

Reading for Pleasure

Raising enjoyment and engagement in stories

School	Merrydale Infant School
Reading Champion	Liz Harvey
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Who was targeted?	All pupils were targeted from Foundation one to Year Two
Outline of project:	
<p>We wanted to address the declining interest shown by our pupils in reading for pleasure and listening to stories. This was evident both in their attitudes at school and in the data produced by the WiT pupil survey. Our stock was outdated and uninspiring and our timetables were overburdened already, so we looked for ways to make stories more engaging, fun and interesting for pupils. This is what we did...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Received funding to subscribe to Leicester Library Services for Education (as it was then) • Visited LSE and had staff meetings there to make sure we could harness the resources effectively • Resourced classrooms with borrowed stock that we put into special book boxes, decorated and labelled so that the books were viewed as special and important by the children • The books were really appreciated and valued explicitly by the staff, who took every opportunity available to share as many as possible with the pupils • Bridget came to give staff CPD about how to tell stories in a variety of ways • We committed to having a whole school storytelling afternoon every half term, when the teachers were timetabled to visit different classes to share stories. The strategies suggested through CPD were applied. The story telling was interactive, pacy and engaging. • The book stock was rotated around classes so that the book box stories stayed fresh for the children. Classes were able to work on other activities such as recommendations, our favourite book discussions and role play. <p>We were VERY careful to not attach any prescribed tasks after book box stories were shared. Rewrite the ending, describe this character, reviews and comprehension activities were all banned! We believed that just maybe some of the lack of excitement around stories, reading and listening to them resulted from the endless follow up activities that always happened after story sharing.</p>	
Overview of the timelines, additional resources etc.	
<p>Subscription to LSE August 2015 Staff meetings at LSE September 2015 INSET from Bridget Hamlet October 2015 First story telling afternoon in final week of first half term and then final weeks of all half terms thereafter. Book boxes refreshed half termly and other resources swapped and returned throughout the year, including guided reading sets and dual language books that were used for target children. Pupil interviews carried out at Christmas 2015 and May 2016.</p>	
Impact	
<p>The results of the project were that the profile of reading heightened around the school. Children clearly looked forward to dipping into the book boxes, secure in the knowledge that ALL they had to do was enjoy the story! The story telling afternoons were well received and the enjoyment that children began taking in listening to stories increased. This was evidenced through pupil interviews, teacher monitoring of how the book boxes were received and also informal observations of the story telling afternoons.</p>	
Lessons learnt – advice for other schools	
<p>If you really want children to read for pleasure and get enjoyment from reading you have to be brave and make space for sharing stories knowing that there MUSTN'T be a follow up activity!</p>	
Estimate of costs	Subscription to LSE - £8.65 x 347 pupils = £3,001.55 That's it!