



The Open  
University



## Strategies for whole school development



Fostering children's reading for pleasure (RfP) in an individually focused accountability culture is not easy. It is both demanding and time consuming 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 targeted at RfP. 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 Local Authorities 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

## **Developing research-informed school practice**

Through connecting your school development work to the trusted *Teachers as Readers RfP* research, professional learning will be enhanced as staff learn from and add to this project's research insights.

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, it will help you make more of a difference to the will and the skill of young readers.

There is considerable material on the site designed to support you on this journey, based on the research and related to each research finding. These are available as downloads for staff use and include: review documents, practical classroom strategies documents and research summaries, as well as related examples of classroom/school practice and PowerPoints for staff meetings.

The process of developing research-informed school practice might usefully involve:

1. **Identifying staff needs:** you could use the core RfP Review your Practice document and collate strengths and areas for development.

2. **Reviewing children's RfP:** you could use the Children's Reading Survey and combine this information with knowledge from tests already in use. You might sample from each class or invite children to undertake the survey online. This survey could be used at different points in the year to help review impact of any changes made in school approaches to RfP.
3. **Agreeing a focused school RfP development plan:** based on the findings from the needs analysis, set a time frame and clear goals focused on one or maximum two of the key areas for development (see 1-5 above). Agree success criteria also.
4. **Setting agreed personal and collective targets to achieve your goals:** encourage staff to set themselves individual development targets for (e.g. establishing reading aloud more regularly with more child choice and discussion) as well as collective staff targets (e.g. widen our knowledge of children's literature and other texts).
5. **Providing professional development opportunities:** in response to need and in staff meetings and development days you could mine the ideas on the site – to develop CPD which engages and involves staff, in reflecting on themselves as readers, widening their knowledge of children's literature and developing a planned RfP pedagogy.
6. **Documenting the impact of the development work on children's RfP:** the impact of the work on children's volitional engagement as readers and the development of a reading community deserves documenting. At the end of the year you could choose to repeat the Children's Reading Survey and/or track library borrowing.
7. **Celebrating best practice through sharing on the RfP site:** the opportunity to showcase work on the OU RfP website enables staff to:
  - Share good practice based upon research with governors and parents
  - Celebrate the impact of their development work
  - Raise the profile of the school and its commitment to this agenda
  - Participate reciprocally in the RfP community
  - Identify areas for further development in response to need#

Staff could share their RfP development work as a two-sided word document or a short PowerPoint. See templates, with prompts (link below) 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.

<https://researchrichpedagogies.org/share/reading-for-pleasure>