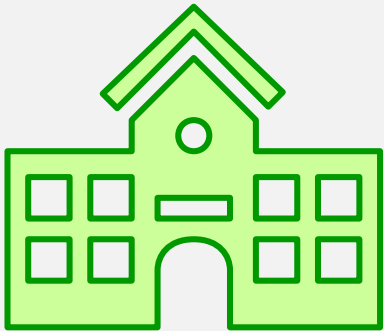


SHELF CONTROL – TEACHERS AS READING ROLE MODELS

**Created by Rebecca Dawson, Callum
Francis & Sarina Gaughan-Pollard**



CONTEXT



Edgar Wood Academy is a secondary school located in Greater Manchester. We opened our doors to students in September 2021. We currently have 300 pupils across year 7 and 8.

Sarina is the Head of English and Literacy
Callum is the Head of Science
Rebecca is a Teacher of English and PSHE Lead.

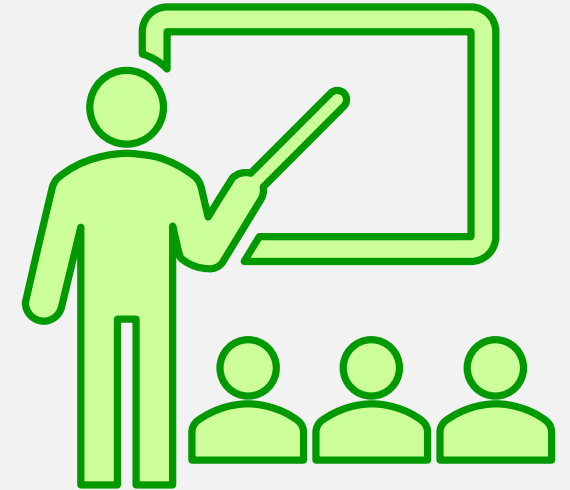
Across the school, teachers are committed to raising aspirations and our vision at EWA is to provide an inclusive curriculum which delivers breadth and depth for each individual, as well as memorable learning experiences.

Embedding Literacy is a key strand of our school development plan. We want to impart a lifelong love of reading for each of our students.



OU RESEARCH INSPIRATION AND RATIONALE

- As a brand-new school we recognised that there was potential to have a big drive on literacy and reading for pleasure and embed this as part of our school culture.
- Our inspiration is born out of a desire to enhance the reading for pleasure experience across school, not just in the English classroom.
- We were influenced by the work of M. Meek (1991) who posited that young people have 'yet to find out what reading is good for.'
- Each week our students are asked to read from their personal reading book before assembly starts. Several of our students are avid readers and value this time greatly. However, there are a vast number of students who will open a book and not be inspired to actively read during this time.
- As T. Cremin (2023) notes 'schools are full of children and young people who have learned how to read, but who do not choose to do so in their own time.'
- This disengagement is a key hurdle that we wish to overcome through this project. We recognised as a staff body that students did not understand the importance or value of reading, and they did not deem it an enjoyable or desirable activity.



OU RESEARCH INSPIRATION AND RATIONALE

As a result, it was decided to focus on the following aspects of the Open University's Teachers as Readers (TaR's) findings:

As reading teachers:
teachers who read and
readers who teach

Whole school project involving all staff
and aiming to shift the culture so teachers
are seen as reading role models by
students.

Considerable knowledge
of children's literature and
other texts

English department project aimed at
reinventing library lessons to
incorporate a range of children's
literature and texts.



AIMS

Our Aims

- Respond to a lack of interest in reading across the school.
- To introduce and discuss different types of text.
- To foster a classroom culture where informal book talk is a key part of the reading for pleasure experience of pupils.
- To allow opportunities for pupils to engage in discussion around books with their peers and teachers in a casual and informal manner.

It was pivotal for us to have buy in from staff across the school and therefore we aimed to adopt strategies that were easy to implement, time efficient and realistic for the demands of our staff body.

OUTLINE

Whole Staff Project – Reading Teachers



As reading teachers: teachers who
read and readers who teach

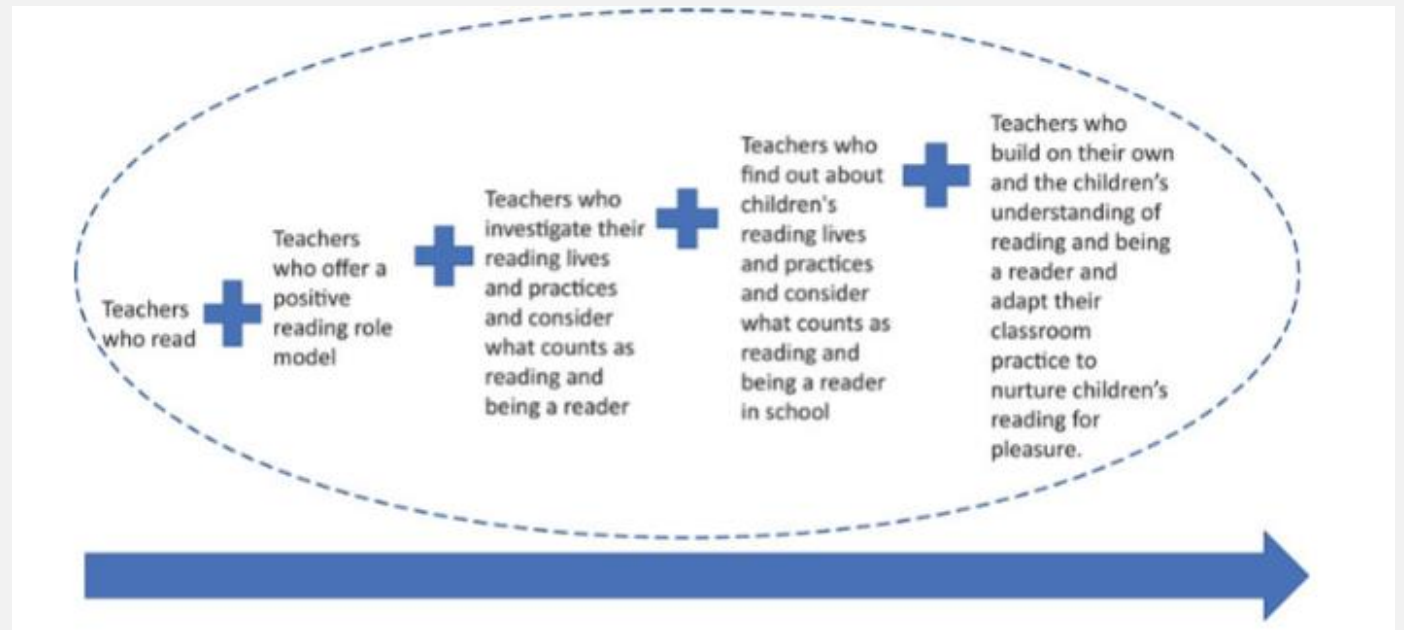
- To help promote opportunities for pupils to engage in discussion around books with teachers in an informal manner, Callum led a whole staff reading project.
- Every member of staff (including SLT and pastoral staff) was asked to fill in a spreadsheet with their top 5 favourite books.
- Gennrich and Janks (2013) note that 'how teachers see themselves and are seen by others as readers is important since their engagement enables them to model the value, pleasure and satisfaction they find in reading, and to induct children into such pleasures.'
- We decided that the best way to begin promoting the pleasure and joy of reading with students then was to encourage teachers to be openly seen as readers.



OUTLINE

- By sharing recommendations and talking about their enjoyment teachers can act as positive reading role models (see Cremin's continuum of additive practices of Reading Teachers).
- Posters were then printed by our reprographics team and displayed on classroom doors, office windows and corridors.

As reading teachers: teachers who read and readers who teach



- The first few days these went up there was a buzz from students as they began asking their class teachers what their favourite books were and what they were about.
- This led to several passing conversations in corridors between teachers and students about books and encouraged informal book talk around the school building.



Edgar Wood Academy @... · 17 Oct 22

Last week, Edgar Wood Library commenced a series of spooky readings - this will continue this week with special guest appearances from Frankenstein & The Witches from Macbeth! Last Thursday, Mrs. Gaughan-Pollard read a terrifying extract from Dracula.

[#readingmatters](#)



As reading teachers: teachers who
read and readers who teach

OUTLINE

- Another exciting opportunity for students to see teachers as readers comes from lunchtime activities in the library.
- During the autumn term staff members volunteered to read spooky stories linked to Halloween, which any student could attend.
- Kenny Pieper (2016) talks about the importance of students seeing the library as a reading space. We wanted to create opportunities for students to have regular visits to the library, so that they could see it as an important and enjoyable place.

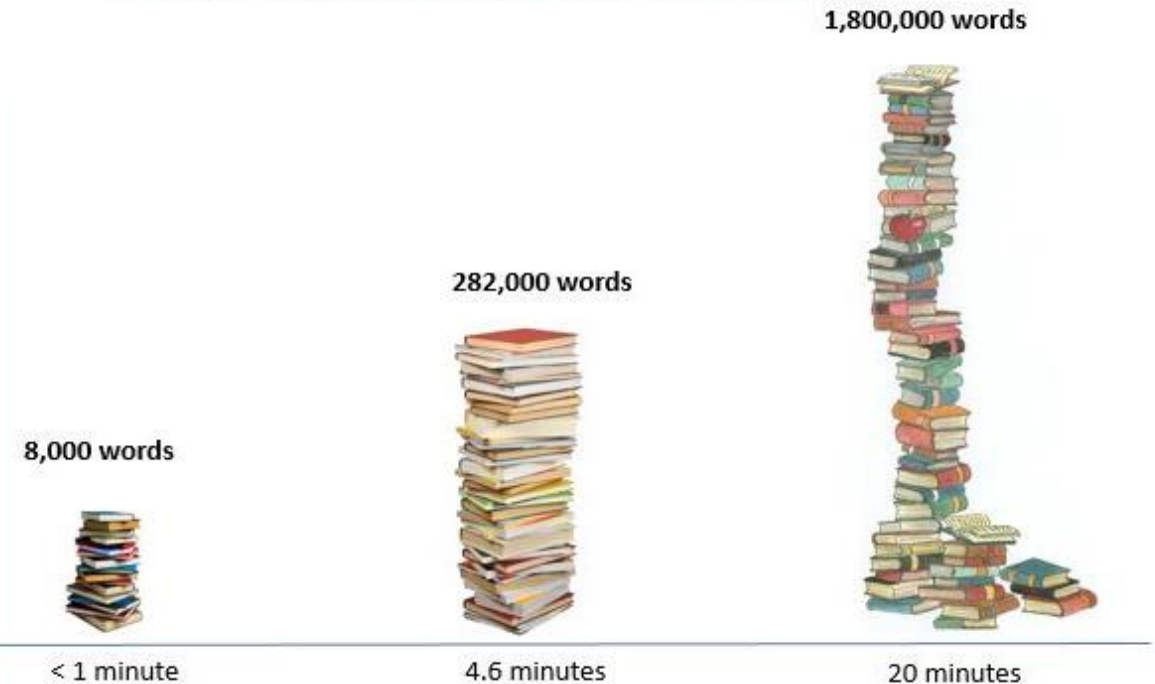


OUTLINE

Considerable knowledge of children's literature and other texts

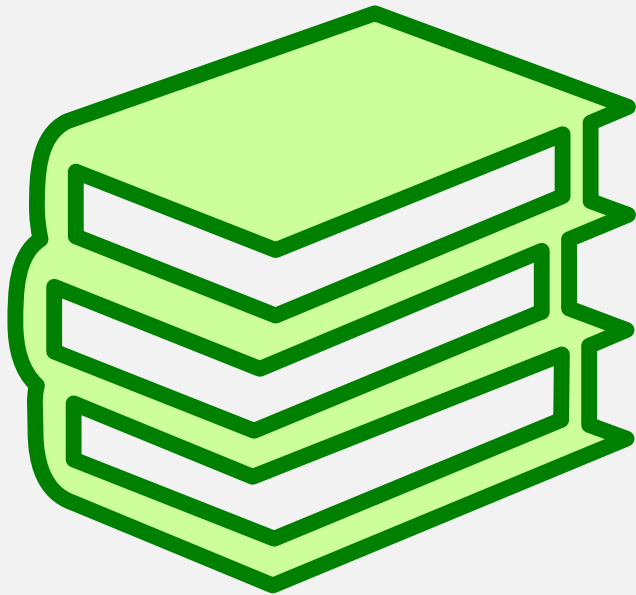
- Research from the EEF (2020) suggests that when children are exposed to a wide range of literature, they develop a depth of knowledge that supports them to comprehend and gives them motivation to read widely themselves.
- Furthermore, our literacy training showed that children could be exposed to 1,800,000 words over the course of a year if they read for just 20 minutes every day.
- We shared this image with students during assemblies to encourage them to take interest in their own literacy and improving their reading ability.
- One of the biggest barriers to this was training students to choose books that would motivate them to read for pleasure.
- This is what we aimed to address with our revised library lessons.

The Matthew effect



OUTLINE

Considerable knowledge of children's literature and other texts



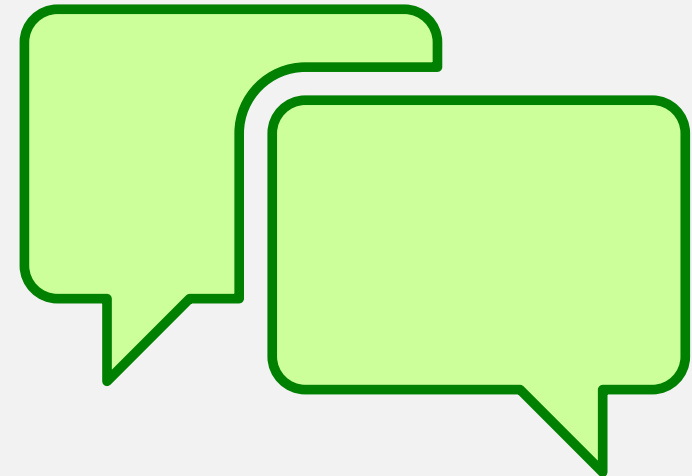
- Every fortnight in English lessons students have a library lesson.
- At the start of the year this involved students being left to independently choose a book and then being given time to actively read.
- Teachers would guide students to make choices and have conversations about books, but we felt this time was not being used effectively.
- As a department we felt that readers, especially the less able were not choosing rich and engaging books. They showed little enjoyment in library lessons and often wandered aimlessly, picking books from shelves with no intention to actually engage with them.



OUTLINE

Considerable knowledge of children's literature and other texts

- The EEF research found that many teachers who responded to their survey believed reading aloud is a communal, social, enjoyable act that serves to unite the class as a community.
- The previous way of students reading independently, often silently and with no chance to discuss this was missing the mark for us.
- We decided to relaunch library lessons to encourage students to select books they would enjoy and encourage students to talk about books with each other, instead of just with staff.



OUTLINE

Considerable knowledge of children's literature and other texts

Book Blanket

You will have 3 minutes per task. At the end of each task I will ask a couple of you to feedback and explain why you chose that book.

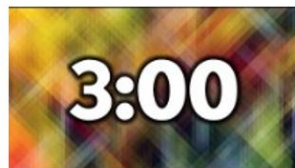
Task 2: Find a book with a fact you don't think anyone else knows



Book Blanket

You will have 3 minutes per task. At the end of each task I will ask a couple of you to feedback and explain why you chose that book.

Task 1: Find a book with a front cover that you like



- Within the first lesson we tasked students with creating their own book blankets when given a series of prompts to work with.
- There was a real buzz in the library for the first time during this lesson.
- It allowed students to explore the library shelves with purpose and select books they might never normally pick up.
- It didn't matter if pupils ***read*** these books are not, we were more interested in making the library an accessible space for them.



Considerable knowledge of children's literature and other texts

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Pupils have been creating Book Blankets in their library lessons this week. We have been working alongside Rochdale Open University to develop Reading for Pleasure. They have allowed teachers to delve into their pupils' reading tastes and inspired others with their chosen books.



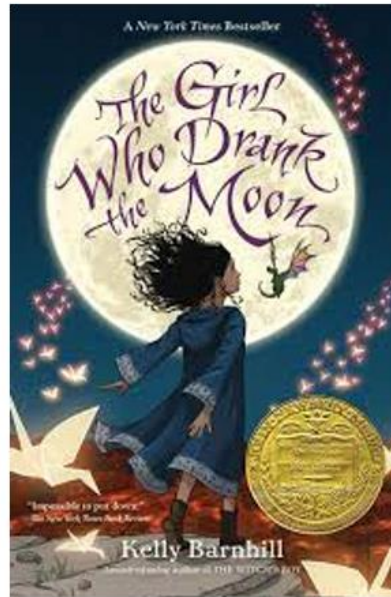
OUTLINE

Becoming a Writer

The opening of the story is written as a dialogue between 2 people - but we only hear 1 side of the conversation!

In pairs you are going to take on the role of the 2 characters. One of you will read from the book extract, the other will improvise the responses.

Then switch!



- In the following weeks, we used websites recommended by the Reading for Pleasure group in Rochdale to select new texts that could be explored during library lessons
- These texts would be read by class teachers and then students would engage with them in an imaginative way.
- This is an example of how we explored *The Girl Who Drank the Moon* with KS3 pupils.



OUTLINE

- Here is a scheme of learning for our revamped library lessons.
- We noticed students being more reflective about their text choices after session 1.
- Students are able to engage with different text types in various ways and we have seen that students enjoy library lessons more as a result.
- Moving forwards we will be continuing to add a range of texts for our students to enjoy.

Week	Text	Explore by...
1	Book Blankets	Creating book blankets to understand our reading preferences and talk about books with our peers.
2	The Girl Who Drank the Moon	Role-playing as the characters speaking in the prologue.
3	Humble Pi	Talking about why people read non-fiction texts
4	Six of Crows	Creating our own diagram depicting the city of Ketterdam
5	Can A Robot Be Human?	Debate: should we kill one person to save the lives of others?
6	Snow White	Debate: fairy tales should be banned because they represent women who require saving and are awarded with marriage.
7	Cookbook Introductions	Create a plan for your own cookbook. What recipes would you include? How would you introduce your book?
8	How to Buy a Planet (Sci-fi)	Create an advertisement designed to sell planet earth to extra-terrestrial lifeforms

IMPACT

“The library lessons are brilliant. The students are really loving them and its much better than them sitting in silence pretending to read for an hour.”

-English Teacher

“We used to have ‘currently reading’ posters at my last school. I would forget to update mine when I was busy. This way I don’t need to change it regularly, I can just talk to students about the books I love.”

-A Busy Teacher

“I don’t like reading but I’m loving this book.”

-Year 7 pupil

“Miss, what are your top 5 favourite books?
points at one front cover What’s this one about?”

-Overheard corridor conversation

“This is Mr X’s favourite book. I found it in the library so I’m reading it.
It’s good.”

-Year 8 pupil



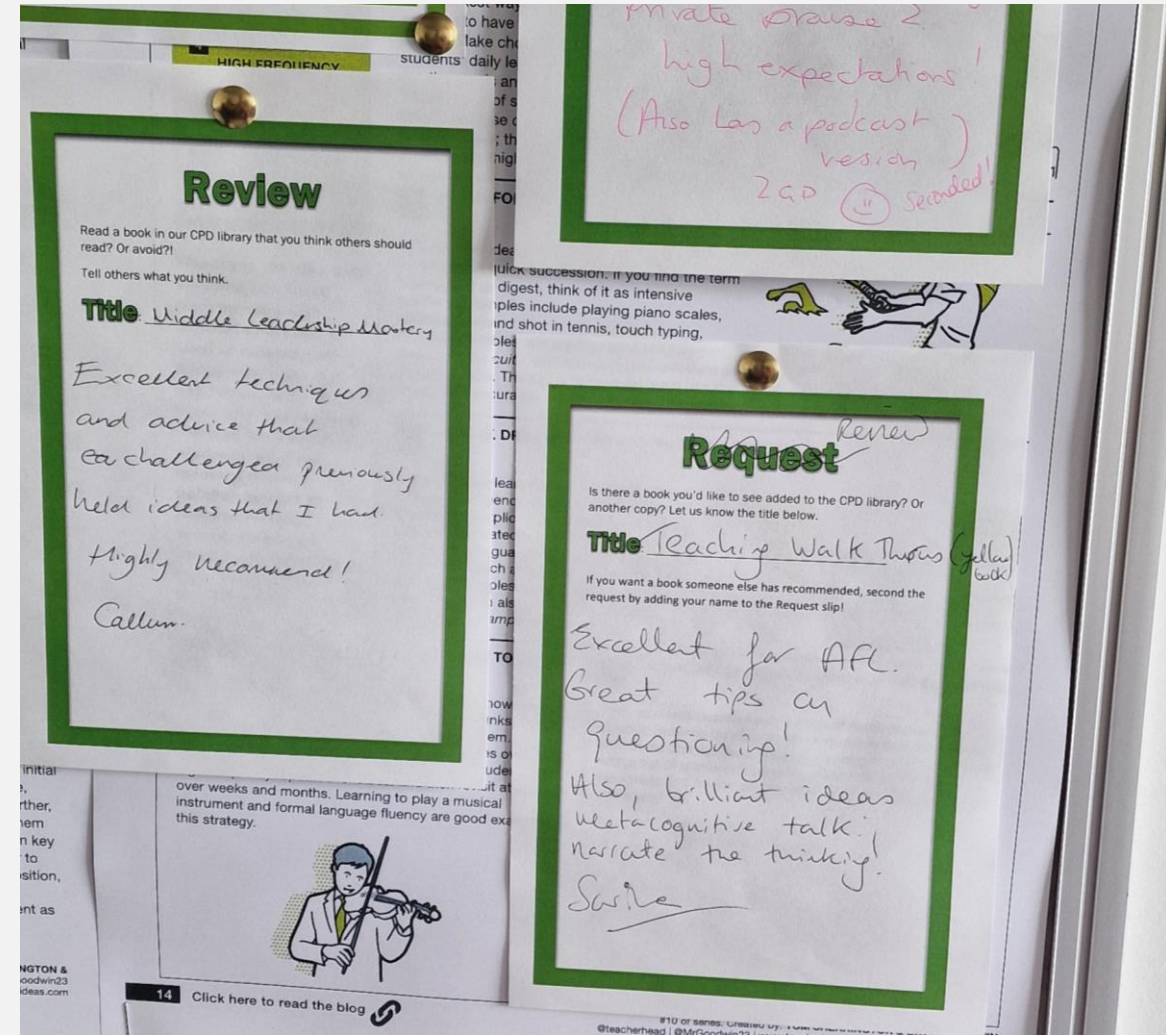


- The culture of the school is shifting, and teachers are acting as visible reading role models for students.
- In our staffroom there is both a ***CPD library*** and a ***reading for pleasure library*** that staff can access.
- Our staff members are leading the way by enjoying reading and reflecting on their own preferences. We are already starting to see this filtering down to pupils.



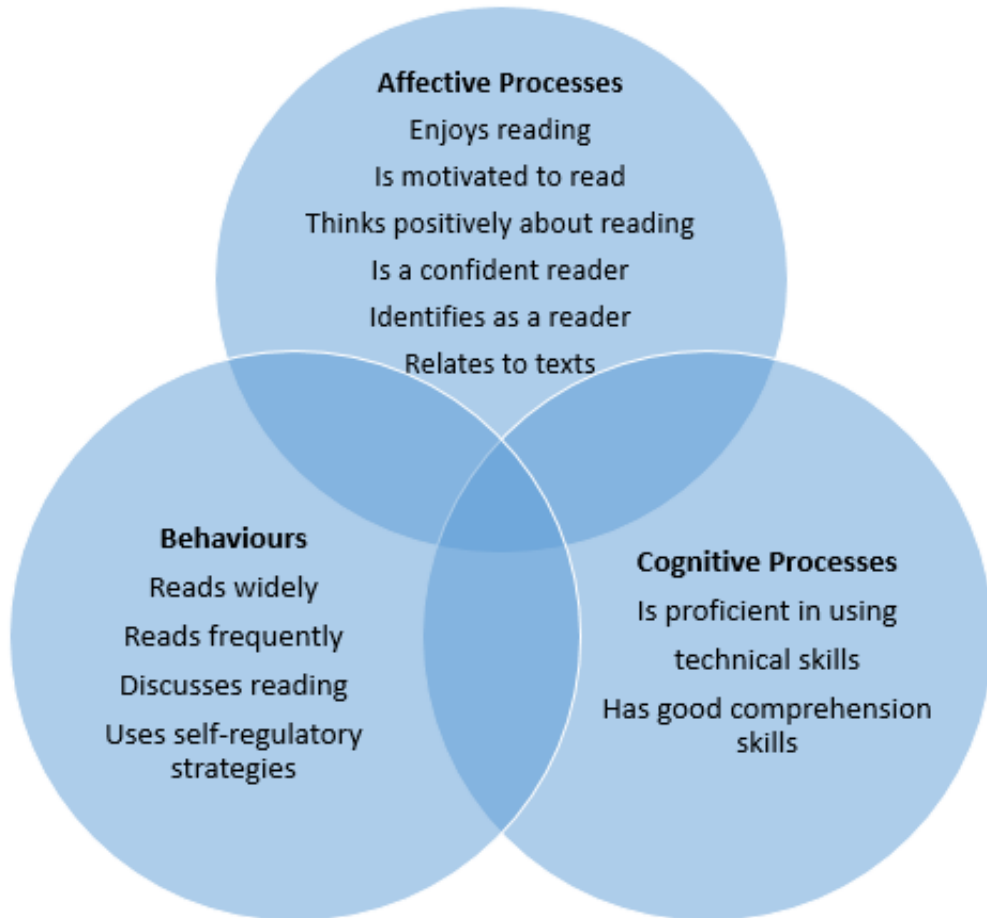
IMPACT — SHELF CONTROL

- Eventually we would like to see our pupils writing considered recommendations for their peers.
- For now, we are leading by example and reviewing or requesting books.
- By reflecting on what appears on our own bookshelves and exploring our own reading practices we are training ourselves to support students in doing the same.
- Our staff spaces are making books and reading increasingly visible.



REFLECTION

Reading...



- We still have a long way to go to embed reading for pleasure at our school.
- We have a group of Library Ambassadors who are spending lots of time on improving the library and raising the profile of reading within the school community.
- We are seeing changes in the affective processes and behaviours surrounding reading.
- Teachers and students are discussing reading more frequently now than at the start of the school year
- Teachers are identifying themselves as readers and we are starting to see students willing to identify themselves as readers.
- We still have more work to do around helping students think positively about reading and being motivated to read independently.



REFLECTION

Continue to develop our knowledge of children's authors and books.

Encourage other subject areas to run library lessons so the library is not seen as an exclusively English related space – it's for everyone!

Use staff reading posters to participate in informal book talk with children on corridors.

Create 'mini libraries' in each department area so that books are visible in classrooms, teachers are seen as reading role models and students can access book recommendations from staff.

Next steps

Start a book review binder for the library so students can browse recommendations from peers.

In future years look at staff/student librarian roles to promote reading and help students choose appropriate books.



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