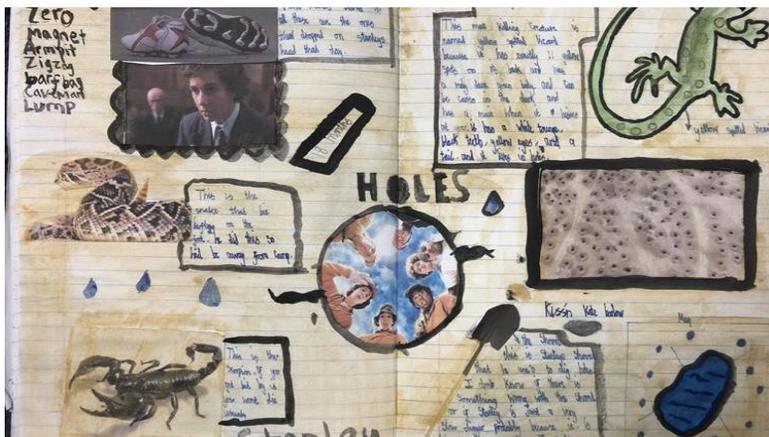




Inspired to Read

Highly Commended - Farshore Reading for Pleasure Award
In partnership with the OU and UKLA 2022
Experienced Teacher

Sarah Bell



Context

- The Holt Primary School is a single form entry, rural school in Lincolnshire with approximately 200 children on role.
- Our school development plan includes a focus on motivating all children to independently read for pleasure, with a particular emphasis on engaging pupils working in the bottom 20% and reluctant readers.
- Our Reading Team consists of a Reception, Year 3 and Year 6 Teacher/Deputy Headteacher with a responsibility and passion for developing children's love of reading. We are fortunate to work at a school that places reading at the heart of its curriculum and thrives on implementing changes based on research to have the maximum impact.
- As the facilitator of the Lincolnshire English Hub's Reading for Pleasure (RfP) Teachers as Readers (TaRs) group, I have recognised areas to improve to make our reading offer even better for our most reluctant readers in Year 5 and 6.



Open University Research Inspiration and Rationale

Pupil interviews and questionnaires revealed that the majority of our most reluctant readers indicated that they **struggled to find books that they enjoyed** from our selection of books at school and **rarely completed the books they did find to take home**. It was clear from conversations with the group of Y5/6 pupils that they were paying lip service to independent reading and it was **seen as a inconvenience rather than something they enjoyed**.

The main inspiration for our project came from a **desire to improve the life chances of our pupils** working in the bottom 20% of upper Key Stage Two **by inspiring their ‘will to read, rather than just their skill’**. The DfE Reading Framework states:

“Reading is fundamental to education. Over the last two decades there has been a deepening recognition of the fundamental importance of improving reading standards on a child’s future academic achievement, wellbeing and success in life.” DfE- Reading Framework 2021



After auditing our current provision using the Open University's TaRs formats, we decided to develop our reading for pleasure pedagogy by focussing on two key areas : **improving social reading environments and independent reading.**

Teresa Cremin's article on 'Reading Communities: why, what and how (2019)' highlighted the fact that I could try to create the most attractive, innovative and tempting book corner in the world, but this alone would not enable my class, nor myself to be any more **proficient Readers' of Pleasure**; there had to be distinct, **research-based** criteria for the choices we made when rethinking our environments and provision.

Our rationale was further supported by the findings from the RfP TaRs group which found that to **foster a culture for RfP** effectively, teachers needed to develop: their understanding of how an improved reading environment included **'texts that tempt'** and **increased opportunities for book talk** within classrooms, key stages and throughout the school. Teresa Cremin's recommendation to foster both the **skill** and the **will** to read particularly resonated to this end.

We were particularly encouraged by Teresa Cremin's **distinctions** between **reading instruction** and **reading for pleasure:**

Reading Instruction is oriented towards:	Reading for Pleasure is oriented towards:
Learning to read	Choosing to read
The skill	The will
Decoding and comprehension	Engagement and response
System readers	Lifelong readers
Teacher direction	Child direction
Teacher ownership	Child ownership
Attainment	Achievement
The minimum entitlement (A Level 4)	The maximum entitlement (A reader for life)
The Standards Agenda	The wider reading agenda

Aims



To encourage teachers and students to value time for independent child-led, choice-led reading.

To create relaxed reading environments with accessible and motivating resources, to enable children to develop stamina for reading through choice so that they develop the 'will' to read as well as 'the skill'.

To allow opportunities to creatively respond to independent reading to promote engagement and stamina.



Outline

We carried out class surveys in Year Five and Six as well as pupil interviews with a small group of students from each of these classes to gain the views of our lowest attaining/least motivated readers. We then responded by making changes to the way in which we organised our school library, planning dedicated time for creative interactions with independent reading as well as promoting a wide range of genres for the whole school to talk about.



Don't forget the pedagogy **check-LIST!**



-  Learner-led
-  Informal
-  Social
-  Texts that tempt

© The Open University



Choosing Reading Books - Reading Hub Room – ‘STARBOOKS’



Feeling very grateful for the staff at Edward's school going that extra mile.

[#lovetoworkineducation](#)



The Holt Primary School

30m · 🌐



Here is a 'sneak preview' of an exciting development at The Holt. We are so passionate about promoting and nurturing a lov... See More

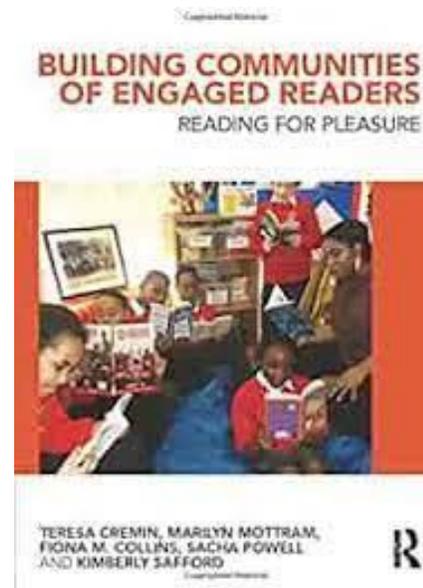
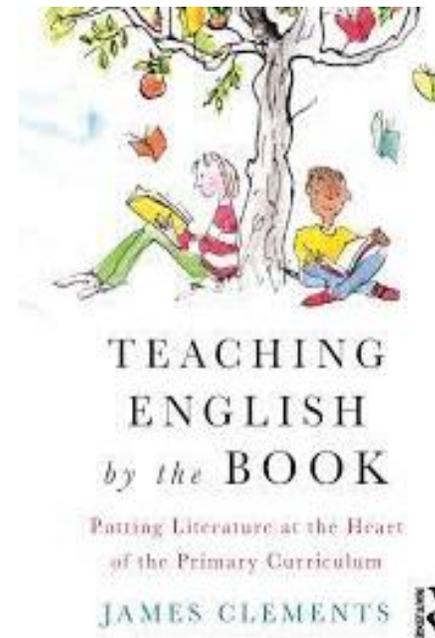


The reading books were carefully selected by the Reading Team and our focus group of pupils. We chose authors to buy collections of books for our new reading room; talking to the pupils, it was clear to see the **authors and texts that tempt** them to want to not only choose a book but complete it as well. The room was organised to look exciting to show that we value reading as well as the experience of choosing a book. The 'STARBOOKS' theme was selected to create a room that would appeal to pupils from all year groups. Our team thought carefully about how we displayed the books so that they were accessible, created areas of interest, celebrated a diversity of genres and was inviting for all ages and stages of reading. We did not 'pigeon hole' reading levels as we wanted to avoid placing any kind of 'ceiling' on our readers, especially our most reluctant pupils. It was our aim to provide a freedom of choice so that our pupils were truly embracing the RfP aims especially '**child led choice**'.

Children throughout the school thoroughly enjoyed watching the space transform into something exciting. Special V.I.P. passes were given to our focus group which allowed them to feel very special about choosing books from this space before anyone else. It was incredible to see them so motivated by the new selection of books on display. We were astounded by the impact this had on them to want to read and how it the increased pace they were working at to complete their books so that they could read other books on their 'wish list'.

It was essential that we were able to create an environment which celebrated and promoted a diverse range of texts and genres. We also knew that we had to allow time to let children browse, reflect and talk about books that inspire them to read because we understood from our RfP research the importance of children 'choosing to read'. We embraced the RfP Pedagogy Checklist which promotes making choices that are learner-led, informal, social and include texts that tempt. Clements describes this perfectly, *'Aside from the academic benefits, a child who doesn't read misses out on the pleasure reading can bring. Whether it is a gripping story, a poem that captures a mood or idea perfectly, a fascinating website or a non-fiction book that provides the answer to a burning question: reading can enrich our lives.'* (2018)

We saw this as an opportunity to instil a **love of reading** to support not only their achievement at school, but also **their success, mental health and wellbeing in later life**. Cremin states, *'Reading for pleasure has myriad other benefits (2019)'* and the DfE notes the following positive outcomes: *'reading attainment and writing ability, text comprehension and grammar, breadth of vocabulary, positive reading attitudes, greater self-confidence as a reader, pleasure in reading in later life, general knowledge, a better understanding of other cultures, community participation and a greater insight into human nature and decision-making.'* (2012)



Don't forget the pedagogy **check-LIST!**



Learner-led



Informal



Social



Texts that tempt

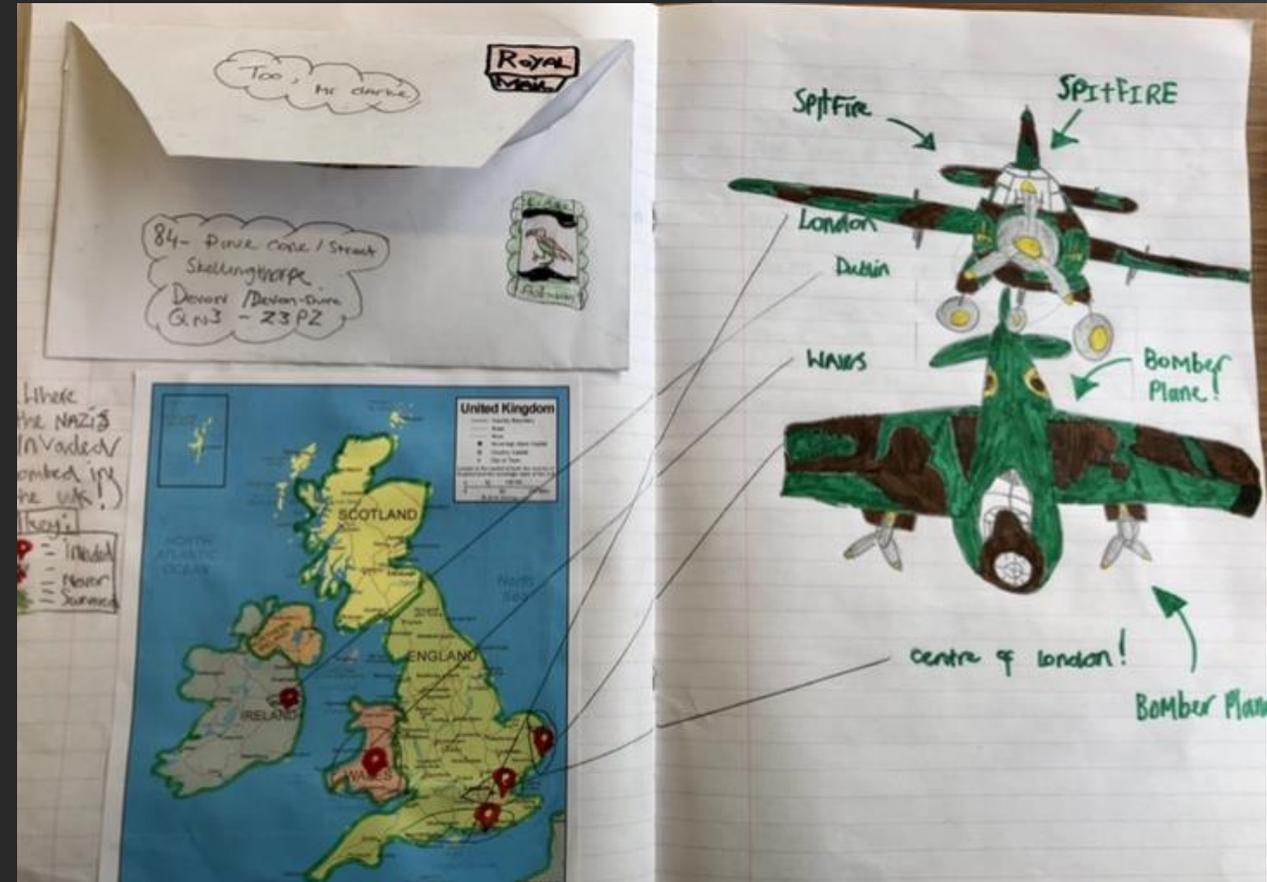
Book of Books

Teachers in Year 5 and 6 introduced a challenge to pupils to create a 'Book of Books' to interact creatively and engage with reading books they enjoyed reading independently. Teachers modelled how to 'savour' and maximize the reading experience with their pupils by first making a class 'Book of Books'.

We wanted to be seen by our classes as Reading Teachers – 'a teacher who reads and a reader who teaches (Cremin et al., 2009),' allowing them to understand we read through choice, rather than necessity. How could we expect children to develop their love of reading if we did not lead by example? They loved hearing about the books we enjoy and why we like reading them. The dialogue this opened for us is building a wonderful community of readers who informally and naturally talk about reading.

This captured the journey of reading books with opportunities to wonder, reflect, be creative, summarize, extend vocabulary, 'read as a writer' and so much more.

This ongoing collection of reading celebrates, reminisces and marks the wide range of high-quality reading now taking place. This is used in place of the traditional reading journal which the children identified as something they did not enjoy or find motivating as they only capture the amount of reading each day and potentially a comment from a parent.



Book of Books

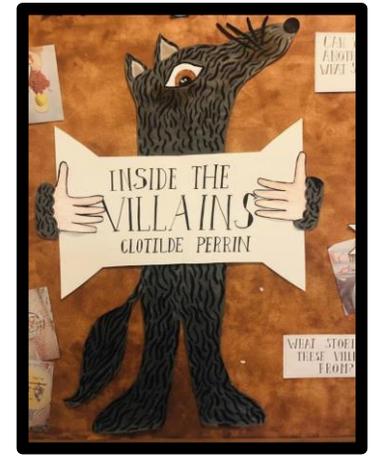
Children are rewarded for each book they complete in their Book of Books. They were highly motivated to choose book cover after finishing their first book. The covers were simply created from wallpaper samples but **the way in which they clutch these treasured books as they travel to and from school demonstrates how much they value them.**

They also earn initials in felt for their front covers after completing their second book, adding to the personalised journal. After that **we found that motivation became intrinsic, and they really enjoyed reflecting on the progress they were making with independent reading.** It was incredible to see how enthusiastic ALL pupils were to engage with reading in this way, especially our once reluctant readers from our focus group.



Spotlight on Reading

To encourage the development of reading communities, our whole school had a monthly focus on an author, book or genre of reading to promote and generate 'book blether' throughout the school community as well as a deeper understanding of the variety of reading children could engage with for example: magazines, graphic novels, comics, poetry, short stories, chapter books and picture books. This was introduced by one of our reading leads in an assembly at the start of each month and then the books were shared in all classes. It was amazing to hear children from our oldest classes talking to our youngest pupils about their favourite book/author from our 'Spotlight on Reading'. This allowed the entire school to become a reading community and promoted excellent opportunities to talk about books and their shared **love of reading.**



 **The Holt Primary School** ...
Posted by Sarah Bell
25 Nov · 🌐

You may have heard your child talking about this month's whole school spotlight book, 'Inside the Villains' by Clotilde Perrin. The children have loved exploring this picture book and thinking about other villains in books and films they know. We love sharing books together at school and it is so nice to hear children, from all classes, talking about the same book. Reading at The Holt is so much fun! 😊

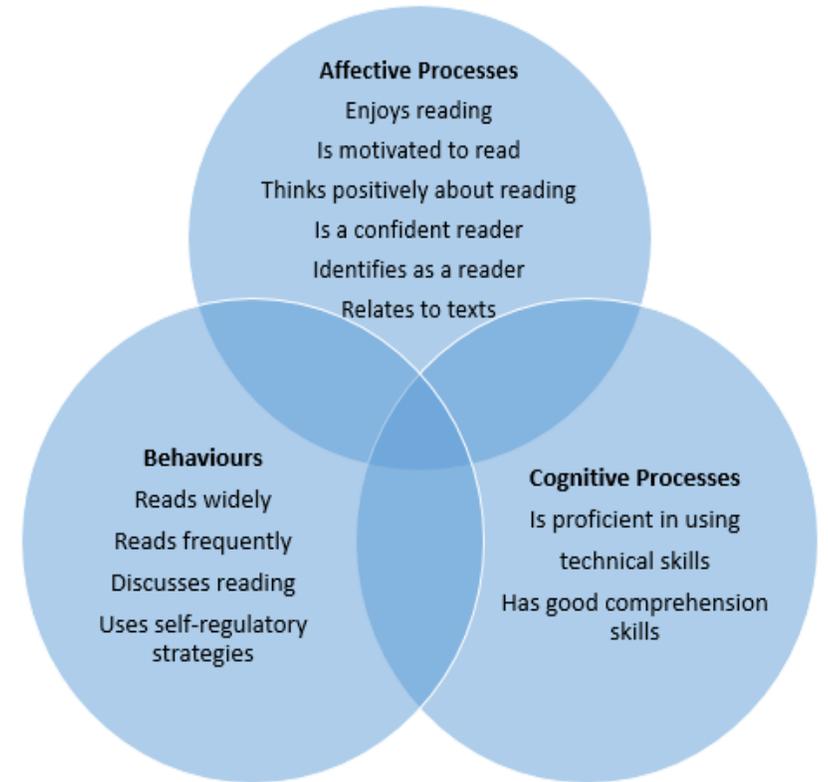


Impact

Pupils spoke with enthusiasm about choosing their books in our new environment for the whole school and enjoyed creating cosy spaces for reading in their own classrooms. The children in our small focus group described our new reading hub like this:

- ***It looks like an ocean of books and is enjoyable to go and visit.***
- ***I like it because there are lots of different books to choose from.***
- ***It's easy to choose books which are right for me.***
- ***It's nice because there are lots of interesting books for my reading stage before, they were not as fun.***
- ***You can see a range of different authors in each section.***
- ***I am able to choose different authors who I wouldn't have known about before.***
- ***I love choosing different books to read because reading calms me.***

Reading...



Impact

All pupils, including our least motivated pupils, were able to **talk with greater enthusiasm and confidence about the authors they love and the genres** of reading that they enjoy the most. It was great to hear our focus group naming specific authors they now love as this was something they found difficult to do at the start of our project. It was evident that many of them felt liberated when they realised they were allowed to read magazines, joke books, picture books, comics, non-fiction, poetry as well as fiction books with chapters.

When interviewed, pupils in our focus groups were all **reading more widely**. Their new interest for poetry and non-fiction texts were particularly noted. Their increased understanding that reading is more than a fiction story, proved significant to their motivation to read independently and to complete books at an increased pace. The students identified through our most recent questionnaires that they enjoyed our whole school Reading Spotlight and felt it **helped them to find new genres and authors that they enjoy**.



The Holt Primary School

Posted by Sarah Bell
21 Oct 2021 · 🌐

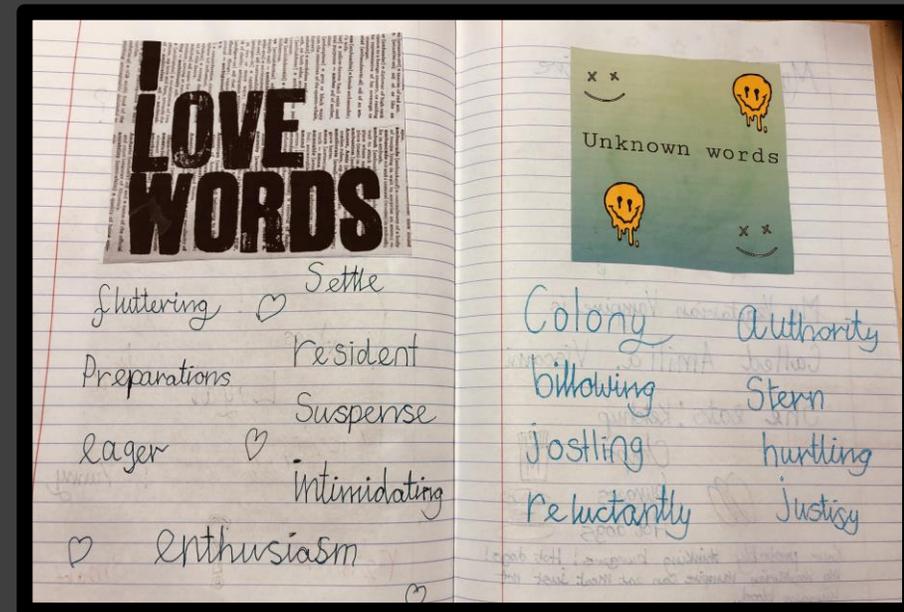
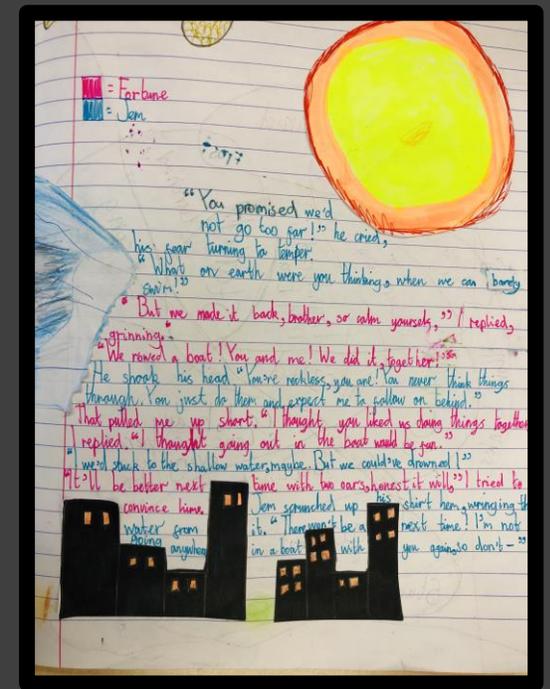
Each month, the whole school will have the opportunity to learn about the same author, book or genre of reading. This is to promote reading for pleasure and provide our school community with an opportunity for our pupils, from all classes, to talk to each other about reading. This term, our children have had the chance to explore books by the author/illustrator, Oliver Jeffers. We are sure your child would love to tell you about the books they have read in school by this incredible author. Each month we will let you know our focus so that you can share in this 'spotlight on reading' focus with us and help to promote a love of reading for your child. Click on the links below to meet Oliver Jeffers and listen to him reading one of his books.
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=w-8ydwV45no>
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OZBzx0ovsJg>

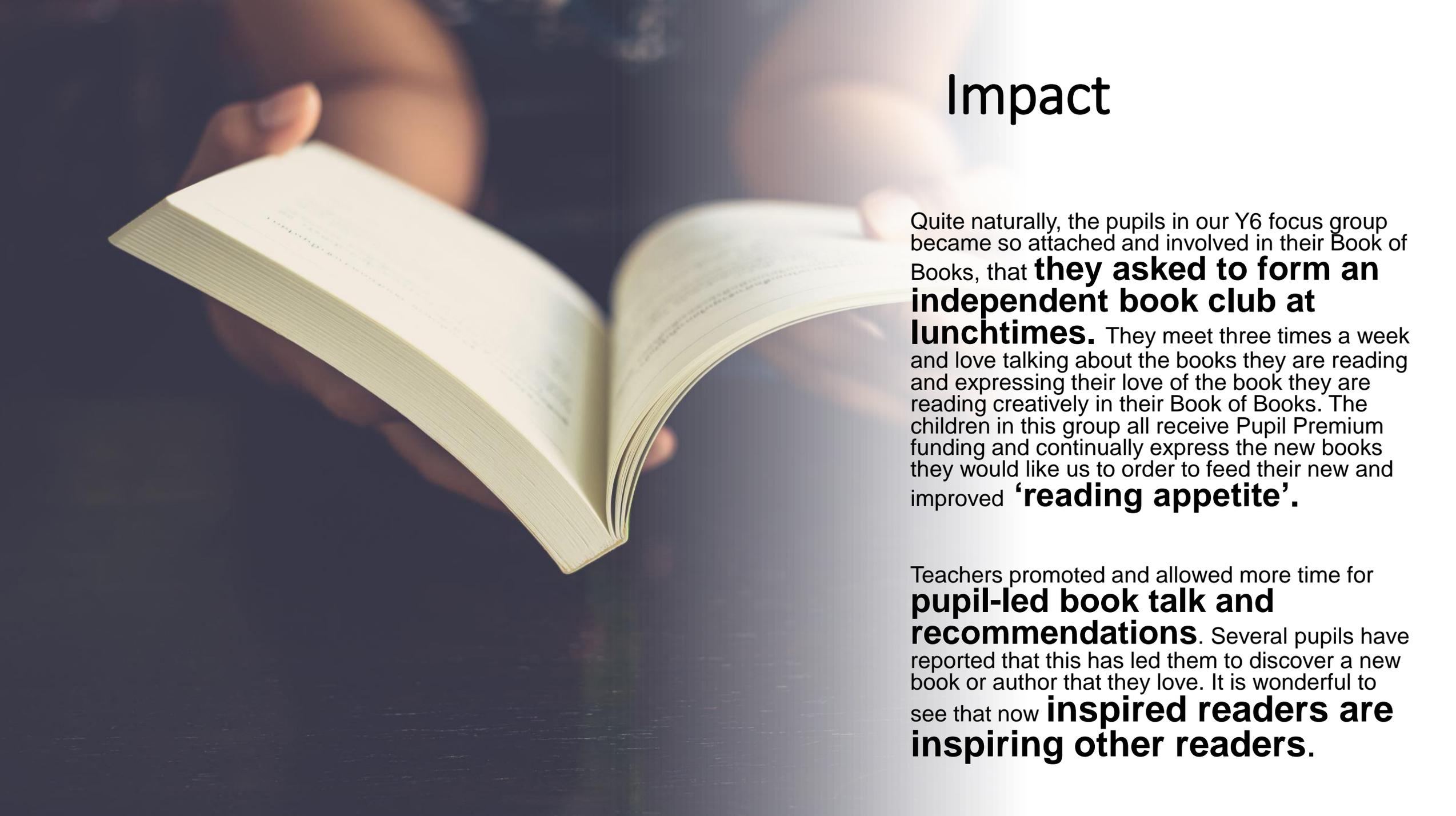
Impact

Some pupils from our focus group initially reported that they only finished one book last academic year and now they have all completed around 10 books each. It was clear from our interviews that their **'will' to read** was natural and evident.

Pupils stated that they **enjoyed tracking their own reading journey**. We have been inundated with comments from parents, especially our pupils who were once considered our most reluctant readers in Year 5 & 6, expressing how amazed they were to see their children **reading independently** and interacting with their 'Book of Books' without prompting at home. One child from our focus group even **inspired** his younger sister to start her own Book of Books to keep a record of her reading creatively. He modelled how to engage with her book beautifully, just as his teacher had with him. Needless to say, his parents were so impressed and shared this beautiful story in an email of appreciation to the school for nurturing such a love of reading.

Several other parents commented in conversations and emails regarding the improvements they were seeing with their children wanting to read at home. Some stated how thrilled they were to see their children really enjoying books and independent reading as this had previously been more of a battle for them than a pleasurable experience. It was also rewarding to see a shift in the parents' thinking regarding the importance of enjoying texts rather than pushing their children to reach the next colour band or level of reading.





Impact

Quite naturally, the pupils in our Y6 focus group became so attached and involved in their Book of Books, that **they asked to form an independent book club at lunchtimes.** They meet three times a week and love talking about the books they are reading and expressing their love of the book they are reading creatively in their Book of Books. The children in this group all receive Pupil Premium funding and continually express the new books they would like us to order to feed their new and improved **'reading appetite'**.

Teachers promoted and allowed more time for **pupil-led book talk and recommendations.** Several pupils have reported that this has led them to discover a new book or author that they love. It is wonderful to see that now **inspired readers are inspiring other readers.**

Reflections

Throughout this process I have deepened my understanding of the **professional responsibility** we have as teachers to understand and **support children's journeys as readers, not just their decoding and comprehension skills.** Too often this is the focus for teachers because of external pressures. The 'bigger picture' became so much more clear for me: my role is to encourage, stimulate and nurture a **'will to read' not just the skill.**

Whilst preparing to lead one of my RfP TaRs sessions, I read this line from the OU's Documenting Reading for pleasure, 'RfP is recognised as **volitional, choice-led reading** of **any** kind of text, and is linked to **motivation, attitudes and children's shifting identities as readers.'** It was at this point that I started to see how essential our role is to enable this process by organising opportunities and cultivating environments which **stimulate, inspire and motivate** children to **want to read.**



Next Steps

My next steps will be driven by information I have collected from our most recent pupil reading questionnaire which stated that the children wanted to:

- meet new authors
- appoint 'Year 5 and 6 Reading Ambassadors' to guide children in KS2 to find books that they love
- organise a book club a lunchtime and after school
- develop outdoor spaces to read at lunchtime
- calendar of events for members of the school community to come into school to read and talk about what they love about reading

These ideas link so nicely with other strands of the RfP agenda: **Informal book talk and Reading aloud.**



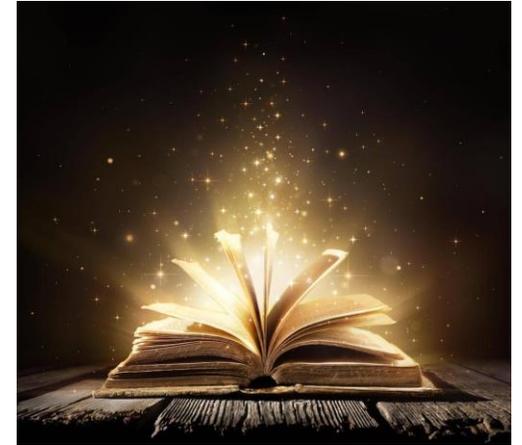
Next Steps

I also will continue to organise **staff training and CPD** to share my developing knowledge with my colleagues and continue to encourage them to deepen their knowledge about the texts that will inspire their classes to LOVE reading. In addition, I will work to create spaces and opportunities for **teachers to share book recommendations for each other and for their classes.**

I will work with the inspiring leaders of our Reading Team to **creatively promote key messages to our parents and governors about developing the 'will' to read and not just the 'skill'** so that our whole community embrace the principles of Reading for Pleasure.

Finally, it is my aim as a teacher and leader to help cultivate a culture as described by Clements.

'It is impossible to make children read for pleasure. Instead, schools need to create a culture where reading is valued and celebrated, time is made on the curriculum for free voluntary reading and children are introduced to inspiring books. These elements help to create a culture where it is difficult for children not to see the value and enjoyment in reading and where not being a reader is the exception.' (2018)



READING
FOR
PLEASURE

References

- Department for Education, (2021) Reading Framework: teaching the foundations of literacy <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-reading-framework-teaching-the-foundations-of-literacy>
- Cremin, T. Mottram, M. Powell, S, Collins & Safford K. (2014) *Building Communities of Engaged Readers: Reading for Pleasure*: Routledge.
- Cremin, Teresa (2019). *Reading communities: why, what and how?* , NATE
- Cremin, Teresa; Mottram, Marilyn; Collins, Fiona; Powell, Sacha and Safford, Kimberly (2009). Teachers as readers: building communities of readers, *Literacy*
- CHempel-Jorgensen, Amelia; Cremin, Teresa; Harris, Diane and Chamberlain, Liz (2018). Pedagogy for reading for pleasure in low socio-economic primary schools: beyond 'pedagogy of poverty'?
- Clements, James. (2018) *Teaching English by the Book*: Routledge (p. 83)
- Department for Education, (2012) Research evidence on reading for pleasure Education standards research team (first accessed January 2021) www.gov.uk/government/publications/research-evidence-on-reading-for-pleasure