



Building a Reading Community

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Godwin Junior
School



Godwin Junior School is a 4-form entry in Newham, East London with 55% EAL, 29% Pupil Premium and 20% SEND. Although Newham has more than half of children (52%) that are judged to be in households in poverty, compared to 38% in the typical London borough, this figure changes to 19% on a local level - Forest Gate North. The school fosters a love of reading for pleasure with an up-to-date library and dedicated class reader sessions 3 times a week.

OU Research inspiration and rationale

Within the school, there is a strong ethos of Reading for Pleasure (RfP) - class reader sessions are timetabled three times a week, class reading books are available in each classroom and every class has a dedicated 30-minute library session once a week. However, within my classroom there was a lack of engagement with the texts available in the class, which did not equate to survey results where 97% of respondents gave a score of 4 or 5 out of 5 when asked if they enjoyed reading (5 being the score that showed the greatest love of reading). There was a need identified within the classroom community to engage more of the pupils, particularly those reluctant to read, in the texts available for them whilst ensuring that reading for pleasure was something that could be discussed in the classroom and used to encourage others, as Cremin 2019 stated, '*Reading for Pleasure 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*'. I chose to do this through building a reciprocal reading community (Cremin, 2014)

Aims

- To improve my own knowledge of children's literature
- To be able to recommend books to my class including reluctant readers
- Children to be able to discuss books they have read in the classroom environment and see the class teacher as a reader of children's books
- To create a place where pupils could find book recommendations
- To further engage pupils with the reading material in the classroom

Outline

Preparation:

- I began by conducting personal research to better understand the principles behind Reading for Pleasure
- I also conducted research to find book recommendations for Year 6 readers - this involved exploring Children's Book of The Month at Waterstones. <https://www.waterstones.com/campaign/books-of-the-month> and also sought recommendations on Twitter from fellow teachers and signed up for the Primary School Book Club - a Twitter-based group that recommends a book a month and then arranges a QandA session with the author. <https://twitter.com/primaryschoolbc?lang=en>
- I began to read children's literature both fiction and non-fiction to create a class-based 'library'
- I conducted an initial reading survey with the class. Responses from the surveys were of interest to me as I wanted to know what would engage pupils as readers. Pupils were asked as part of the survey to complete the sentence 'I would read more if...' whilst there were a range of responses to the questions the most popular were:
 - ☐ If I had more time
 - ☐ I found a good book
 - ☐ If I had more books to choose from
- I created a class book to record information about the books and a log-book for pupils to record books borrowed and returned.

Introducing the class book about books:

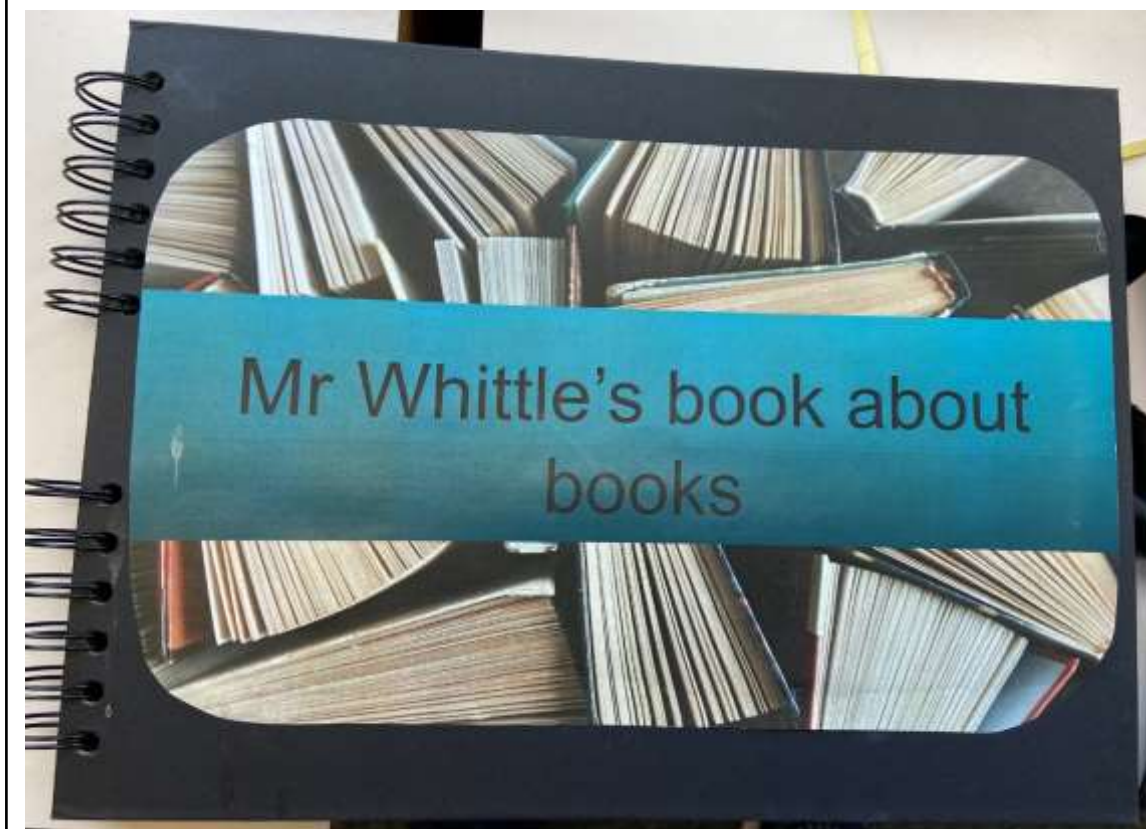
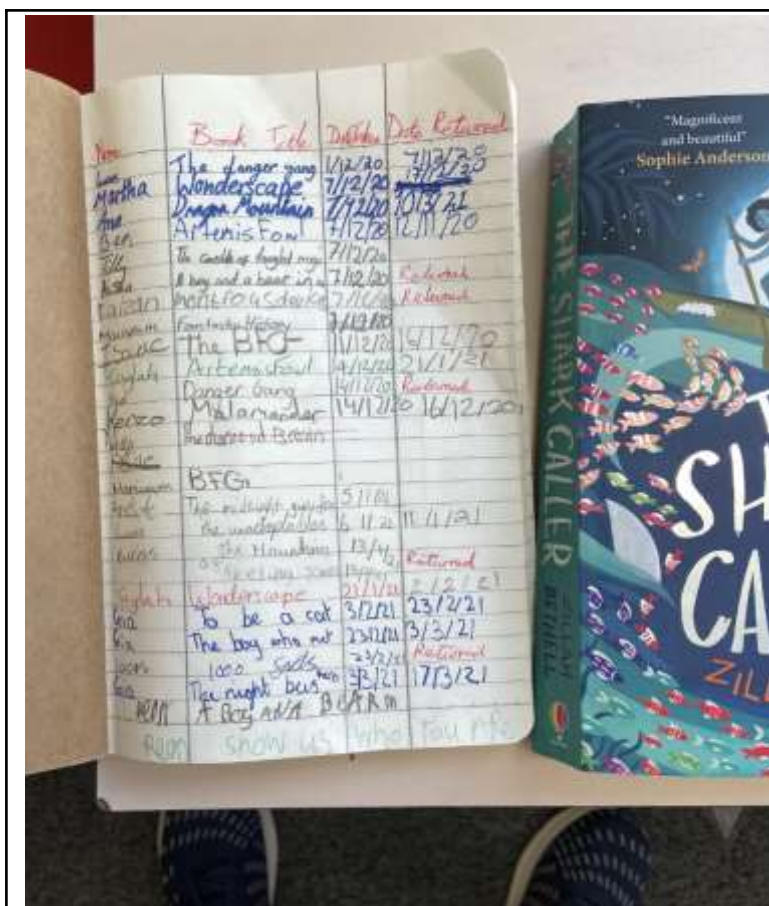
I introduced the class to the selection of books and the book about books. I ensured that pupils knew the process for taking and returning books. A weekly 'Book Talk' slot was scheduled into the timetable and I talked to the class about completing book reviews.

Pupils as readers:

Pupils were encouraged and allowed to read books at appropriate times. I questioned them about the books they had read, determining if they had enjoyed the book and taking feedback as to why/ why not. All pupils that had read a book were expected to participate in the class book talk - pupils were made aware that any comments about a book, both positive and negative, were welcome as that would generate discussion. Book review templates were given to children once they had read a book.

Below are photos of the class book about books and the display.

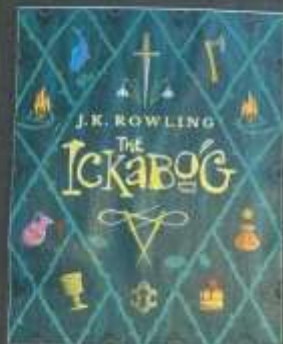




A boy has been found.
A dagger has been stolen.
Will Ravi and his sister solve the mystery? What has a whale got to do with the story?



Nizrana was born and raised in Sri Lanka. She uses her childhood home to inspire her story setting.



The kingdom of Comucopia is no longer happy and it was once the happiest place in the world.

A mystery surrounds the monstrous Ickabog. Who or what is it? Is it as deadly and dreadful as everyone thinks? A fairy tale adventure with lots of twists and turns.



The author of the Harry Potter series turns her hand to fairy tales.

Col is a long way from home and has been separated from his sister. One day a letter arrives to say they won't be spending Christmas together. So begins a magical journey with Col and his imaginary friends.



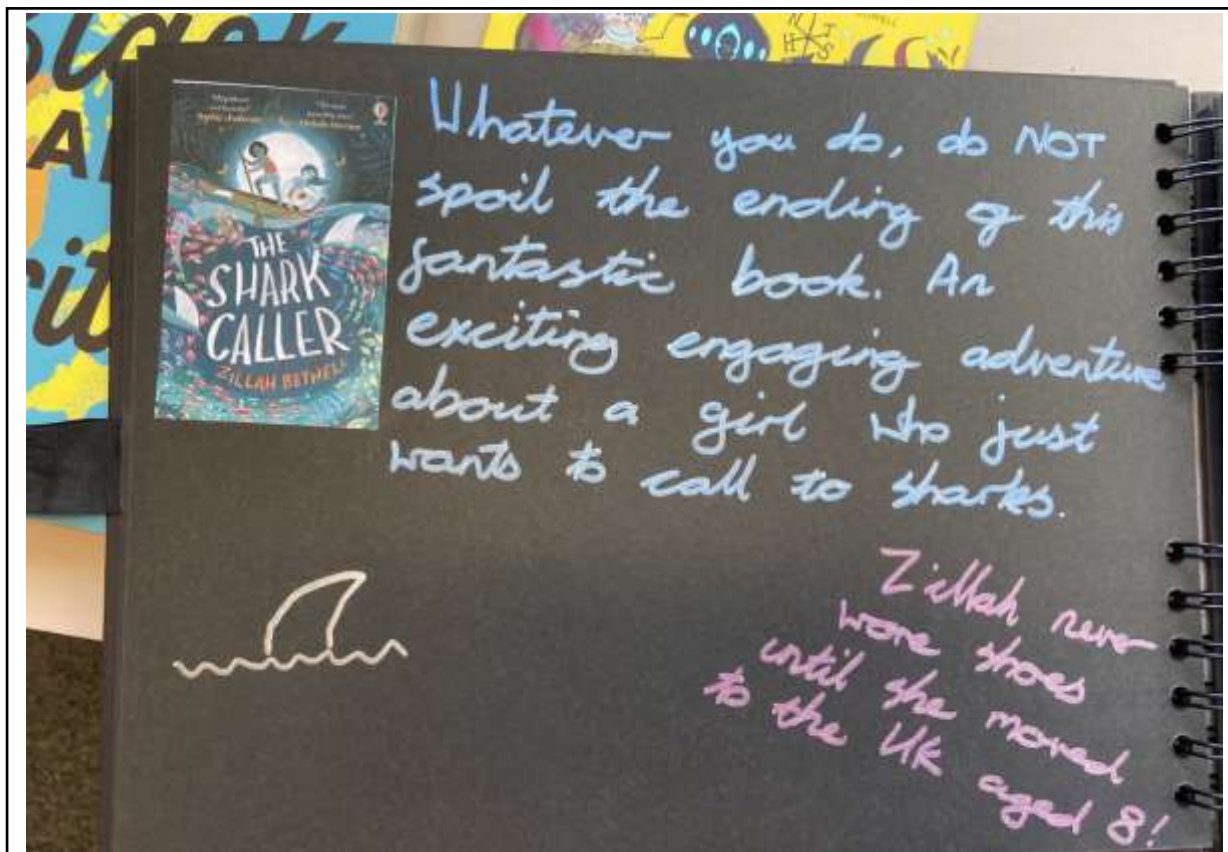
Ross Montgomery used to be a primary school teacher. He is now a full-time teen author.



A funny adventure. Barney is not happy with his life and wishes for change. One day he wakes up to find that he has become a cat! Barney soon discovers that his life is not so bad after all.

Matt Haig writes books for children and adults. He is an advocate for mental health.





Environment

- I designated a place in the classroom for the class selection of books - separate from the selection of books already in place
- I created a display area in class to feature covers of books and reviews written by pupils

Below are photos of the book review display and some of the reviews written by pupils in the class

Fiction

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1. Thumpka, the girl who was trapped in a tower with her uncle and Zabuza.
2. Caterpillar, both of her parents died and she had to play with her good step sister and a bad step mother.
3. Shirley, I love when she the and the heart.



Book Title: The

Author: Joseph

Fiction or Non-fiction: Foof-,o/1

What is the book about?

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How would you recommend the book to? Why?

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Can you write three facts you have learnt or three things you have learnt about one of the characters?

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Rating: ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Book Title: The

Author: Joseph

Fiction or Non-fiction: Foof-,o/1

Book Title: The
Author: Joseph
Fiction or Non-fiction: Foof-,o/1

Book Title: Amari and the night brothers
Author: B.B Alston
Fiction or Non-fiction: Fiction

What is the book about?

It is about a girl who's brother has disappeared. discovers a magical world that her brother was of. A criminal is out there and she thinks has her brother!

Who would you recommend the book to? Why?

Anyone who is a fan of Harry Potter and likes magic, and betrayal.

Can you write the facts you have learnt or three things you have learnt about one of the characters?

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2. S 1.5, 1. j (Me. l. "-j" -m t 1-t, "3
- 3) 15 V Oj !, ro, . If <

Rating: * * * *


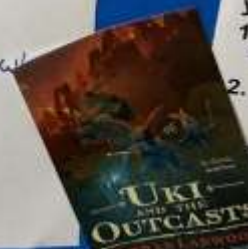
Book Title: The Space we're in
Author: katya Balen
Fiction or Non-fiction:
fiction

What is the book about?
 It is about a boy whose brother has autism and has to put up with it. He loves his mother but he also gets angry with his family.

Who would you recommend the book to? Why?
 I would recommend this book to people whose like codes and sad books. I would also recommend recommend to people who like plot twists.

Can you write three facts you have learnt or three things you have learnt about one of the characters?
 1. That you shouldn't get angry at people for who are
 2. You should love your family
 3. Don't be rude to others

Rating: ★★★★★

Impact

- Reading surveys showed that pupils have been recommended more books by their peers.
- The surveys also showed that pupils had responded positively to a wider range of texts being available and that the texts were mostly recent releases.
- Class book talk revealed that pupils appreciated the fact that the teacher was recommending books and that time had been taken by the teacher to read the books.
- 95% of pupils responded that they felt they had read more this year than they would have due to the range of books and recommendations in the classroom
- 92% of pupils enjoyed being allowed time in class to discuss what they have read as they could then make recommendations to others and listen to their peers' thoughts on books that they had read as it could help them select the next book they would read
- A range of responses were given as to why the range of books in class were more likely to engage readers. These included:

- ☐ *'It is great that we have free choice with the book and can take them home,' - class reading books are banded to attainment but pupils are allowed and indeed encouraged to take these home*
 - ☐ *'I know if Mr Whittle has read the book and he has put it in his book book it will be good.'*
 - ☐ *'There is a good range of books and they are different genres'*
 - ☐ *'I get to take the books home and have responsibility for looking after it.'*
 - ☐ *'The books are longer than the ones we have in class and I like longer chapter books.'*
- Pupils were also asked to reflect on how having a selected range of books had encouraged them as readers. Below are some of the responses:
 - ☐ *I like having a selection of books because it made me read more than I used to and because I used to not read at all but when I saw the bookshelf I started to read more.*
 - ☐ *When I read one of Mr Whittle's books, I was inspired and I choose to read more of his books. I read one of my favourite book every day but I have my own copy to read at home because I know I will take a long time. But reading Mr Whittle's books are like an adventure in one place but not like a movie, you read and you might learn new words. I love Mr Whittle's books.*
 - ☐ *These books have allowed me to actually choose the things I want to read unlike the other shelf where you have to read the certain colour band. I do not really like reading but the books I will read are ones that look very interesting. It also helps me find new words as these books are for any age and because of that they may use different words for that age group to understand.*
 - ☐ *The selection of books has made me more eager to read, the books I have at home are mostly read. I've really enjoyed it as there is now a greater range of books. I like that I have read different genres of books, I believe I have read a greater range in genres than before.*
 - ☐ *The selection of books has made me more interested in reading more books and go home to read a book. I really enjoy the selection of books mainly because there are a wide range of books to choose from. They've really inspired me to read more and learn new words to help me understand new things.*
 - ☐ *Starting off these books have benefited me by helping me focused and interested in reading more since there is such a wide variety of different books to choose from these books have helped me go out to buy books of my own to read at home!*

Reflections on impact the TaRs research had on practice

As a keen reader myself, I had not considered the impact my reading practice would have on pupils' reading habits. The information data and TaR research has enabled me to reflect on my role as an influencer in reading for pleasure. I have been greatly encouraged to see so many children engaged in reading within the classroom, a knock-on effect of which has been that some pupils have become incredibly keen to complete their work so that they may have extra time to read their books.

Through discussions with pupils, it has been evident that they clearly valued having books recommended for them by their teacher and this has impacted how keen they are to read. Pupils have enjoyed listening to me and their peers talk about the book recommendations and have also appreciated being able to discuss books they would not normally find in the classroom - there appears to be a disconnect with most pupils and the books that were previously available in the class. This has also been the case for most, but not all, of the reluctant readers. Pupils were also incredibly keen to read any non-fiction titles that I had in the collection 'Queens' and '@Blakc and British' being the most sought-after titles in the genre.

Next year, I will be remaining in Year 6 and will continue the project adding new books throughout the year. I am excited by the prospect of adding to what currently stands as a collection of 30+ books and continue to build book talk into the timetable.