

A Practical Guide to Reading for Pleasure

2012 - 2013

See inside for:

- helpful guidance on moving English forward in your school and lots of practical support for reading for pleasure
- Michael Rosen's 20-point plan for reading
- Waterstones' top 50 children's books and much more!

Reading for pleasure

Spelling

Writing

Grammar

Oracy

Comprehension

Phonics



Welcome to our Practical Guide to Reading for Pleasure!

'Reading for pleasure' is the phrase that's tripping off everyone's lips right now, but what does it actually mean and why is it crucial to moving English forward?

The new draft National Curriculum for English states that "reading widely and often opens up a treasure-house of wonder and joy for curious minds." It puts into practice many of the recommendations contained in OFSTED's recent Moving English Forward report, which highlights the fact that currently, too few pupils read widely enough for pleasure within the taught curriculum and recommends that schools develop policies to promote reading for enjoyment throughout the whole school.

At Pearson, we know that inspiring a love of literacy in your pupils so they fall in love with reading for life is one of the best ways to hook children into reading and writing – in fact, many of you have told us it's what inspired you to become teachers in the first place, but how do you inspire *all* of the pupils in your school to fall in love with reading?

On the following pages, you'll find helpful information on reading for pleasure as well as the low down on OFSTED's Moving English Forward report and what it means for you in practice. Michael Rosen, former Children's Laureate and our series editor on Literacy Evolve shares his 20-point plan for reading and Waterstones charts their top 50 children's literature picks. We also share some experiences and suggestions from two primary schools on how they have managed to inspire a love of reading among their pupils. We hope you find it useful!

Best wishes

Kath Donovan
MD, Pearson Primary

Reading for
pleasure

Writing

Grammar

Inside the guide

Primary Policy Watch update.....	1
Michael Rosen's 20-point plan for reading.....	2-5
Waterstones' top 50 children's literature picks.....	6-7
The way language works.....	8-9
Read every day, talk every day.....	10-11
Engaging families with reading at home.....	12-13
Creating a reading for pleasure culture.....	14-17

welcome



Welcome to our Practical Guide to Reading for Pleasure!

'Reading for pleasure' is the phrase that's tripping off everyone's lips right now, but what does it actually mean and why is it crucial to moving English forward?

The new draft National Curriculum for English states that "reading widely and often opens up a treasure-house of wonder and joy for curious minds." It puts into practice many of the recommendations contained in OFSTED's recent Moving English Forward report, which highlights the fact that currently, too few pupils read widely enough for pleasure within the taught curriculum and recommends that schools develop policies to promote reading for enjoyment throughout the whole school.

At Pearson, we know that inspiring a love of literacy in your pupils so they fall in love with reading for life is one of the best ways to hook children into reading and writing – in fact, many of you have told us it's what inspired you to become teachers in the first place, but how do you inspire *all* of the pupils in your school to fall in love with reading?

On the following pages, you'll find helpful information on reading for pleasure as well as the low down on OFSTED's Moving English Forward report and what it means for you in practice. Michael Rosen, former Children's Laureate and our series editor on Literacy Evolve shares his 20-point plan for reading and Waterstones charts their top 50 children's literature picks. We also share some experiences and suggestions from two primary schools on how they have managed to inspire a love of reading among their pupils. We hope you find it useful!

Best wishes

Kath Donovan
MD, Pearson Primary

Inside the guide

Primary Policy Watch update.....	1
Michael Rosen's 20-point plan for reading.....	2-5
Waterstones' top 50 children's literature picks	6-7
The way language works.....	8-9
Read every day, talk every day	10-11
Engaging families with reading at home	12-13
Creating a reading for pleasure culture	14-17

Reading for
pleasure

Writing

Grammar

Comprehension

Oracy

Primary Policy Watch update

Reading widely, for pleasure, for enjoyment and often

As well as its well-publicised emphasis on phonics, reading for pleasure is a key focus of government policy this year and is at the heart of the revised English curriculum. Indeed, the new draft National Curriculum for English states that English should be recognised as a subject in its own right, actively encourages pupils to read for pleasure and places greater emphasis on improving writing, speaking and listening skills, putting into practice many of the recommendations contained in OFSTED's recent Moving English Forward report.

Drawing the two initiatives together, Schools Minister Nick Gibb says that "Reading for pleasure is key to boosting a young person's life chances. As a government, improving reading standards in schools is central to all our education reforms. Through phonics we are ensuring all children learn the mechanics of reading early in their school career. Helping children to develop a love of reading and a habit of reading for pleasure every day is key to ensuring we have well educated and literate young people by the time they leave school!"

Moving English forward

In its report, OFSTED highlights the fact that that too few pupils read widely enough for pleasure within the taught curriculum in both primary and secondary schools and that too little improvement has been made in standards of English in recent years.

The report states that whilst there is much effective practice in English in our primary and secondary schools, too few schools give enough thought to ways of encouraging the love

of reading and a 'sizeable minority' (one in five pupils) are failing to reach national expectations in reading at the end of Key Stage 2, with many more not achieving the expected standard in writing at the end of Key Stage 2.

Teacher research

These findings are echoed in a recent survey of 400 secondary school teachers, which found that more than a third of children (42%) are likely to have turned off reading for pleasure before they reach secondary school age.

OFSTED recommendations

In Moving English Forward, OFSTED makes a number of recommendations which it believes will reverse the stagnation of English progress and encourage all pupils to read more widely and for pleasure. As well as calling on the DfE to publish research on the teaching of writing, including spelling and handwriting, and how boys can be helped to be successful writers, OFSTED recommends the DfE increase the number of specialist English teachers in primary schools and improve existing English coordinators' subject knowledge.

At individual school level, they want all schools to encourage pupils to read widely and to develop policies to promote reading for enjoyment. At the early years level, nursery and primary schools should develop a structured programme for improving children's communication skills in the EYFS to secure pupils' early reading skills by the end of Key Stage 1.

Boosting life chances

So as with phonics, the active encouragement of reading for pleasure takes centre stage in the government's drive to raise standards. As well as Michael Gove's suggestion last year that 'Children as young as 11 should be expected to read 50 books a year as part of a national drive to improve literacy standards', the All-Party Parliamentary Group for Education has also said that 'reading for pleasure should be a core part of every child's curriculum entitlement because extensive reading and exposure to a wide range of texts make a huge contribution to students' educational achievement'. And with a new National Schools' Reading Competition to encourage reading for pleasure coming soon, the literacy landscape looks set to be dominated by phonics and reading for pleasure in the coming years.

Julie McCulloch

Pearson Centre for Policy and Learning



Michael Rosen's 20-point plan for reading

Michael Rosen, the former Children's Laureate, is on a mission. His mission is to turn every school into a book loving school, a place where books are prioritised and enjoyed. In his many years of visiting schools, Michael has seen lots of activities that really help get children excited and talking about books. Some of these ideas, as well as some of his own, go into his 20-point plan for reading. We know that you will be doing some of these already, but we hope you will come across some new ideas that you will enjoy using too.

How many of Michael's ideas are you doing already in school? Post your boast at twitter.com/primaryschool #readingforpleasure and let the world know what works for you!

"If we don't learn to love books, we don't read. And if we don't read widely, we don't think deeply." **Michael Rosen**

1. Improve home-school liaison

It's really important to share the idea that books and talking about books really matters, but this can be difficult to extend beyond the classroom into the home environment. A good starting point is to have someone in each year group who is responsible for talking with individual parents or carers about their child's reading. The discussion should be very specific and matched to the interests of each child and their parents or carers. Talk about particular books, magazines or reading websites, about your local library or book clubs that might be of interest. Make sure the dialogue is ongoing, not a one-off chat!

2. Hold events

Arrange for writers, illustrators, storytellers, librarians and book enthusiasts of all kinds to visit your school regularly to talk about books and perform to your children. Some events – such as a special story telling assembly or a local author visit – won't take much time to organise and will help your school become a place where everyone talks about books and reading. Or why not pull out all the stops to create a real splash once a term? How about a launch event for the first day of your campaign to inspire everyone? Then you can ask the children and their parents for ideas about what kind of reading event they'd like to hold next! You can invite people who are passionate about reading into school, but there are bound to be lots of book enthusiasts in school already among your staff, parents, carers and older pupils! You could designate them as Reading Buddies for the younger or more reluctant readers to spread their enthusiasm for reading across the whole school. There are some excellent ground rules for Reading Buddies at www.readingrevolution.co.uk/get-started.

3. Create close links with booksellers

Forge and maintain good contacts with booksellers as they can often help you find writers and storytellers to visit your school. Don't limit yourself to the syndicated book fair contact; talk to your local and specialist bookshops too. If there is a children's section in your local bookshop the shop manager will have a good overview of what's available for children, will be knowledgeable about authors and illustrators and will probably be used to organising author visits to schools and setting up bookstalls to sell copies of suitable books at the same time.

Spread the word about your local bookshop – many good booksellers run regular weekend storytelling sessions with local and well-known authors. Keep up to date with their events so that you can let the children know when something good is coming up.

4. Appoint a school librarian

If you don't have one already, setting up a school library takes time and commitment and keeping it running in a way that continues to inspire children requires the dedication and skill of someone who is trained and interested in the job. If this seems like too big a task, start small with a mini library in every classroom. Not enough space? Make room! If the library is hidden away, books may become sidelined so why not think about using a corner of your school hall or another space which gets lots of traffic?

Not enough in-school expertise? Bring it in! Ask your local librarian to come into school to help you set up the kind of library that suits your needs. Not enough time? Find a volunteer! If you ask, you might find a parent or better still, two parents, who can support the teachers and perhaps eventually take on the job themselves. Once you have your library, however small, make sure you find time for the children to use it regularly.

5. Set up school book clubs

Aim to have an active book club that includes every teacher and every child in every class. Conduct a survey and ask everyone what kind of club they want. To appeal to everyone, you might need to set up more than one club. Work with your school librarian and other book enthusiasts to organise the appropriate books and to ensure everything runs smoothly. You can ask the children to help promote the club/s and cover some of your literacy objectives at the same time by challenging them to design posters to advertise them. Make sure you refresh book club books regularly to generate wide-ranging and in-depth conversations about reading.

6. Share information on local libraries

Aim to make every family in the school aware of where the local library is, when it's open and what's available there for children. Arrange a trip to the library in school time, planning the visit ahead by liaising with the local librarian. Make visits to the local library appealing by creating an exciting information pack for your children to take home and read with their parents or carers. Include your school logo, photographs, artwork and quotes from pupils and parents who love reading, saying how brilliant particular sections of the library are or why a particular event at the library was so inspiring.



7. Adopt an author or illustrator

If you can, work with an author or illustrator (ideally both!) for an extended period of time. This is a great way to achieve some of your literacy objectives about understanding an author's work in more depth. To find the right author for your school, first decide what you want to achieve. If you have a theme that's running for a term or a year that you'd like to tie in with, look for an author who has written in this area. Visit www.societyofauthors.org or www.booktrust.org.uk to find an author that fits the bill.

8. Try book-making

Making hand-made books needs lots of pairs of hands. Depending on the techniques you use, book making can include cutting, hole-punching, sticking, stapling, sewing, using the computer... Don't be shy about asking parents and carers if they have a free hour to come into support the practical sessions. Then show off your hand-made books! Set up a display in the school foyer. Bring out the books and celebrate the children's achievements at parents' evenings and invite each class to take it in turn to hold up their hand-made books in assembly for all to see. For practical ideas on making books, take a look at www.makingbooks.com/freeprojects.shtml.

Michael Rosen's 20-point plan for reading

9. Share books

Sharing books and encouraging conversations about them is crucial to keep reading enjoyment alive. Try to build time into the school day for book swaps and assembly presentations of 'this week's good read' or book posters and display book reviews prominently around school. Survey pupils or use the suggestion box to find your own ideas for the best way to share books in school. And don't forget to get your keen readers involved. They will have a good idea about which books might interest more reluctant children so pair them up as Reading Buddies.

10. Read widely

School trips or events at school are an ideal opportunity to encourage your children to read more widely. Find books for children to read that are relevant to the trip or event's theme. Ask your school librarian to check if you have relevant books in school or ask the local librarian to suggest books you can borrow. Send a letter home with children asking families to bring in relevant books and other literature to share and involve the staff too.

11. Try regular themed activities

Make sure you incorporate books whenever there is themed activity at school. Arrange for each class to visit your local library to search for books to support your theme and ask children to bring in magazines, pictures and other reading material from home. Reading of all kinds, in all genres and for all ages can be covered by these activities, but you don't need to do everything at once. If you have an active and varied programme throughout the school year, you will have covered a lot of ground by the end of each term and you can even follow up term-time themed activities with reading challenges for the holidays!

12. Get the reading habit

Spending time on books and reading in school will show children how important books are and will really help your pupils to see them in new and imaginative ways. Develop a whole-school policy about reading books out loud every day and remember, assembly is a great time to promote reading. Encourage children to chat about the books they are reading. Every angle and approach to book chat is valid and this is particularly true for reluctant readers. Give children time to read a book in school every day. Don't give them excerpts that can be fitted into 15 minutes, but instead, give them 15 minutes to read a whole book and get Reading Buddies to support the reluctant readers. Encourage parents and carers to keep reading to their children. Run a survey asking every child in school to name the author and title of three books they've read recently then challenge them to review their favourite books.

13. Collect odd, old books

Make reading intriguing by finding a place for old or strange books in your school. Have exciting, ever-changing, even weird books to provoke ideas and conversation in the Headteacher's office and on every teacher's desk. Visit your local charity or second-hand bookshop and search out books with leather or cloth bindings and different styles of lettering, such as gold blocking. Display old posters to show what book promotions used to look like and experiment with tea-staining to make display lettering look aged. You could even organise a book treasure hunt! Hide books around the school, ideally hiding each book in a particularly relevant spot. Maybe the name of the author could reference an object in school or the content of the story could link to a particular teacher or room in the school?

14. Keep and use book reviews

Get into the habit of regularly cutting out and keeping (or cutting and pasting) reviews of children's books. Get all members of staff involved so you are all informed about which new books are coming out, why they are good and how they might link to ongoing work and discussions in school. Keep the best and more relevant reviews in an accessible place and introduce a system of adding to and actively sharing the reviews with your colleagues – perhaps by making them the subject of a monthly staff training session.

15. Avoid hidden catches

Finding time in the day for free reading as well as for discussions about reading can be difficult. To avoid it being squeezed out by other things, establish a principle that in gaps – such as waiting for a visitor or when the projector is being set up – children can get out their reading books or talk about their books together. Support this principle by showing a keen interest in the book each child is reading, encourage discussion by asking open-ended questions and group the children in different ways to chat about their books. Have your own book to read alongside the children and chat about it in an excited way too.

16. Have plenty of books around

Always make sure there are plenty of wonderful children's books in the room when a meeting about literacy is taking place. This is particularly important when teachers are helping parents and carers to understand literacy and the importance of regularly reading with their children. There's a great list of recommended children's books at www.readingrevolution.co.uk/get-started.

17. Encourage varied reading

Ensure all your children are excited by reading by providing a variety of reading materials to suit their various interests. As well as giving children opportunities to enjoy classic stories at school, include annuals and football programmes open at the Junior Supporters pages, and books that tie in with TV shows and films. Place a book basket in the school foyer to catch children's eyes as they enter the building and include information about how the books can be borrowed, making sure the process is easy so that budding reading enthusiasts aren't put off at the first hurdle. Display the books in school face-out, so that the bright cover illustrations and graphics catch children's attention as well as tell them what's inside.

18. Perform stories


Performance is a great way to engage children in the excitement of stories but you don't need to limit it to the children. Wrap up curriculum evenings or group meetings with parents and carers with a read-aloud session from a children's book, choosing stories that are well-suited to being read aloud such as one of Julia Donaldson's and Axel Sheffler's masterpieces. Explain very clearly at the start of the session that joining in is compulsory! Encourage parents to be vocal by leading by example and aim for all staff to agree up front that they too will join in.

19. Share precious books

Establish a school culture that values the sharing of favourite books from childhood and you will uncover some fascinating stories. Start with your own favourites to get the ball rolling and encourage staff, parents, grandparents and other carers to share their memories of favourite books from their childhoods. Ask them to bring in and show off the books that they have kept since they were children. Time and inspiration permitting, you could turn the gathered memories into projects that support your curriculum objectives in an enjoyable way.

20. Train colleagues on children's literature

Aim to be clear and vocal about your support for specific instruction on children's literature to be once again included in teacher and assistant training courses. Talk to colleagues about what you as a school would change about the present system and lobby relevant organisations to help make it happen.

A photograph of Michael Rosen, an older man with glasses and a beard, wearing a brown jacket over a white t-shirt. He is sitting and holding an open book, looking directly at the camera with a surprised expression. In the foreground, the backs of several children's heads are visible, suggesting he is reading to a group.

This article is abridged from
Michael Rosen's 20-point plan at
www.readingrevolution.co.uk
where you can read reviews for the
latest children's books, watch
Michael and find much more besides.

Waterstones

Top 50 children's literature picks

Stuck for inspiring literature to catch your children's imaginations? Wondering what on earth is out there to tempt your reluctant readers?

In Waterstones stores every day, great children's books are flying off the shelves, some are new stories, some are classics from the authors we ourselves loved as children, but all of them have one thing in common - they've made it onto the Waterstones Top 50 children's literature picks!

If you're searching for books for reading for pleasure, this list a great place to start...

The top picks for 5 to 8 year olds

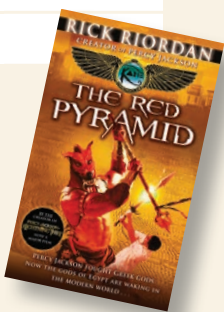
1. Mrs Pepperpot Stories	Alf Proysen	Random House
2. Utterly Me, Clarice Bean	Lauren Child	Hachette Children's Books
3. Kate the Royal Wedding Fairy	Daisy Meadows	Hachette Children's Books
4. Fantastic Mr Fox	Roald Dahl	Penguin Books
5. The Kitten Nobody Wanted	Holly Webb	Magi Publications
6. Flat Stanley	Jeff Brown	Egmont Children's Books
7. George's Marvellous Medicine	Roald Dahl	Penguin Books
8. Horrid Henry and Other Stories	Francesca Simon	Orion Publishing
9. Horrid Henry and the Zombie Vampire	Francesca Simon	Orion Publishing
10. Beast Quest: Ferno the Fire Dragon	Adam Blade	Hachette Children's Books
11. The Worst Witch	Jill Murphy	Penguin Books
12. The Magic Faraway Tree	Enid Blyton	Egmont Children's Books
13. The Twits	Roald Dahl	Penguin Books
14. You're a Bad Man, Mr Gum!	Andy Stanton	Egmont Children's Books
15. The Butterfly Lion	Michael Morpurgo	HarperCollins

The top children's reference picks

1. Horrible Histories: Ruthless Romans	Terry Deary	Scholastic Ltd
2. Horrible Histories: The Terrible Tudors	Terry Deary & Neil Tonge	Scholastic Ltd
3. Atticus the Storyteller's 100 Greek Myths	Lucy Coats	Orion Publishing
4. See Inside Castles	Katie Daynes	Usborne Publishing
5. See Inside Space	Katie Daynes	Usborne Publishing
6. See Inside Your Body	Katie Daynes	Usborne Publishing
7. Predators	Steve Backshall	Orion Publishing
8. Steve Backshall's Deadly 60	Steve Backshall	New Holland UK

The top picks for 9 to 12 year olds

1. Percy Jackson and the Lightning Thief	Rick Riordan	Penguin Books
2. The BFG	Roald Dahl	Penguin Books
3. The Lost Hero	Rick Riordan	Penguin Books
4. The Naughtiest Girl in the School	Enid Blyton	Hachette Children's Books
5. The Twins at St Clare's	Enid Blyton	Egmont Children's Books
6. Matilda	Roald Dahl	Penguin Books
7. May Contain Nuts	Jonathan Meres	Hachette Children's Books
8. Little Darlings	Jacqueline Wilson	Random House
9. The Kane Chronicles: The Red Pyramid	Rick Riordan	Penguin Books
10. Laura Marlin Mysteries: Dead Man's Cove	Lauren St John	Orion Publishing
11. The Tales of Beedle the Bard	JK Rowling	Bloomsbury Publishing
12. Private Peaceful	Michael Morpurgo	HarperCollins
13. Farm Boy	Michael Morpurgo	HarperCollins
14. Artemis Fowl	Eoin Colfer	Penguin Books
15. The Brilliant World of Tom Gates	Liz Pichon	Scholastic Ltd
16. The Worst Thing About My Sister	Jacqueline Wilson	Random House
17. Shadow	Michael Morpurgo	HarperCollins
18. Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone	JK Rowling	Bloomsbury Publishing
19. Hiccup	Cressida Cowell	Hachette Children's Books
20. Skulduggery Pleasant	Derek Landy	HarperCollins
21. The Boy in the Dress	David Walliams	HarperCollins
22. Mr Stink	David Walliams	HarperCollins
23. Billionaire Boy	David Walliams	HarperCollins
24. Diary of a Wimpy Kid	Jeff Kinney	Penguin Books
25. Gangsta Granny	David Walliams	HarperCollins
26. War Horse	Michael Morpurgo	Egmont Children's Books
27. Diary of a Wimpy Kid: Cabin Fever	Jeff Kinney	Penguin Books



Available at your local Waterstones or online at Waterstones.com

The way language works

Understanding the way language works contributes to children's enjoyment of reading and writing and equips them with vocabulary, an awareness of genre and a feel for sentence grammar – in short, the skills they need to draw on to become confident and fluent readers and writers. Just as understanding the rules of football enhances your enjoyment of watching it, understanding the 'rules' of language enriches children's reading and writing experiences.

In this article, Janet Brennan, a former HMI, teacher and literacy expert gives some helpful suggestions about how to help children understand more about the way language works.

Learning how experts write is illuminating. Whether it's the structure, the sentences or vocabulary, seeing how a text is constructed allows us to read it in new ways.

An important element in understanding how stories work, for example, is the notion that something significant has to happen to move the plot forward – a critical incident. Consider, for instance, the scene in Martin Waddell's *Farmer Duck* when the animals rebel against the lazy farmer who 'got fat by staying in bed'.

You can explore this critical incident with children of any age. Introduce the story by showing this scene alone: the animals' entry into the farmhouse is magically illustrated by Helen Oxenford. Don't read anything else of the book at all. Make a point of not revealing other clues – especially not the cover. Ask the children what they notice. 'Why are the animals indoors?' 'Do you think they know where to go? ... 'Why do you think that?' 'What can we tell about how the cow feels?' 'Is there anything else you notice?'

With younger children, pursue their ideas to develop the story orally – their story, asking 'What do you think is going to happen next?' 'How will our story end?' 'And how could our story begin?'

With older children, start the same way but encourage them to pick up on other features such as the significance of the time of day, indicated by the sepia-like tints of the illustration; the simplicity of the language. Then ask them to write what might be the preceding and subsequent pages – or, indeed, all of them as they imagine them – in a similar style. (Later, when you read the whole story, you might want to mention George Orwell's *Animal Farm*. They won't read it now, but they might in a few years' time.)

But take time, first, to investigate the language with them. Focus on the two sentences: 'They stole down the hall. They creaked up the

stairs.' Draw children's attention to the precise, monosyllabic verbs; the repeated structure (main verb with a prepositional phrase); the sense of movement created by the opposing 'down' and 'up'.

In fact, move away from 'Wow!' words altogether. Teach your children to think about vocabulary less superficially. True 'Wow!' words gain their impact through context and not through the words themselves.



Learning how experts write is illuminating. Whether it's the structure, the sentences or vocabulary, seeing how a text is constructed allows us to read it in new ways.

Let me show you what I mean. There's a telling example on the opening page of Susan Cooper's classic fantasy, *The Dark is Rising*. We are introduced to Will, looking out of the window and 'wishing it would snow properly'.

We are told how 'The snow lay thin and' (– here the author uses the word I want to discuss –) 'over the world.' 'Thin and' – 'We are told that the snow is 'thin and apologetic'. The adjective comes as a surprise. First, juxtaposing it with 'thin' is an unusual

Noun - names a person, place, thing or idea.

Adjective - describes a noun.

What kind? How many? Which one?

Verb - tells you what someone or something is doing.

way to describe snow. Second, humans may be 'apologetic' but not snow. The author personifies the snow, because it 'refused to fall' from the 'broad sky'.

Explore another description, a page or two later, as Will and James, on their way to Dawsons' Farm, pass 'the tall spinney of horse-chestnut trees, raucous with the calling of the rooks and (– here is another exact word –) with the clutter of their sprawling nests'. 'Rubbish-roofed' is the author's choice there. Look at how that compound adjective sums up the appearance of the top of the spinney, how the alliteration of the 'r' in both words also draws us back to the words 'raucous' and 'rooks' earlier in the sentence. Neither the word 'rubbish' nor 'roofed' is intrinsically 'powerful' – they are certainly not 'Wow!' words – but, drawn together, we can imagine that December spinney.

Don't shy away from using the technical terms 'compound adjective', 'personification', 'monosyllabic' and any others you need. Simply make such language a normal part of talking about books. The children might not learn all the words, but they'll remember some of them.

In a programme about reading on Radio 4 in May this year, Nick Gibb, the Minister for Schools, described how learning to recite poetry by heart 'embeds deep inside you more interesting ways to use language'. Helping children to examine how authors use language 'in interesting ways' can work similarly. In talking about the author's craft, you give children the vital tools they need to write – knowledge and skills that go beyond the superficial. They enrich their understanding of language and of the book; and you have then taught them to read more deeply for pleasure.

There's a great little video photostory of Farmer Duck on YouTube! Check it out at http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_2Qn7-X8Wuc



Read every day, talk every day

When she was appointed as Head Teacher of Brookfield Infant School in Kent four years ago, Pauline Woods was determined to lead with passion. That passion has had a transformational impact on the way reading is prioritised across the whole of the school. Here, she tells us how their reading initiative 'Read Every Day, Talk Every Day' or RED TED for short, was born and how it turned reluctant readers into readers for pleasure at the school.

My passions are 'families' and 'reading'. I truly believe that a school can only achieve the best for its pupils if - right from the start - it admits 'families not just pupils' into its community. Reading underpins all learning and therefore I determined my mission was to instil a true love of reading into every pupil and inspire them to learn both at home as well as at school!

Brookfield Infants is a two-form intake in a diverse area. Pupils in our school have a wide range of abilities and come from a variety of social backgrounds. Our number of free school meals is above the national average and 26% of pupils have special educational needs. In 2008 our data for reading attainment was below the national average.

The clues to reading attitudes in the school soon led me to detect a certain lack of enthusiasm from all quarters! Pupil Reading Contact books indicated that a worrying number of pupils rarely read regularly at home. Parent questionnaires revealed that a lot of them felt unsure about how to support reading at home and some were brave enough to admit that their own reading ability was very poor. They also stated that actually persuading their children to read was a chore in itself. Attitudes from certain members of staff were also concerning especially when I learned in a staff meeting that library books were collected in two weeks before the end of each term for a stock take. And we were supposed to be crusaders for promoting reading at home!

I had to solve the situation and act quickly if I were to have a chance of influencing our present intake. Those Eureka moments are so exciting and happen at the most unexpected times. One

Saturday when driving home from some much needed retail therapy, RED TED was born...

"Those Eureka moments are so exciting and happen at the most unexpected times. One Saturday when driving home from some much needed retail therapy, RED TED was born..."



All of our little people needed to READ EVERY DAY and TALK EVERY DAY and RED TED was just the little character to help set those good habits into motion. Within hours I had it all planned: every time a child read at home and had their book signed by an adult they would receive a RED TED stamp. As soon as they had collected ten RED TED stamps in their home record books

they would bring it along with their current reading book to be presented with their RED TED.

RED TED is a miniature bear with a sash that says 'Brookfield Infant School. Read Every Day, Talk Every Day'. During the presentation I would explain that RED TED was theirs to keep and take home. He didn't require food or water but he would need a story every day to keep him happy.

The delight and excitement in the faces of the RED TED recipients was all I needed to know that this was working! Children who previously hadn't read ten times at home in a year were arriving at my office after only a couple of weeks to be awarded their

little teds. Parents were enquiring about when their little person was going to receive theirs and good habits were starting to form in the homes of our families! Feedback revealed that parents were not having to battle with their children to encourage them to open their book bags and that they would appreciate some support regarding how to best help their child at home. Together RED TED and I had started our own reading revolution!

Four years on and RED TED is an institution in our school and also quite famous! He has appeared in the local press and on South East television and visited a number of other schools to help generate a similar revolution and ignite a love for reading.

We now award RED TED t-shirts, pencils, bookmarks and certificates throughout the school. We hold RED TED workshops for parents to help them support their child's home reading alongside adult literacy classes. And..... we have solved the library crisis! We have created a RED TED Swap Shop from donated books. Pupils who don't always have reading material at home can come to the swap shop and simply swap a book. We don't even mind if it's not returned as we are happy that pupils have books at home.

RED TED is one of the best and most successful initiatives I have introduced and it has transformed attitudes to reading in our school. Parents

understand the importance of home reading; staff have developed expertise in teaching reading and our pupils sum it up like this; WE LOVE RED TED!

For me, the reward is witnessing my two passions of 'families' and 'reading' flourishing hand in hand to inspire a love of reading in all our pupils.

Pauline Woods,
Head Teacher, Brookfield Infant School





Kate Ruttle, SENCO

Engaging families with reading at home

"I've given up reading with Will. He brings the same book home every night for a week and we both get bored of it. I don't know what to do with the book. I don't know how to help him."

Inspiring a reading for pleasure culture doesn't stop at the school gates; getting parents on side to help their children fall in love with reading is just as crucial as the work that goes on in school.

Here, Kate Ruttle, SENCO at Great Heath Primary School in Suffolk tells us how her school has managed to help parents continue to support learning at home and shares with us her top ten ideas for engaging families with reading at home.

Will's* mum had always been supportive and Will was a loving, hardworking child in Year 2, so his teacher was surprised to hear that comment. We have 'How to Read with your Child at Home' leaflets which we hand out each year; we offer some badly attended reading workshops for parents; teachers are always available to talk to at the end of the day. Will's mum had never approached his teacher to say she had a problem.

Unfortunately, Will's reading attainment had plateaued for three terms, and we couldn't seem to move him forwards. His decoding was consistently accurate – at the level of books he was reading – but he had little understanding of the text. The meeting between the teacher, Will's mother and me had been set up to see if we could agree a strategy to move Will on. This comment, 20 minutes into the meeting, changed the conversation. If Will's mum was unintentionally sending him negative messages about reading, was Will picking up on that feeling and losing interest himself?

The agreed action at the end of the meeting was that we would change Will onto a different reading scheme with fresh books and characters. The key aspect of this new scheme is that it has notes for parents on the inside front cover so that Will's mum would have a better idea about how she could help him. For her part, Will's mum agreed that she would make reading with Will a special time each day after school, as well as agreeing to read to him every night at bedtime.

That meeting was key to our understanding of how we could help Will. Up until that point, we had been looking for reasons for Will's lack of progress, exploring the possibility of an underlying learning difficulty. But instead, we focused on building Will's motivation and reading confidence. Almost immediately, we started seeing an improvement in his

*names have been changed.

reading and within a term he had regained his enthusiasm and nearly caught up with the levels we predicted for him before he plateaued.

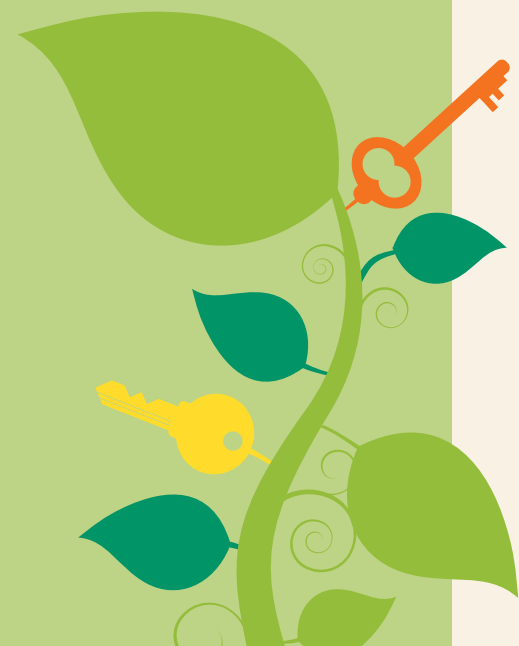
The whole experience with Will and his mum brought back to us the question of what we needed to do to engage our parents in their children's learning in a way that they found helpful, rather than in one which we found expedient. We were lucky, in a way, that it was Will's mum who brought this issue to our attention: she is articulate and recognises that we do our best for the children. If she was feeling this way about reading, how were other, often less well educated and less articulate, parents feeling? Our reading results are just below national average and we can't seem to improve them. But the conversation with Will's Mum may provide a way forwards for us. Perhaps it isn't a matter of what we need to change in school, but of what we should change to support our parents to help their children at home?

"The whole experience with Will and his mum brought back to us the question of what we needed to do to engage our parents in their children's learning in a way that they found helpful..."

Our ten big ideas...

- Talk to more parents: what kind of help and support would *they* appreciate?
- Find out from other schools what they have done to engage parents.
- Look at the National Literacy Trust Website. They have lots of competitions and ideas to engage families with reading.
- Make links with the local library. How can we work together with them?
- Create opportunities for bringing parents into school to share books with their children.
- Make more of our own school library.
- Look online at publishers' websites. What do they have that might help our parents?
- Set up family reading challenges.
- Look more carefully at the reading books we send home. Can we ensure that the majority have notes to help parents?
- Build relationships with parents and ensure that we listen carefully to what they say.

"Up until that point, we had been looking for reasons for Will's lack of progress, exploring the possibility of an underlying learning difficulty. But instead, we focused on building Will's motivation and reading confidence."



Creating a reading for pleasure culture

How do you inspire all of the pupils in your school to fall in love with reading? Well, having books that children want to read, in formats that excite them, such as comics, graphic novels and even eBooks, is a great way to start. On the following pages, two schools – Bangor Central Integrated Primary and Great Heath Primary – talk about how Bug Club has created a buzz about reading among their pupils and is helping turn their reluctant readers into little book worms.

Bangor Central Integrated Primary School and Bug Club

Wendy Jenkins, the Literacy Coordinator and Deputy Head Teacher at Bangor Integrated Primary School, Northern Ireland, took part in the trialling of Bug Club books and software as they were being developed. She involved all of the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 teachers and children in the trialling, and as a result, has become one of Bug Club's most enthusiastic advocates.

"The children have loved trialling the books" Wendy says. "They loved the diversity of characters they came across in Bug Club. Instead of seeing the same characters in every book, they read about lots of different characters. This led them to use much richer language when they were talking about the books."

Wendy has been focusing on promoting reading throughout the school this year. The Foundation Stage teachers assess all the children for reading readiness when they start school. Quite a few of the children are not used to handling books, so Wendy finds the lilac level wordless books in Bug Club really useful for them.

A particular favourite was the Trucktown series – the boys loved the trucks and the girls loved the fact that there was a girl truck just for them! The teachers at Bangor usually find that getting children hooked on books is a real challenge. "They are so used to TV, DVDs and everything else that getting them interested in reading is really hard. But Bug Club had children laughing, engaged and begging for more!"

When Sharon Heasley, a teacher at the school, read Chase in New York with her pupils, she was impressed. "The children really enjoyed the book and I was so impressed, it was great! The illustrations were exciting and informative. They stimulated a lot of discussion about an aeroplane journey, the city of New York, landmarks of New York and visits to the zoo. It was a really interesting and very clever story told in just a few pages. Completely suitable for this level. I would thoroughly enjoy using this book as a story book with my children."

Turning boys into book worms

Like many Literacy Coordinators, Wendy is faced with the tricky issue of how to turn boys into enthusiastic readers, but she feels

she has found the answer with Bug Club. She told us about a little boy who read one of Bug Club's Jay and Sniffer books, The Missing Masks. The boy began the trialling process by saying that he was bored. But once he started to read, he really connected with the story, wanted to read it and laughed at the pictures. Later, Wendy overheard him animatedly retelling the story and describing the pictures to some other children who had not been involved in the trialling process. His final comment was "it's really funny!"

Helping parents join the Club

Like many schools, Bangor has found that when children start school their parents are very keen to read with them, but the older the children get, the less they read with their parents and the more the school has to work with them. The school does run workshops with parents and sends parent activity sheets with the books that go home. Wendy feels that the help parents are offered on the inside covers of Bug Club books will be really useful. She's also pleased to hear that Bug Club software offers parents extra support and ensures teachers will be able to monitor how much children are really reading at home.



Teachers catch the Bug too

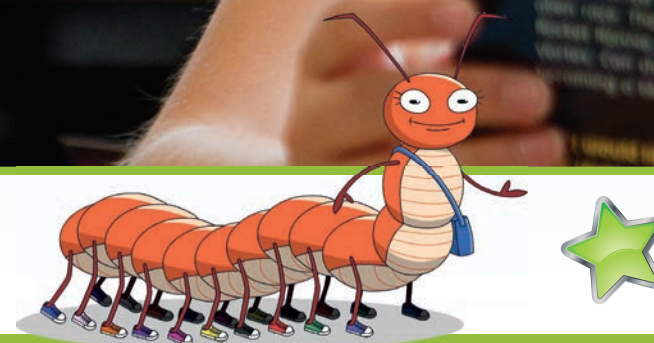
When asked what teachers most liked about Bug Club, Wendy said that she loves the diversity of books with the great variety of genres in fiction, non-fiction and comics. In the books, Wendy feels that there is a good balance of context words, high frequency words and phonically decodable words in all the books. She is also really looking forward to using the eBooks on her interactive white board to model reading and during shared reading.

Why Bug Club?

At Pearson we strongly believe that if a child enjoys a story they will want to read more, and the more they read the better readers they become. The aim of Bug Club is to create stories, pictures, activities and software that have children grabbing the books rather than turning on the TV. It's a tall order, but when 7 year old Ailie at Bangor School read Sick as a Parrot, she thought we got it right: 'What a good story, the pictures were cool!'

About the School

Situated in the centre of the coastal town of Bangor in Northern Ireland, Bangor Central Integrated Primary School is one of 41 integrated primary schools in Northern Ireland. These schools accept children from all faiths and as such have a very diverse range of children. It is a large school with 568 children aged between 4 and 11. There are 3 classes per year group and the school draws children from a very mixed catchment area.



Creating a reading for pleasure culture

Great Heath Primary School and Bug Club

Kate Ruttle, the SENCO at Great Heath Primary School in Mildenhall, Suffolk trialled Bug Club at the end of last year as part of the school's Fischer Family Trust Wave 3 literacy programme. Here she explains how Bug Club helped two Year 2 children who were really struggling with their reading to make progress and take those all important early steps on the road to becoming confident and fluent readers.

The background

Too many children in our school don't get level 2 in their Year 2 SATs and these children are at a clear disadvantage as they enter Key Stage 2. We had already made the decision to train a teaching assistant to follow the FFT programme, when we received the Bug Club books. Since the books are so carefully levelled, and they are all unfamiliar books, we decided to use them with our children. We did the FFT training in early October, so we have only been following the programme for 6 weeks as of the middle of November.

Initially, we decided to select two children who are already well behind at the beginning of Year 2:

- Child A is a summer born girl. Initial teacher assessment put her as reading at about a level P8 which we decided to match to Bug Club level Red C.
- Child B is a summer born boy. He was virtually a non-reader so he started reading the Pink A books.

The programme follows the basic structure of Reading Recovery with alternate writing days and reading days. Children read each book a minimum of 3 times: it's introduced on a reading day, re-read on a writing day and re-read again as a familiar text at the beginning of the next reading day. The children each have 20-25 minutes a day 1-1 support for reading and or writing.

Child A: from P8 to 2B within one school year

Part of Child A's problem with school has always been confidence. She joined the school nurture group when she was in Reception in order to boost her confidence and this was largely successful, but A always finds it hard to start a new class with a new teacher. She has been assessed by the Educational Psychologist who thinks that A is potentially an able child who is under-performing.

At the beginning of Year 2, the reading observation was again that A had lost ground from a 1C back to a P8 and wasn't really doing much in class at all. After the first couple of sessions of FFT, we decided to move her back to Red A in order to give her

some confidence. This approach worked and she soon began to look forward to her daily sessions. Within a week, she was reading confidently back at Red C - and she has continued to make amazing progress. Six weeks into the programme, she is now reading confidently at Green A and will move to Green B next week. This is a jump from a struggling P7/8 to a confident 1B in a matter of weeks.

"Although he couldn't yet read the Star Wars books or the Wallace and Grommit books, he understood that if he worked hard, this might happen"

A has obviously been supported by the daily reading sessions and the opportunity to develop a trusting relationship with an adult in school. However, the small painless steps in Bug Club have been invaluable because she has had the confidence to learn, to try out the strategies she is being taught and to enjoy reading. Her confidence is already impacting on her general class work too, and her Mum is thrilled that A is reading and rereading all of the books on her online Bug Club world at home.

When A is reading securely at Green C - which should be before Christmas - we will gradually withdraw the programme, but make sure that the TA reads with her at least once a week. By the beginning of the Spring term, A will be back on track and her end of year predications are now a level 2B which was unthinkable only a few weeks ago, but now seems like a real possibility. From P8 to 2B within one school year is very good progress!



Child B: learning to learn and enjoying becoming a reader

Child B is a very active little boy who has always been unwilling to sit down, to read and to write. Assessments suggest that he has low average receptive vocabulary (BPVS standardised score of 89 in July 2010) and a poor short term memory. By the end of Year 1, he was realising that he was falling behind his peers and his behaviour worsened. This pattern continued at the beginning of Year 2 and we were hesitant about taking him into the FFT programme because of it. However, we made the decision that since he needed to learn to read, we would see what impact the programme might make.

For B, one of the big draws to the programme was the familiar characters in some of the books. Although he couldn't yet read the Star Wars books or the Wallace and Grommit books, he understood that if he worked hard, this might happen.

"For B, the value of Bug Club is twofold: the small steps are allowing him to make progress without fear of failure, and the clusters of books are giving him incentives to move on."

Initial assessment showed that B was still at an early stage of learning phonics: although he recognised most of the letter sounds, he wasn't blending successfully. All of the children in school have daily phonics sessions in attainment sets. B was doing the phase 3 work for the third time because he hadn't made the progress we had hoped. This had previously been put down to his behaviour but it quickly became apparent that part of B's difficulty was that he didn't 'get' the point of phonics.

We started B reading the Trucktown books, starting with the Lilac and quickly progressing through Pink A and Pink B. Once B realised that he could use his phonics to work out the words in the text, he took off. We revisited the Harry and the Dinosaurs books at Pink A and Pink B to ensure that he was secure reading at these levels and then moved onto Red. Six weeks into the programme, B is now reading the Yellow books and he will soon be ready for Blue.

For B, the value of Bug Club is twofold: the small steps are allowing him to make progress without fear of failure, and the clusters of books are giving him incentives to move on. The pattern of his progress has continued to be that he will read

all three books in a cluster; then go back a couple of sublevels and read all three books in the next cluster. In between times, he reads some of the non-fiction books. Although reading the third book in a cluster can be a trial - so we read it with him - by the time he has already read through two clusters at the same level, he is easily able to read all three books in the next. The motivation of reading another book about a character has proved to be sufficient to spur him on and given him the incentive to try. As an additional incentive, he is sometimes allowed to read his familiar book on the computer (he doesn't have internet access at home).

B's behaviour is now much improved and he is generally willing to make an attempt at anything that is offered to him - including writing which was once a significant trigger for temper tantrums. Once he realised why he was learning phonics, he discovered that he had been inadvertently learning the phase 3 graphemes after all and he was promoted into the Phase 4 group. He will move to Phase 5 after Christmas.

We will continue to work with B for at least another 3 months in order to see if we can achieve a level 2 by the end of the year. It's a tall order, but we are optimistic that he will at least gain a level 2C at the end of this year. Although he is still working behind the expected level for his age, B is now learning to learn and enjoying becoming a reader.



"From the moment I picked up one of the books and realised that the content inside more than lived up to the expectation created by the attractive covers I knew that I had to make Bug Club a school priority... However it wasn't until I heard the reaction of the children in the class next door to my office that I realised what a special resource we have on our hands - each and every child was genuinely excited."

Tristan Roberts, Headteacher
Ysgol Kingsland, Holyhead



Bug Club

Try Bug Club FREE for 60 days

www.joinbugclub.co.uk

Transform reading and writing in your school

Developed with the former Children's Laureate Michael Rosen, Literacy Evolve is perfect for encouraging reading for pleasure. It brings whole-class literature teaching back to the classroom, using real, whole books, films and poetry from the best children's authors and poets.



Try Literacy Evolve FREE for 60 days

www.pearsonprimary.co.uk/literacyevolve

Talk to your local Pearson consultant on 0800 023 2723

Email: primaryappointments.uk@pearson.com Web: www.pearsonschools.co.uk/consultant

Keep up with all our latest Reading for Pleasure news, including competitions, helpful advice and more by following us on twitter - twitter.com/primaryschool