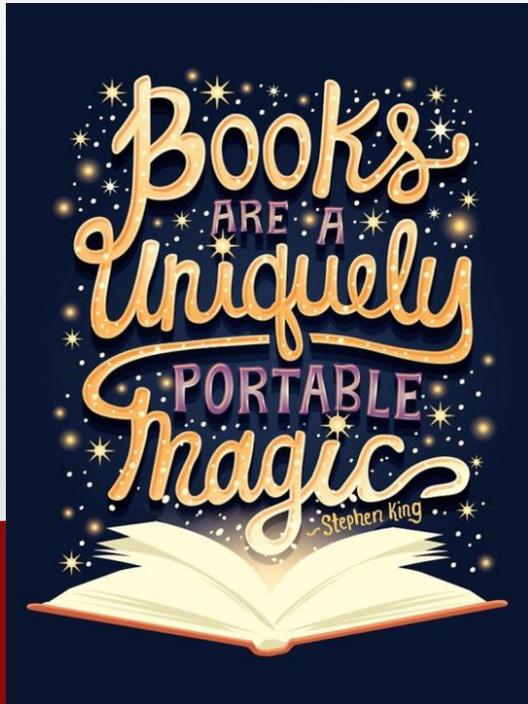


PROMOTING RFP THROUGH CHAMPIONING BOOKS

T.RICHARDSON



*Bringing books to
the heart of the
classroom and
beyond...*

CONTEXT



- I work at Matchborough First School in Redditch, Worcestershire.
- I am a Year 4 Teacher and English Lead. I have been teaching there for eight years.
- Over the last few years, RfP has been a real focus for us and we have worked hard to raise the profile of reading through a number of initiatives including Starbooks (an outdoor reading area led by Book Baristas), themed book corners and areas, *Book Snuggles*, dedicated year group authors and book sharing through *Friday Favourites & Teacher Favourites*.
- We understand the importance of using books to immerse children in their learning and high-quality texts are chosen as the 'vehicles' to drive curriculum topics.
- We want children to independently choose to read for pleasure. The National Literacy Trust has found that just 53% of children said they enjoyed reading 'very much' or quite a lot.



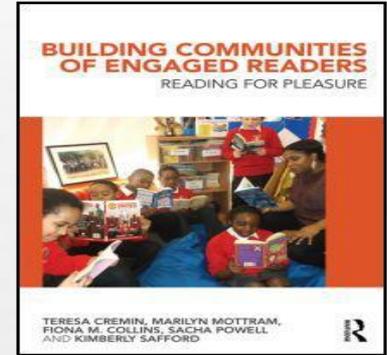
Matchborough First School Academy

Aim high and smile



OU RESEARCH INSPIRATION AND RATIONALE

1. *Considerable knowledge of children's literature and other texts*
2. *Knowledge of children's reading practices*
3. *A reading for pleasure pedagogy which includes:*
 - Social reading environments*
 - Reading aloud*
 - Independent reading*



Informal book talk, inside-text talk and recommendations ←

4. *As Reading Teachers: teachers who read and readers who teach*

5. Reading communities that are reciprocal and interactive. ←

My aim was to develop informal book talk inside the classroom but also extend this into the wider school community. My research was therefore centred around TaRs 3 and 5 (Cremin et al., 2014). The Teachers as Readers (TaRs) project found that a key impact of the classroom talk about texts was the shared understanding amongst children, between teachers and children, and amongst teachers, that reading is intrinsically worthy of discussion. Additionally they also found that children's pleasure in reading was strongly influenced by the new reading networks and relationships which developed. As a result, I had the view to use our school community as the foundation for more interactive reading recommendations.



The Open
University

Research Rich
Pedagogies

AIMS

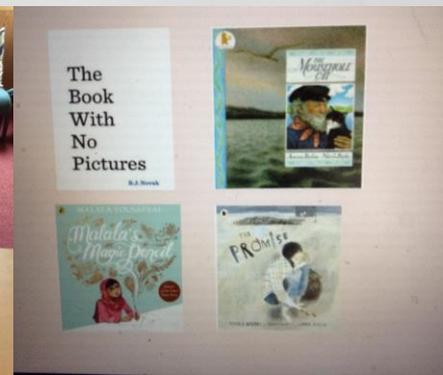
From conducting an initial baseline using a small number of children and the KS2 Children's RfP Survey the following findings were found:

- 75% of children responded with either “It’s okay” or “I’m not bothered” when asked about their enjoyment of reading.
- 50% of children reported that they preferred reading story apps over physical books.
- 50% of children reported not chatting about what they have read either at school or home.
- One pupil reported, “I only read when I take school books home. If I haven’t got one, I won’t read. I don’t have books.”
- When asked about what they were reading in school, one pupil reported, “My teacher chooses for me.”

AIMS

These findings indicated that while children could name a few books and authors, their 'reading diet' was limited and it was clear most children weren't independently choosing to read for pleasure. Book talk was clearly limited both inside the classroom and at home while text choices were governed by the teacher.

- I set out to raise the profile of reading within the classroom especially for those children who showed a lack of interest in RfP. I wanted to empower children with book choices and recommendations and bring them to the forefront of the 'reading community' (TaR 5).
- I wanted to give children more voice in what was read in class, giving them the opportunity to choose which books they wanted to share with other classes through voting slips, giving reasons why in a fun and creative environment (TaR 5).
- I also wanted expose children to a wider range of high quality texts (TaR 3) and promote these through different stimuli.
- I also hoped that I could get parents more engaged with book recommendations and gain an insight into their child's reading interests (TaR 5).



OUTLINE – BOOK AMBASSADORS & BOOK OFFS

- I then wanted to give children a voice as to what we read in class. I decided to choose two **'Book Ambassadors'** who I knew were reluctant readers to choose a book each from the Waterstone's recommended children's books page. We read through the blurbs together as a class..



- To get the children excited and into the spirit of a **'Book Off' battle** I played **PJ & Duncan – Let's Get Ready to Rhumble**. This became our class jingle for any 'Book Off' reading that took place in class.

- I planned in time during Guided Reading to informally discuss each book and the feelings they incited. The children debated which was their favourite based on their opinions, giving arguments as to why other children should join their 'side'.



OUTLINE – BOOKFLIX DISPLAY

To build on this ‘buzz’ of battling books against each other. I created a **Bookflix** display in my classroom where children had the opportunity to rank the books based on how much they liked them. I also asked children for quotes about the books and give scores. Something I also used to improve our **“Books we’ve read”** display in our Year 4 area. This would give an insight into what the children thought about the books.



OUTLINE – BOOK PALS

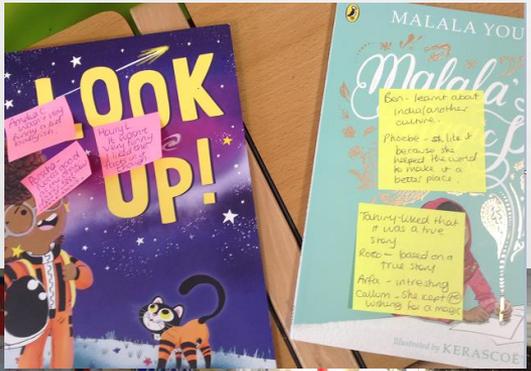
Following the success off the ‘**Book Offs**’ in class I wanted to share the books with another class in school and become ‘**Book Pals**’ with them. Due to COVID restrictions, each year group has been in a bubble. As year groups hadn’t seen each other for a number of months, I thought it would be nice to share videos about the books we had been reading with another class. This was to initially develop our **in-school community** of RfP (Cremin, 2019).

I chose a Year 3 (3S) class and informed the teacher of the plan and that they would become our ‘**Book Pal**’.

This was to be a two-way process in that this class would also recommend books to us via videos depending on which was voted as favourite.



Voting Slips



'Book Thoughts'

'Book Off' debates



Promotional Picture



OUTLINE – BOOK PAL VIDEOS



**4R Book
Ambassadors
present to 3S.**

**3S Book
Ambassadors
present to 4R.**



OUTLINE – BOOKFLIX PADLET

- With RfP being such a highly social process (Cremin, 2019) I wanted to take this sudden ‘buzz’ about RfP beyond the school gates and share with my class’s parents what was happening inside the classroom.
- I decided to create a BookFlix padlet in which parents could see our ‘recommended’ books and see the books their children particularly enjoyed. I would include the books I was reading (TaR 5).
- I would also use this as an opportunity to learn about parents’ and families’ reading practices (Cremin, 2019) by asking children to share pictures of the books they are currently reading and comment on the books of others.
- Finally, I planned to use this as a platform to share parental links for recommended age appropriate books.



IMPACT

Following the reading initiatives introduced in the classroom, the same children used for the baseline completed KS2 Children's RfP Survey and the following findings were found:

Baseline Survey	Final Survey
75% of children responded with either "It's okay" or "I'm not bothered" when asked about their enjoyment of reading.	75% of children responded with "I love reading" or "It's okay" when asked about reading.
50% of children reported that they preferred reading story apps to physical books.	75% of children reported that they preferred reading physical books to story apps.
50% of children reported not chatting about what they have read at either school or home.	100% of children reported chatting about what they had read at either school or home.

IMPACT

- I was amazed to see such a sudden shift in attitudes towards RfP within the classroom and the enthusiasm for sharing books together.
- I noticed children wanting to talk about the books they were reading and share them with the class. One reluctant reader (IW) even read a whole chapter book at home and was desperate for me to read it to the class – which of course I did! She talked for great length about how much she enjoyed the book and why.
- A number of children even asked their parents to order some of the books we had been reading in class.
- The reading displays created a real buzz for new books, especially children not in my class – My Maths set would go back and ask their teacher if they could read the books that were **“trending now”** in my classroom – This enabled *Book Pals* and more book recommendations.
- During Parents’ Evening, a parent commented on how they had noticed a real change in attitude to reading as to how much more they were reading independently and talking about their books.

Mr Moore shares a book ‘trending now’.



I loved this book because it made me think about my own dreams and how they can sometimes be frightening or exciting. I felt sorry for the boy as he was being terrorised by the wolf. I couldn't wait to find out what happened!

IMPACT - QUOTES

The children really enjoyed the process of the Book Off! They were so excited that they got to choose their own books, read them and vote for the one they felt was the best. It encouraged them to discuss the reasons for appreciating each book and they were really able to unpick the reasons for choosing their favourite! They loved getting the video message from their book buddies and were excited to read the book that had been chosen for them. It inspired them to talk about books and give reasons for why other children should read them. It was a fantastic process, and it was fabulous to see the children so engaged in reading for pleasure.

Year 3 Teacher

Mrs Chan, TA

I have noticed that more children are now more keen to read chapter books. Normally I have to pester the class to change their books but now children are actually asking me to change them on a regular basis.

IMPACT - QUOTES



REFLECTIONS ON IMPACT THE TARS RESEARCH HAD ON PRACTICE

- I initially set out to encourage more informal book talk (TaRs 3) inside the classroom and develop a wider reading community for RfP (TaRs 5). Due to COVID restrictions the 'community' element was scaled back somewhat therefore I focused on an 'intra' classroom community through the use of *Book Pals*. I feel that sense of community was created with other classrooms and it was great to hear children talking about books they were reading with other children in different classes.
- The use of the *Book Flix* padlet and *Reading Quotes* empowered children to share their own opinions on books and reasons why they should be read by others (TaRs 3).
- I now plan to roll out *Book Pals* a whole-school initiative while working with SLT to dedicate set time for RfP each week with recommendations for how this will look. This can be shaped differently in each classroom but should build a social fabric of reading community across the school by committing to talking about texts (TaRs 5).
- I would also like to set aside part of the English budget for children to choose what books they want purchased for their classrooms – *Book Ambassadors*.



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS



- Thank you for my colleagues involved in *Book Pals*, particularly Mrs Smith who was more than happy to be my initial guinea pig!
- Thank you to my incredibly hardworking and amazingly artistic TA, Mrs Chan, for her commitment to reading in my classroom and for making some beautiful *Treasure Book Boxes*.
- Finally, thank you to all the children for making this possible and being enthused by reading despite my sometimes wacky ideas!