

January
2023



Newsletter



Flying High
English Hub

Spring Term events

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7th March 23

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Y1 phonics screening
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Reading aloud to children



From Carl Pattison,
Flying High English Hub Lead

In this month's newsletter, I want to discuss the important role of **reading aloud** to children as it is such a key part of the school day. We know, from the work of the Open University, that reading aloud plays a key role in children's enjoyment of reading and their desire to become readers in their own right. Each day, story time creates a sense of community. The class gathers round to hear the next story or instalment of a text and instantly have a text in common.

The coming together is great for the community, but the opening up of a common experience also promotes endless opportunities for further book chat.

Together, the class have numerous opportunities to experience a text, often beyond their own reading capabilities. They see how their teacher brings the text back to life and each child creates their own internal images, as the words dance around their minds.

Research tells us that reading aloud has various benefits to a child's development. For example, improved empathy. They learn about others who might lead a life quite different to their own. Contrastingly, they might experience a protagonist who is similar to themselves. They see how they deal with challenges, overcome fears etc. As the text is often beyond their own reading ability, they also get to experience the wonderful array of language that is used in a variety of contexts. Importantly, they then have opportunities to use this in book chat or spend some time looking words up to help them understand their meaning.

I could continue to write about the benefits of reading aloud, however, I want to focus on how we might get it right in schools.

Therefore, I want to share my top tips:

Tip Number 1: When reading aloud, allow for pauses so you can invite children in to engage in the text some way. You might freeze frame and allow children to consider character thoughts and feelings. Children might simply be asked to make connections with their own lives.

Tip Number 2: Practise reading aloud and self-assess your performance. As part of our English Hub training, we were asked to film ourselves reading a story. Whilst being quite scary, it did enable us to improve how we brought to text back to life.





Tip Number 3: Use character voices you can maintain and prepare your session wherever possible.

Tip Number 4: Set the scene before reading. This might be with a discussion or a look at an image or video.

Tip Number 5: Pupil choice: Allow children to vote for the next story/text. You might take this further and allow children to visit other teachers at a coordinated time.

I'm sure you can add many other tips. Why not share/discuss these as a team and consider a relaunch of how you read aloud to children in your school.

Finally, we know that reading aloud should also take place at home. Research tells us that it often disappears when children are able to read for themselves, so we need to support families to keep it going. I have shared a few resources in this newsletter to support this. In addition, we also have a role in supporting families to start reading to their children as soon as possible.

"Niklas and Schneider (2013) demonstrated that aspects of the Home Literacy Environment such as parental reading, reading to the child, and the number of books in a household predicted preschoolers' vocabulary and phonological awareness as well as the further development of literacy competencies even when controlling for a range of child and family background variables."

The sooner, the better. Early reading to children journal.

Wherever reading aloud takes place, we should continue to make it the best part of the day: I believe practitioners should build anticipation throughout the day so that it becomes an enjoyable experience for all.

Author in the spotlight



Nizrana Farook

Nizrana Farook was born and raised in Colombo, Sri Lanka, and the beautiful landscapes of her home country find their way into the stories she writes. She has a master's degree in writing for young people, and lives with her family in Hertfordshire.

Nizrana has a variety of materials to support teachers and children using her books. [Find them here.](#)

[Read about her journey to becoming a published author here](#)



We Recommend...



Flying High
English Hub

Open University



READING
FOR PLEASURE

To follow on from our hub lead editorial, we have a collection of resources to support **reading aloud at home**:

[Supporting families at home](#)

[Supporting reading at home poster](#)

[Helping your parents to support 'book chat'](#)

BRITISH
LIBRARY



A reminder about these exciting opportunities coming up:

Cook up your own fairy tales
1st February 2023

A free live-streamed 'Authors into Schools' event, Michael Rosen and Viviane Schwarz will concoct their own fairy tale recipes. There will be delightful storytelling, improvised illustration and a live brainstorming session to help your students plan their very own tales.



[MORE INFO
HERE](#)

Fairytales in the classroom - free CPD

4pm, 25th January 2023

Join Michael Rosen, the award-winning Mara the Storyteller and Matt Towler, year 6 teacher at Hugh Gaitskell Primary School, Leeds, for a free fairy tales twilight CPD session for primary teachers.



[MORE INFO
HERE](#)

Developing reading fluency video and social media shorts

The DfE are pleased to launch the new reading framework part 1 video, '[Beyond the phonics screening check: What next?](#)' and associated social media shorts.

The video is based on [reading framework part 1](#) guidance on developing fluency. It is aimed at supporting those children who have met the standard of the phonics screening check but struggle to develop fluency in their reading and are at risk of falling behind.

The associated social media shorts are designed to promote use of the reading framework, reinforce guidance on developing fluency, and to direct teachers & leaders to read/revisit the framework.



Bitesize

Where we take a look at resources available to schools and how they might want to use them.



Flying High English Hub



Are your children aware of the current children's laureate? If not, you might want to explore more on the [BookTrust website](#).

We previously featured Joseph as one of our authors in the spotlight, however, if you missed it, we do recommend visiting his website for lots of great content.

As part of his laureate role, Joseph also shares 'Poetry Prompts.' He aims to invite the nation to become poets. It isn't just for children so maybe staff in your school will also take part?

The next one is released 16th January and can be found here 

You can also find the last video there.

- Why not use these videos in assembly?
- Set up a family workshop where they can come together to use a video to stimulate some poetry creation?
- Schools could use the prompts to set up a poetry competition and then invite a local author to judge it.

We are sure schools will find creative ways to use these prompts.



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Flying High English Conference

Flying High Futures continue to offer a range of professional learning opportunities. Their next big one is the English Conference which takes place on 7th February 2023. The theme is '**Oracy**' and it will provide delegates with the opportunity to hear from the Voice 21, the UK's oracy charity. More information can be found by clicking on the Spring term activity flyer on the left and at the top of this newsletter.



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