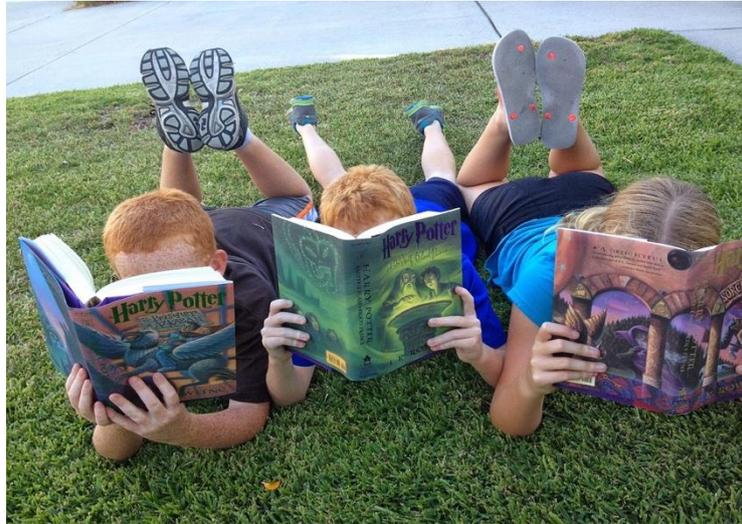




## Reading for Pleasure Pedagogy

### Developing Independent Reading for Pleasure



### Evidence of Practice

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#### Introduction/Context

This reflective practice was undertaken in a P5/6 class within St Athanasius Primary School in South Lanarkshire. Children in the class ranged from early First level reading ability to end of Second level reading ability. Upon embarking on the Reading for Pleasure course, there were about 7 children out of 24 who told me they enjoy reading for pleasure. The children had previously been allowed time for reading for pleasure within the classroom but this was often as a finisher task with no real feeling of the importance of having a special, social reading time as such.

#### Rationale/Knowledge of RfP

The benefits of reading have been widely recognised and evidenced. The Scottish Government has put 'Reading Schools' as an important part of the agenda in Scottish Education in order to raise attainment and 'close the gap.' Research shows, as most teachers intuitively recognise, that reading for pleasure has a knock-on effect in progress in learning across the Curriculum.

However, children identifying themselves as readers and reading for pleasure is at an all-time low. With children's attention often being grabbed by technology (games, apps and messaging platforms), I found myself pondering the following questions...

1. What can I do, as a class teacher, to enthuse children to develop a love for reading?
2. Working collaboratively within my school's reading working party, what examples of good practice can we adopt to ensure a positive and enthusiastic reading culture which sets the groundwork for lifelong readers?

I discovered, through my professional reading, that reading for pleasure is linked to intrinsic motivation (reading at own pace, with whom they choose and in their own way) rather than extrinsic motivation; incentives and rewards (Cremin, 2019). With this knowledge in mind, I established the following focus:

### **Aims**

- To increase children's enjoyment and participation in reading for pleasure.
- To embed a reading culture within my class and as part of a whole school approach to reading for pleasure.
- Allotted time for children to discuss their reading choices and share their enthusiasm and interests in their reading material.
- Encourage children to identify themselves as readers and develop a lifelong love for reading.

### **Outline**

As part of a whole school approach, I set about establishing the routine of 'Everyone reading in class' (ERIC time) for pleasure at least 3 times a week. I chose to establish this in the 20 mins after lunch when children enjoy the chance to relax and have some quiet time reading to themselves or in pairs or very small groups.

I began a dialogue with the class about their reading habits, what they enjoyed reading, authors they enjoyed, the types of books they would like to read and have access to in their class library. This informal dialogue very quickly progressed into an informal weekly 'book blether' time. This was a chance for children to chat about what they had been reading and share their thoughts about their reading with the class.

I set about making our class library more attractive but gave responsibility for the organisation of their class books to a group of 6 children. I was able to obtain a huge amount of second hand books in my local area which included authors and text types that the children has spoken enthusiastically about.

I made sure that I was a role model for reading by reading with my class during reading time.

I set up a display of what children were currently reading which they took responsibility for maintaining with the aim of encouraging themselves to identify as readers.

I modelled reading aloud three times a week from a class novel that was purely for reading for pleasure with no written tasks attached.

As part of a whole school development of reading, I worked with my colleagues to establish an attractive, comfortable space for a whole school library.

I worked to build my knowledge of children's literature by reading the Scottish Book Trusts recommended book lists and regularly reading children's literature as well as taking part in book blethers as part of the RfP group.

### **Impact**

#### **ERIC Time and Book Blethers**

Very quickly, I began to notice that nearly all the children in the class looked forward to 'ERIC' time. They began asking for it on a daily basis and children were very focused on their reading and displayed total immersion in the books they were reading.

Children began to talk to me about what they were reading at other times of the day.



Several children would talk to me in the morning about what they had read the night before. Parents began to feedback to me that their children were asking for specific book series at Christmas time. This was particularly true of a few children who had, previously, never read at home. 'Diary of the Wimpy Kid' became a class hit and, interestingly, was capturing the imagination of reluctant readers:

"I can relate to Greg"      "its funny"      "its easy to read"

This developed into a spin off activity in the playground. A child shared with me that he and 2 other boys had begun their own 'diary club.' Their enthusiasm and ability to relate their

shared love and enjoyment of reading these books together was palpable. They were demonstrating the desire to share and be sociable about their reading enjoyment.

After months of this embedded daily ERIC time, another child asked me if he could complete a metalinguistics task on his personal reading book. I asked the other children if this is something they would like to do with about  $\frac{3}{4}$  of the children agreeing they would like that opportunity. A spin off learning opportunity into increasing vocabulary which was child led, meaningful and relevant was created. The desire to become better readers and the confidence to take responsibility for this demonstrated a new progression in the children's identity as readers.

### *Developing my own knowledge of children's literature*

Discussing recommended books with colleagues from out with my own school during RfP groups has been truly inspiring. I have rekindled my own love for children's literature and a new awareness and knowledge of the diversity of texts new and old. This has had an impact on my ability to have a relaxed but informative dialogue with children during the book blether sessions.

### **Reflection**

After, 6 months of an established reading for pleasure routine and weekly book blether sessions, 22 out of the 24 children in my class have told me they consider themselves readers and enjoy time for reading for pleasure in the class.

I feel that paying attention and allowing time for a dialogue with children as to what they want to read, how and where they read and how they want to share their reading has been influential in embedding a reading culture. It's clear that allowing children to establish reading habits in the classroom and opportunities to talk about their reading with each other promotes enthusiasm.