



Reading Teachers

Practical classroom strategies



“It’s no good just meaning to do it, it’s all too incidental and unplanned – it needs to be spontaneous at times of course, but I think ‘How can I show them I am a reader? How can I share my reading life with them?’ and then I plan something.”

(TaRs teacher, Kent)

1. Explore reading histories: What you read and influential people and places

Help the children document their reading histories in some way, perhaps as a display, a treasure chest of old favourites or a collage or Power Point? You could share your own history as an example. You might take the class to a Foundation/ KS1 classroom to gather box loads, revisit favourites and create a book blanket covering the desks as a rich and pleasurable resource. Prompt sheets as homework can help uncover old favourites at home. Celebrate the diversity of the children's histories.

You could also focus on who was important in these early reading memories (parents, carers, siblings, grandparents?) and the places (kitchen, bedroom, church, clubs, community hall?) where reading was undertaken. Create a display and discuss how other readers make a difference to each of us as readers.

2. Share everyday reading: What do we read in 24 hours?

Invite the class to collect and record what they read in 24 hours and create collages. Reading isn't only books, but environmental print too as well as many other in print and on-line texts. Share your 24 hour read too and consider what the children's collages suggest counts as reading in their eyes. How wide is the breadth of their reading? Does your classroom also demonstrate this diversity? Consider what changes might be possible/necessary.

3. Share current reading texts: what are you reading at the moment?

Share what you are currently reading and create a staff or class notice board, making sure to change it regularly and perhaps showing the front cover of the book. Alternatively the staff or your class could create a treasure chest of old or current favourites.



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4. Share current reading spaces: Where do you like to read?

Discuss your favourite places to read at school and at home. Share a few photos of your own favourite places and invite the children also to take photos and create a display, perhaps reviewing the space and comfort of reading at home and in school and considering what changes might be possible in school.



5. Share current reading times: When do you like to read?

Discuss when you like to read and why. For some people this might be at bedtime or weekends. For others, holiday periods give space for more extended opportunities to read. Share with the children a holiday 'reading diary' – this could be done retrospectively or drawn up as a 'wish list'. You might like to do this on 'Meet the Teacher day' in the summer and then ask the children to bring back their diaries and share yours. Use the results, along with photos and images of the texts to create a display.

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6. Consider the Rights of the Reader

Share Daniel Pennac's *The Rights of the Reader* with the class, brilliantly illustrated by Quentin Blake and discuss them.

http://www2.curriculum.edu.au/verve/resources/Connections_72_poster.pdf

1. The right to skip pages
 2. The right not to read
 3. The right not to finish
 4. The right to re-read
 5. The right to read anything
 6. The right to read anywhere
 7. The right to mistake a book for real life
 8. The right to browse
 9. The right to read out loud
 10. The right to remain silent
- (Pennac, 1994)

Do children feel they have these rights in your class? Do they want others? They could decide on these and create their own rights and posters.

7. Examine the 'right not to finish'

Have you or the children given up on particular books/texts? Have you/they been so irritated, offended, bored, or dissatisfied with a text or so unengaged that you/they stopped reading it? Share these experiences with your class and discuss why you/they gave up on particular texts. Might the class create a display of books/texts which they have not finished?



Display of *The Rights of the Reader* (Cremin et al., 2014:80)

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8. Discuss reading habits

Initiate a discussion about reading habits, your own and the children's. You could make a class list which might include the following:

- skipping long descriptive passages in books
- reading the end before you get there
- skimming forward or check backwards/re-read to find out something
- re-reading passages to help remember events or characters
- turning the pages down or using a bookmark
- flicking through
- making connections to your own life
- getting lost in the book

Discuss how these might vary according to the kind of reading material.



9. Create a 'Voice your Views' slot

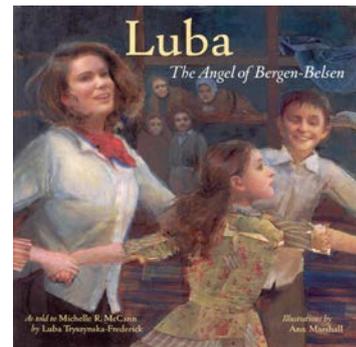
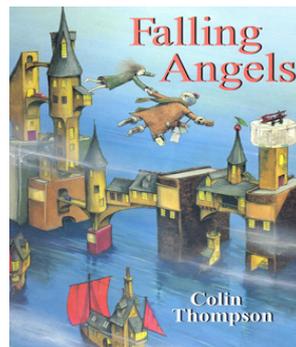
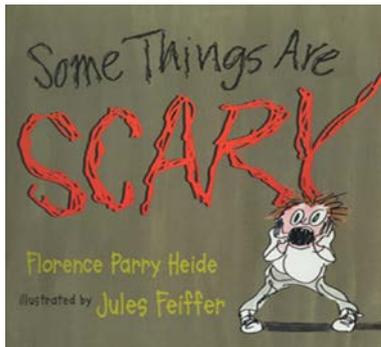
Bring in a newspaper, magazine, or share a blog with the class that you want to discuss. Voice your views about the issue, express your opinions and see if the class agree. Invite them too to share their views about any issues in response to something they have read. Debate different perspectives, thoughts about the writer's intended meaning and purpose and their angle on the issue.

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10. Voice your emotions and personal connections

Books, magazines, newspapers, on and off-line can make us sad, happy, afraid, angry etc. As you talk about what you are reading, share your emotional response to the text and encourage children to do likewise if they wish. Sharing emotional responses is likely to lead to making personal life to text and text to life connections which are highly significant in building reading communities.

You could make a display of books which make us laugh, cry, get cross and so forth.



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