



Case Study: Getting Yew all reading

Maureen Carroll, Talk for Writing Lead at Yew Tree Primary in Birmingham, explains some of the steps the school has taken to embed a love of reading in the pupils.

Our greatest challenge has always been reading; the learning of the new vocabulary and inference being the main area the children struggle with. As a school, over the last few years we have constantly reflected, re-addressed and ensured reading was high on the agenda. Our main priority was developing a love of reading throughout the school in order to boost self-confidence in reading and open up a world of unlimited opportunities. We feel this has been successful because of the following things we have put into place.

Reading for pleasure

We ensured that our classrooms were reading material rich, with a strong emphasis on enjoyment of reading. Each morning begins with a celebration of reading and teachers promoting the importance of reading for pleasure. This in itself had a huge impact on children wanting to read. Every child has 15 minutes of reading for pleasure every day where they can discuss the book they have just read, change their reading books, summarise or write up recommendations for others about their book.



Inference training

Every teacher in the school has received inference training and related materials to help their children with reading. This is a structured scheme where children are taught to read and then summarise using a short extract and pictures they have drawn to help as prompts when they are summarising.

Two days for shared and three days' comprehension

Throughout the school, we have organised reading sessions where each class has a shared read for two days. The teacher reads with the class a text where they orally discuss key skills such as: themes, language structures and layout of texts, and how these help them understand what they are reading. The next three days are taught comprehension. Teachers are able to focus on teaching key skills and strategies over these three days; this allows them the flexibility to have the third day as the application day of the skills taught.



Text level

We provide texts that are challenging to children and they are taught in a steady incremental way in order to build up and build on skills of reading. Close reading skills are taught ensuring children read and reflect, going in deep to ensure correct interpretation plus time for analysing and expressing their own point of view.

Vocabulary is also a high priority for teaching reading. Teachers ensure that knowledge of the new language required is extracted from the context of the sentence reading before and



beyond to extract meaning plus building on prior knowledge of similar word meanings.

Parents and libraries

We have taken parents with their children to join our local library and helped them choose books. This was done over a period of weeks so as to help less confident parents become confident with choosing good texts while, at the same time, enjoying books with their children in a calm, literature rich environment.

Reading diaries

We have reading diaries for every child where they record the books they have read and parents can make comments as they read with their children or listen to them. This also allows teachers to track the texts that are read by the children in their group.

Book sales

We have book sales where children in all year groups can buy books.



New reading materials (Cracking Comprehension, Head Start)

Investing in new reading materials that focus on teaching the key skills and strategies of reading and allow clear progression has seen children engaged and enjoying reading more. They are taught through visual literacy short extracts and word work which all helps build up to the skills that they have to apply in their reading.

Reading corners

Every class has an engaging and inviting book corner, where age appropriate books as well as newspapers, magazines and comics are provided for children's enjoyment.

Holiday reading

During the holidays, children are encouraged and guided to choose at least three books they will enjoy reading, a fiction, non-fiction and a classic.

Asking the parents and the children

We listened to the views of our children and their parents about what children enjoy. Parent and children views are collected regularly to help us provide books that the children really enjoy and to encourage parents to read with their children:

"The reading workshops have inspired me to read at home with my child. I realise now that at a very early age my child loves books. I never had this! I am able to transform my child into a magical world and he loves it."

"Going to the reading workshops has made me make time to read with my child and it is such a wonderful way of ensuring they enjoy reading themselves."

If you'd like to visit Yew Tree Primary to see Talk for Writing in action and talk to Maureen and other staff about how all of this has been done in practice, why not book onto an open morning at the school?