

MORE THAN BOOK WORMS!

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CONTEXT

- ▶ We are 3rd year BA Primary Education students at the University of Greenwich.
- ▶ We have had a wide experience in practice through working and visiting schools across London, Kent and Essex.
- ▶ We are currently studying a self-elected course in children's literature and we have a passion for reading and teaching reading in the classroom.

OU RESEARCH INSPIRATION AND RATIONALE

We have decided to focus our presentation on Teachers' knowledge of children's literature and other texts as we believe this is the area we would most benefit from developing. Reading for Pleasure research demonstrates that a wide knowledge of modern children's literature enables teachers to be better equipped to embed reading for pleasure in their pupils.

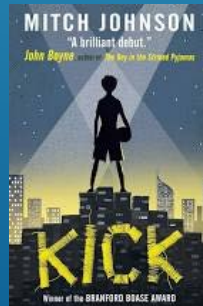
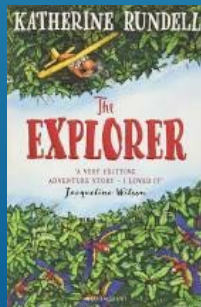
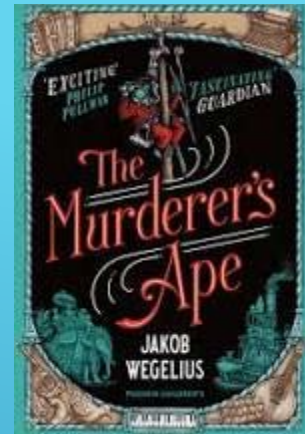
- ▶ *'Teachers who have a good knowledge of children's literature are much more able to make well-judged recommendations to children about what they may like to read next and are also more able to develop a community of readers in their classroom'* (Bearne and Reedy, 2018:155).
- ▶ *'A breadth of knowledge of children's literature is essential if a teacher wishes to develop positive reader identities'* (Cremin et al, 2014).
- ▶ *'Teachers' attitudes to reading and their knowledge about children's literature and other texts can markedly influence their capacity to teach reading creatively'* (Cremin et al, 2014).
- ▶ *'Reading teachers are well enough informed to introduce children to new writers and genres and to select complex, potent books for extended study'* (Cremin et al, 2015:58).
- ▶ *'Knowledge of children's literature and of individual children and their reading interests is essential in order to develop young readers who can and do choose to read for pleasure'* (Cremin et al, 2014).
- ▶ *'Effective teaching of reading and writing is contingent upon teachers' deep subject knowledge of texts and approaches to working with them in the classroom'* (Gamble, 2019).
- ▶ The ULKA Teachers as Readers (TARs) research reports that teachers need an up to date knowledge of children's literature in order to foster reading for pleasure. It found that only 46% of teachers could name 6 children's authors (many of these were celebrity authors) and only 10% could identify 6 poets. This is not the teacher we want to be, therefore we have worked hard during this course to develop our understanding of children's literature, including fiction, non-fiction and poetry texts.

AIMS

- ▶ We want to reflect on our subject knowledge of children's literature in order to be in a better position to foster a Reading for Pleasure pedagogy in our classrooms.
- ▶ We aim to develop our knowledge of children's literature.
- ▶ We aim to reflect on our journey of how we have developed this subject knowledge and the impact this will have on our future practice.
- ▶ We wish to become involved in a community of readers, to engage in the sharing, and discussion of quality literature which will help to develop our own pedagogy.
- ▶ Finally, we want to identify areas of ongoing improvement that will make us even more informed of children's literature.

OUTLINE

- ▶ Reading for Pleasure research demonstrates that teachers too often rely on celebrity authors such as Roald Dahl and David Walliams in their classrooms. We have been working to develop a wide subject knowledge of many authors which can be used and explored by children.
- ▶ This was started by the opportunity to shadow the UKLA book awards (7-11 age category) during the summer of 2019. We read books then took part in book groups where we shared ideas about these books: what we liked and did not like and ideas for how we might use them in the classroom. Reading these books inspired the group to read further works by the same authors.
- ▶ The following slides show some of the other work we have done to further develop our knowledge of children's literature.



UKLA
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- ▶ Creating a reading river allowed us to reflect on what we read, what has shaped us as readers and to have a discussion about what has led us to where we are now in terms of our reading knowledge and preferences.
- ▶ *'...teachers need to find out more about children's everyday lives and reading practices and broaden their understanding of the wide range of texts that children choose to read in their homes and communities'* (Cremin et al, 2015).

This is a great activity and can be used in the classroom. It can help teachers to understand what a child has read, what they like to read and how much they read. It provides opportunities for teachers to recommend texts a child might like based on their reading experiences. It also helps to build a community of readers in the classroom as children can share and recommend what they have read.

WE CREATED OUR OWN READING RIVERS





- ▶ As part of our course, we have explored children's books from a wide variety of authors and genres.
- ▶ We have read 13 chapter books which has widened our knowledge of children's literature, and authors, immensely.
- ▶ Each student created a reading journal based on one of these books to demonstrate a deep understanding of one text and how this might be used to support teaching and learning in the classroom.

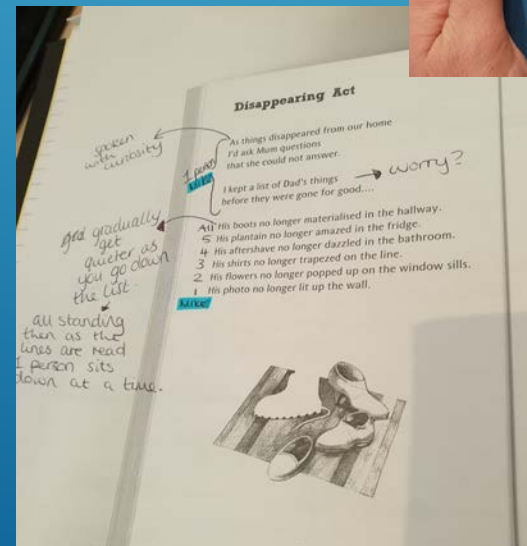
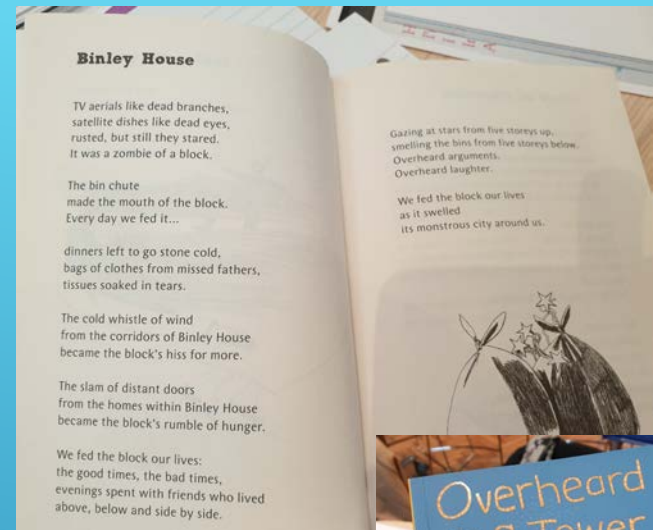
CHILDREN'S LITERATURE COURSE



WE VISITED THE CENTRE FOR LITERACY IN PRIMARY EDUCATION (CLPE) IN LONDON

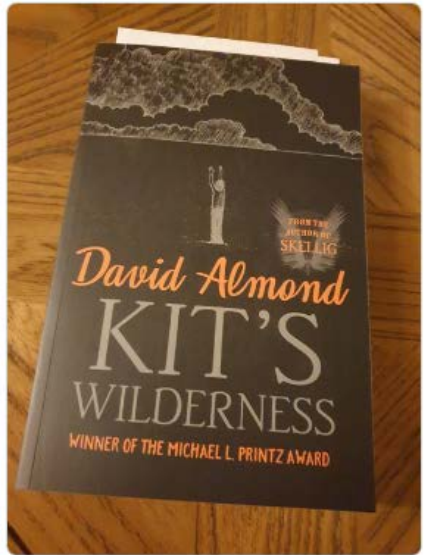
- ▶ Here we were able to explore fiction, non-fiction and poetry books for children of all ages and have meaningful discussions about those we knew, those we did not, and how we might use these in the classroom.

- ▶ At the CLPE, we were introduced to a wide range of children's poetry and poets beyond those we already know and love.
- ▶ We had the opportunity to work in groups to act out poems we liked, and consider how emotive and meaningful they can be for children.
- ▶ Throughout the workshop, we were given the time and space to explore poetry and were signposted to works that would be a good baseline for building our subject knowledge.

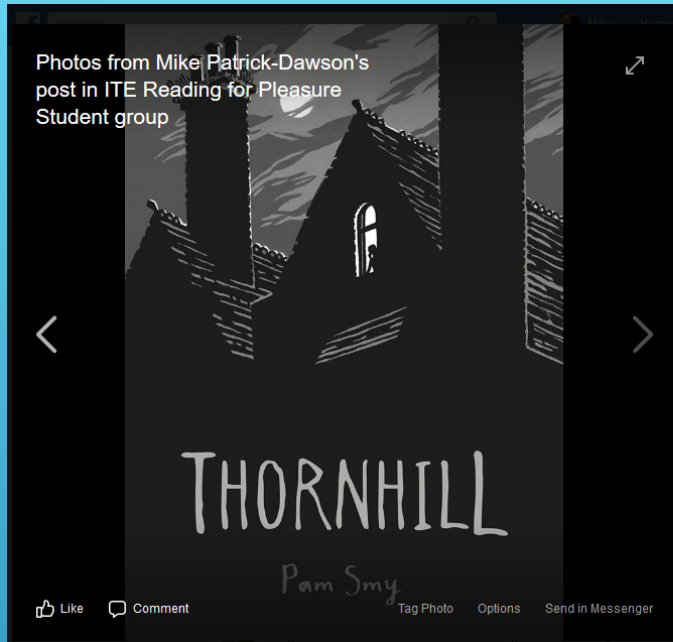
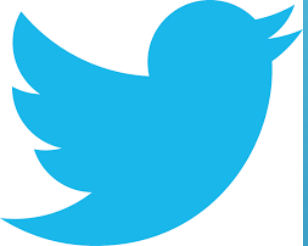


POETRY WORKSHOP AT
THE CLPE

Tweet
 @Mr_PD_Teacher
 Another wet weekend means another book to read. So many good reviews of this one; I've wanted to dive into it for ages! @davidjalmond #readingforpleasure #readingcommunity #weekend



6:27 AM · Nov 23, 2019 · Twitter for Android
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 David Almond @davidjalmond · Nov 23
 Replying to @Mr_PD_Teacher
 Thanks, Mike.



Mike Patrick-Dawson · ITE Reading for Pleasure Student group
 November 18

Finally read this today. Loved the dark intensity of it and the way Mary evolved into her own style of monster. A clever build up to the climax with the present day picture story interwoven within the text to slow us down. All she wanted was a friend!

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10 Likes 4 Comments
 Seen by 113

Like Comment

Roger McDonald · I loved this book. I agree that the way the stories are interwoven is amazing. In what circumstances would you read this in school? Could it be a read aloud book? Year 7 maybe?
 Like · Reply · 2w

Tracy Parvin · Roger I too have pondered over how I might read this aloud. A great and complex book.
 Like · Reply · 2w

Mike Patrick-Dawson · Roger it's difficult. I think reading it aloud would offer the support the children might need with the themes but they wouldn't get the immersive experience of the pictures. Perhaps a guided read? Or a book club. And definitely KS3 upwards I would say.
 Like · Reply · 2w

Roger McDonald · Yes, really interesting to look at how certain books could be shared. I agree that reading aloud not suitable for me as I wanted to flick back and forward as I read the pictures.
 Like · Reply · 2w

▶ Using social media to engage in a community of readers has allowed us to share recommendations as well as offer advice to other professionals and use ideas ourselves.

ENGAGING IN AN ONLINE COMMUNITY OF READERS

IMPACT

- ▶ Through visiting the CLPE, talking part in the university's children's literature course and exploring children's book ourselves, we have developed our own knowledge of children's literature. This includes genres and authors we are not used to and would not have thought to use in the primary classroom. We are also more comfortable with debating how and when we would use a particular book with children.
- ▶ We now understand that having a secure knowledge of children's literature will support us in developing children's love of reading. By knowing more children's books and a wider range of children's books, we will be able to celebrate a diverse range in our classrooms. TaRs research stated, *'the newly qualified teachers had to work the hardest at widening their repertoires, but as they came to understand the significance of their subject knowledge the, like their more experienced colleagues, took increased responsibility for developing and sustaining this knowledge over time'* (Cremin et al., 2014).
- ▶ Through the research we have undertaken, we know that secure subject knowledge will enable us to:
 - recommend the right text to a child
 - create a community of readers in the classroom
 - challenge a child's reading habits
 - develop rich talk between teacher and pupil.

REFLECTIONS ON IMPACT THE TARS RESEARCH HAD ON PRACTICE

- ▶ We want to ensure that as teachers, we use a wide range of children's books in our classrooms, not just celebrity authors.
- ▶ We want to continue to share ideas and gain further knowledge by engaging in online communities; it is important that we continue to build our up to date knowledge of children's literature to enable us to teach reading creatively.
- ▶ We want to embed a Reading for Pleasure pedagogy in our classrooms. This includes representing Daniel Pennac's Rights of the Reader.
- ▶ We still have work to do however...our knowledge of non-fiction texts is something that continues to be worked on.



- ▶ Bearne, E. and Reedy, D. (2018) *Teaching Primary English: Subject Knowledge and Classroom Practice*. Abingdon: Routledge.
- ▶ Cremin, T. et al. (2014) *Building Communities of Engaged Readers: Reading for Pleasure*. Abingdon: Routledge.
- ▶ Cremin, T. et al. (2015) *Teaching English Creatively*. Abingdon: Routledge.
- ▶ Gamble, N. (2019) *Exploring Children's Literature*. London: Sage Publications.

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