

# Northmead's Reading Newsletter

## June 2020

6<sup>th</sup> Edition

### Children are reading more during the coronavirus lockdown, according to a new survey.

The Reading Agency research found that 89% of 7 to 11-year-olds have been reading in some form during this period, with 37% of them spending more time on the pursuit than they were before schools closed. The survey, which polled 14,461 seven to 11-year-olds, also found that 68% of boys and 70% of girls reported a love of reading.

Let's hope the trend for reading continues as lockdown restrictions begin to loosen.



### Can we read it again...and again...and again?

Children, especially very young children, often ask for books to be read again and again. As an adult this can become rather boring as you read the 'Gruffalo' for the millionth time. However, during this time of restriction, with shops and libraries having been closed, many people have not had access to a wide range of books and have therefore been forced to re-read books. Parents should not worry about this. Repetition of books can be very good for children.

Research has shown that re-reading the same vocabulary can help embed the words into children's brains, allowing them to become familiar with them and understand their context. As children become really familiar with a book the depth of their understanding and their ability to discuss themes within the book increases. Research by Lucy Rodriguez Leon of the Open University noted during the first reading of a book, the children's responses to questions tended to reflect a surface level understanding of the narrative. Their comments focused on factual elements of the book. In subsequent readings the discussions developed, and the children began to question and critique the character's intentions and actions; they formed hypotheses and grappled with alternative possibilities. So by becoming more familiar with a book through multiple re-readings, children may develop better critical thinking skills and be able to interpret the book more fully.

So if your child says 'Can we read it again?' do try to remember – this is good for them!



To help children and families during lockdown, J.K. Rowling is publishing her original story, *The Ickabog*, online for free! Set in an imaginary land, *The Ickabog* is a stand-alone fairy tale.

A new instalment of the story will be revealed daily at 3pm, Monday to Friday, throughout the course of seven weeks.



# Supporting Readers at Home



Open University research suggests there are three important ways to support readers and a love of reading.



Reading aloud to your children shows them reading is a pleasure, not a chore. Older children can read to younger ones too.



Making time to read alongside one another helps develop children's reading stamina and interest. Let them choose what to read and relax together.



Children who read, and are supported as readers, develop strong reading skills and do better at school.



Book Chats encourage readers. Invite them to make connections and share their views. Join in with your thoughts too!



For more ideas see the OU website:  
<https://www.researchrichpedagogies.org>

## **“I'd love to read more with my daughter but she finds it hard to concentrate when I read to her.”**

Childhood development experts generally say that a reasonable attention span to expect of a child is two to three minutes per year of their age.

Average attention spans work out like this:

- 6 years old: 12 to 18 minutes
- 8 years old: 16 to 24 minutes
- 10 years old: 20 to 30 minutes

It's worth noting that some developmental researchers put the upper limit at five minutes per year of a child's age, meaning a 2-year-old could be able to focus on a task for up to 10 minutes at a time. Of course, these are only generalisations. And how long a child is truly able to focus is largely determined by factors such as how many distractions are nearby, how hungry or tired the child is and how interested they are in the activity.



Below are some suggestions to help develop children's concentration when listening to stories.

Ensure your child has an input when choosing books to read so they are interested in the text.

Use your personality to bring children's books to life. Using different voices for each character or acting out parts of the story can make story time even more memorable and enjoyable for you and your child.

Reading time doesn't always have to be at bedtime when children can be tired and irritable.

Think about reading in different places; under the trees in the evening with a blanket and torch; swaying on a hammock; cuddled up with a favourite toy, whilst cycling on the exercise bike!

Ask key questions throughout the read aloud



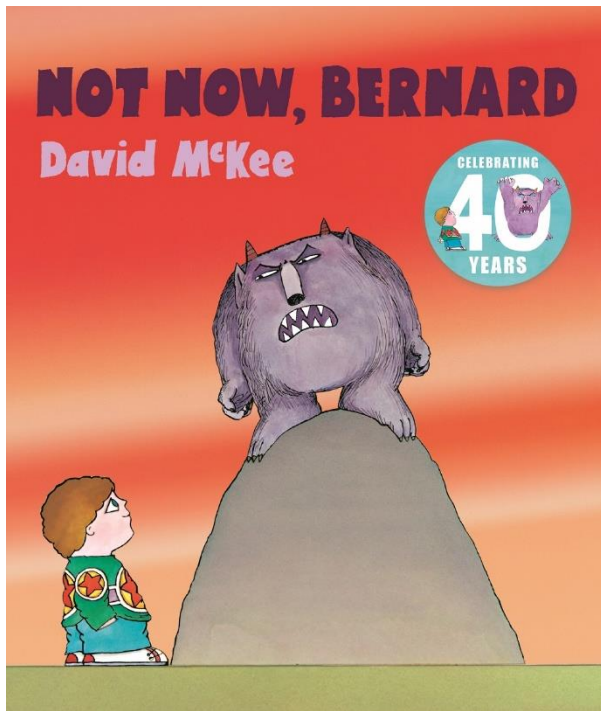
Some children need something to fiddle with to aid concentration. This could be a toy or notebook to draw images that come to mind as they listen to the story or passage.

You could prepare “read aloud” bingo and cross off words or phrases that he or she hears.



# Book of the Month

## What is the story about?



Another oldie but goodie!

'Not Now Bernard' has been a firm favourite for 40 years. To celebrate it's 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary a special edition has been released.

For those of you who don't know the book; Bernard's got a problem: he's found a monster in the back garden but his mum and dad are just too busy to notice. So Bernard tries to befriend the monster... and that doesn't go quite to plan.

*Not Now, Bernard* had a mixed reception when it was first released. Libraries banned it for being too violent, but children and their parents responded to it.

Lots of grown-ups say how it makes them realise how guilty they are of ignoring their children

## Who is the author?

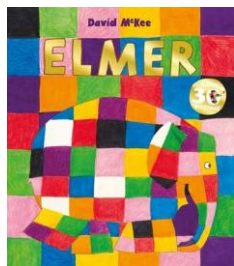
David McKee was born in Devon and studied at Plymouth Art College. In the early part of his career, McKee regularly drew and sold humorous drawings to magazines and newspapers.

David loves to paint and now lives in the South of France.



## What other books has this author written?

David McKee has written and illustrated over 50 picture books and has written a number of children's classics, including Elmer and Mr Benn.



## Accelerated reader information

### Quiz number for this book

201457

### Book Level

1.4

### Colour Band

Navy Blue