



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 class within St Athanasius Primary School in South Lanarkshire. Prior to embarking on the Reading for Pleasure course, I did not observe my children regularly reading and/or engaging in conversation about books. A large group of my children expressed a negative attitude towards reading and perceived it as a task rather than a hobby they would enjoy.

Rationale/Knowledge of RfP

The benefits of reading for pleasure have been widely recognised and evidenced (Cremin et al. 2014). 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.

Reading for pleasure has many social benefits and can make people feel more connected to the wider community. Reading increases a person's understanding of their own identity,

improves empathy, and gives them an insight into the world view of others (The Reading Agency, 2015). My hope was that my pupils would develop positive attitudes towards reading and a lifelong interest in reading (International Reading Association, 2014).

I posed myself the question, 'In what ways can I engage reluctant readers when promoting reading for pleasure in the classroom?'. 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.
- Using Assistive Technologies to encourage RfP.
- 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 organised and set up the whole class on an online reading platform called 'Epic Books'. To begin, I choose five reluctant readers to listen to audio books online.

Each child using Epic Books in class filled out a survey I created in order to gain a greater understanding of each child's current reading preferences. In the first instance I planned to use this information to update our class library. However, upon reading the survey I soon realised just engaging and motivating the children to read for pleasure may be my biggest challenge.

Therefore, 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 and open area more attractive. I was able to obtain a huge amount of second hand books in my local area which included authors and text types such as graphic novels that the children have 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.

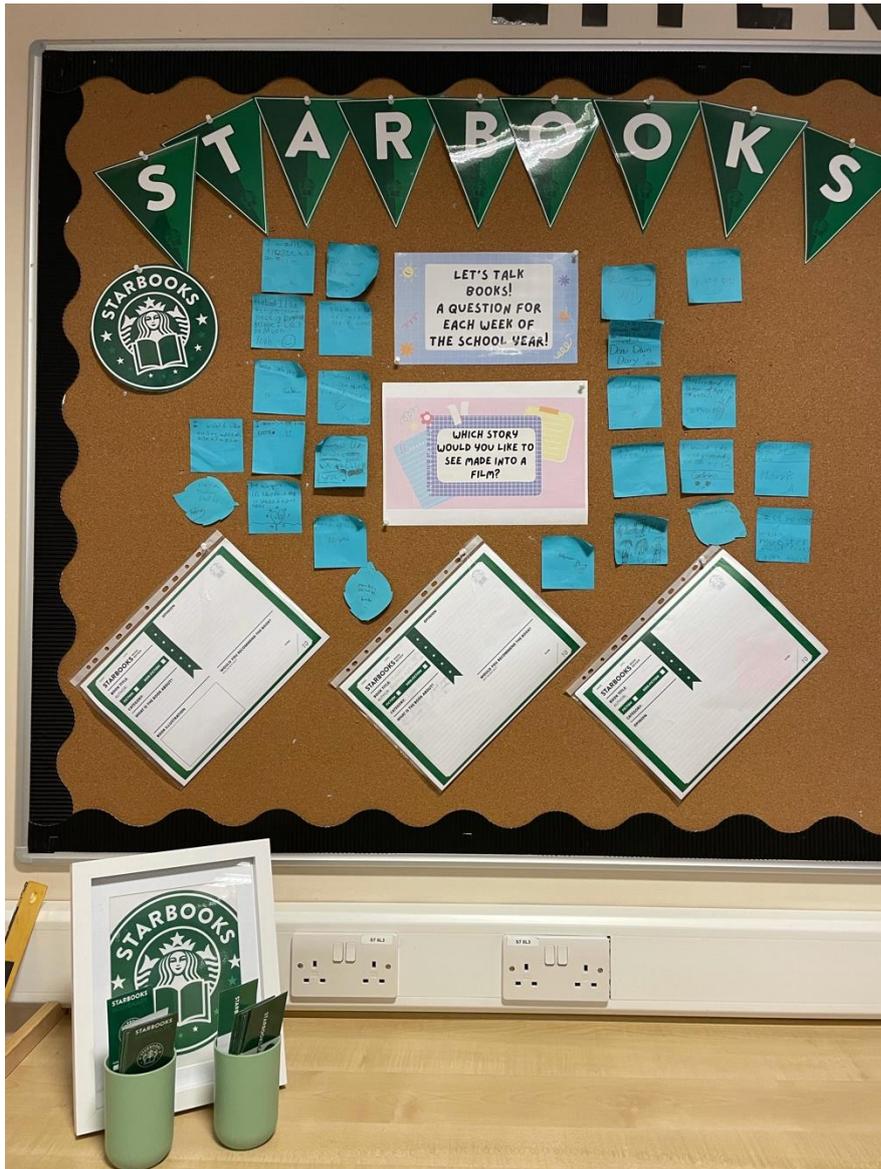
As part of a whole school development of reading, I worked with my colleagues to establish an attractive, comfortable space for a whole school library.

I also made reading an integral part of the classroom environment by creating vibrant reading displays celebrating and showcasing the children's love and desire for reading.

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







Impact

ERIC Time and Book Blethers

Very quickly, I began to notice that most children in the class looked forward to 'ERIC' time. I noticed a significant improvement in the children's reading attitudes who were using audio books during ERIC time. The children logged on without a fuss and appeared calm and settled when listening to an audio book online.

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. Very quickly, pupils' confidence grew and they were regularly asking to share their 'book reviews' with the class. The children in my class particularly enjoyed the calmness of ERIC time as detailed in the quotes below:

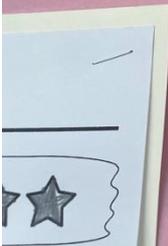


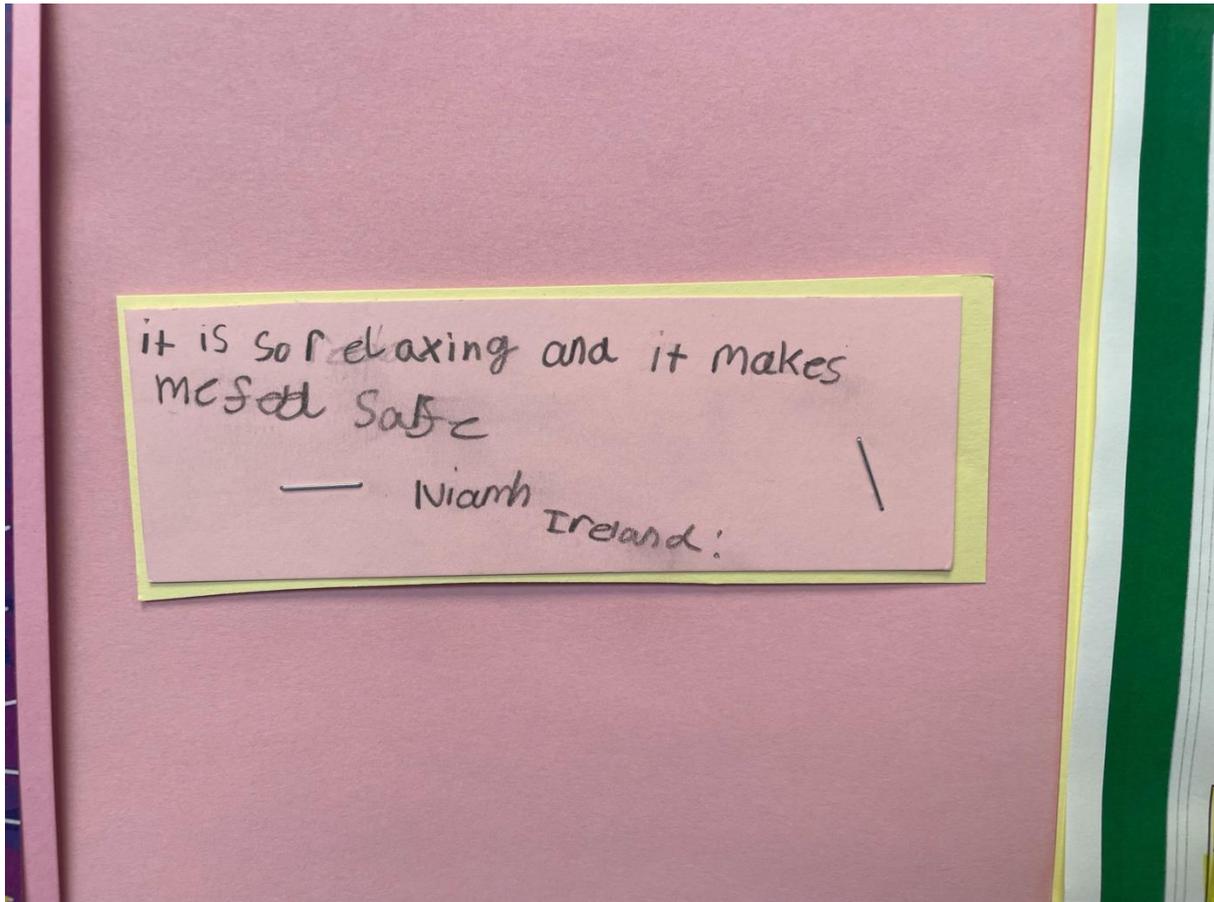
It is a good way to wind down.
— - PUKP —



Reading books lets your
imagination out.
Fatima Malik

Reading is CALM ☺
| | Jacob |





Children began to talk to me about what they were reading at other times of the day. I received positive feedback from several parents, expressing their delight that their child was now reading more at home and asking for books as a Christmas/Birthday gift. 'Cat Ninja' on Epic Books became an instant hit for my reluctant readers using assistive technologies to aid their learning.

Soon children were becoming immersed in their personal reading books. A large number of my pupils expressed an interest in graphic novels therefore I planned and taught a sequence of lessons on how to write your very own 'comic'. Pupils were completely immersed in this learning experience and created comics rich with vocabulary and full of imaginative ideas. We also extended this learning experience across the curriculum by acting out our favourite comic chapters in Drama. Each and every child was motivated, enthusiastic and taking part in meaningful conversation about reading.

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 outside my own school during RfP, Teachers' Reading groups has been truly inspiring. I have been able to identify gaps in my own knowledge of children's literature and improve my own practice as a result. I have realised the importance of promoting reading for pleasure in an environment which is relaxed, encouraging and celebrates success.

Reflection

After, 6 months of an established reading for pleasure routine and weekly book blether sessions, I have observed a notable difference in my children's reading attitudes. The use of audio books through Assistive Technologies has played a huge part in increasing my reluctant readers' confidence. They have completed several books in full and as a result have gained a sense of achievement and belief that they are readers.

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. Its clear that allowing children to establish reading habits in the classroom and opportunities to talk about their reading with each other promotes enthusiasm towards reading and encourages lifelong learning.