

*If a book
is well written,
I always find it
too short.*

Jane Austen

Northmead Reading Newsletter

November 2021



Reading Together in Families Counts!

In this newsletter we have previously explored the importance of reading aloud to your child, even when your child can read independently themselves.

There are many benefits which include;

- Enhancing children's literacy and reading skills
- Improving their overall academic performance
- Developing a better vocabulary
- Creating a stronger parent-child bond
- Improving concentration and discipline
- Widening children's imagination
- Promoting healthy brain development and good mental health



Children need support to develop the habit and love of reading. Alongside reading aloud to your child we would encourage families to participate in 'Book Chat'

Book Chat is the informal interaction that accompanies quality reading to and with children, developing children's language and comprehension and nurturing a love of reading. Time and space to hear stories and to read and talk informally about what you're reading makes a difference to children's pleasure in reading. Below is a guide to Book Chat produced by The Open University.

In addition, you can use the links to watch two short films which model this relaxed interaction through the use of open questions, comments and prompts.

[House that Once Was \(Ages 7+\) - YouTube](#)

[The Same Inside \(Ages 9+\) - YouTube](#)





A Guide to Book Chat

Research indicates that parents who regularly read with their children at home lay solid foundations for language and literacy development. It's a precious time for you both to relax, share your thoughts and feelings, have fun and chat together. Whilst sharing books, your child has your undivided attention, and the conversation, connection and enjoyment they experience is invaluable.

To promote children's pleasure in reading and foster the habit, we need to read **to** children and **with** them and to **talk** to them about books. These conversations are crucial as they help children to engage and think deeply.

There are several ways to prompt book chat, these are our Top Tips.

Watch and listen carefully to follow their interests

Observe and respond: Pay attention to what captures your child's attention and build on their interests, for example, 'Oh, you've spotted the...!'.
Leave pauses: So they can look closely and think, this will lead to comments on the pictures or questions. Respond to their lead and let the book chat flow.

Invite your child to get involved

Pose questions: Open questions encourage thinking and discussion, such as, 'How do you think the boy is feeling?'. Try to avoid closed questions, such as 'What colour is that?'; these have a single answer and don't keep the conversation going.
Draw attention to illustrations: Encourage your child to notice details in the pictures and think what they might mean, for example, 'Look! What's that hiding, what do you think it might be?'.

Wonder and connect to your lives

Ponder and wonder: Encourage your child to think about what might happen, using phrases such as, 'I wonder if/ whether /who/ why/ what ...?'.
Make personal connections: Picture storybooks not only allow children to empathise with the experiences of fictional characters but enable them to make sense of events in their own lives. Talk about connections, for example, 'That reminds me of when...?'.
Comment on your feelings: By sharing your emotional response to a character or something that's happened you encourage your child to do the same, helping them engage and learn to express their emotions.

Share your emotional responses!

Keep it light and enjoyable!

Your combined pleasure counts: Bring the story to life with facial expression, actions and sounds, encouraging your child to join in! Do offer information to help with unfamiliar words, such as 'That's the hencoop, it's where the hens live', but keep the focus on fun.



What are we reading?

These are the titles we are currently reading at school.

Have a chat to your child about whether they are enjoying the book.

What are the characters like? Can they tell you the story or predict what might happen next?

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Year 5



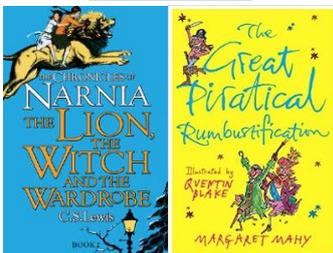
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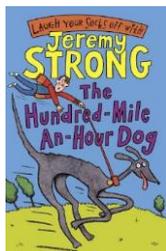
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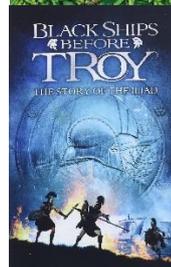
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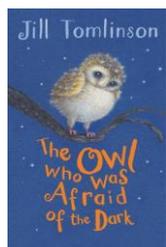
Year 4



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These are some of the books we have been able to purchase using our commission from the recent book fair.

These books will support reading lessons, book clubs, and the set of Football Academy books are already being enjoyed in the library.

The Centre For Literacy In Primary Education (CLPE) has just released its Survey of Ethnic Representation within UK Children’s Literature 2020. The key findings of this survey suggest that despite a reduction in overall output in 2020, there is an increase in the proportion of books that are representative of children in our schools. Publishers have made an effort to ensure that more books are containing well rounded, sensitively portrayed and real characters of colour.



So why is it important to include characters of colour in our children’s reading material? This question has been answered by Louise Johns-Shepherd chief executive of CLPE:

“Learning to read is a social process and it is intensely linked with self-image. Put simply, the reading experience can be compromised if you never come across a character or story that reflects your life, culture or background. We also know so much now about how important reading is to developing empathy and broadening outlook; ensuring an opportunity for all children to come across reading material that reflects the wide world in which they live has never been more important.”

To read the full report click here [CLPE Reflecting Realities Report 2021.pdf](#)

Key Findings and Reflecting on Content

5875 children’s picturebooks, fiction and non-fiction titles were published in the UK in 2020.

Of these 879 featured characters of colour.

15% of the children’s picturebooks, fiction and non-fiction titles published in 2020 featured characters of colour, compared to 10% in 2019, 7% in 2018 and 4% in 2017.

The continued positive trend in inclusive and representative output makes this a really exciting time in children’s literature.



15% of Children’s Books Published featured Black, Asian or Minority Ethnic characters

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