

Outline

- Returning to school after the Christmas holiday, we spent time talking about what the children had read during the break. Several of them talked about books they had received, which led to a discussion about graphic novels and comics not being viewed as 'real reading' by some parents because they're 'too easy' and have pictures. We then talked about what 'real reading' was and about the reading that we do during a day.



- That evening, I created my own 24-hour Reading River (above) to share with the class the next day. I tried to include a wide variety of media and not limit it to books and magazines. It is a visual activity and, for speed, I used mostly photographs. However, a Reading River could also be easily created using drawing and writing.
- I talked to the children about my reading day and all the text types that I 'flowed' through. I emphasised that some of the reading was done for pleasure, some for work and some for 'real life', reinforcing the message that reading is key to our daily routine.
- Many of the children then created their own Reading Rivers at home (several were helped by their parents) and brought them in to share with the class. Some pupils then talked about their Reading Rivers during assembly.

Impact

- Children were able to reflect upon and share their wider reading diet with their peers, their teacher and their family.
- As a teacher, I was able to learn more about what children read at home and what they define as reading. This made me think carefully about what we had available to read in the classroom and library. As a result, we have subscribed to the Phoenix comic and increased the number of relevant magazines (eg Minecraft, Simpsons) available.
- The activity ensured that reading was discussed every day in class when the children brought in their Reading Rivers.
- The wall display in the library that was created using the children's Reading Rivers created a ripple effect across the school, with other classes and other teachers adapting and developing the idea. One class looked at their weekend Reading River and other children talked about the Reading Rivers for their entire family. Several teachers used the opportunity to 'freshen up' the available reading material in the classroom.

