

‘Reading Role Models’.

A collaborative initiative between Nursery and Year 4 where young readers take on the mantle of expert.

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Thank you!



The Explorers gave you a perfect..... 5/5 stars ☺



Local context

Coleshill Heath School is a primary school, with approximately 500 pupils, in a large housing estate, on the outskirts of Birmingham. It serves a community with a number of challenges including high socio-economic deprivation and high unemployment (over half the children are eligible for free school meals).

Cultural capital

One statistic alone has highlighted the importance of this work – **66% of CHS Nursery children are NOT read to at home.**

Our RfP team consists of a Year 4 class teacher, a Nursey teacher and a member of the SLT with a whole school responsibility for developing reading. All three of us are passionate about developing children’s love of reading and are fortunate to work in a school that places reading at the heart of its curriculum.

OU Research Inspiration and Rationale.

Given the high level of deprivation in the area our school serves, many children do not have access to books at home and a high proportion are not read to or do not have the opportunity to read to others.

Local sources where children can have access to books include our local library, a main supermarket and one charity shop. The nearest bookshops are eight miles away.

Developing our **reading for pleasure pedagogy** has therefore been critical and now includes:

- regular comfy reading sessions
- reading role models (Year 4 to Nursery & Year 6 to Year 1)
- 'Reading Rucksacks' for all classes in the school
- 'Recorded Read Aloud' sessions, where a variety of school staff have selected quality picture books to read aloud, which are then saved onto our school website.
- The use of a reading 'spine' across the whole school so that quality texts are heard read in each year group
- The adoption of a 'Patron of Reading' - John Dougherty
- The introduction of a new home reading scheme including the Top 100 recommended reads for Years 3 and 4 and Top 100 reads for Years 5 and 6

The focus of this report is the 'Reading Role Models' initiative between Nursery and Year 4.

'Reading for pleasure is more closely associated with intrinsic motivation; it is reading that children do for themselves at their own pace, with whom they choose and in their own way.'

(Cremin, 2019)

Older children elect to take part in this initiative and regard it as part of their reading for pleasure.





Aims: foster a love of reading, with children seeing themselves as role model readers and being inspirational to others.

- Enable all Year 4 readers to take on the mantle of experts and build their confidence in reading aloud.
- For Year 4 to make appropriate book choices for Nursery and coach each other using our F.A.S.E criteria. (fluidity, accuracy, speed and expression)
- To inspire Nursery children by hearing the 'big'

children and be exposed to a greater number of people reading to them.

- For 'book blether' to be further developed within the Nursery setting.

The Open University (2021) highlight that reading aloud '*enabled children to access rich and challenging texts, offered a model for silent independent reading, prompted the children's affective engagement and created a class repertoire of 'texts in common' to discuss*'.

Outline.

- Year 4 children volunteer to read to Nursery and can do this as a pair or alone. This is open to children of all abilities.
- They select three possible books and have to discuss and agree on what is age appropriate, visually effective and a story that they both like. Their selection is then discussed with the teacher or T.A. (with a view to moving to peer discussion in the future).
- Children practise reading the book aloud and decide who is reading which parts, noticing any features that they want to stress. They select a peer(s) to give them feedback.
- The Year 4 children read to Nursery.
- Following the 'reading' a focus group of nursery children discuss the reading and the book with the teacher. They give feedback on what they liked and did not like and make connections with other stories they have read or heard.
- Year 4 children get a feedback letter from Nursery, which they read to their class.



Impact

The **Year 4** children have locked into this project 100%. Readers of all abilities have volunteered to read and, having done it, it has had a positive impact on their individual worth and value as readers. It is not something they take lightly and are concerned to be properly prepared to give the Nursery children the best experience.

Dylan said, *"I felt very nervous. There were so many of them! But it felt really good when they were all listening."*

Kacey said, *"It felt scary at first because there were lots of children but when I started reading, I felt more comfortable."*

Alfie said, *I liked reading and it made me happy as my little brother was there."*

Book Choices

Having the autonomy to select books that will engage their young audience and that they will enjoy reading has also proved critical. The process has by necessity, involved discussion between the readers about choice.

Future said, *"It was National Number Day, so we wanted to find a book with numbers in."* They did and were delighted to find out that the Nursery team had also chosen the same book and it was in their book box for the day so the Nursery children were able to go back to it afterwards.

Alfie-Dean said, *It was hard to choose a book because we had to find one that they would all like."*

Libby said, *"It was hard because we didn't know what they would like. We read some pages of each book and thought it would be good for them to make friends so that was what the book was about."*

Peer Coaching

Peer coaching has also been central to making the process belong to the children. It has also given them the opportunity to use the F.A.S.E (fluidity, accuracy, speed and expression) criteria for an additional purpose. Mya said of their Year 4 coach, *"Jackson was really helpful, he reminded us to slow down and to change our voices to louder and quieter."*

Whatever time of the day Year 4 come down to **Nursery**, the Nursery children are quick to drop everything and take their places on the carpet to see where today's story 'takes' them.

The careful selection of the stories from Year 4 continue to add to the Nursery children's increasing bank of stories and characters – Meg the Witch, recently made it onto a T4W innovated story map! Year 4 do not just simply 'read' to Nursery, they use the time to share their knowledge and love for reading, such as sharing the blurb, explaining the title and the author. Aston, in Year 4 recently told the Nursery children, *"Here's a good tip, even if you can't read these (pointing to the title and author) just yet, you can guess what the book is about by looking at the picture on the cover!"*

'Book Blether'.

The informal book blether sessions that follow in Nursery after Year 4 have been to read to, have quickly become an important part of our curriculum time and something Nursery look forward to. They are an enthusiastic gathering of eager pre-readers during which the thoughts of the day's story from our youngest of learners are discussed at length! These sessions enable the Nursery children to express their likes and dislikes from the story (often using the story to justify their thoughts) in addition to providing an opportunity for them to make connections allowing them to make sense of the story and a chance for them to critique the way the older children read.

Through listening to the older children reading to them, Nursery's skills in becoming active listeners and their ability to make connections to other stories they know and the wider world in which they live is flourishing. During a recent book blether, whilst discussing a story by Julia Donaldson, Dexter said, *"The Gruffalo was written by Julia Donaldson too!"* Isabelle continued, *"And Spinderella, but that didn't rhyme, this one ('One Ted Fall Out of Bed') did....ted and bed, ha!"*

Reading Role Models

The children from Year 4 have been great role models. Their reading has been fluent, confident and expressive but more importantly, their own love

for reading has shone through inspiring the Nursery children with the confidence to become readers themselves.

"I'm reading a story like Jackson!" Kallum using the puppet from the book to retell 'the' story ... "and me!" added Isla-Rose



"I'm reading Brown Bear, Brown Bear, reading like the big children – I think they'd like the story!" Shayla (smiling broadly!)

"When I'm a big sister, I will read books to my baby brother!" Iris.



"Once upon a time, there was a spider called Spinderella. She had lots of brother and sisters..." Rosalee using the pictures to 'read' the story of 'Spinderella'.

Choosing a library book to take home on Fridays is a time Nursery now look forward to. More and more of them are returning their books early so they can choose a 'new' book to take home The passion for reading that Year 4 have is contagious and has been passed on to the Nursery children, who are fully equipped to make a considered choice of book to take home and excitedly share with their families.

Reciprocity. Nursery's Experience of Year 4:

Jack said, *"They must read lots to be so good!"*

Tia said, *"I liked it when they read together!"*

Isobelle said, *"I'd like to hear that story again!"*

Louie said, *"It sounded like a song!"*

Amaya said, *"The pictures had lots of colours!"*

Lochlan said, *"They smiled when they read the book!"*



Lily said, *"That's clever...they can read upside down."*

Reciprocity. Year 4's Experience of Nursery.

Callum said, *"The best bit was that they all listened."*

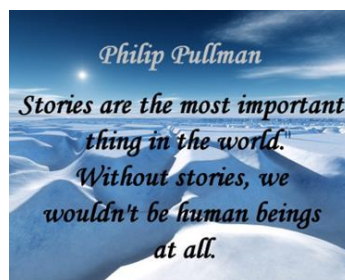
Lacey said, *"I like how the teacher said 'come together' and they all did it straight away."*

Kacey said, *"They were really good listeners and no one talked."*

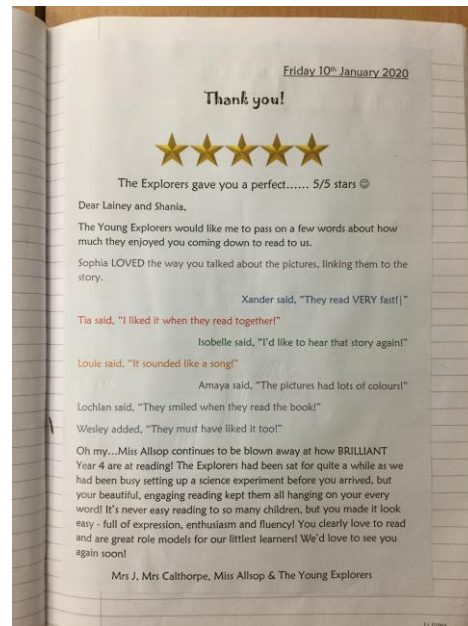
Valerii said, *"They were never interrupting."*

Mya said, *"I loved it when they joined in."*

Wystan said, *"One girl held her teddy up so he could listen too."*



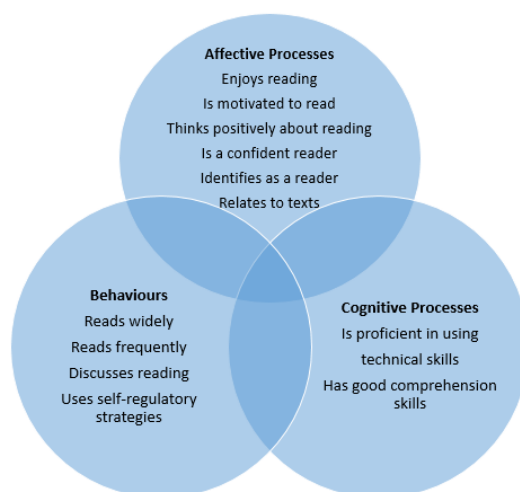
Finally, the readers receive a letter from Nursery giving them feedback, which they read to their class. These are anticipated with great enthusiasm. When there was a slight delay with one, the readers were constantly asking if it had arrived yet. Nathan said, *“I couldn’t wait for my letter to arrive. I really wanted to know what they thought of the book and our reading.”*



This part of the process has some parallels, such as the one they have with our Patron of Reading (John Dougherty) who has read to them in school and subsequently responded to their letters. As reading role models, they have become our own Patrons of Reading. The feedback is always positive so that future readers have clear signposts about what works.

We believe this initiative clearly meets aspects of all three areas identified by the ROGO model for all the children in this process.

Reading...



ROGO model evidence base National Literacy Trust 2017, page 2

Reflections.

The Teachers as Readers (TaRs) research (Cremin et al., 2014) identifies effective reading pedagogies which include creating social reading environments, book talk and recommendations. By involving children in this process as active readers and listeners they have been able to create a micro reading community and generate a discussion about books. 'Reading increases our understanding of our own identity, improves empathy and gives us an insight into the world view of others' (The Reading Agency, 2015). This vertical initiative has certainly had a positive impact on all the children involved.

Our next steps are to embed and develop this, 'Readers as Role Models' initiative by extending it throughout the school. We have taken tentative steps by establishing 'Reader Coaches' with a selected group of higher attaining Year 6 children and some Year 1 children, and have also earmarked a similar set up to that in Year 4 and Nursery, with Year 3 and Reception.

Ideally, we would like to find a way to involve the Year 4 readers in the post read 'book blether'. Another step would be for the readers to keep a class journal of the books they had read to Nursery with a short self-evaluation of the read.

"School is a knowledge party, and books are the presents."

Aaliyah Year 4

This collaborative approach to developing reading for pleasure has certainly given everyone involved presents.