

# READING FOR PLEASURE

## What we know works

Centre for Literacy in Primary Education

Research from the Power of Reading Project



Centre for Literacy  
in Primary Education



# READING FOR PLEASURE

## What works?

The Centre for Literacy in Primary Education is an independent UK charity with a global reputation for the quality of our work.

We exist to promote high standards in the teaching of literacy through our high quality, trusted teacher professional development and our renowned classroom based research. We particularly emphasise the importance of books and literature in enabling children to become confident, happy and enthusiastic readers and writers, with all the benefits this brings.

Since 2004 we have run the ‘Power of Reading’ project. This is a whole school development project where teachers attend high quality training, have access to a wide range of quality children’s literature and work with their colleagues to develop practice around the teaching of reading in their school. Over the twelve years of the project we have worked with over 4000 teachers from more than 2600 schools in over 50 Local Authorities. Every year we collect data about children’s achievement and progress and we ask teachers to share examples of how they have changed whole school practice. The practical examples are all collected on the project website.



Download the free Reading and  
Writing Scales at [www.clpe.org.uk](http://www.clpe.org.uk)

power of reading  
● ● ● ● ● ●

The project has given us a unique perspective on the successful teaching of reading in primary schools. We have constructed the professional development sessions using the most up to date published research as well as insights from authors, poets and illustrators. We spend time carefully selecting the 20+ project texts which are given to teachers on the course and they reflect the very best of current children's literature. As well as this we collect numerous examples of effective reading practice from our project teachers during each of our development sessions. These examples of practice are uploaded to the project site so that the teachers have the benefit of face to face training and remote support with examples from real classrooms.

This year Power of Reading is in its twelfth year. In celebration of this remarkable achievement and to support schools in the implementation of the National Curriculum 2014 we are publishing a series of accessible and practical papers to help schools develop aspects of a reading for pleasure school that we know are important.

Louise Johns-Shepherd, **Chief Executive**, CLPE

**To download the second paper in this series 'Poetry in Primary Schools – What we know works' visit [www.clpe.org.uk/library-and-resources/research](http://www.clpe.org.uk/library-and-resources/research)**

**To subscribe to the Power of Reading website visit [www.clpe.org.uk/powerofreading/subscription](http://www.clpe.org.uk/powerofreading/subscription)**

**For more information about CLPE visit [www.clpe.org.uk](http://www.clpe.org.uk)**

**For more information about Power of Reading visit [www.clpe.org.uk/por](http://www.clpe.org.uk/por)**



# 1 Developing an ethos and an environment that excites, enthuses, inspires and values

The Power of Reading allows us to spend time with teachers thinking about the way in which they show and display books and work with books in their classrooms and schools. We have found that the way in which the reading provision is set up and accessed can be key to the engagement of children in the reading process. The role and attitudes of the teachers are key in creating an environment that promotes reading as a socially engaging activity that is valued and encouraged. Book areas where books and information about books are displayed attractively and where browsing, choosing and reading can take place are a visible way of establishing and promoting a positive ethos for reading for pleasure.

**Learn more:** .....

Power of Reading  
[clpe.org.uk/por](http://clpe.org.uk/por)

Power of Reading in the Early Years  
[clpe.org.uk/POREY](http://clpe.org.uk/POREY)

CLPE Reading and Writing Scales – free download  
[clpe.org.uk/readingandwritingscales](http://clpe.org.uk/readingandwritingscales)

“ Book corners have been developed to excite and enthuse children about reading – we have developed author displays in the book corners so if children like one book by the author then they can try others ”

“ As a school we have developed our reading areas with a focus on making them more engaging for the children. Pupils are now much more enthusiastic about selecting books and contributing to the reading area ”



## 2 High quality texts with depth and interest in story, character, illustration, vocabulary, structure and subject matter

We know that there are books which lend themselves to being talked about, thought through, returned to and which are engaging for children for a variety of reasons. They tend to be texts with powerful stories which engage children, stir ideas and feelings and excite the reader's interest and imagination. They are books that children will want to re-read, to savour and will remember. Texts such as these can take many forms – poetry, picture books (with or without words), information texts, chapter books, modern stories or famous classics. It is important that schools have a range of quality reading material and that they plan to enable children to engage with the texts on a meaningful level.

“ The comment that you 'raise the child to the level of the book' has really rung true, and we have all been seeking out high quality texts to read to young readers and non-readers alike ”

“ The stories emotionally engage the children... they connect deeply with the narratives and the dilemmas ”



Learn more: .....

Raising Achievement in Writing  
[clpe.org.uk/RAW](https://clpe.org.uk/RAW)

Planning Creatively Around Texts KS1 and KS2  
[clpe.org.uk/planningks1](https://clpe.org.uk/planningks1)  
[clpe.org.uk/planningks2](https://clpe.org.uk/planningks2)

# 3 A read aloud programme

Reading aloud is probably the most important thing that teachers can do and needs to be a frequent and regular part of each school day. Reading aloud slows written language down and enables children to hear and take in tunes and patterns. It enables children to experience and enjoy stories that they might not otherwise meet.

By reading well-chosen books aloud, teachers help classes to become communities of readers – ensuring that they can share in experiences of a wide repertoire of books they enjoy and get to know well.

Learn more: .....

Group Reading

[clpe.org.uk/groupreadings1](http://clpe.org.uk/groupreadings1)

[clpe.org.uk/groupreadings2](http://clpe.org.uk/groupreadings2)

Power of Reading

[clpe.org.uk/por](http://clpe.org.uk/por)

Power of Reading in the Early Years

[clpe.org.uk/POREY](http://clpe.org.uk/POREY)

CLPE Reading and Writing Scales – free download

[clpe.org.uk/readingandwritingscales](http://clpe.org.uk/readingandwritingscales)

“ Pupils have commented on how much they loved being read to by the teacher as it helped them to ‘imagine the story better’ ”

“ All the children love being read to daily. They are all able to talk meaningfully and discuss reading better ”

“ I even had Y6 asking for bedtime reading on our residential trip! ”



# 4 Teachers who are knowledgeable about children's literature

When teachers develop their own experience, preferences and enthusiasms in reading, their personal engagement and reflective involvement as adult readers helps them to be very clear about the nature of reading and the experience of being a reader. This has an impact on teaching practice.

*“A synergy of ongoing subject knowledge development and personal reflection opened up new pathways to effective pedagogy and more inclusive practices in the teaching of reading.”*

Cremin, T; Mottram, M; Collins, F; Powell S and Safford, K (2009). Teachers as readers: building communities of readers. Literacy, 43(1), pp. 11-19.

**Learn more:** .....

Developing the Role of English Subject Leader  
[clpe.org.uk/ESL](http://clpe.org.uk/ESL)

Core Books Online  
Register free at [clpe.org.uk/corebooks](http://clpe.org.uk/corebooks)

CLPE Reading and Writing Scales – free download  
[clpe.org.uk/readingandwritingscales](http://clpe.org.uk/readingandwritingscales)

Progress and Achievement in Reading  
[clpe.org.uk/PAR](http://clpe.org.uk/PAR)

“ I have a wealth of excellent books to recommend and use as a stimulus for literacy planning and teaching ”

“ I'm more aware of authors and my children have picked up on my enthusiasms – it's become infectious! ”



# 5 Creating a community of readers with opportunities to share responses and opinions

Reading is fundamentally a social phenomenon. Early shared experiences are internalised and become the basis of what children can do independently and what they understand reading to be. It is really important that the invitations to be part of the school reading community involve as many people as possible and include all staff as well as parents and families.

Book groups, book shops, interactive displays, reading competitions, reading volunteers and book related fundraising activities are all ways of involving the wider community and helping to create a community of readers.

**Learn more:** .....

Guide to running a book group  
[clpe.org.uk/page/68](http://clpe.org.uk/page/68)

CLPE Reading and Writing Scales – free download  
[clpe.org.uk/readingandwritingscales](http://clpe.org.uk/readingandwritingscales)

Progress and Achievement in Reading  
[clpe.org.uk/PAR](http://clpe.org.uk/PAR)

“ I run an afternoon book club which is very popular and promotes books to other children in the school. The children are engaged and keen to read the next book ”

“ The biggest change is that in every class you will see quality reading books that children have brought from home as they have asked parents for books instead of toys as gifts ”



# 6 Planning for talking about books and stories, providing structures within which to do this

Children need frequent, regular and sustained opportunities to talk together about the books that they are reading as a whole class. The more experience they have of talking together like this, the better they get at making explicit the meanings that a text holds for them, helping the class as a whole to reach shared understanding of ideas and issues. Talking about books is supportive to all readers and writers but is especially empowering for children who find literacy difficult.

“ Building much more book talk into the planning, before even opening the book, has stimulated the children’s thoughts and questions ”

“ Children have developed in their ability to discuss their views about books – book talk is very successful ”

Learn more: .....

Inspiring Writers KS1 and KS2

[clpe.org.uk/writingks1](http://clpe.org.uk/writingks1)

[clpe.org.uk/writingks2](http://clpe.org.uk/writingks2)

Group Reading KS1 and KS2

[clpe.org.uk/groupreadings1](http://clpe.org.uk/groupreadings1)

[clpe.org.uk/groupreadings2](http://clpe.org.uk/groupreadings2)

CLPE Reading and Writing Scales – free download

[clpe.org.uk/readingandwritingscales](http://clpe.org.uk/readingandwritingscales)



# 7 Understanding the importance of illustration in reading both in terms of creating a text and responding to a text

Illustrated and picture books are tremendously important resources for all readers. Understanding how pictures and illustrations work with the text to create meaning for the reader is a high level reading skill. Opportunities to draw in response to texts can help and encourage children to move into an imaginary world or understand a character. Drawing helps children to begin to articulate their response to what they read and can help them to analyse the ways in which the writer has used language and images.

**Learn more:** .....

Power of Pictures

[clpe.org.uk/powerofpictures](http://clpe.org.uk/powerofpictures)

The Power of the Picture Book for Teaching Mathematics in the Early Years and KS1

[clpe.org.uk/picturebookmaths](http://clpe.org.uk/picturebookmaths)

[clpe.org.uk/picturebookmathsks1](http://clpe.org.uk/picturebookmathsks1)

CLPE Reading and Writing Scales – free download

[clpe.org.uk/readingandwritingscales](http://clpe.org.uk/readingandwritingscales)

“ My class are greatly motivated by art – approaches [using art] have truly helped them engage with the text and develop their language ”

“ I love the picture book approach... in Year 6, which has really inspired my class ”

“ Picture books have a high impact on progress in reading – much more than I thought ”



# 8 Using drama and role play to help children to understand and access texts

Drama and role play provide immediate routes into the world of a story and allow children to explore texts actively. They enable children to put themselves into a particular character's shoes and imagine how things would look from that point of view. Through drama and role play children can deepen their understanding and imagining of characters and events. They can then extend this understanding to their reading and their writing.

“ The use of drama/role play is a great way of approaching literacy. It gives the children a chance to access the text in a variety of ways and develop their vocabulary in preparation for some great writing ”

“ Children are using book language from stories read from the beginning of the year. It's now embedded in their learning and their play ”

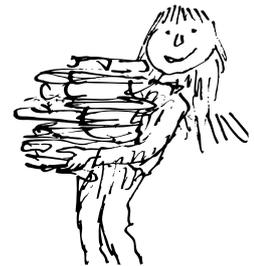
Learn more: .....

Power of Reading  
[clpe.org.uk/por](http://clpe.org.uk/por)

Planning Creatively Around Texts KS1 and KS2  
[clpe.org.uk/planningks1](http://clpe.org.uk/planningks1)  
[clpe.org.uk/planningks2](http://clpe.org.uk/planningks2)

Inspiring Writers KS1 and KS2  
[clpe.org.uk/writingks1](http://clpe.org.uk/writingks1)  
[clpe.org.uk/writingks2](http://clpe.org.uk/writingks2)

CLPE Reading and Writing Scales – free download  
[clpe.org.uk/readingandwritingscales](http://clpe.org.uk/readingandwritingscales)



# 9 Working with authors and author/illustrators to understand the process of creating books

*“Writers working with children and young people in schools offer them experiences that can inspire and unlock their creative expression, regardless of age, gender, home background or attitudes... Many schools agree there are benefits that make a significant contribution to how children learn about the excitement and power of language and the imagination.”*

Magic dust that lasts. Writers in schools – sustaining the momentum – Sue Horner – Arts Council.

“ [Hearing from authors helps in... ] looking more deeply at the text as a writer, asking questions about why the author wrote in certain ways or chose certain words ”

“ A whole school author focus was used to encourage the whole school to get involved – he even opened our library ”



**Learn more:** .....

Power of Pictures

[clpe.org.uk/powerofpictures](http://clpe.org.uk/powerofpictures)

Poetryline website

[clpe.org.uk/poetryline](http://clpe.org.uk/poetryline)

CLPE Reading and Writing Scales – free download

[clpe.org.uk/readingandwritingscales](http://clpe.org.uk/readingandwritingscales)

# 10 Using literature beyond the literacy lesson – cross curricular planning with quality literature as the starting point

Teachers have told us again and again how successful they have been when they use a text as the centre of their planning. Many schools are now taking a cross-curricular approach starting with a quality text and using it to link other subjects. This puts reading at the heart of the curriculum and shows the importance and value of learning to read.

“ A greater use of cross-curricular teaching – incorporating art and music into literacy lessons. Children have become so vocal and expressive ”

“ Reading now taught throughout subjects, with more cross-curricular links to create a deeper understanding of texts ”

**Learn more:** .....

We're Going on a Science Hunt  
**[clpe.org.uk/sciencehunt](http://clpe.org.uk/sciencehunt)**

The Power of the Picture Book for Teaching Mathematics in the Early Years and KS1  
**[clpe.org.uk/picturebookmaths](http://clpe.org.uk/picturebookmaths)**  
**[clpe.org.uk/picturebookmathsks1](http://clpe.org.uk/picturebookmathsks1)**

CLPE Reading and Writing Scales – free download  
**[clpe.org.uk/readingandwritingscales](http://clpe.org.uk/readingandwritingscales)**



# READING FOR PLEASURE – WHAT WORKS

1. **Developing an ethos and an environment that excites, enthuses, inspires and values**
2. **High quality texts with depth and interest in story, character, illustration, vocabulary, structure and subject matter**
3. **A read aloud programme**
4. **Teachers who are knowledgeable about children's literature**
5. **Creating a community of readers with opportunities to share responses and opinions**
6. **Planning for talking about books and stories, providing structures within which to do this**
7. **Understanding the importance of illustration in reading both in terms of creating a text and responding to a text**
8. **Using drama and role play to help children to understand and access texts**
9. **Working with authors and author/illustrators to understand the process of creating books**
10. **Using literature beyond the literacy lesson – cross-curricular planning with quality literature as the starting point**



# Power of Reading Project 2016–17

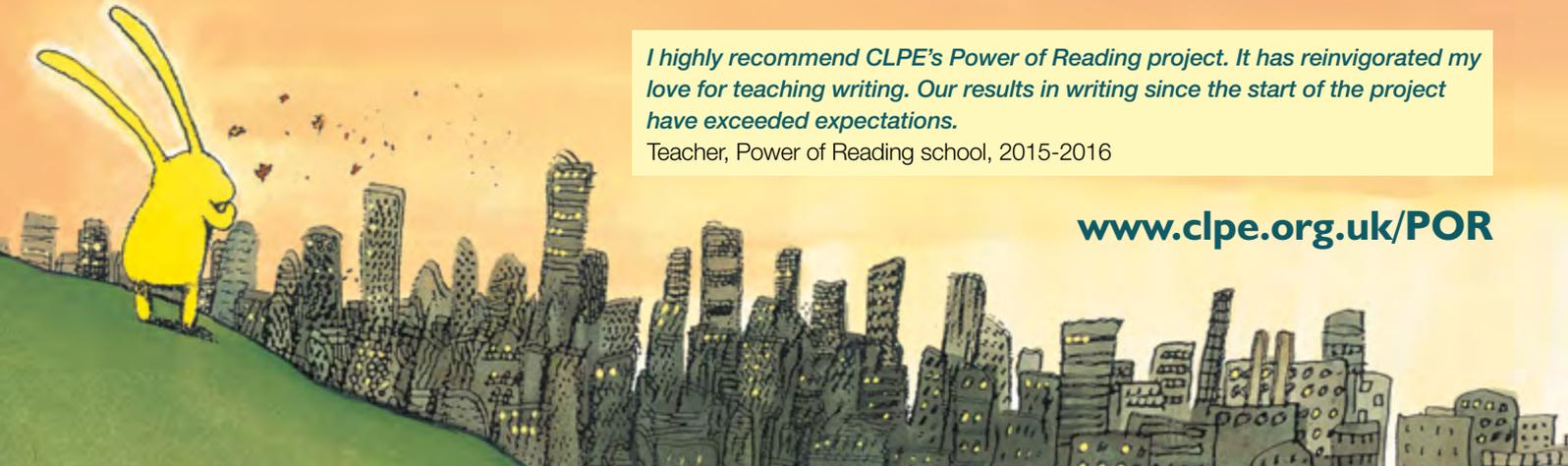
Reading for pleasure,  
achievement for life

12th  
successful  
year!

*I highly recommend CLPE's Power of Reading project. It has reinvigorated my love for teaching writing. Our results in writing since the start of the project have exceeded expectations.*

Teacher, Power of Reading school, 2015-2016

[www.clpe.org.uk/POR](http://www.clpe.org.uk/POR)



Download our second paper in this series **Poetry in Primary Schools – What We Know Works**.

It shares what we know about making poetry work in primary schools, encouraging a lifelong love of literacy learning. Available here: [clpe.org.uk/library-and-resources/useful-resources](http://clpe.org.uk/library-and-resources/useful-resources)

## Keep in touch



Website [www.clpe.org.uk](http://www.clpe.org.uk)



Email [info@clpe.org.uk](mailto:info@clpe.org.uk)



Phone **020 7401 3382/3**



Twitter [@clpe1](https://twitter.com/clpe1)



Facebook [www.facebook.com/CentreforLiteracyinPrimaryEducation](http://www.facebook.com/CentreforLiteracyinPrimaryEducation)

44 Webber Street, London SE1 8QW

©Centre for Literacy in Primary Education 2016

Illustrations by Quentin Blake

Updated September 2016