



**Winner of the Farshore Reading for Pleasure Award**  
In partnership with the OU and UKLA 2021  
**Community Reading Champion**

**Reading: Bringing Us Together (Even When We're Apart)**

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**Context**

I'm the Reading Coordinator for an education charity called Liverpool Learning Partnership (LLP).



Liverpool is a city with considerable challenges regarding literacy. Out of 30 wards, 24 are in the top 10% of the country in terms of literacy need (Experian 2016).

My role is to support over 160 schools in Liverpool (maintained nursery, primary, secondary and special) with developing opportunities for pupils to read for pleasure in school and at home. I do this through a combination of consultancy and training, project management (establishing reading clubs for vulnerable pupils) and events management.

During Covid-19 and the subsequent lockdowns, it was difficult for schools to maintain many of the ways in which they previously embedded opportunities within the school day to share the love of reading. Children and staff were grouped into bubbles, communal library areas were not as easily accessible and whole school story-based assemblies couldn't take place physically. From a wider city-wide perspective, our planned reading festival that was designed to bring schools across the city to read for pleasure together couldn't go ahead.

**OU Research inspiration and rationale**

The Open University's Teachers as Readers (TaRs) research project (Cremin et al, 2008, 2014) highlights the importance of schools fostering reciprocal and interactive reading communities.

We knew that reading communities could not continue as they had before, especially during periods of lockdown, but wanted to find a way to encourage schools to continue sharing their love of books and reading and to continue to foster those links across the city. Also, whilst more pupils were learning at home we wanted to be able to support parents/carers in providing reading experiences and developing book talk together.

The TaRs research project also focuses on the importance of teachers having a considerable knowledge of children's literature. We wanted to have opportunities to connect teachers to books/authors/illustrators that they might not have read before.

## Aims

- To develop strategies for developing and strengthening reading for pleasure communities during periods of home learning or blended learning
- To encourage teachers to further connect to 'reading for pleasure' as a concept, rather than another lesson or task
- To support schools in identifying and accessing quality children's and YA literature

## Outline

### Discussion Resources

We released a daily prompt that would encourage families, classes and groups of children to engage in a reading based discussion. These could be used in the classroom (with Key Worker Children), as part of virtual learning, shared on social media or school websites and used to encourage parents/carers to have reading based conversations with their children.

### Events

#### *Liverpool Children's Festival of Reading*

Clark and Lant (2019) found a significantly higher level of reading enjoyment in pupils who reported to have had a writer visit (68.2%) compared to those who haven't (47.4%).

The Liverpool Children's Festival of Reading was adapted for delivery via livestreaming meaning that pupils learning at school and at home had access to a range of author events. In order to allow pupils to engage with the authors whilst also adhering to online safeguarding guidance, we set up moderated padlets where pupils could add their responses.



Copies of the author's texts were given to participating schools so they could be shared with staff/pupils and then added to school library areas.

Sessions were planned across primary and secondary age ranges with 9 different authors, intended to widen teacher's knowledge of writing and children and young people. We are passionate about ensuring diversity and inclusion in reading and this was at the heart of many of our events.

Thank you @EarlyTrain @ReadingatLLP for mentioning @StAmbroseSpeke The children were absolutely delighted! 🥳👏👏👏



9:51 AM - Jan 25, 2021 - Twitter for iPad



Year 1 @rudstony1 - Jan 28

How exciting! We are watching the Susannah Lloyd live author event. We hope our Y1 home learners are joining in too. #rudstonreads #ReadingatLLP



### **Liverpool Readathon**

We have worked with the charity Read for Good for 4 years on the Liverpool Readathon.

We knew that a sponsored event wouldn't work in the same way this year (especially in terms of the financial difficulties many families were facing) so instead of the usual full Readathon programme we held a Drop Everything and Read that aimed to bring Liverpool together for one morning to take time out to share a love of reading.

Drop everything and read. #OLGH #OLGHEYFS @SILPrimary @OLGHLiverpool @ReadingatLLP #WorldBookDay2021



2:23 PM - Mar 4, 2021 - Twitter for iPad

## Online Support

We released a daily prompt that would encourage families, classes and groups of children to engage in a reading based discussion.

These could be used in the classroom, as part of virtual learning, shared on social media or school websites and used to encourage parents/carers to have reading based conversations with their children.

<https://wke.lt/w/s/-9NkLA>



As teacher networking events relating to reading couldn't take place in the same way, we promoted and further developed our range of resources to support knowledge of children's literature and reading for

pleasure pedagogy.

[www.padlet.com/jholder\\_llp/diversity](http://www.padlet.com/jholder_llp/diversity)

[www.padlet.com/jholder\\_llp/rfpliverpool](http://www.padlet.com/jholder_llp/rfpliverpool)



## Videos and Support

We have developed the use of our YouTube channel to promote messages surrounding the benefits of deep embedded reading for pleasure practice , to provide quick CPD videos on ways to encourage reading for pleasure and to develop an interview series where people who live and work in Liverpool talk about the books that have inspired them to be more resilient.

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCIrO7ZVnaXkvNXvX5OaVqtQ/featured>

## Reading for Pleasure Quick Ideas

Liverpool Learning Partnership - 1 / 4



-  Reading for Pleasure Quick Ideas: Pupil Response  
Liverpool Learning Partnership  
0:47
-  Reading for Pleasure Quick Ideas: Poetry  
Liverpool Learning Partnership  
1:04
-  Reading for Pleasure Quick Wins: Tracking and Sharing  
Liverpool Learning Partnership  
0:54
-  Reading For Pleasure Quick Ideas: Front Facing Books  
Liverpool Learning Partnership  
0:48

## Impact

### Engagement

#### *Liverpool Children's Festival of Reading*

Between 100-500 devices logged onto every festival event.

Children were inspired to read the books covered, other books written by the authors and even to have a go at their own writing for pleasure.

My pleasure - he loves to read and write ! Very rare in boys at that age so this was a dream for him to engage like this with 'a real author' Thankyou all so much

Events allowed for pupils to share experiences even when not together. Having the books then available in the class then creates "books in common."



### **Liverpool Readathon- DEARLIVERPOOL**

#DEARLiverpool brought 33 schools together at 10am on March 4th (World Book Day) to take time out to read.

Staff and parents/carers shared on social media what they and their pupils/children had been reading. Schools engaged through their own platforms and social media with the pupils learning at home about their reading. Other local organisations joined in too- connecting with schools and pupils across the city!

<https://wke.lt/w/s/ghtCqF>

### **Resources**



Book-based discussion took place in classrooms, at home and online. The discussion and video resources have been used in classrooms and CPD sessions not only in Liverpool but across the UK.



## **Reflections on impact the TaRs research had on practice**

The TaRs research project highlighted the importance of whole school reading for pleasure communities. We have found that sharing resources and events with schools

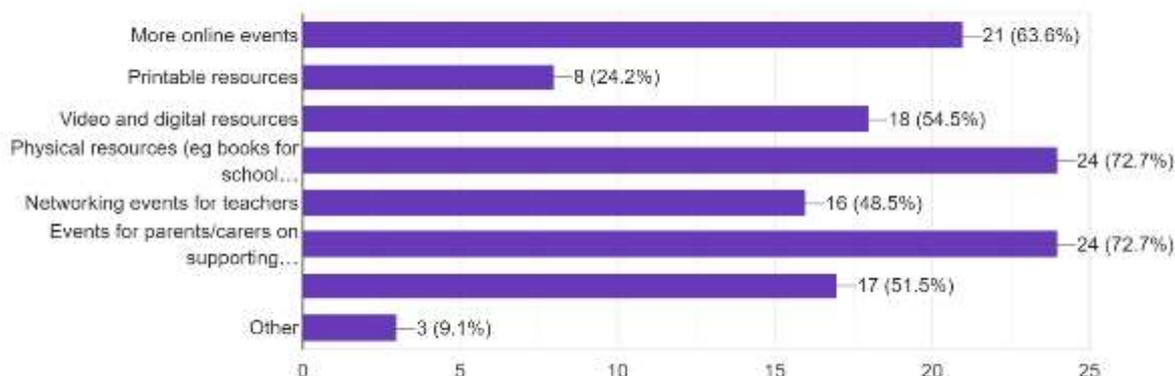
and families across a city can produce wider reciprocal communities of readers, sharing text recommendations and practice. Pupils from different schools were able to have “authors” and “books in common”

### Next Steps

In the past LLP has mainly worked with schools and teachers. By extending our offer digitally we were able to directly reach families and we found that this was something that both schools and parents welcomed.

Thinking of reading for pleasure, what support would you like from Liverpool Learning Partnership?

33 responses



Our next steps are to further develop the range of support available for parents/carers relating to Reading For Pleasure. We intend to create a suite of support include materials that can be used by schools (videos, downloadable) and live support sessions featuring opportunities for Q&A with education and reading/library professionals within the city.

**From Context to Reflections, the word count is 1150 words.**