

Developing reading for pleasure in your school



There are significant benefits of reading for pleasure (RfP). Indeed international evidence demonstrates that RfP:

- increases attainment in literacy and numeracy (e.g. Anderson et al., 1988; OECD, 2010; PIRLS, 2006; Sullivan & Brown, 2013)
- improves general knowledge;
- enriches vocabulary and increases self-confidence as a reader (Rothbauer, 2004; Appleyard, 1990)
- encourages imagination, empathy and mindfulness of others (Kidd & Costano, 2013).

However, reading for pleasure does not comprise a series of activities or stand-alone initiatives and requires far more than the development of apparently enticing reading areas and well stocked libraries to be effective. In the current accountability climate it is demanding and complex to build richly reciprocal communities of readers who are motivated and socially interactive about what they read. It requires significant professional knowledge, and well planned and evaluated pedagogic practice to create

communities of engaged readers. Such work is richer and more sustainable when informed by significant research.

The site is based upon the *Teachers as Readers* research project. This work undertaken in 5 LAs across England influenced both policy and practice and showed that in order to effectively develop children's RfP, teachers need to develop:

1. Considerable knowledge of children's literature and other texts;
2. Knowledge of children's reading practices;
3. A reading for pleasure pedagogy, encompassing:
 - social reading environments
 - reading aloud
 - informal book talk, inside-text talk and recommendations
 - independent reading time
4. As Reading Teachers- teachers who read and readers who teach;
5. Reciprocal and interactive reading communities.

Resources to support development work based on this research are available for each key research finding (1-5) on the site. These are available as downloads and include:

Review your practice documents: Used for whole-school review, these can be undertaken individually and anonymously online and the printed reviews passed to the literacy coordinator for analysis. Alternatively, printed copies could be used in a staff meeting as a prompt for discussion.

More research details: Used to support staff and prompt discussion these 2 page summaries offer clear insights into each of the key Teachers as Readers research findings.

Practical classroom strategies: These documents offer 10 rich RfP ideas for staff to select from, adapt and develop in their classrooms.

Examples of practice: Short focused accounts of classroom based development work, informed by Teachers as Readers and undertaken by teachers and student teachers from across the UK and beyond.

Developing research informed practice

Through connecting your school development work to this trusted research, professional learning will be enhanced as staff learn from and add to the Teachers as Readers research insights. You might wish to set a time frame and agree your school focus. This may be identified by an assessment of staff needs, undertaken

by using one or more of the review documents on this site. You will no doubt also want to find out the children's attitudes to reading and their practices and preferences as readers within and beyond school. You might adapt the National Literacy Trust survey or use one of the ideas documented in the website section on 'Teachers' Knowledge of Children's Reading Practices'.

Over time as you work with staff in meetings, development days and perhaps in their classrooms, you can help your colleagues to pay attention to two levels of changes.

1. Their own subtly changing practice, such as their wider knowledge of children's literature and other texts, their own role and their pedagogy. 2. The wider IMPACT of this on children's volitional engagement as readers and the development of a reading community. Sustaining a commitment to RfP is essential. Following your development work it makes sense to share and celebrate new practice, and its impact, with each other in your school and more widely.

Why invite the staff to develop RfP work in school and share this on the site?

The opportunity to showcase work on the OU RfP website enables staff to:

- share good practice based upon research
- celebrate the impact of their development work
- participate reciprocally in the RfP community
- raise the profile of the school and its commitment to this agenda
- share their work with governors and parents
- identify areas for further development in response to need.

What form does sharing take?

Staff could share their RfP development work based on the Teachers as Readers research by uploading evidence of it as a 2 sided word document or a short PowerPoint. See templates (with prompts) and the exciting examples on the site, and be sure to invite staff to include some engaging pictures! You will need to check your school policy with regard to visuals of children/adults.

The site offers support for developing research-rich practice and for joining a professional community of educators who are committed to sharing how they foster children's reading for pleasure. Do use it and share your own work on it. We hope it will help you to make more of a difference to the will and the skill of young readers.

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