagement.
- ▶ Collaboratively, we decided that:
 - They'd record their reading journeys on a 'My Bookshelf'
 - They'd share photos of what and where they were reading.
 - I'd record my reading journey and share photos too
 - We'd all make recommendations to each other
 - I'd share any interesting news from authors and about books.
- ▶ Interestingly, the children's ideas mirrored the kinds of informal conversations and practices that usually take place in class and around school.



Credit to Jon Biddle:
<http://www.readingforplea.com/2017/06/my-bookshelf.html>

Outline: What are we reading?

- ▶ The children have shared what they've been reading. I've tried to respond to their posts in a way that supports 'informal' online conversation about their enthusiasm; for example, what they liked about it, why and who else they think might enjoy reading it.



“

Miss Williams, can you help me to pick a book I can read ... please help! Could you recommend me one please?

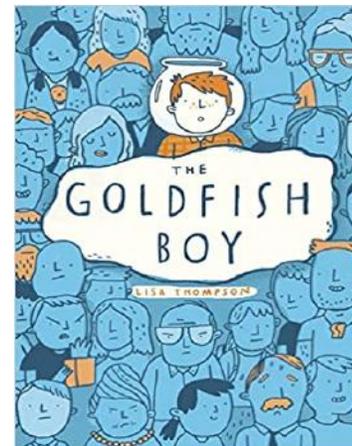
I'm REALY in love with Daisy books! I hope this helps thank you!!

”

“

I'm enjoying the mystery of Goldfish Boy. I just thought that [REDACTED] might enjoy it.

”



“

*Hi miss Williams!
I've just finished reading How To seize a
dragon's jewel
And I think that the whole class will
love it! 🐉*

*Thank you for the recommendation, N! Why do
you think we'd enjoy it as a class?*

*... because each book keeps on getting better and
better! It has so many cliffhangers!*

”



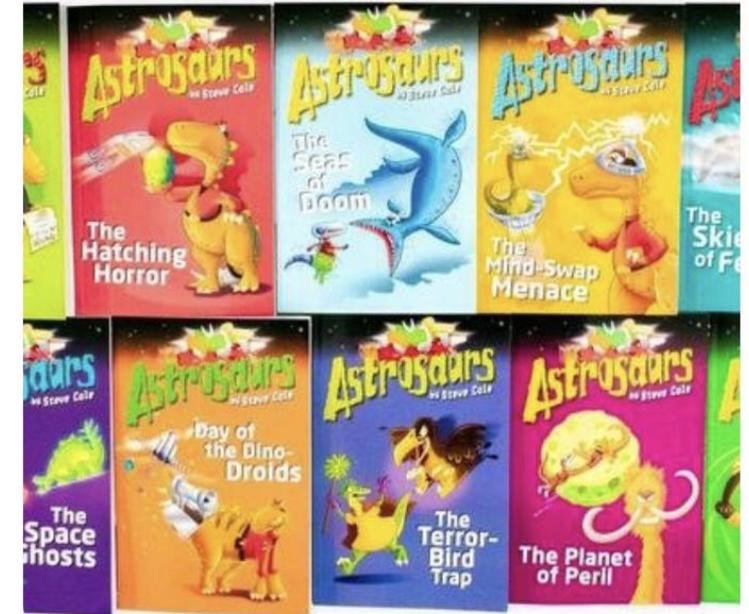
If children ask for recommendations, I've **tried to emulate the way that I'd make recommendations in school** – based on

- ▶ what I know about them as readers,
- ▶ a choice of two texts that are similar to those they've already enjoyed and one more adventurous text that will broaden their choices.

If children have made recommendations to other children, I've shared these.

✕

Miss Williams's post



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♥ Like

💬 Comment

Add a comment...

Send



[Redacted] 's portfolio • 2w

In honour of your birthday we decided to make somewhere special we could read our books in outside, just like in reading club. We decided to make a tree house in our fig tree. We put some pieces of wood as the base and then we put a palette on top. We used an old curtain on top of the branches for the roof. We read up there every day :)

1 comment



Like



Comment



Miss Claire Williams

2w

This has made me smile SO much, [Redacted] You're making me wish I had a fig tree to build a tree house in! Thank you so much for sharing!

Add a comment...

Send

Outline: Where are we reading ?

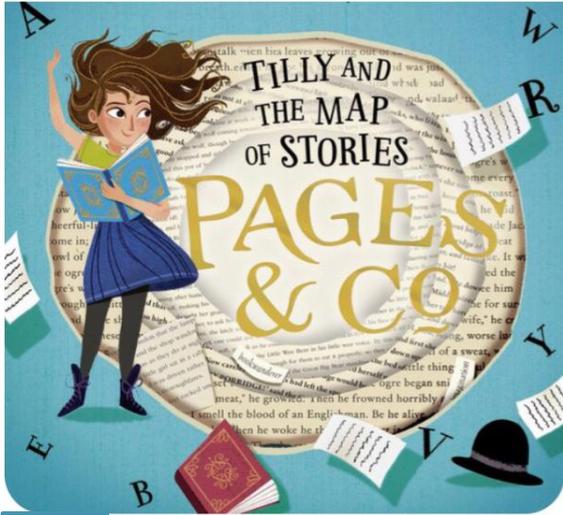
- ▶ Children have also shared where they have been reading. Once a few children had shared the reading spaces that they had created, this then inspired others.
- ▶ Although the children haven't had access to an engaging reading environment in school to promote book talk, they've started to create their own.
- ▶ One child filmed a 'tour' of the reading den he had created at home: *"If you're wondering, I'm in the reading den that my Mum made me!"*

Outline: Widening my knowledge

- ▶ I've been drawing on my current reading to share, which has largely been books from the recent shortlists for this year's UKLA Book Awards: <https://ukla.org/news/story/shortlists-announced-for-the-unique-awards-from-teachers2>
- ▶ Although this is yet to be finalised, I currently trying to organise for the children to have the opportunity to read the 9-11 shortlist as this will give us shared pleasure and 'books in common' to discuss on Class Dojo.
- ▶ In addition, I'm working on developing my knowledge of contemporary children's literature and other texts, including news and opportunities to engage with authors, illustrators and poets, to support me in promoting informal talk effectively.
- ▶ We're so fortunate that a number of authors are working hard across social media platforms to create ways for children to engage with them. I've shared some of these opportunities with the class and others with individual children specifically, based on what I know about their reading preferences.



✕ Miss Williams's post



I just thought of you - Anna James has just released the title of the third Pages & Co. novel! I know this was what you wanted to know when we recorded those questions for her and I thought you might like to know! It's not published until September but I'll definitely be getting a copy and you can definitely borrow it, if you'd like to! I can't wait!

Add a comment... Send

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✕ Miss Williams's post

rushing in the next morning after you'd taken Rumble Star home telling me that your pulse was still racing from the excitement!

Abi Elphinstone has recorded some films about the sequel, Jungle Drop, here: https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLYK02hpIHfPCPrehOtBN4cVCVnfKPZOV_

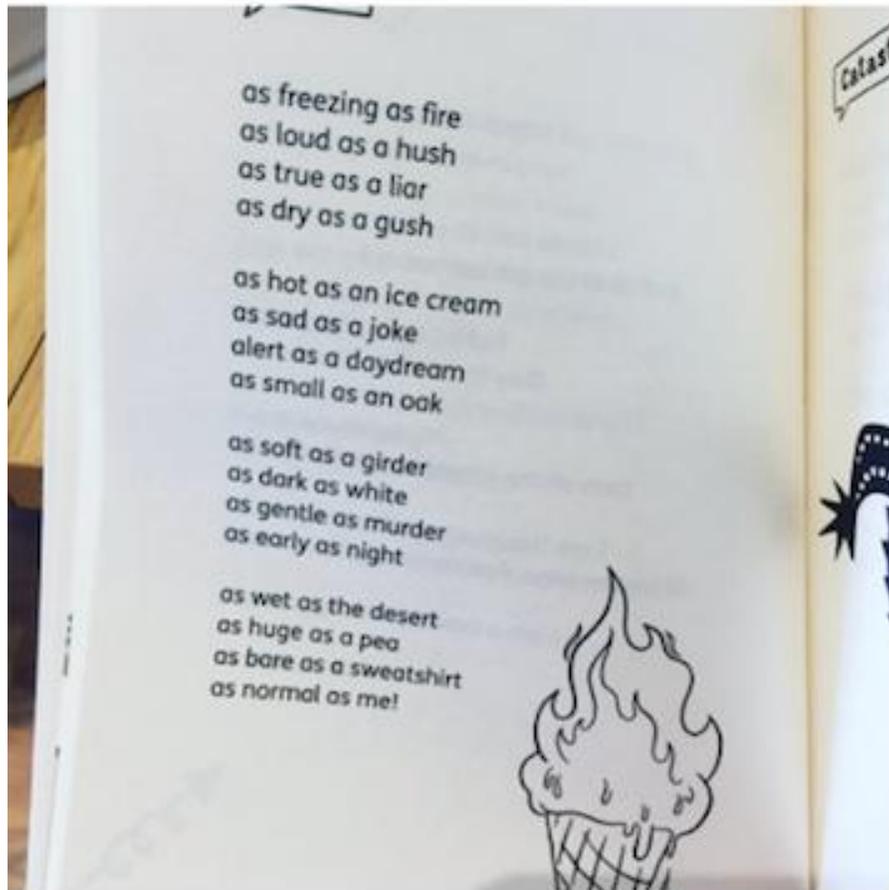
And there's a sneak peek at the first three chapters here: <http://www.abielphinstone.com/schools/4587845327>

I'm going to make a cup of coffee and read them now! Let me know what you think!

I'll be getting a copy and I'm happy for you to borrow it, if you'd like to!

Like Comment

Add a comment... Send



Happy Monday, wonderful Narwhals!

The brilliant poet Joshua Seigal, who wrote the poetry book 'I Don't Like Poetry' (I've seen quite a few of you giggling away reading the copies from our bookshelves!) has launched a 'Silly Similes' poetry challenge! It is inspired by his own poem, which I've posted above, and he will be choosing from the poems that are sent in to publish on his blog!

If you'd like to have a go, read his poem with an adult, discuss the humour and patterns that you notice ... and then have fun playing with language to write your own!

The contact details to send your poems through to are here:
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And, of course, I'd love to read them, too!

Miss Williams x

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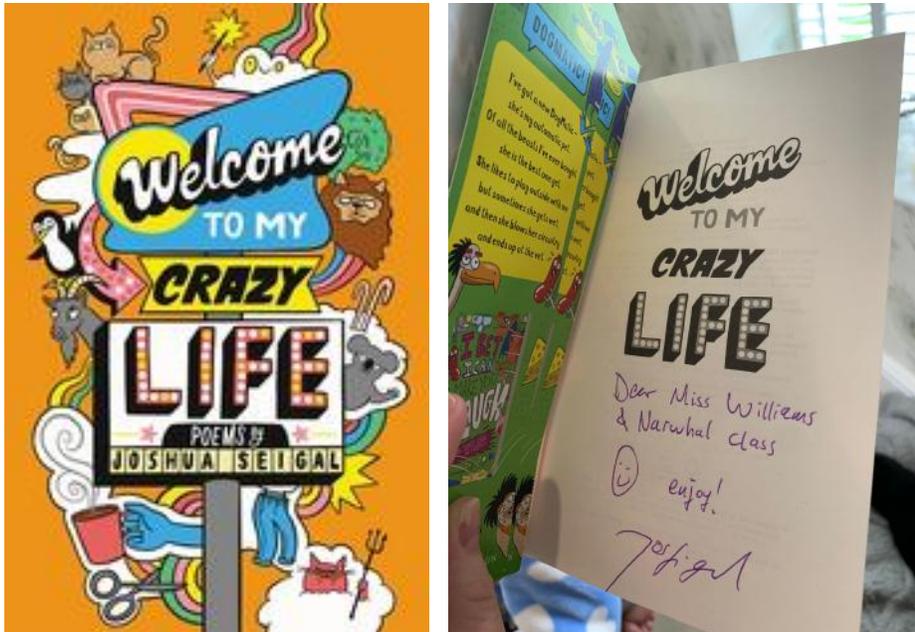
- ▶ *I Don't Like Poetry* is a 'book in common' that lots of the children have so I shared this with the whole class.
- ▶ However, there have been other opportunities that I've directed to individuals, based on my knowledge of them as readers. For example, J has been reading a lot of books about horses recently so I shared a poetry competition being run by an Olympic three day eventer with her.

Impact:

- ▶ Significantly, these opportunities to initiate and respond to conversations about texts and reading have all been **volitional** – the children have had a choice in terms of whether they have participated or not. It is therefore significant that the majority of the children in my class have **chosen to communicate with me about reading**, often initiating this communication themselves – this would suggest that they see the value in doing so and see reading as intrinsically worthy of discussion.
- ▶ Being able to talk about texts and reading remotely has enabled me to make **tailored recommendations**, supporting children's RfP and mirroring the ways in which I would usually make these normally. Though there are constraints, as children aren't able to browse and talk informally about collections of books as they usually would, it is still promoting choice.
- ▶ Similarly, the children have had the **choice to engage with authors, illustrators and poets that I have shared** – and they have. Knowing the children as readers and continuing to develop my knowledge of children's literature and other texts has been critical to making tailored recommendations that have engaged individual children in book talk remotely thus supporting their RfP.

Impact:

- ▶ Having had her poem published on Joshua Seigal's blog, one of the children shared a film on our online communication platform, which demonstrates the reciprocal nature of the conversation – I had recommended *I Don't Like Poetry* to her but I hadn't come across *Welcome to My Crazy Life*, which she then recommended to me!



“She literally inspires and lights up the children’s imaginations even remotely! Us parents think she has magical powers!!”

“The first thing she came home and said is that if they wanted books to read, you’d get them to them ... and the best thing is that I know you absolutely would.”

Reflections:

- ▶ The Teachers as Readers (TaRs) research revealed that talking about texts and talking about reading is fundamental to promoting reading for pleasure – and that informal book talk and inside-text talk conversations play an important role in children’s development as readers (Cremin et al., 2014).
- ▶ Finding ways to promote such informal, reciprocal conversations about texts and reading remotely has been key to supporting children’s engagement in reading for pleasure since school closed for many of them. **Although engaging in conversations about reading has been volitional, the majority of children have chosen to do so.** As we move forwards, my priority is to find ways through for the few children that have not yet chosen to do so, which will involve carefully drawing on my knowledge of those children as readers and their reading preferences, coupled with my knowledge of children’s literature, to initiate conversations that will entice them.
- ▶ In addition, I am aiming to find a way to enable children in my class and, if this is successful, children and teachers from other classes across the school, to read the books that have been shortlisted for this year’s UKLA Book Award. This will give us ‘books in common’ to discuss on our online communication platform – within and across classes.