

# KNOWING READERS AND BUILDING STAMINA

Becky Denby

@Bee2286



# CONTEXT



- ▶ I am the Year 6 teacher in a one-form entry primary school in Cambridgeshire.
- ▶ This project was created through dialogue with Teresa Cremin about reading stamina as we were both interested and developing a workshop for an OU /UKLA conference.
- ▶ I chose to focus in particular on a group of five reluctant readers from my class.

# RESEARCH INSPIRATION AND RATIONALE

- ▶ This project is founded upon the 'Teachers as Readers' research, in particular, this research identified that each teacher's knowledge of children's as readers was key to nurture their love of reading (Cremin et al., 2014).
- ▶ Additionally, by understanding children's reading practices, the research highlighted that teachers would be able to offer more tailored support to individual readers. They would also be able to build on their knowledge through developing reciprocal and interactive reader relationships with these young readers.
- ▶ In order to develop children's reading stamina, I realised it would be vital for me to understand my five focus children as readers and any barriers they face.

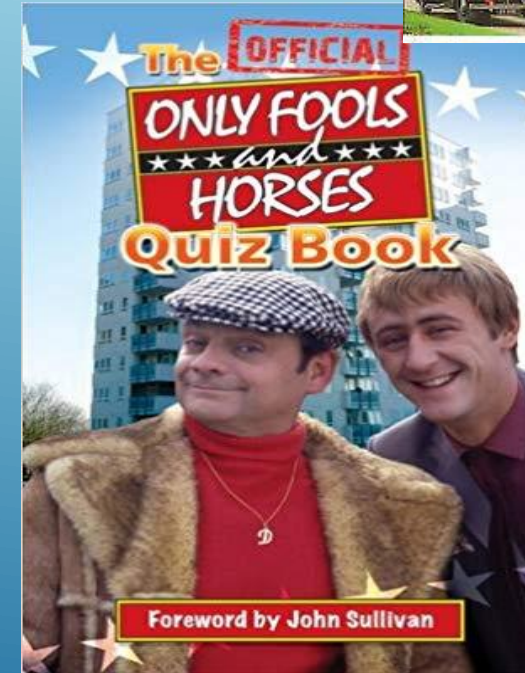
# AIMS



- ▶ To gain a better understanding of five children who as Year 6 readers, were able to read, but were not choosing to do so. They were either reluctant or had no staying power with reading and found reading to be laborious.
- ▶ To develop the children's reading stamina and engagement with reading, to encourage them to read a wider range of texts and build their staying power.

# OUTLINE

- ▶ From initial conversations with each child about their reading, I began to build up my picture of them as readers and any potential barriers they faced e.g. David
- ▶ When I first met David in Y4, he was reluctant to pick up a text. Through many informal conversations I found out he was interested in three things: cameras, 'Only Fools and Horses' and classic cars.



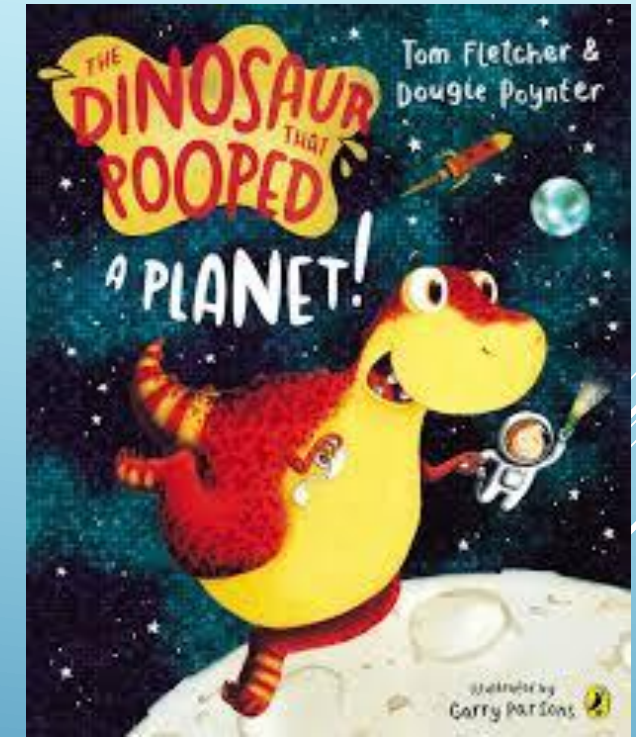
- ▶ When discussing their reading, it became apparent that the children had developed a habit of dipping in and out of texts, struggling to read a book from start to finish.
- ▶ I shared with the group *my own recent of experience of struggling to finish a book and feeling unmotivated*.
- ▶ From these discussions, as a group, we decided to form a reading group – the children named it 'The Book Club'. The plan was for it be a way for us to share our reading experiences and encourage each other.

**'The Book Club'**

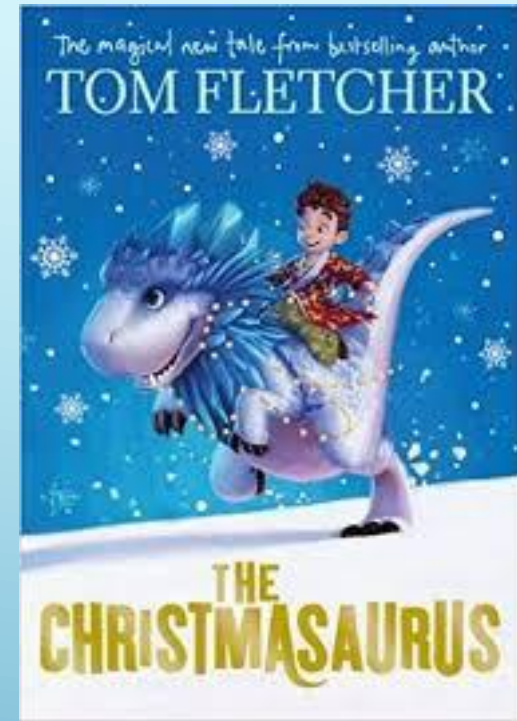


# BUILDING ON CHILDREN'S INTERESTS

- ▶ When establishing our Book Club, I aimed to hook the group and build on their reading interests.
- ▶ From teaching them in Year 4, I knew how much they enjoyed reading the Oi series of books. We read these together, discussing our favourite parts.
- ▶ At our next group meeting, one of the children suggested '*The dinosaur that pooped the planet*'. As a group we decided we'd read it together.



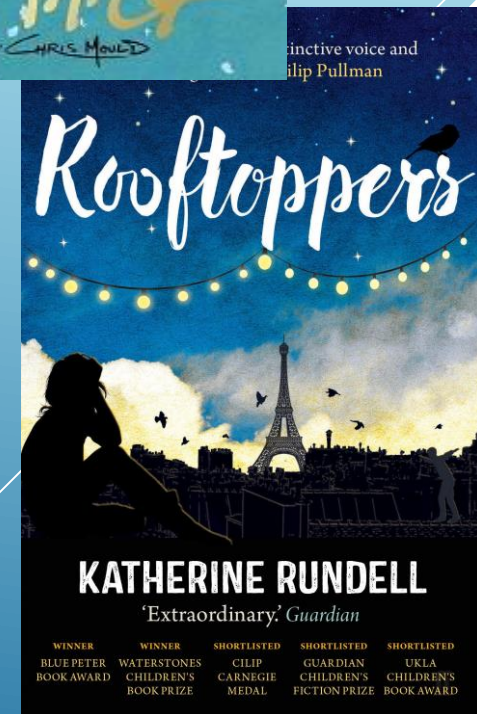
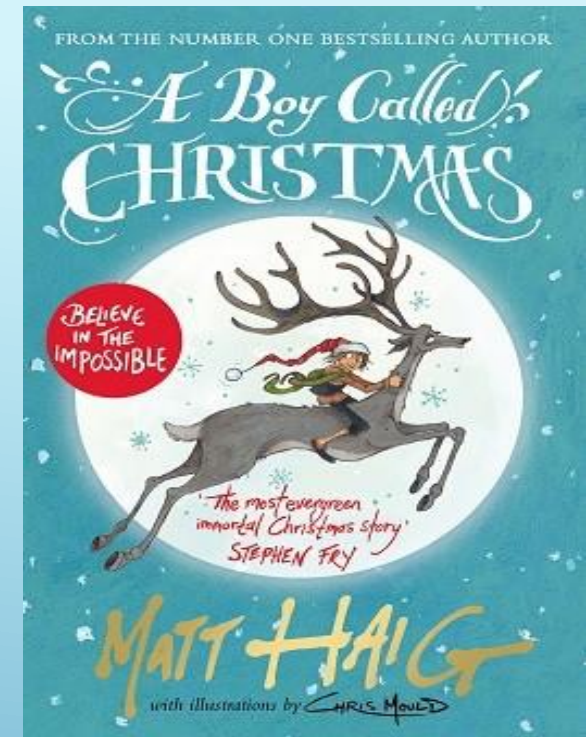
- ▶ From our adventures of 'The dinosaur that pooped the planet', I introduced a slightly longer text written by the same author, Tom Fletcher.
- ▶ The children were excited to read chapters together and one morning they decided to surprise me as they had read the next three chapters at home! They found it so funny that they had surprised me and I had to play catch up!
- ▶ We continued to read the book each week, with children reading chapters together. Once we'd finished they decided they wanted to read the next book in the series.
- ▶ This time, I encouraged them to read more of the text between sessions and over time, the children began to read more at home and in between sessions.





# CHOOSING TEXTS

- ▶ Once we finished *The Christmasaurus* and the *Winter Witch*, David suggested 'A Boy called Christmas' – he had spotted it in the shops and noticed the similarities with *The Christmasaurus* front cover.
- ▶ Once finishing this, Ruby noticed that all of our selection so far had featured boys on the cover. Having given the children ownership of text selections up to this point, I offered a suggestion of 'Rooftoppers' by Katherine Rundell – a text full of adventure with a female lead.



# MOVING FORWARDS

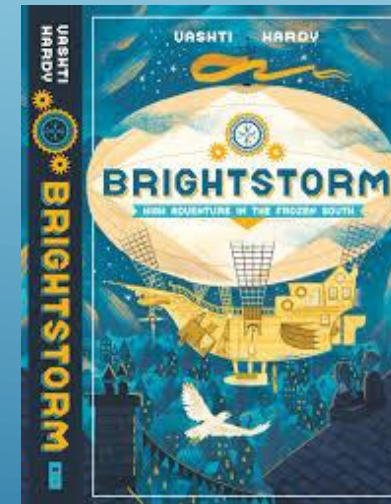
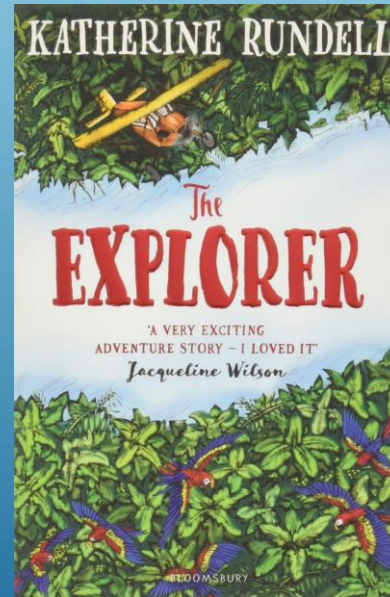
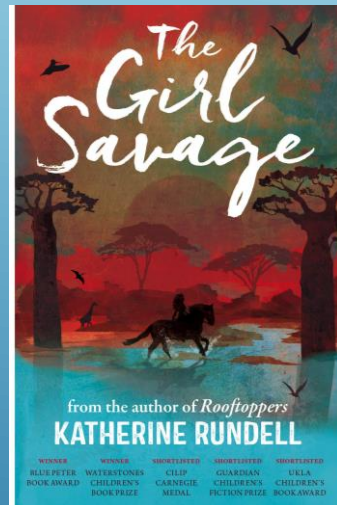


- ▶ The Book Club became a sacred part to our week. Children would come in on Wednesdays, excited to share where they had got up to in their reading, ready to discuss texts.
- ▶ Over the course of a few months, I began to encourage the five children to read their own choice of texts. We still met as a book club, but instead of discussing one text, children had the chance to share what they had read in their own book that week.



# STAMINA

Despite starting the Book Club with simple picture books and texts that were less demanding, children's reading stamina significantly improved and they began to tackle more age-appropriate and challenging texts (texts read by the children in Spring below)



# IMPACT



- ▶ From this process, I gained a greater understanding of the children as readers. Not only did I find out more about their likes and dislikes, but also the barriers they faced in regards to stamina and staying power.
- ▶ Throughout this process, it became increasingly evident just how much the children enjoyed the time together to share texts and discuss their reading adventures.
- ▶ They become increasingly confident to share their opinions (whether positive or negative!) and gave encouragement to one another.



# Impact: David

Me as a reader in Year 5		
I didn't like reading that much	Diary	I read
I read once a month	or a weekly	I read
I stuttered more	had	I can
I tried to avoid reading	messages	I
I only read easy books	Christmas	I
I wasn't interested in books	books	I
I read with a robotic voice		I

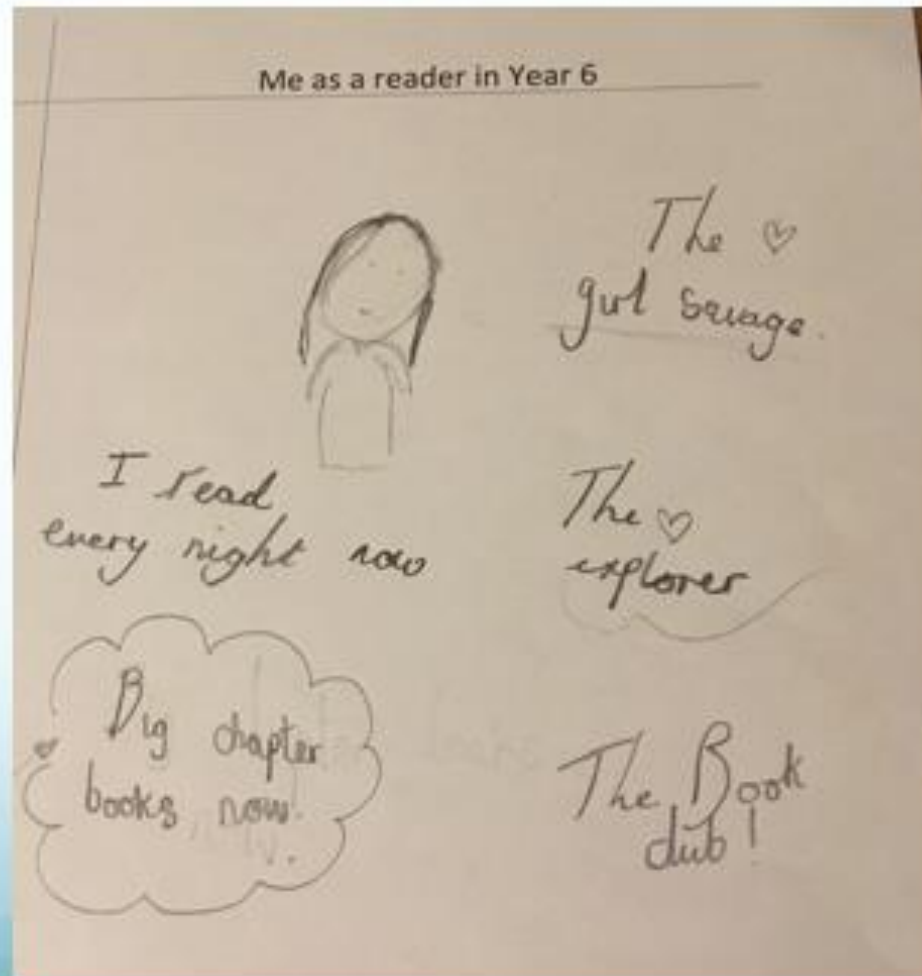
- "I tried to avoid reading"
- "I only read easy books"
- "I stuttered more"

Me as a reader in Year 6		
I read every night before bed	Diary or a weekly	I read
I read longer books (chapter books)	had	I can
I can say more challenging words	Harry	I
I read horror and mystery	Potter and the Philosopher's Stone	I
I read for longer	messages	I
I read clearer	Perry Jackson	I
I read more		I
I like reading		I

- "I read for longer"
- "I read longer books (chapter books)"
- "I can say more challenging words"
- "I read clearer"

# Impact: Layla

- She is choosing to read at home – her mum noted a change in how much she is reading at home
- Currently reading... *The Girl Savage* by Katherine Rundell



# REFLECTION ON THE IMPACT OF THE TARS RESEARCH ON MY PRACTICE



- ▶ This project, linked to the TaRs findings, gave me an insight into the children as readers and the barriers faced by them in regards to reading stamina.
- ▶ The importance of establishing a small group, safe and social reading environment became clear. The children valued the opportunity to share their reading experiences (both good and bad) and use the reading group to encourage one another to try more challenging texts.
- ▶ As a result, I plan to continue creating small Book Clubs each year, targeting those children who struggle with reading stamina.