



# Context

Lowerplace Primary School,  
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The aims of this project are to *enhance children's recall of the previously-read elements of a story*, in order to *encourage their engagement with the story* and better *retain its details*.

## **OU Research inspiration and rationale**

The following strands of the Teachers as Readers rationales informed my practice:

### ***Knowledge of children's reading practices***

#### ***Reading aloud***

#### ***As Reading Teachers: teachers who read and readers who teach***

The reasons for choosing these are that while reading aloud to children, my TA and I noticed that their recall of what was being read was extremely poor. Although the children seemed to enjoy the reading, and I attempted to make it as engaging as possible. They were generally poor at recalling characters' names, locations etc

We started by interrupting the reading in order to check knowledge but knew this was unsatisfactory as it was breaking up the rhythm of the story and undermining children's *pleasure* in the reading.

We therefore drew on our experience to design a solution to this problem.

# Aims

The aim of the practice is to improve children's recall of the characters, locations and events in a story and thereby increase their investment in, and enjoyment of, the story. In turn, this will familiarise them with some of the conventions of story telling and increase their confidence in expressing themselves in their written and oral story telling.

I am connecting my aims in this practice to the Knowledge of Children's Reading Practices strand on the OU RFP pages.

# Outline

I used my experience of working with the author Richard O'Neill - illustrating the themes and ideas he generated with children to assist their writing – as the impetus to illustrate parts of stories I read to my cohort.

I knew that the children contributed to 'boxing up' pictorial exercises in English (writing) lessons and were familiar with using a form of illustrative short-hand to stimulate memory.

I therefore decided to use drawings (which I'd done beforehand) while reading the chapters of stories, as a way of stimulating the children's interest in the salient details of the story and ensuring they were invested in the outcome of each chapter.

Each session, I added to the drawings.

The final drawing would reference all the major points of the story and children would be able to name the location, characters, events and conclusions of the stories.

# Impact

We noticed that at the end of the week where we used illustrations as our pre-teach, there was not only much greater character, setting and story recognition,

there was a noticeable increase in

enthusiasm from the children towards

these elements. It has been tricky to take

photos of the children due to current home

learning situation where these activities

have been trialled.

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

Reflect on which specific aspects of the TaRs research influenced your practice and in what ways.

What are your plans and next steps to support children's volitional engagement as readers?

We shall use this practice within a classroom environment and work out how to use the children to provide the illustrations themselves –maybe on white boards.

Can we use this as a way of summarising; predicting; choosing and justifying favourite elements of the story; imagining what characters may look like including their emotions for example, even using emoji-style symbols so the practice is accessible to all children.



