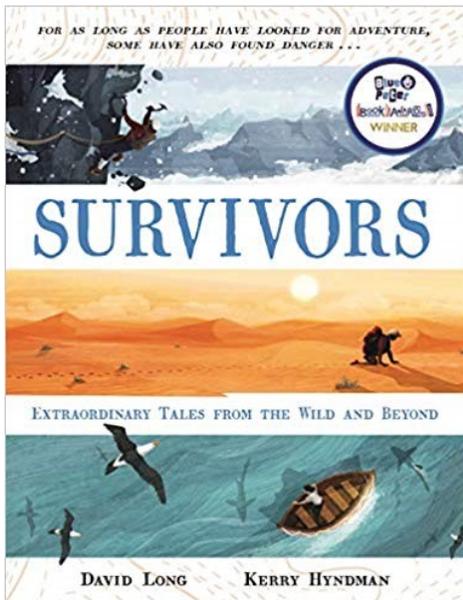


School Improvement English Newsletter Autumn

Book recommendations



Upper Key Stage 2 (Year 5/6) 9-12 years

Survivors by David Long, illustrated by Kerry Hyndman

Winner of the Best Book With Facts Blue Peter Book Award 2017, this amazing book features tales of ordinary and extraordinary people overcoming adversity. Based on 23 true stories, beautiful illustrations and gruesome details will grip even the most stubborn of book avoiders and keep them hooked! It can be dipped into as an end of day read (each story is the perfect length for a fifteen to twenty minute session), used in assemblies or looked at in detail in reading lessons. It is particularly suitable for vocabulary development and is the perfect 'easy to engage with' non-fiction text.

Whether trapped in a sunken submarine, blasted by Mount St. Helens, trapped or lost in the desert, stuck in quicksand or dangling precariously from a mountainside, these courageous tales of men and women, demonstrate incredible perseverance and will to live.

An anthology to inspire and help children to understand how far self-belief and guts took these adventurers, and to wonder how far these qualities could take them too.

Lower Key Stage 2 (Year 3/4) Aged 7-9

The Nothing to see Here Hotel by Steven Butler

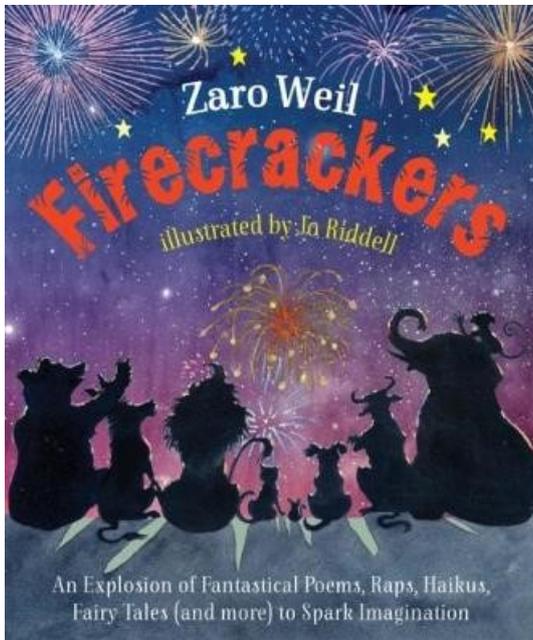
'A splundishly swashbunbling tale of trolls, goblins and other bonejangling creatures. Put on your wellies and plunge into the strangest hotel you will ever encounter. This is a hotel I hope I never find! Wonderfully, disgustingly funny.' Jeremy Strong

Welcome to The Nothing to see here Hotel, run by Frankie Banister and his family. It's not a hotel that you will ever see though, as it is hidden (by magic and terrible reviews) from human view. It's not for humans, you see, and instead is the perfect getaway for magical creatures of all kinds – mermaids are welcomed through the sea door and stairs are rented to ghosts looking for a holiday from their usual haunts.

This book is genuinely funny and full of crazy and charming characters. Children aged 7-9 will particularly enjoy this, but even adults will appreciate the humour. You need this book in your children's lives.



Book recommendations



KS1 (Year 1/2) ages 5-7

Firecrackers by Zaro Weil, illustrated by Jo Riddell

This anthology contains 101 poems, rhymes, raps, haikus, but also short plays and fairy tales on a variety of subjects.

It's ideal for dipping into, for quiet reading and for reading aloud; indeed, It's real strength is in celebrating word play, rhythm, the joy of language *out loud*. The book comes with a QR code for listening to the pieces and unusually amongst the stories, haikus and poems, there are a couple of rhyming plays too.

This is a beautiful collection. The illustrations by Jo Riddell are witty and suffused with warmth, in perfect harmony with the text. A brightly sparkling gem. Every page invites the reader into an enticing world where concepts, language and rhythms conspire to spark imagination.

EYFS/KS1 (ages 4 up)

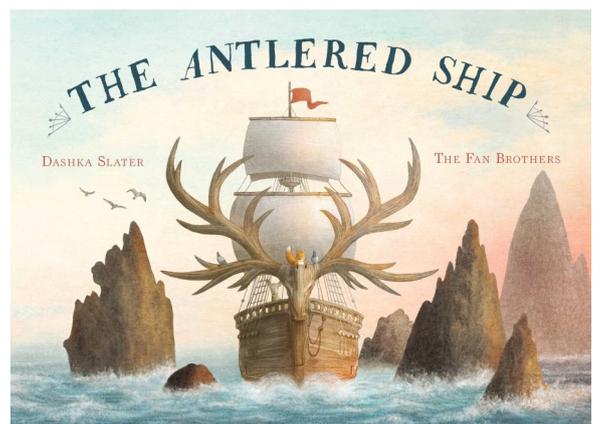
The Antlered Ship by Dashka Slater, illustrated by The Fan Brothers

This powerfully rich and atmospheric picture book takes a thoughtful fox on a search for answers, finding adventures and true friendship along the way. Like all good quest stories, the hero ends up not at their intended destination, but in finding what he was actually searching for all along—a sense of belonging, which is most important of all.

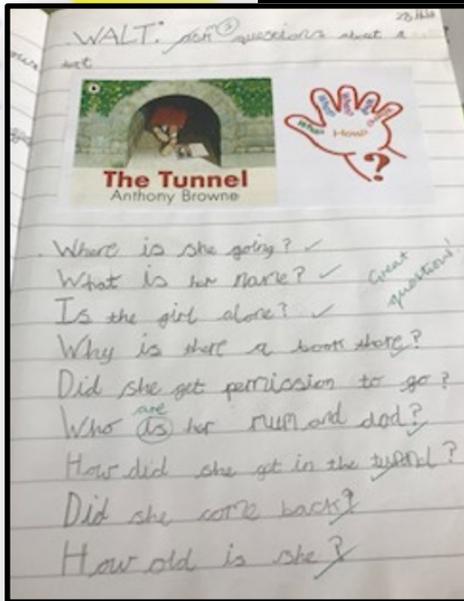
Rich in an atmospheric seascape and language, *The Antlered Ship* is an engaging and adventurous story that will encourage all children to keep on asking questions about the world they live in. When the beautiful ship with the huge antlers on its prow comes into port, Marco, the Fox, is busy contemplating the mysteries of the world. Marco asks questions such as, 'Why do some songs make you happy and others make you sad?', 'Why don't trees ever talk?' and 'How deep does the sun go when it sinks into the sea?' None of his fox friends have any answers. So, when he sees the ship he decides to join the curious crew of deer and pigeons in the hope that a sea voyage to far off lands will help him find the answers.

The Fan brothers stunning artwork really brings the story to life, and the illustrations are beautifully detailed. Children (and their teachers!) will want to pore over the imaginative maps gracing the book's endpapers and point out details of the ship. Young readers will revel in the whimsical touches, like the peg-legged pigeon sailor (who hasn't seen a one-legged pigeon in London?). It is a book that begs to be read aloud and savoured, with rhythmic, lyrical language. Vocabulary, whilst challenging, will stimulate discussion.

This book works on so many levels and would provide fabulous opportunities for engaging with the text and as a stimulus for writing in many year groups. A contender for whole school projects.



Spotlight on Good Practice

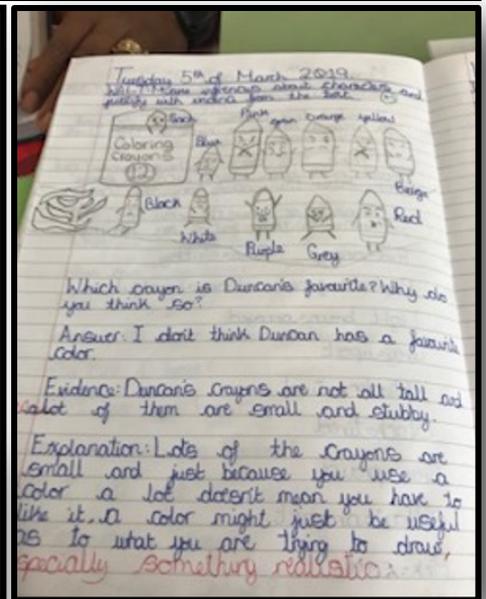


All Saints C of E Primary School-

Whole Class Reading lessons

All Saints have developed whole class reading lessons based on rich texts, with an emphasis on vocabulary development and finding evidence in the text.

Children have made marked progress in their reading outcomes, and are really engaging with their books.



Gonville Academy have introduced Close Reading to improve understanding and outcomes for their school.

They have built a Close Reading session into daily timetables, focusing on whole class teaching of a rich text. The context of the book is then directly taught through the humanities curriculum. Close Reading sessions build on the strategies from Doug Lemov and his book, 'Reading Reconsidered'.

CPD has been central to the consistency and understanding behind the approach. Feedback from teachers and students has been amazing in terms of students being passionate about their reading and developing a secure understanding of a context as well as building a wide range of tier 2 vocabulary.

There has been a clear positive impact on the changes to Reading – 2017 KS2 Reading results = 64% and this increased to 2018 KS2 Reading results = 84%. In addition, 2018 disadvantaged student progress was well above average at 5.7 points and SEN students made 8 points of progress.

The core texts that Gonville teach are supported by embedded texts, including a wide range of non-fiction. All this reading is captured in the discussions with students and in their writing opportunities.

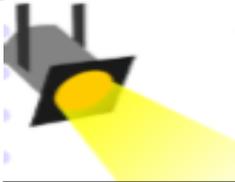
Beverly Naidoo recently visited Y5 students as they have been reading a selection of her books, including 'Journey to Jo'Burg'.

It has been a really exciting reading journey for Gonville Academy and they are continuing to build a reading culture based on collaborative approaches.



PLEASE REMEMBER TO FORWARD ANY EXAMPLES OF GOOD PRACTICE IN YOUR SCHOOL TO:

rachel.fox@octavopartnership.org



Spotlight on Good Practice



Park Hill Infant School

This week Park Hill had a visit from Joe Chambers and Andy Crawford, who present the CBeebies television program 'The Rhyme Rocket'. Paper and pencils were replaced for the afternoon as the whole school helped them in their 'Ridiculous Rhyme Show' where they made up rhymes, songs and dances which got all of the pupils excited about creating their own poems.

During Book Week in March, **Year One** pupils designed their own Lego story characters and created storyboards and short stories based on their character's adventures. Park Hill invited parents to visit classrooms for a 'Big Booky Breakfast' where they got to share their favourite childhood stories with the children in each class.

Year Two have been busy forming descriptive writing in the form of fantasy stories and poetry. They produced some imaginative poems using a 'poem generator', such as:

'In the sea of curiosity

was a magical necklace of a mermaid princess

and a shriek of a dolphin on a tide of tears

In the forest of timeless wonder

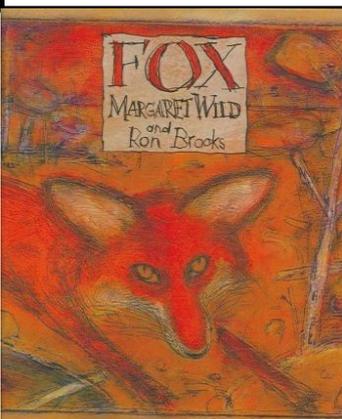
I found an evil wizard with a crystal ball

and enchanted trees with terrible secrets'

This week **Year Two** have used what they have learnt in our context for learning, 'Endangered Animals', to create their own protest to show to parents and other members of the school. They have written persuasive letters to our head teacher, Ms Charman, asking for help to fund-raise and sponsor an endangered animal of their choice in each class. The letters were so well written that they have convinced Ms Charman to let them adopt some animals and they have spread the messages to the school community about how endangered these amazing animals are becoming.

EYFS found some sticky marmalade paw prints in their outdoor area which they inspected and investigated, making WANTED posters to stick up around the school. Luckily they found that the culprit was Paddington on one of his visits to Croydon! They then loved reading about Paddington Bear and his journeys in and around London.

Park Hill have also been trialling '**Surprise story time Teacher Swaps**' where all adults around the school have surprised the children in different classes and year groups by a visit at the end of the school day to read them their favourite picture books. The children have loved awaiting their daily story surprise!

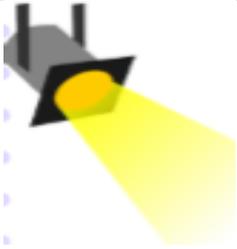


Ecclesbourne Primary

Year 4 at Ecclesbourne have just finished a CLPE Power of Reading unit on the wonderful text **Fox by Margaret Wild**.

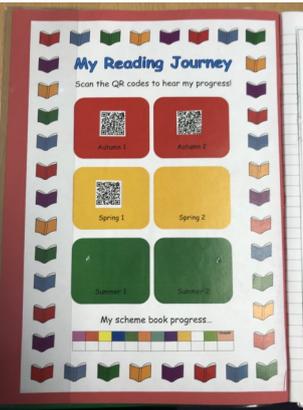
They have made models, written poems, created dialogue and are currently finishing rewriting the book from Fox's point of view.

They have really enjoyed this unit of work.



Spotlight on Good Practice

New Valley Primary School



At New Valley, as part of their developing reading action plan, the school have been focussing in improving reading fluency. To help moderate and standardise judgements of this across the school, they record a very short video of each child in the school, each half term, reading from a choice of suggested texts. These texts may or may not have been read in class but will not be overly familiar. From the point of view of CPD for all staff, these have proven useful in developing understanding of fluency and what to listen for, as well as being useful to compare within and across year groups.

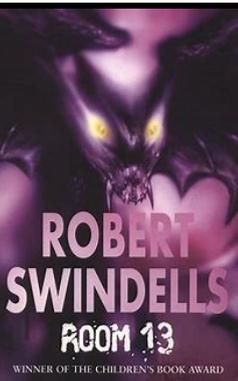
Attached is a photo of an ARE child's front cover of their reading journal. This is just one of the things done in terms of assessing reading and this particular element is augmented by running records that are carried out for all pupils throughout the school.

QR codes are used to monitor progress and staff are able to use the evidence to talk to the children and parents about what children are doing successfully and next steps. For the children, it is useful for them to hear their performance. This aspect of formative assessment is useful to share with additional adults working with the pupils.

This work has definitely been beneficial, and is now part of their practice.

To make a QR code, upload your video to Lgfl VideoCentral. This will then generate an email containing your code. A simple QR reading app will allow you to view the codes.

Howard Primary School



Over the Spring Term, Year 5 have been reading Room 13, by Robert Swindells. Their first piece of work was an imitation of Chapter 1 in Swindells' style focusing on building tension, character, setting and atmosphere. Next, they used The Literacy Shed as their writing stimulus. Linking nicely to the setting of Whitby, where Room 13 is based, they watched the clip entitled *Dracula's Whitby* to write a warning dream for an innovated character.

Finally, they decided to write a travel guide to Whitby, focusing on many of the attractions that had been mentioned in the class read. Over the February half term, Amy Blackford (class teacher and English lead) visited Whitby, where she raided the leaflets/brochures in their tourist information centre, and the class then used these to study the tone, vocabulary and appropriate grammar associated with this text type, up-levelling sentences as they went.

After writing the main body of the text, they peer-assessed and began typing up their work, inserting pictures, captions and headings to make it visually appealing for the reader. The children all now want to visit Whitby during their holidays!

