

HIAS OPEN RESOURCE

Reading culture and reading for pleasure

Supporting all readers in secondary schools

Joanna Kenyon
May 2025
Final version

Overview

This document contains...

Slides that could be used as part of a CPD sequence for teachers in school, supporting understanding of reading in secondary schools

Points to consider when using this resource

The resources in this series are intended as a companion piece to the DfE's series of training videos and guidance [Supporting all readers in secondary school](#), providing additional detail. This resource expands on ideas shared in video 3, [Reading in secondary students](#) and provides links to research.

Whole school reading-promotion approaches are not interventions

- Silent reading, eg *Everyone Reads In Class, Drop Everything And Read*
- Motivation and reading promotion schemes, eg *Accelerated Reader*

“...if you are using a reading promotion scheme in the hope that it will help your weakest readers to read, you are likely to be disappointed.”

(Murray and Murray, *Thinking Reading*, 2018)

“...many plausible approaches to improving literacy may not improve outcomes for students.”

([EEF Improving Literacy at KS3 and KS4 Guidance Report 2019](#))

While these schemes may be used effectively to raise the profile of reading within school and are motivating for some pupils, particularly when supported by knowledgeable teachers and school librarians, they should not be confused with reading interventions.

However...

- Secondary school pupils often do not choose to read for pleasure
- Some pupils do not find reading pleasurable, while others enjoy reading but find other activities more attractive
- Some pupils find it difficult to give focused attention to their reading and struggle with concentration
- Some pupils enjoy being read to and listening to audiobooks, which has benefits in terms of language development, but is not sufficient to ensure that pupils are confident in reading and comprehending independently
- Some pupils have not yet found the books they might enjoy
- Some pupils do not have access to books at home

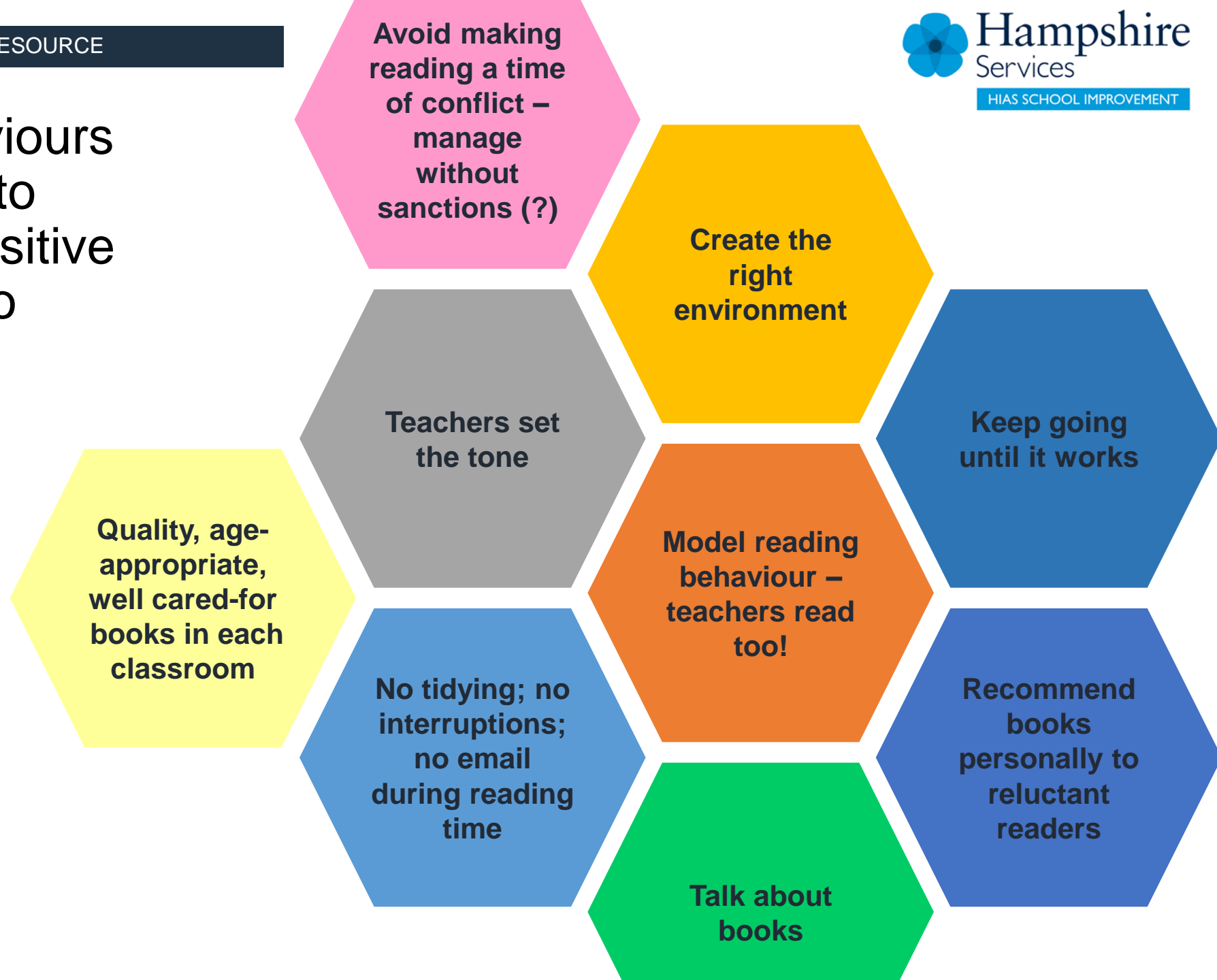
Therefore...

- Schools need to consider building structures into the school day that ensure that pupils have sufficient experience of reading (with their eyes on the page)
- Schools need to provide access to a diet of texts that pupils can engage with, but are not expected to study in an academic sense
- Schools need to provide dedicated time for reading
- Schools should provide pupils with access to interesting books and encourage **both** engagement with high quality texts and the opportunity to make choices about what to read

Consider...

- Goal-setting and monitoring schemes
- Tutor time (or other timetabled) reading programmes aimed at reading for pleasure
- Careful choices of texts for any shared reading programmes
- Sharing recommendations – a range of approaches
- Celebration of reading successes
- Book gifts (especially for pupils with no or few books in the home)
- Display and the physical reading environment

Staff behaviours necessary to model a positive approach to reading



Reading culture

- Precisely targeted support for struggling readers
- Expectation of reading in every subject – built into the curriculum
- Vocabulary instruction in every subject
- Academic and extension reading planned and carefully delivered
- Regular CPD and refresh of reading knowledge for staff
- Classroom reading strategies to support comprehension for all as part of subject pedagogy
- Reading valued and space created
- Library provision; reading celebrations; participation in reading events
- Teachers see the value in the reading culture of the school and are proud to contribute

HIAS English Team

Please contact Joanna Kenyon Joanna.Kenyon@hants.gov.uk for support with secondary reading, whole school literacy and English.

For further details on the full range of services available please contact us using the following email: htlcdev@hants.gov.uk

Upcoming Courses

Keep up-to-date with our learning opportunities for each subject through our Upcoming Course pages linked below. To browse the full catalogue of learning offers, visit our new Learning Zone. Full details of how to access the site to make a booking are provided [here](#).

- [English](#)
- [Maths](#)
- [Science](#)
- [Geography](#)
- [RE](#)
- [History](#)
- [Leadership](#)
- [Computing](#)
- [Art](#)
- [D&T](#)
- [Assessment](#)
- [Support Staff](#)
- [SEN](#)
- [TED](#)
- [MFL](#)

Terms and conditions

Terms of Use

This file is for personal or classroom use only. By using it, you agree that you will not copy or reproduce this file except for your own personal, non-commercial use. HIAS have the right to modify the terms of this agreement at any time; the modification will be effective immediately and shall replace all prior agreements.

You are welcome to:

- download this resource
- save this resource on your computer
- print as many copies as you would like to use in your school
- amend this electronic resource so long as you acknowledge its source and do not share as your own work.

You may not:

- claim this resource as your own
- sell or in any way profit from this resource
- store or distribute this resource on any other website or another location where others are able to electronically retrieve it
- email this resource to anyone outside your school or transmit it in any other fashion.