LOVE TO READ

A Programme to Inspire
and Sustain a Love of Reading

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For further information about Love to Read, and to access all resources, please visit: https://blogs.ed.ac.uk/lovetoread/

Contents

Unit 1. Introduction

The Love to Read programme has been designed to inspire and sustain a love of book reading among children aged 8-11, and has been developed by researchers, teachers and other professionals, with input from children. By developing the programme in this way, we have been able to ensure children's perspectives and experiences are included, while also ensuring the programme is informed by relevant theory and research, and teachers' professional and pedagogical knowledge, expertise and experience. You can learn more about the Love to Read project here: https://blogs.ed.ac.uk/lovetoread/

The Love to Read Programme is underpinned by six research-informed principles:

Access

Teacher definition: Children have regular and easy access to books at school which reflect their reading interests, preferences, abilities, lives and experiences.

Child definition: I can access books I enjoy

Choice

Teacher definition: Children have choice over their independent reading activities; schools have the structure, and children have the skills, to ensure 'good' (i.e., skill and interest aligned) reading choices

Child definition: I know how to choose books I will enjoy

Time

Teacher definition: Children have regular quality time to read books they engage with in school and at home

Child definition: I have quality time to read at school and at home

Connection

Teacher definition: Children can access and choose books, and book reading activities, which are personally relevant, and relevant to their reading goals

Child definition: I can access and choose books which I connect with

Social

Teacher definition: Children have the time, skills and confidence to share and discuss books with others

Child definition: I enjoy sharing and discussing books with others

Success

Teacher definition: Children have a range of rich and diverse positive reading experiences, can set meaningful goals, and recognise their growing success as readers

Child definition: I have positive reading experiences and feel I am developing as a reader

This handbook has 9 units. Units 1 and 2 should take approximately 1 hour to read and reflect on and Units 3 – 8 should take approximately 2 hours, with the final unit taking 1 hour.

Units:

1) Introduction
2) Implementation
3) Access
4) Choice
5) Time
6) Connection
7) Social
8) Success
9) Love to Read evaluation

Throughout the Love to Read programme you will find detailed content, summaries, opportunities for reflection and classroom activities to embed these six research-informed principles into practice. We would strongly encourage school leaders and teachers to familiarise themselves with the content of the entire programme prior to delivery.

Love to Read has been specifically developed for children in Years 4-6 (England and Wales), Primary 5-7 (Scotland) and Years 5-7 (Northern Ireland). We begin with a brief review of relevant research, in addition to insights into children's reading experiences.

Why books?

"I feel like…..if it's written very well, I feel like I'm there"

"If I read a funny book, it just lightens my mood"

Time spent reading books, but especially fiction books, is associated with a wide range of rich and diverse positive outcomes. Students who read books more often have better general knowledge, language, reading and spelling skills, and school achievement (Mol & Bus, 2011; Torppa et al., 2019). Indeed, books, more than any other text type, are associated with improved reading comprehension skills (e.g. Torppa et al., 2019) and 'book language' introduces children to much more varied and rich vocabulary, and complex syntactic structures, that they would experience in everyday conversation (Nation et al., 2022). In addition, books provide opportunities for children to relax, laugh, escape to new worlds, pursue their interests, learn new things, experience adventures and/or spend time with fictional friends (McGeown et al., 2020; McGeown & Wilkinson, 2021). Book reading has been associated with wellbeing (Clark & Teravainen-Goff, 2018) and can also help children to explore personally relevant content (Kuzmičová & Cremin, 2021; McGeown & Wilkinson, 2021), in addition to developing an enriched understanding, and reduced prejudice, towards others (Vezzali et al., 2015). Indeed, reading books can help children understand themselves, and others, better (McGeown & Wilkinson, 2021).

However, not all children have positive experiences with books (Clark et al., 2008; McArthur, 2022), for various reasons. Love to Read has been created to inspire and sustain a love of book reading among all children, however we appreciate that the path to becoming a reader will vary for children, and may not always begin with books, but with other text types which allow positive, rewarding and successful experiences with texts, before leading on to books.

What children say about books, from McGeown et al., (2020).

In addition, while books naturally introduce children to more rich and diverse vocabulary than they would encounter in day to day conversations (Nation et al., 2022), it is also important that children are, at times, encouraged to find slightly more challenging books to read, to continue to develop their reading and language skills – and ultimately be able to access a much wider selection of books.

Reading motivation, engagement and positive outcomes

Despite research demonstrating the benefits of reading books, only 43% of UK children aged 9-11 report reading daily outside of class (Clark & Teravainen-Goff, 2020). The Love to Read programme aims to directly address this by increasing children's intrinsic reading motivation, in other words their desire to want to read, a key antecedent to reading engagement (Miyamoto et al., 2019; Schiefele et al., 2012).

Understanding what motivates children to read is central to inspiring and sustaining reading for pleasure (i.e., independent book reading). **Reading motivation** has been summarised as 'the drive to read resulting from an individual's beliefs about, attitudes toward, and goals for reading' (Conradi et al., 2014, p.154).

Reading motivation
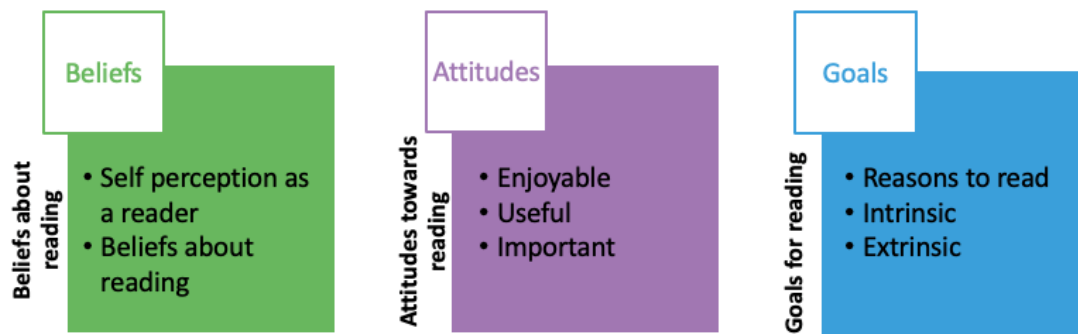
Children's **beliefs about reading** reflect whether they believe they are good at reading or not (i.e. their self-perceptions of themselves as readers) and whether they believe reading is a useful and important activity. Reading motivation also reflects children's **attitudes toward reading.** That is, the extent to which they feel reading is an enjoyable, useful and important activity. Finally, reading motivation reflects children's **goals or reasons for reading.** In other words, why they choose to read: Is it to learn, for fun, to relax, for escapism, to spend time with fictional friends or because their teacher told them to? This latter point is important because it draws attention to the difference between intrinsic (internal reasons for reading – e.g., for fun) and extrinsic (external reasons for reading – e.g., because their teacher told them to) motivation.

While children often read for numerous reasons (both **intrinsic and extrinsic**) and may have different reasons for reading different texts, research is consistent that intrinsic reading motivation is associated with more frequent and engaged reading, and better reading skill, than extrinsic reading motivation (e.g. Schiefele et al., 2012; Troyer et al., 2019). Therefore, Love to Read aims to increase children's intrinsic, rather than extrinsic, reading motivation. In addition, Love to Read aims to develop an inclusive whole class or whole school reading culture, ensuring those children who do not enjoy reading (for whatever reason) are identified and supported. Developing and sustaining a reading community will work best when school leadership, teachers, and other staff are all committed to this, and understand the value of a whole class or whole school approach.

Love to Read also aims to enhance children's **reading engagement**, which has behavioural, cognitive, affective and social dimensions (Lee et al., 2021).

Reading engagement
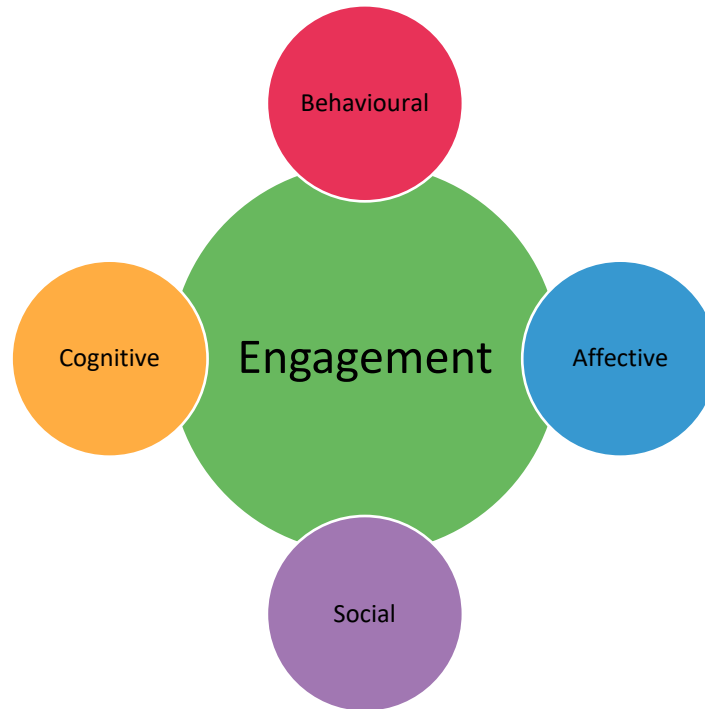
Behavioural engagement reflects the amount of reading that children do, that is, how often and for how long children read, and the nature of text types they read. **Cognitive engagement** reflects children's level of cognitive effort while they read, and the extent to which children put into place strategies (e.g., decoding, re-reading) to support their comprehension. For example, choosing to decipher unfamiliar words, working out word meanings, monitoring comprehension and making connections between new information and existing knowledge (Miyamoto et al., 2019). **Affective engagement** reflects the depth of emotions children experience while reading and the extent to which children are interested in what they read and explore personally meaningful content. It includes immersing oneself in a book, relating personal experiences to text content, using ones' imagination and empathising with characters (Miyamoto et al., 2019; McGeown & Wilkinson, 2021). Finally, **social engagement** refers to children's participation in diverse reading activities with others (e.g., peers, teacher, family, etc) as they share, swap and discuss books. This allows children to learn and benefit from other readers in their class, home and community (Cremin et al., 2014).

Research demonstrates that reading motivation precedes reading engagement. That is, motivated readers read more – behavioural engagement (Schiefele et al., 2012) and exert more cognitive effort while reading – cognitive engagement (Taboada et al., 2009), both of which are crucial for developing reading skills (Torppa et al., 2019; Toste et al., 2020).

Indeed, reading motivation improves reading comprehension, via reading engagement (Miyamoto et al., 2019). Affective and social engagement are important for the positive feelings and emotions than can arising from reading, in addition to supporting children's understanding of themselves and others, perspective taking and empathy.
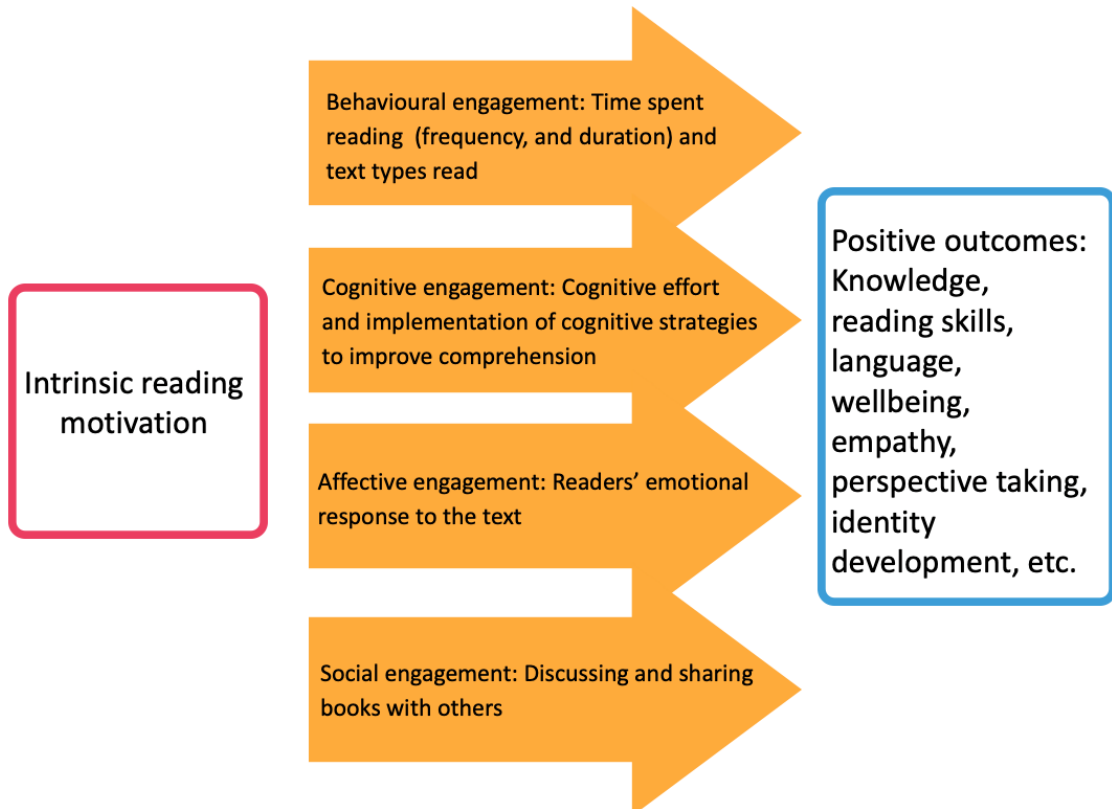
Illustration of the relationship from motivation to engagement to positive outcomes.

Reading motivation and engagement: Leveraging social change

In 2000, results from the OECD's Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) reported:

"while the degree of engagement in reading varies considerably from country to country, 15-year-olds whose parents have the lowest occupational status but who are highly engaged in reading obtain higher average reading scores in PISA than students whose parents have high or medium occupational status but who report to be poorly engaged in reading. This suggests that finding ways to engage students in reading may be one of the most effective ways to leverage social change" (Kirsch et al., 2002, p.3).

This was also reflected in a more recent report from OECD:

"PISA data consistently shows that engagement in reading is strongly correlated with reading performance and is a mediator of gender or socio-economic status"

(OECD, 2021, p.28).

The importance of developing a love of reading therefore cannot be underestimated. In Love to Read, we draw upon the wealth of research available to support teachers in this endeavour, integrating this with essential input from children and teachers themselves.

Summary:

Book reading is associated with a range of positive academic, social and emotional outcomes.

Reading motivation reflects children's beliefs about, attitudes towards, and goals for reading.

Reading engagement includes behavioural, cognitive, affective and social dimensions.

Fostering reading motivation and engagement is essential for children to experience the rich and diverse benefits that books have to offer.

Reading motivation and engagement have potential to reduce inequalities resulting from children's social and economic background.

Reflection:

Note down 3-4 new ideas learnt from within this section.

How much do you currently know about your students' reading motivation and engagement?

What would a motivated reader look like?

What would an engaged reader look like?

Supporting all children

Children vary in their levels of reading motivation and engagement and for each child this will also fluctuate over time, depending on their recent experiences with reading books. Love to Read is intended as a whole class programme, however children with negative reading experiences will need addition consideration. Whole class implementation could unintentionally increase inequalities in reading for pleasure, if not implemented with their needs and experiences in mind.

In this next section, we discuss specific supports that some children may benefit from. It is important to recognise however that there will be considerable variation in the reading attitudes, behaviours and skills of children within these groups. That said, there are also likely to be some similarities, for example, children with reading difficulties could find it difficult to access and enjoy the books their peers are reading, unless adjustments are

made (e.g., teacher read alouds, reading buddies, audio books, or use of technology/apps (i.e., those that narrate books or provide reading aloud support, e.g., Epic, Claro ScanPen)).

We would encourage more regular 'check-ins' with these students, either by the teacher, teacher assistant or support staff, either in small groups or individually in order to learn about their thoughts and experiences of the Love to Read activities. Asking their opinion and acting on this can be empowering for children, and means supports are tailored to their own recognised needs.

Finally, children who struggle with reading (for whatever reason) are often acutely aware of their difficulties and challenges, which can be incredibly demotivating. Changing the narrative they hold of themselves as a reader, by focusing on what they do well and the progress they have made, will support motivation and engagement, and should be adopted consistently in addition to finding motivating and enjoyable ways to support skill development.

Supporting children with reading difficulties

Children with reading (word reading and/or comprehension) difficulties (Duff & Clarke, 2011) often have poor perceptions of themselves as readers and are more likely to suffer from reading anxiety (Francis et al., 2019; Francis & McArthur, 2020; McArthur, 2022; McArthur et al., 2020) all of which can have consequences for their emotional health (McArthur et al., 2021). Therefore, the importance of positive reading experiences with this group cannot be underestimated.

When delivering Love to Read in your class, we would encourage you to pay particular attention to needs and experiences of children with reading difficulties to ensure the programme does not, inadvertently, have a negative influence on these children. Reflecting on the six principles from the perspectives of children with reading difficulties is essential. For example, for *'access'* ensure children have access to texts which reflect their interests, but are also at a suitable reading ability level so that they experience success. Books by the publisher Barrington Stoke are an excellent example of books which are of high interest for older readers but require lower reading skills. Furthermore, shorter texts can provide a good gateway into book reading.   Realise that children may be self-conscious about their reading difficulties, so subtlety providing these high-quality alternative texts is important. As already mentioned, audio books and read aloud apps can support with access to books which are popular within the class, ensuring children with reading difficulties can participate in class discussions and feel a part of the reading community.

'Time' spent reading is also essential for children to develop their reading skills, and so speak to children's parents or guardians about Love to Read and encourage additional support at home, which can include supporting independent reading, in addition to reading together, or being read to. Finally, the messages inherent within *'success'* are essential – being a reader is about finding books that you enjoy reading, choosing to read outside of

school, understanding one's own reading interests and being able to select books which align with these, feeling confident to share one's own thoughts about books, and being able to let their parents or teacher know when they need additional support or better access to books which reflect their abilities and interests. Working with children with reading difficulties to set personally important and achievable reading goals is also essential, as is highlighting their strengths and progress as readers.

Supporting children with special educational needs/additional support for learning

There is considerable variation among children with Special Educational Needs /Additional Support for Learning, as this term is typically used collectively to include children with Speech, Language and Communication Needs, Autism Spectrum Disorder, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder, Learning Difficulties, Physical Disabilities, Sensory Impairments, Social, Emotional and Mental Health needs, etc. (Department for Education, 2022a). It is also important to recognise that there will be undiagnosed children within classrooms who will benefit from additional support.

Children with SEN/ASL may find reading for pleasure difficult for different reasons, as reading naturally places demands on children's language skills, attention, working memory, visual acuity, inference skills, etc., in addition to requiring motivation and engagement. It is beyond the scope of this handbook to provide a full account of the consequences of these demands, but to help overcome barriers or opportunities to read for pleasure, we would encourage you to think about the Love to Read principles and classroom activities from the perspectives of children with SEN/ASL.

In addition, over the last few years there has been increasing awareness about the importance of diversity in children's books (Best et al., 2020) and greater awareness about the lack of disability representation within books for children (Matthew & Clow, 2007; Pennell et al., 2018). Indeed, there is good evidence to suggest that children, for various reasons, often feel poorly represented in the books they have access to (Best et al., 2020). Aligned with the principles of *'access'* and '*connection*', it is essential that all children are able to access books which they feel reflect them and their lives in a positive way, and are able to explore personally meaningful content as they read (Kuzmičová & Cremin, 2021; Mar, 2018; Oatley, 2016). It is also important that children have access to shorter texts, engaging texts, and texts which reflect their language skills, so that they can have successful reading experiences. With regard to *'social',* providing different ways for children to engage in book-talk (e.g., written thoughts, drawings, short recommendations) will allow more children to share their thoughts and ideas in ways which are more inclusive. In addition, the messages inherent within *'success'* are important, as children learn that there are different ways to be a successful reader, that we are all able to develop as readers, and contribute towards a reading community in different ways.

The delivery of Love to Read should also be considered with all children's needs in mind. Considerations with regard to movement breaks, reducing quantity and increasingly clarity of verbal information provided, and allowing children different ways to contribute to activities (e.g., verbal, written) are all important to consider to ensure inclusive delivery of Love to Read. We would also encourage you to seek feedback from children with SEN/ASL as you deliver Love to Read, to understand how to improve the classroom activities for them.

Supporting bi/multi-lingual learners (often referred to as children who speak English as an Additional Language)

The term *English as an Additional Language* describes a child who has been exposed to a language other than English in early development and continues to be exposed to that language in the home or the community (Department for Education and Skills, 2007). Naturally this description encapsulates children with a variety of language experiences, from children who are new to English to those who are English dominant. Therefore, children who speak EAL will require different levels of support with reading.

Research suggests that children with EAL may have a particular difficulty with reading comprehension, despite age-appropriate word reading skills and reading fluency (Beech & Keys, 1997; Burgoyne et al., 2009; Hutchinson et al., 2003; Rosowsky, 2001). In line with the principles of '*access*' and '*connection*', it's particularly important that children with EAL's comprehension is checked, even if they appear to be reading well. Publishers such as Barrington Stoke may be helpful for EAL learners, where interesting and age appropriate content is conveyed in more accessible language. Audio books and technology/apps often help with decoding difficulties rather than comprehension, but can take some of the cognitive load away from decoding, allowing more cognitive resource for comprehension.

Children with EAL also need to be able to engage with texts that are culturally relevant. Culturally relevant texts not only help children to *connect* to the story, but children can draw on their own background knowledge to construct meaning, helping their overall comprehension (Abu-Rabia, 2003; Ebe, 2010; Yuet & Chan, 2003). Culturally relevant content can be meaningful to children and help to form their identity as a bi- or multi-lingual learner.

The overarching purpose of the Love to Read programme is to promote a love of reading, whether in in English or in other languages. Aligned with the principle of '*social*', children should be encouraged to read texts in their first language, especially in the home, so that they can share reading experiences with parents and other family members. Parents should be reassured that reading together in the home language will not be detrimental to children's English.

"I kind of feel what the book wants me to feel"

"After a long day at school... it just makes me want to read a book

"And it makes me laugh sometimes"

"After reading I can go to sleep, which is nice, because it's like, reading yourself a story, a bedtime story"

"I feel like I am actually in that place, and I don't want to leave it"
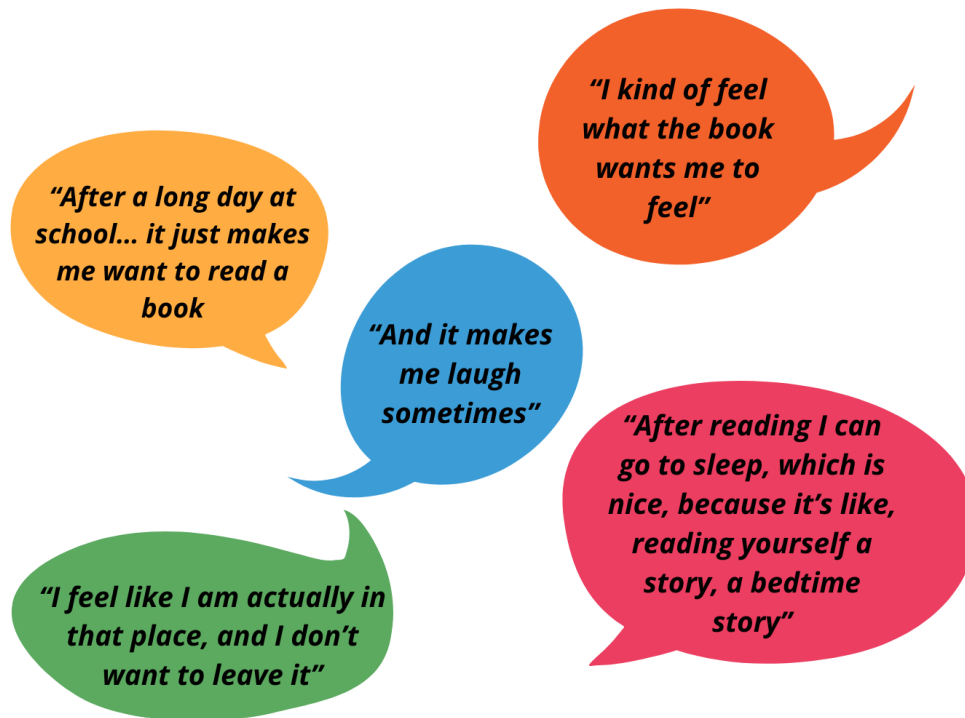
What children say about books, from McGeown et al., (2020).

Summary:

Children's reading motivation and engagement is influenced by their recent and past reading experiences.

Children with reading difficulties, special educational needs/additional support for learning and bi/multi-lingual/EAL may need addition support to promote motivation and engagement.

By making popular books accessible, children will feel more included and a part of the class reading community. Seeking children's feedback on ways to support them, in addition to celebrating strengths and progress is essential for children to develop positive perceptions of themselves as readers.

Consider the principles of access, choice, time, connection, social and success from the perspective of these students, providing additional support or adapting Love to Read activities/resources to optimise delivery and/or support.

Seek children's feedback and respond to this, while simultaneously providing strategies to support greater autonomy.

Reflection:

- Note down 3-4 new ideas learnt from within this section.
- Reflect on your current class – are there any students in particular that would benefit from additional support with their reading motivation and engagement?
- What current practices do you have in place to support children's reading motivation and engagement?

Reading Myths

Now that you've developed understanding about what motivates children to read, it is important to dispel common reading myths which can influence teacher practice, and children's reading experiences.

1. Children should be rewarded for reading

   Providing tangible rewards for reading is an extrinsic motivator and may encourage children to read in order to obtain a reward as opposed to reading for the sheer enjoyment and experience of it. It is currently unclear whether extrinsic motivators undermine children's intrinsic reading motivation, however the Love to Read programme firmly focuses on developing intrinsic reading motivation, that is, an internal desire to want to read due to the enjoyment and experience of reading itself.

2. All children benefit from public celebrations of reading success

   Children can, and often do, compare themselves to their peers. While we would encourage teachers to celebrate reading successes, making specific successes visible may unintentionally encourage comparisons within classrooms and discourage some students from reading. Therefore, be thoughtful and sensitive when celebrating reading successes, ensuring it is always done in an inclusive way.

3. Reading motivation and engagement should come second to developing reading skill

   Within a busy school day, teachers need to make decisions on how to optimally support children's learning (e.g., reading and language development), therefore a focus on skills rather than motivation and engagement may be prioritised. However, as we have seen, there is a considerable body of research demonstrating the reading and language benefits associated with independent book reading, especially outside of school. Love to Read provides a structure to improve children's reading motivation and depth of reading engagement, increasing the likelihood and

quality of independent reading. Therefore motivation and engagement should not come second to skill development, nor should it be regarded as being in conflict with a focus on skill development. Indeed, research shows that both cognitive (e.g., language) and affective (e.g., motivation) factors predict reading skills and growth in skills over time (Taboada et al., 2009), especially among struggling readers (Logan et al., 2011).

Curricula links

The Love to Read programme has been designed to inspire and sustain a love of book reading, which is reflected in the curricula across the different UK nations, and therefore are responsibilities for school leaders and teachers alike. In this section, curriculum examples from England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland are provided.

National Primary Curriculum England

'Pupils should be taught to read fluently, understand extended prose (both fiction and non-fiction) and be encouraged to read for pleasure. Schools should do everything to promote wider reading. They should provide library facilities and set ambitious expectations for reading at home' (Department for Education, 2013, p. 10)

'Through reading in particular, pupils have a chance to develop culturally, emotionally, intellectually, socially and spiritually. Literature, especially, plays a key role in such development. Reading also enables pupils both to acquire knowledge and to build on what they already know' (p13)

'The overarching aim for English in the national curriculum is to promote high standards of language and literacy by equipping pupils with a strong command of the spoken and written word, and to develop their love of literature through widespread reading for enjoyment' (p13)

'The National Curriculum for England aims to ensure that all pupils: develop a habit of reading widely and often, both for pleasure and information' (p13)

'All pupils must be encouraged to read widely across both fiction and non-fiction to develop their knowledge of themselves and the world in which they live, to establish an appreciation and love of reading, and to gain knowledge across the curriculum' (p14)

'Reading widely and often increases pupils' vocabulary because they encounter words they would rarely hear or use in everyday speech. Reading also feeds pupils' imagination and opens up a treasure-house of wonder and joy for curious young minds' (p14)

Curriculum for Excellence (Scotland)

Reading / Enjoyment and Choice: 'Within a motivating and challenging environment, developing an awareness of the relevance of texts in my life' (LIT 1-01a / LIT 2-01a, pg. 6)

'I regularly select and read, listen to or watch texts which I enjoy and find interesting, and I can explain why I prefer certain texts and authors' (Outcome code LIT 1-11a / LIT 2-11a, pg. 7)

The Northern Ireland Curriculum Primary

'Children should be encouraged to develop a love of books and the disposition to read' (p20)

'Children should be helped to develop confidence in reading using a range of methods. They should be given opportunities to develop their confidence and independence through enjoyable reading experiences that will help them develop individual tastes and preferences and make sense of what they read' (p50)

Curriculum for Wales

'Learners should experience a language-rich environment where oracy, reading and writing experiences are connected to ensure that they become enthusiastic, independent and reflective readers' (p5)

Learners should 'read for different purposes, e.g. for personal pleasure' (p5)

Department for Education: The Reading Framework: Teaching the foundations of literacy

The importance of reading motivation and engagement is also reflected in the Foreword of the recent Department for Education (2022) report which stressed the importance of being a 'highly engaged reader' as well as 'building a love of stories and reading'.

Supporting teachers' professional development/learning

The Love to Read programme has been designed to develop teachers' and school leaders' professional development/learning around reading for reading for pleasure. In developing this programme, we have drawn upon recent research commissioned by the Education Endowment Foundation on effective professional development (Collin & Smith, 2021).

1) Love to Read is evidence-based and content is drawn from trusted sources. Furthermore, Love to Read focuses on six key mechanisms (the principles of access, choice, time, connection, social and success) which are integral to the programme.

2) Love to Read aims to build knowledge, motivate teachers, develop new teaching techniques and embed these into practice. We also encourage teachers to set goals for improvement and evaluate progress (via self-reflection and student feedback).

3) When implementing Love to Read, we encourage teachers to reflect on the context and needs of the school and their pupils. While fidelity to the six principles is essential, we encourage teachers to implement Love to Read in a way that aligns with their knowledge of their students' needs, context and school resources. We have provided multiple classroom activities associated with each principle and would encourage teachers to select which classroom activity to implement to maximise positive outcomes. Depth of knowledge of these principles and a good understanding of your students' needs, interests, and abilities is essential to guide this decision making process.

In addition, a key recommendation from professional development/learning literature is the importance of coaching and support to embed new pedagogies into practice, including social support. We would recommend Love to Read is embedded in several classes within a school, so that teachers can support each other during its implementation.

Reflection:

- Write down 3-5 things that you would like to gain from the Love to Read programme to support your own professional development/learning.
- How is knowledge of reading for pleasure practice currently shared within your school?
- What will support you to develop your knowledge and pedagogy as you engage with the Love to Read programme?

Unit 2. How to use Love to Read

A whole class, small group or individual approach

Love to Read has been designed as a whole class programme, to inspire and sustain a love of book reading among all students. However, it is important to view the six principles from the perspectives of struggling readers and less engaged readers, and we would also suggest more targeted support for students who perhaps have had negative experiences with reading, or are uninterested in reading.   This targeted support may include 1-1 or small group explicit teaching of strategies to select books, providing 'bounded choice', developing confidence in contributing to book-talk in a smaller group setting, etc.

Before implementing Love to Read, school leaders and teachers should familiarise themselves with the content and make plans about how to implement this in practice. Teachers should be provided with a minimum of six hours to engage with the Love to Read programme and resources, prior to implementing classroom activities. Indeed, we would encourage teachers to read the entire programme before delivery.

We recommend that Love to Read is introduced at the start of a school year, to initiate a reading for enjoyment culture within your class. We would encourage you to follow the programme activities over 12 weeks within the first school semester, spending approximately 45 minutes each week with your class on Love to Read. A recommended approach is to focus on one principle and its associated activities for two weeks, before moving to the next principle, in the order of: access, choice, time, connection, social and success.

Love to Read is designed to kick-start a culture of reading for enjoyment in your class/school, and therefore we would encourage you to continue to embed these principles and practices throughout the school year. While it is anticipated that new attitudes, skills and behaviours will more naturally occur (e.g., children will have better book choosing strategies, will be more reflective when reading, more likely to read at home, more likely to engage in informal book-talk, etc) some principles/practices may need to be revisited throughout the school year. This can be done with the whole class, small groups or individuals, if it is identified that some additional support is needed (e.g., still struggling to find books they enjoy/apply effective book choosing strategies). Furthermore, children will need to continue to be given the opportunities to practice these new skills and strategies (e.g., by being given time to select books, independently read in class, share/recommend/discuss books with others, be encouraged to read at home). Some Love to Read activities may also align with different festivals or celebrations throughout the school year, and so it may be worth revisiting activities if this applies.

Love to Read has been designed with considerations of fidelity and flexibility in mind. Fidelity to the research informed principles, but flexibility in delivery, encouraging teachers to use their professional and contextual knowledge to select the activities that they believe will have the greatest positive impact on their students.

For school leadership teams

A whole-school approach to support reading for pleasure is important, for all children to benefit from the Love to Read programme. Reading for pleasure should be an integral part of children's school and home experiences. It is embedded within the curricula across the UK (curricula links section) and there is a considerable body of evidence demonstrating the academic, social and emotional benefits of reading (see introduction). Providing teachers with sufficient time, and resources, to develop their expertise in this area has considerable potential to benefit students in many ways. Indeed, Love to Read has been created to inspire children to read out of school, in their own time, therefore teaching time dedicated to this should have positive consequences for children's independent learning. The evaluation of Love to Read (Unit 9) provides examples of this. In terms of strategies to support a whole school approach to reading for pleasure, McGeown & Wilkinson (2021) suggest:

1) Including reading for pleasure in the school strategy documents or improvement plan

2) Allocating regular time each week to reading for pleasure activities (e.g., independent silent reading, book selection, book-talk, etc)

3) Forming a reading leadership group within the school, compromised of students and staff, to promote and sustain reading for pleasure practices

4) Allocating budget to ensure high-quality book provision aligned with students' interests and abilities

5) Creating appealing and comfortable places to read throughout the school and encouraging regular use.

In addition, building and sustaining momentum among all school staff to support reading for pleasure is important. For example, staff meetings which have opportunities for teachers to share their experiences of implementing Love to Read, or time to look at new books which have been purchased for the school.   Furthermore, encouraging colleagues with more experience to take a lead on reading for pleasure initiatives and/or support other colleagues to develop their professional and pedagogical knowledge and experience can be helpful.

Love to Read has been created to be used within school's existing resources, however we recognise that some activities (e.g., new books) require investment. Suggestions are provided in the programme for external sources of support and fundraising ideas to support with book provision.

Introducing and establishing the Love to Read programme in school is likely to be most effective when done in a planned and systematic way. It is likely to be most effective when:

- Leaders and the leadership team are actively and visibly involved in the programme.

- It is used across multiple classrooms in the school so that teachers can share their learning.
- Teachers are given time to engage in initial professional development/learning (e.g., reading of Love to Read programme and resources) and ongoing time and support is provided.
- The impact of the programme on students' attitudes, behaviours and skills around independent reading is monitored and evaluated over time.

A range of resources have been created to support schools and school leaders. These include presentations for teachers and the wider school community, resources for students such as bookmarks and posters, and links and further reading on the Love to Read website.

For teachers

Love to Read has been designed to develop depth of knowledge and understanding of relevant theory and research to promote reading for pleasure. We have been incredibly fortunate to work alongside a team of experienced teachers and other professionals from leading literacy and education organisations to develop this programme, to ensure it supports your own professional practice, in addition to supporting your students.

We are aware that research and practice in this area continues to develop, therefore it is essential to engage in continuing professional development/learning to keep abreast of new insights. In addition, in the UK there is a wonderful community of Teacher Reading Groups run by the Open University and UKLA. These focus on developing teachers' knowledge of children's literature, in addition to reading for pleasure pedagogy. In addition, one-off webinars and conferences offer opportunities to keep up to date with the latest developments in research and practice. Furthermore, different organisations such as BookTrust, National Literacy Trust, Reading Agency and Scottish Book Trust (in alphabetical order) also offer resources to support teachers to develop reading for pleasure pedagogy, you can learn more about these on their websites.

Reflecting on and evaluating your practice

Love to Read has been created to increase children's reading motivation and engagement. Therefore, after participating in the programme, we hope that children will have more positive beliefs about, and attitudes towards, reading, in addition to more reasons to want to read (i.e., increased reading motivation). Furthermore, we hope that the quality and depth of children's reading experiences will have increased (i.e., increased reading engagement). An important part of developing your knowledge and skills in this area, is reflecting on and evaluating your practice. Conversations with colleagues and surveys/feedback from children can help with this.

Love to Read has been developed to support children to learn new skills, strategies, and have experience of implementing these, to encourage improvements across the six principles underpinning Love to Read. Specifically, we hope that:

1) Children will have better knowledge of how to access books that align with their interests/preferences/skills/lives (access)

2) Children will feel more able and confident to choose books that align with their interests and skills (choice)

3) Children will choose to spend more time reading in school and at home (time)

4) Children will know how to choose personally relevant books (relevant to their lives, interests, goals) (connection)

5) Children will enjoy, and feel more confident, sharing and contributing to discussions with others about books (social)

6) Children will recognise their growing success as readers, and be able to set achievable, and personally important, reading goals (success)

Ultimately, we hope that Love to Read will improve children's attitudes, behaviours and skills in relation to independent reading.

Surveys and discussion starters are also available for you to evaluate your practice and can be accessed on the Love to Read website (see Reading Engagement Scale). This can be used to evaluate the Love to Read programme, if completed by children before and after taking part in the Love to Read activities. In addition to these more formal evaluation practices, you can also encourage feedback from children through the year, seeking their opinions on what has and hasn't worked well. Details of the evaluation of Love to Read can be found in Unit 9, but also at the end of Units 3-8, so you can see children's and teachers' perspectives and experiences of participating in Love to Read activities. This will provide insight into the types of experiences and outcomes you might want to look for.

Reflection:

What would be the best way to introduce Love to Read into your school/class?

How can you ensure Love to Read is sustained beyond the initial implementation?

Make a plan for how you will evaluate the impact of the Love to Read programme in your class/school context.

Love to Read: Additional Resources

Principle Posters

Posters have been created to display details of the principles in class and school libraries. The illustrations for these posters were created with input from children from five UK primary schools and convey the idea of 'powerful portals' – books opening up portals to new experiences. The posters will remind students, and staff, of the Love to Read principles. Posters including all six principles are available in portrait and landscape orientation. Furthermore, posters for each principle are also available on the Love to Read website. Talk to children about these principles, so that they understand them and know what to expect from the Love to Read programme.

Bookmarks

Bookmarks have been created for children and are an excellent way for children to bring their new learning home, to allow their families an opportunity to learn about what they are doing in school. We would suggest that teachers, or students, make the decision about when they receive these bookmarks. It may be after a principle has been introduced, completed, or children could be encouraged to decide for themselves when they feel they have developed knowledge, skills or confidence in the principle, to award this to themselves.

Presentations

A presentation is available for school leadership teams to deliver to school staff to ensure everyone involved in delivering Love to Read has a shared understanding of the programme, its goals, and the relationship between the theory, research and classroom activities (see 'school leader presentation to schools').

A presentation is also available for school staff to deliver to parents, to inform them of the programme, including what they can expect from the school, and how they can support themselves (see 'presentation for parents'). Both are available on the Love to Read website: https://blogs.ed.ac.uk/lovetoread/

Additional content for parents and guardians

Love to Read is a school based reading programme, however it would be useful for the principles and practices within Love to Read to be shared with parents and guardians, so that good practice initiated in school is introduced and maintained at home. The Love to Read bookmarks are a fantastic resource for children to take home so their parents can learn more about what they are doing in school. There is also a short presentation and handout created specifically for parents to communicate key ideas and some classroom activities in the 'social' section to get family and other community members involved in supporting children's reading enjoyment and engagement. We would encourage you to

discuss with your colleagues other ways to get parents involved, so that they take a more active role in their children's reading at home.

Activity:

Decide whether to use the Love to Read posters, and if so, where to display these. Talk to children about what they mean when putting them up on display.

Consider when and how to give children the bookmarks throughout the programme.

Depending on your role, familiarise yourself with the presentation for school leaders/parents and decide on a suitable time to share this.

Discuss with colleagues how to encourage parents/guardians to support reading at home.

Love to Read: The Principles

The Love to Read programme is underpinned by six principles: **access, choice, time, connection, social and success.** In the next section, relevant theory and research, in addition to children's opinions and experiences of these principles are discussed. In the development to Love to Read we undertook a comprehensive review of the research literature and spoke with ~60 primary school children from 4 UK schools about each of the Love to Read principles, to ensure their thoughts and experiences were reflected in the programme.

Depth of knowledge and understanding of the importance and relevance of these principles is important to deliver the Love to Read programme effectively. We would encourage you to read the following section, and also think about these principles from different children's perspectives. For example, with access, while school library provision may reflect the interests, skills, and personal experiences of some children, for others, there may be very little on offer for them. Indeed, it may be particularly helpful to think about these principles from the perspectives of children who have difficulties with reading, are disengaged readers, or within a minority group.

Each principle is summarised below, with a definition for teachers and children, followed by insights from theory, research and children in relation to each principle.

These are followed by classroom activities which have been designed to support you to implement the Love to Read principles into practice, and have been developed in collaboration with six experienced primary school teachers. For each principle, key points have been developed based on insights from research and practice, with classroom activities aligned with these key points. The activities typically require teachers to provide some direction/input, with children then independently applying these new skills and strategies themselves (e.g., teacher provides guidance on choice strategies, which children then apply, when given opportunities to in practice). This release of responsibility, from the teacher to the child, will give the child more autonomy over their reading experiences.

Different options for classroom activities have been suggested, with **core activities in bold box (e.g., A.1) and supplementary activities in light box (e.g., A.5). Supplementary activities should be put into place in those classrooms where core activities are already embedded in practice.** We would encourage teachers to select which classroom activities to implement based on their knowledge of their students, class and school context, selecting those that are most likely to have the greatest gains in supporting children's reading motivation and engagement.

Please note that the classroom activities take different forms, and some require preparation time. Some resources have been created to support with the delivery of Love to Read, and these are available on our website: https://blogs.ed.ac.uk/lovetoread/

Access

Teacher definition:

Children have regular and easy access to books at school which reflect their interests, preferences, abilities, lives and experiences

Child definition:

I can access books I enjoy

Unit 3. Access

Teacher definition:

Children have regular and easy access to books at school which reflect their interests, preferences, abilities, lives and experiences

Child definition:

I can access books I enjoy

Research insights:

Children are more motivated to read when they have access to a wide range of reading materials (Gambrell, 2011), but specifically reading materials which reflect their lives, interests, preferences and abilities (McGeown & Wilkinson, 2021). However, inequalities in access to books persist. For example, in the UK, a quarter of disadvantaged primary schools in England do not have a library and 40% of primary schools reported having no dedicated school library budget (Tyler Todd, 2021). Furthermore, inequalities in access to books are reflected in children's homes; children from higher income families are more likely to have books at home (Clark et al., 2021) than children from lower income families. In addition inequalities are reflected across different communities (Neuman & Celano, 2001) as are the use and availability of public libraries to support children's reading practices. Therefore, good knowledge of resources to freely increase access to books is important (see Access classroom activities section and McGeown & Wilkinson, 2021, for suggestions).

Reading aloud to children is one way to increase their access to a wide range of reading materials (Gambrell, 2011), exposing children to more diverse books and authors than they would naturally encounter. Furthermore, reading aloud allows children to access more challenging books; books that they may not be able to read independently with the level of fluency required for deep engagement (Cremin et al., 2014). In addition, creating links with the public libraries can facilitate greater access to books for children.

Insights from children:

Seeking children's opinions and experiences is essential to understand each of the Love to Read principles from their perspectives. In the development of the Love to Read

programme, we asked children about each of the principles to ensure their voices informed the programme. Here's what children had to say about access:

Firstly, children found it easy to access books in school that they enjoy when the school has a **variety of genres** and there is good **availability** of books. They also said that **experience of reading** can enhance access but that **restrictions** in what was available to them and time to chose made it difficult for children to access books they would enjoy. Children suggested teachers can improve access to books by using **pupil voice** to ask children about their reading preferences and purchase new books to reflect this.

"Once you've read a lot, it's in alphabetical order so if you know an author that you like it's easy to just whizz to that section and find a book, so it's kind of easy to find a book but then sometimes it's hard if you don't know what you're looking for"

"Well sometimes it's difficult because we only have a limited time to choose a book ...We have two minutes I think"

"You can't read some other books that are in the year 6 library, and you have to just try to read the books that are on the shelf, even if you don't really like them"

"I think they should do what we're doing now, they should maybe ask a kid's opinion"

"I think [it's] easy because theres loads of books that you can read, and there are loads of different types and other books as well"

Access summary:

- Children need access to reading materials which reflect their lives, experiences, interests and reading abilities.
- Reading aloud can increase children's access to a wide range of reading materials.
- Not all schools have access to high quality books reflecting the interests and needs of their readers; drawing upon resources offered by external organisations can help.
- Children believe that a variety of genres and experience of reading are important for access. Restrictions on 'right to use' and 'time to choose' limit access. Students' input into new book selection/provision is essential to improve access within primary schools.

Classroom activities

Teacher definition: Children have regular and easy access to books at school which reflect their interests, preferences, abilities, lives and experiences.

Child definition: I can access books I enjoy

Key Points:

1) Child input is important.
- Involve children in new purchasing decisions, their input into the selection of texts available to them is essential.

2) Look at access from the perspectives of all children.
- Ensure books are inclusive and representative of the class, and serve the reading interests and abilities of all students. What may be good access/provision for one student in your class may not be good access/provision for another.

3) Reading aloud in class can increase access

- Reading aloud exposes children to new books and authors and can increase access to wide range of high-quality books.

4) Create fundraising and gifting opportunities to increase school access to quality books

- School budgets are limited, therefore finding different ways to increase book provision is essential.

5) Improve ease of access for children

- Organising or categorising books to improve ease of access is essential. Furthermore, providing children with regular opportunities to browse and swap books improves their ease of access.

6) Draw upon external sources of support to increase access

- Many organisations offer free activities, events and resources. Spend time browsing the fantastic selection of what is already on offer.

Child input is important, as is understanding all children's needs and interests (Key Points 1 and 2)

These activities demonstrate how you can use Love to Read in your classroom. Activities in this section will help you to know your students better, and also seek children's perspectives on access to reading materials that align with their interests. Provide opportunities for ongoing input into new books purchased, but be realistic about changes that can be made to provision. Ensure all children's perspectives are included and pay particular attention to those children who do not feel they have good access to texts that align with their interests, personal experiences or abilities.

Activity: A.1. It's Book To Know You

- Use the "All About Me" or "It's Book To Know You" card. Find out more about your students, what they are interested in, what they like to do and what they care about. This could be used at the start of the academic year to get to know your new class. Encouraging children to reflect on who they are, what they like and don't like, and sharing this information with you, will help you both to find books aligned with their interests and needs. Follow this activity up with a trip to the school or local library so they can see what access they have to books aligned with their preferences, interests and abilities. See resource Access1.

Activity A.2. Ask Us Our Opinion

- "Ask Us Our Opinion". Take a class survey on your students' favourite genres, books and authors. This could be extended to a class discussion about the quality and access of books in your class/school and how to work collectively to improve provision. See resource Access2.

Activity A.3. Library Audit

- Carry out a current library audit to evaluate whether school book provision reflects the interests, lives, preferences and abilities students in your school. Ask children to be involved in looking through your library collection, removing outdated books or those in poor condition - old, tattered books can put children off reading – unless they are favourite reads! The school provision of books should look as exciting and inviting as possible.

Read aloud in class (Key Point 3)

Reading aloud a wide range of high-quality books gives children access to books they might not be able to read independently. Reading aloud also gives children access to more diverse books and authors than they would naturally read themselves.

Activity A.4. Whole class read

- Introduce a class vote on the next 'whole class read'. The class teacher selects five books in advance (perhaps based on children's recommendations, but also ensuring diversity/representation) and reads an extract of each one, then the books are left in the classroom and children are encouraged to pick them up and read extracts before the final vote. Allow children to vote anonymously if they wish. Introducing this, alongside teacher favourite reads (i.e., books you know they'll love/think are important for them to access) ensures children also have a say in the whole class reads.

Activity A.5. Online read alouds

- Draw upon external sources of support to access readily available read alouds (e.g., Authors Live, cBeebies). In addition, parents, teachers or people from the community (e.g., lollipop man/lady, local supermarket/shop) may also want to create their own recorded read aloud.

Fundraise to increase access to quality books (Key Point 4)

Access to high quality text types is important, however school budgets are limited. Different ideas to increase the provision of books within school are provided here.

Activity A.6. School or community fundraising
- Organise a school fundraising effort to raise money for books, involving the whole school community. Work with children to create a list of books that you would like for school and encourage the local community to 'sponsor a book'. You can do this by creating a wish list and asking your local children's bookstore to keep a list of the books requested. Then ask the local community, parents, school governors etc. to buy a book from the wish list – perhaps in response to a sponsored activity.

Activity A.7. Book swap or donation
- Organise a 'book-swap'. Ask families in the school community to bring in books from home that they no longer read and swap them with other families or donate to the school.

Improve ease of access for children (Key Point 5)

Accessing high-quality, interesting and ability appropriate books needs to be as easy as possible for children. Organisation of the school library or class book corner are key in ensuring access to books is easy. Regular routines and time to browse and swap books is also important.

Activity A.8. Organise class and school library
- Organise books in a way that is inviting and as exciting as possible. This could be by genre or theme, with special displays around current events, or popular films and television shows. Books can be highlighted and faced forward. Ensure it is communicated to children that they can pick these books up and choose them and they're not 'off limits' because they are on display.

Activity A.9. Child ownership of class book corner or school library
- Give children ownership of the book corner in the classroom. Elect some children to look after it, ensure it is tidy and there is a good selection of books on show. These book corner monitors can include more reluctant readers to give them a better understanding of what's on offer.

There are many external bodies which offer support and free activities/resources to encourage a love of reading and increase access to different books and authors. We have suggested some ways to keep up-to-date of these organisations and take advantage of their support (see website for more information).

Activity A.10. Local library

- Organise class trips to your local library if you have a library nearby. Children can hear recommendations from librarians and sign up for their own library card. Teachers can also use this time to collect books to be used for whole class reading.

Activity A.11. Online support

- Spend time examining the numerous sources of excellent support available online to increase access. For example, you can let children browse websites where they can read extracts of new books to see if they enjoy the author's style of writing or the genre. This gives children the opportunity to select books that they think they will enjoy and these could be purchased for the school.

Activity A.12. Twitter

- Create a Twitter page for your class or the whole school and follow a range of reading organisations to keep up to date with what's going on, while also sharing what your class/school are doing. You can also watch out for book giveaways and prize-draws. Why not follow your class's favourite authors on Twitter too.

After participating in Love to Read, these are some of the things teachers and children had to say about their experiences of the 'access' activities, and the related outcomes. Teachers' responses are presented in the darker blue quotes, and children's responses are presented in the lighter blue quotes.

"children loved being able to sort and re-design own class library. It highlighted gaps in genre we have"

"this term we started to go to the library, and the library books I really enjoyed them"

"Organising the class library by genre was incredible. Suddenly my reluctant readers were reading blurbs to try and categorise them!"

"I liked the Love to Read project because the teacher let us pick stuff for the library"

"Emptying the class library was one of the best things we ever did... now half the size but reflects much more what they want to read"

Teacher Reflection

General

- What are the key messages from this section for you and your colleagues?
- Reflect on how access is currently supported within your class and school context.

For delivery

- Which access activities would make the biggest gains to children's reading motivation and engagement in your classroom?
- Are there any students in your class who would benefit from more support with access?
- What preparation do you need to undertake to put these activities into practice?
- How could you work with other teachers and teaching assistants to improve access across the school, share learning, and workload?
- Are there any 'access' resource implications that need to be discussed with your school leadership team?

Discuss these points with colleagues, to support each other with the introduction of this principle in the class and school context.

Choice

Teacher definition:

Children have choice over their independent reading activities; schools have the structure, and children have the skills, to ensure 'good' (i.e., skill and interest aligned) reading choices

Child definition:

I know how to choose books I will enjoy

Unit 4. Choice

Teacher definition:

Children have choice over their independent reading activities; schools have the structure, and children have the skills, to ensure 'good' (i.e., skill and interest aligned) reading choices

Child definition:

I know how to choose books I will enjoy

Research insights:

Providing children with choice over their reading enables ownership of books or of reading more generally (Guthrie et al., 2007). Indeed, giving children control of their independent reading activities through choice is central to supporting their motivation to read (Guthrie et al., 2004; Guthrie et al., 2007; McGeown & Wilkinson, 2021). This is also reflected in research demonstrating the importance of autonomy supportive practices (De Naeghel et al., 2014) to promote reading motivation. To date, there is a considerable body of research highlighting the importance of children's choice. For example, Gambrell (2011) and Brandt et al., (2021) note the importance of choice – both in terms of what children read, but also choice of how to engage in, and complete, reading activities.

However, children vary in their ability to make 'good' reading choices (i.e., choices aligned with their interests and abilities) (Guthrie et al., 2007). Indeed, it is likely that able and experienced readers have a better understanding of the types of books they like to read, accrued through vast reading experiences, and may have more options available to them for books aligned with their reading skills. On the other hand, struggling and less experienced readers may need more support to make 'good' reading choices. Indeed, Brandt et al., (2021) note that children need to be taught the skills to become autonomous and independent readers, capable of guiding their own reading choices. Gambrell (2011) suggests that some children may benefit from 'bounded choice', that is, the option to choose from a range of books which the teacher has selected to align with their

interests/skills. This scaffolded approach may be useful until children are in a position to be able to confidently select their own books, based on a better understanding of their own interests.

In terms of the strategies children use to choose books, Merga and Roni (2017) found that most children, including skilled readers, often have poor strategies or quite random strategies for choosing books. Of the different strategies used, the colour of the book, back-cover text, title, genre, ability level/difficulty, size/length, page sampling, author familiarity, series familiarity, re-reading and supported choice (i.e., friends/teachers, family, etc.) were all strategies reported by children. Supporting children to develop effective selection strategies is essential to ensure children find books that they really connect with. Suggestions for this can be found within the Choice classroom activities section.

In addition to developing children's knowledge, skills and experience to make good reading choices, schools should also ensure they have optimal structure to support student choice. School libraries, bookshelves, reading corners and books displays all need to be carefully considered to facilitate and optimise reading choice. School librarians (Merga, 2019), knowledgeable teachers (Cremin et al., 2014), school leaders, and children themselves, can all provide input into this.

Insights from children:

Seeking children's opinions and experiences is essential to understand each of the Love to Read principles from their perspectives. In the development of the Love to Read programme, we asked children about each of the principles to ensure their voices informed the programme. Here's what children had to say about choice:

When children are choosing a book they know they will enjoy, **prior experience** of reading helps them to make a selection, as they know which authors and genres they enjoy. A **wide array** of books to choose from is also important, however **too much choice** can be daunting for some. Indeed, some children mention that trying out new authors or genres is a **risk** because they may not enjoy their style, or their books could be too **effortful.** Children suggest that book **attributes** can help them make a selection, such as the front cover or the title and blurb. Library organisation can also help, such as having books front facing so children can see the covers.

Children also enjoy having **book recommendations,** whether these are from **classmates, teachers or other adults** in their lives. **Class novels** can also be used as a gateway to introduce the class to new authors and genres.

"If there's somebody that's read a lot of books before, then it might be quite easy for them to tell about the books, so they can tell other people what books are good and what books are bad cos they've read a lot of books"

"I like a few authors yeah and I don't really want to try new books because I think they might be boring"

"I think probably that [teachers] should probably get to know which books you know and which books you'll enjoy so they can kind of suggest books for you to read"

"I think it's quite difficult because in the school there's lots of.. a lot lot of books"

"I know the type of the books that I like to read and the books that I don't like to read"

Choice summary:

- Providing choice gives children ownership over books and reading more generally.
- Choice can be offered both in terms of what children read, but also how children engage in reading activities.
- Children need support to make 'good' (i.e., interest and ability aligned) reading choices (e.g., via explicit instruction, modelling) and less experienced readers will need more support.
- Schools should ensure they have optimal structures in place to support student choice (e.g., via book displays, categorisation, etc).
- Children believe that prior experience is helpful to make good reading choices, that seeing too many books can make choice difficult, and that library organisation can help. In addition, recommendations from peers, teachers and others, in addition to whole class novels, can support with choice.

Classroom activities

Teacher definition: Children have choice over their independent reading activities; schools have the structure, and children have the skills, to ensure 'good' (i.e., skill and interest aligned) reading choices

Child definition: I know how to choose books I will enjoy

Key Points:

1) Develop children's skills to make 'good' reading choices

   - Provide guidance and model effective strategies to select books aligned with interests and abilities. Help children to make reading choices based on interest/likes and not solely based on their reading level/band. Encourage children to share and discuss different strategies for choosing books.

2) Scaffold reading choices

   - Give children autonomy over their reading choices but limit options in a helpful way to ensure their selections align with their reading skills and interests.

3) Know your pupils and make personalised suggestions

   - Get to know your students' likes and dislikes and make personalised suggestions, saying why you chose them.

4) Organise books in the library and class to optimise ease of choice

   - Ensure books are categorised optimally to support student choice. Include visible recommendations and information about books to support choice.

Develop children's skills to make 'good' reading choices (Key Point 1)

These activities are aimed providing explicit instruction, and modelling strategies, to improve children's ability to make good reading choices. Reluctant readers may not know what type of book they would enjoy and regular readers may stick to a particular genre or author. Therefore, developing these skills among all children is important. Finally, an overemphasis on reading bands/levels can restrict choice considerably so encourage children to also consider their interests, likes and mood (in addition to skills) to support choice.

Activity Ch.1. Learn and apply effective strategies to choose books

- Discuss with children different strategies for selecting a book (e.g., thinking about what you are in the mood for, reading blurb, reading first few pages, looking at the front cover, having knowledge of the genre/series/author, receiving a recommendation) and encourage them to think about which strategies they use to select books, which work best for them, and try using new strategies to see if this is helpful. Encourage children to discuss and share their strategies for selecting books with each other and apply these strategies when choosing new books to read. Remind them that they can swap their book for something else if they are not enjoying it. Part of developing the skill of choice is also recognising when you have made the wrong one and persevering with a book you don't like can reaffirm negative beliefs about reading. The strategies: Think, Choose, Support, Listen, Look & Swap are available in resource Choice1.

Activity Ch.2. Model strategies to choose books

- Model your own process of selecting a book and share this with others (e.g., with a sign on your classroom door saying what you are reading and why you chose it). You can also model book selection when introducing new books to the class, for example: *'today we're going to be talking about … I've chosen this book because…'*

Scaffold reading choices (Key Point 2)

Even with good strategies in place, some children can find too much choice overwhelming. Reluctant readers may not have sufficient experience to make 'good' reading choices initially, and regular readers may still stick with familiar authors or genres without diversifying their book selections.

Activity Ch.3. Restrict choice to support strategy use

- Use bounded choice (e.g., suggest 4-5 books based on the child's interests and skill) which gives them autonomy over what they read, but ensures choice is not too overwhelming. Encourage children to articulate their strategies to select from the 4-5 books presented, or talk through with them good strategies to choose between the different books on offer.

Activity Ch.4. Reading Challenge

- Create a reading challenge to diversify children's reading practices, but still encourage choice and strategy use. For example, children could be challenged to read 10 books in a year from among 15 different categories (e.g., 'a short story'; 'a poem'; 'a book set in another country' etc). Children need to use their choice strategies but within different categories. See resource Choice4.

Activity Ch.5. Bookmark suggestions

- Create bookmarks: '*If you enjoyed this book….you should read these books …*' and put these bookmarks in the back of books in school. Ensure suggestions are available to children. See resource Choice5.

Know your pupils and make personalised suggestions (Key Point 3)

Get to know your pupils and their interests – this will help you to make personalised suggestions. Teacher recommendations can help children in their own book selection.

Activity Ch.6 Make personalised books suggestions – including 'why' you chose that book

- Knowing your children well will allow you to make personalised book suggestions. These can be left on their desk with a little note telling them why you chose this book for them, which models the strategy of choice. Knowledge of books for children is also essential to do this well, and there are many sources of support to help with this. See resource Choice8.

Organise books in the library and class to optimise ease of choice (Key Point 4)

Books and other texts should be visible across the school, but organised in a way that facilitates easy choice for children. Visible recommendations across the school can also support choice.

Activity Ch.7 Optimise structure to support book choice

- Think carefully about how books are categorised and displayed in school. Ask for children's input – how easy is it currently for them to find a book they would enjoy? Ask children for suggestions on how to organise/share/promote books to improve ease of choice.

Activity Ch.8 Displays and book reviews to support choice

- Encourage pupil book reviews and display them on the walls across the class, school, on your school's website or in newsletters to parents. Peer recommendations can help with pupil choice. Consider keeping these reviews for subsequent year groups (e.g., children previously in this year enjoyed X, X and X) and ask your new year group to do the same. See resource Choice10.

After participating in Love to Read, these are some of the things teachers and children had to say about their experiences of the 'choice' activities, and the related outcomes. Teachers' responses are presented in the darker orange quotes, and children's responses are presented in the lighter orange quotes.

"I liked that we could discover new things what we liked. I found out that I quite like the diary kind of books, which I didn't know I liked before'"

"they weren't necessarily understanding how to choose books... you now see them take much longer to select their books" [and know when to change]

"This was the most useful lesson, the class really didn't have the skills to choose a book and I found children who disengage with reading quickly were finding books they found interesting and reading consistently"

"highlighted that many children did not have strategies on how to select a book.. the weaker children in particular began to make better choice of reading material"

"I used to just like pick up a book and look at the front cover and be like, 'Oh, that's interesting'. But now when I pick up book I look at the front cover... I think about what story could be about..."

"I used to not read books, and I've started to like books more and more ... because I've found books that I like!'

Teacher Reflection

General

- What are the key messages from this section for you and your colleagues?
- Reflect on how choice is currently supported within your class and school context.

For delivery

- Which choice activities would make the biggest gains to children's reading motivation and engagement in your classroom?
- Are there any students in your class who would benefit from more support with choice?
- What preparation do you need to undertake to put these activities into practice?
- How could you work with other teachers and teaching assistants to improve choice across the school, share learning, and workload?
- Are there any 'choice' resources implications that need to be discussed with your school leadership team?

Discuss these points with colleagues, to support each other with the introduction of this principle in the class and school context.

Time

Teacher definition:

Children have regular quality time to read books they engage with in school and at home

Child definition:

I have quality time to read at school and at home

Unit 5. Time

Teacher definition:

Children have regular quality time to read books they engage with in school and at home

Child definition:

I have quality time to read at school and at home

Research insights:

Teachers will be aware that more time reading improves reading skills and this is also evident in a considerable body of research. For example, Guthrie et al., (1999) reported that the amount of time children spent reading in and out of school predicts reading comprehension. More recently, Torppa et al., (2019) found that time spent reading books, but not other text types, predicted better reading comprehension. Similarly, van Bergen et al., (2020) found that from the age of about nine, the amount of time that children spend independently reading predicts growth in reading skills. This is all consistent with a meta-analysis by Mol and Bus (2011) which found that an upward spiral of causality: children who have better word reading, spelling and comprehension skills read more, and because of more reading, these skills improve. Gambrell (2011) also highlights that time to engage in sustained reading is essential to increase children's reading motivation, in addition to their reading achievement. However, it is important to note that much of the research on the benefits of time spent reading, point to leisure time reading activities, that is, outside of class (Torppa et al., 2019). Therefore, providing time in class for independent reading, while simultaneously encouraging children to take these books home to continue reading is essential. Indeed, Love to Read aims to increase out of school reading, by improving children's attitudes towards reading and supporting them to develop new skills (e.g., in book choice) to encourage more reading outside of school.

In addition, there are different ways to provide time for reading in the classroom. Drop Everything and Read (DEAR) is a widely used classroom practice which provides children with an opportunity to read independently, typically from a book of their choice, on a frequent basis for a relatively short period of time. During DEAR there are no interruptions

or tests/assignments on what has been read.   Children simply have the time to read for pleasure, and in some cases, teachers read for pleasure during this time too. Of course, DEAR can implemented in different ways, with sessions varying in terms of duration, frequency, opportunities for pupil book choice, discussion, level of teacher monitoring, teacher reading, etc. (Garan & DeVoogd, 2008; Lee-Daniels & Murray, 2000).

Insights from children:

Seeking children's opinions and experiences is essential to understand each of the Love to Read principles from their perspectives.   In the development of the Love to Read programme, we asked children about each of the principles to ensure their voices informed the programme. Here's what children had to say about time:

For children, the timing of reading was related to how they felt about what they were reading. For example, some associated reading as a **time to relax** or **feel calm**. In particular, children mentioned reading to help them relax after arduous schoolwork or as an activity to help them wind down at bedtime. Some children also enjoyed reading in the morning, as a form of **activation** to get ready to learn. During class time, reading for pleasure was often used for **management,** either to occupy children while teachers were carrying out tasks, or as a gap filling activity. Children did highlight the importance of reading a book of their **choice** during class reading time, and they wanted the ability to change a book if they weren't enjoying it. Finally, children often mentioned how reading time **competed** against other activities both at school and at home.

"Our teacher, she does [reading for pleasure] at the start, cos not many people like going to school so at the start of the day we have time to read which a lot of people do like"

"I always read books in the night; it helps me to sleep"

I had a book that I didn't really like so I swapped it for a book that I really do like"

"My teacher, at the start of the day when she'd doing the register [...] she gives us a bit of time for reading"

"Well, a lot of the time when I'm at home I'm on my computer, Xbox that kind of thing"

Time summary:

- Time spent reading improves children's reading skills, but nurturing out of school leisure time reading is particularly beneficial.
- Time spent reading books (especially fiction), rather than other texts types, improves comprehension.
- Reading time during class can take different forms (e.g., independent reading, book-talk) but needs to be 'on-task' (i.e., children are genuinely engaged) to be beneficial.
- Children felt that the timing of reading during the school day influenced how they felt about it, and that reading was sometimes used as a form of 'class management'. Children felt that selecting their own book to read was important, as was the opportunity to change it if they weren't enjoying it.

Classroom activities

Teacher definition: Children have regular quality time to read books they engage with in school and at home

Child definition: I have quality time to read at school and at home

Key Points:

1) Quality time to read independently in school
- A school or class environment which supports 'on-task and engaged' independent reading is essential.

2) Nurturing reading outside of school
- A considerable body of research points to the importance of leisure time (i.e., out of school) reading for children's reading skills to develop.

3) Time for additional reading activities
- Create opportunities for whole class reading together, talking about books/recommending books and extra times within the school day to read for pleasure.

Quality time to read independently in school (Key Point 1)

Providing quality time to read in school is important and should also foster and encourage reading outside of school. Establishing regular routines for reading can be helpful.

Activity T.1. The right book

- Ensure children have a book that they genuinely want to read prior to independent reading time in class and give them time to choose this. This is essential to increase likelihood that children will be more engaged with the book that they read.

Activity T.2. Introduce independent reading time in a relaxed environment

- Ensure independent reading time becomes an established part of the school day/week and think about when in the day/week this would best fit. Giving protected, dedicated and routine time for reading for pleasure will embed the importance of it within your class. During independent reading, ensure this time is uninterrupted by displaying a 'currently reading' sign on your class door so others know not to disturb you. Make sure children are as comfortable as possible when reading, for example, allow children to move from their chairs, sitting elsewhere in the class if they wish. Having some cushions//beanbags can help. In addition, for some children, calm/classical music during reading might help to further create a relaxed environment – however seek feedback from children as not everyone may enjoy this. See resource Time2.

Nurture reading outside of school (Key Point 2)

In school reading should be a gateway to reading outside of class time. Inspiring a love of reading, and providing access to quality books, should encourage children to choose to read outside of school more. However, improving communication with parents/guardians about the importance of reading and encouraging parents/guardians to establish regular reading routines and conversations about books at home is also important.   The presentation for parents can support with this.

Activity T.3. Encourage reading time at home

- Encourage parents to read to their child, or listen to their child read to them, discussing the book if they wish. Encourage parents to establish regular reading routines within the week, even family reading where everybody reads at the same time. Encourage older siblings/other family members to read with younger siblings. See resource Time3.

Activity T.4. School-home communication

- There are different ways to initiate and sustain school-home connections. For example, send out a reading newsletter to parents (e.g., monthly or end of each term) per year/stage or to the whole school with sections about the books each class are reading and/or details of local reading events and activities available for families (e.g., organised by local library or community).   You could also host events for parents/guardians, for example, aligned with World Book Day, to encourage parents to come to their child's school and read with their child.

Time for additional reading activities (Key Point 3)

School reading time should not exclusively be about independent reading. Whole class reading aloud should be promoted, as should time and opportunities for children to browse/discuss books together. Finally, giving children opportunities to read at different times of the school day (e.g., breakfast club, lunchtime, etc) is important.

Activity T.5. Time to read throughout the school day

- Children should have the opportunity to read at breakfast club, during lunch time or in their after-school club. Have a book trolley for break/ play times where children can choose to relax, read quietly and share books together or allow playground assistants to read to groups of children that may wish to enjoy a story at breaks. Encouraging staff involved in breakfast and after school club is important to demonstrate that adults other than class teachers enjoy reading. Providing access to the school library during these times can also be helpful.

Activity T.6. A whole class read

- Read a story to your whole class over a period of a couple of weeks. Select a book that is not too long and is likely to keep children engaged over a period of time – perhaps reading 2-3 chapters each time.

After participating in Love to Read, these are some of the things teachers and children had to say about their experiences of the 'time' activities, and the related outcomes. Teachers' responses are presented in the darker red quotes, and children's responses are presented in the lighter red quotes.

"I used to like never read, I would just like play with like toys before I went to bed and now that I've like, stared reading I read books every night when I go to bed"

"We read a chapter of our class novel as a whole class everyday. I think the class enjoy that protected time, in which there's guaranteed 'calm' and there's always a really nice feeling of togetherness"

"Teachers and TAs say they are feeling more relaxed because they have time to read within their day as well"

"Made us stop and take time to enjoy books – teachers and TA's too... down time was not just for reading but also to de-stress and slow down"

"From the Love to Read now I have a different opinion, now I keep reading books before I go to bed, even though I've never done that"

"I go to the library every Friday now after swimming and get lots of books out"

Teacher Reflection

General

- What are the key messages from this section for you and your colleagues?
- Reflect on how time is currently supported within your class and school context.

For delivery

- Which time activities would make the biggest gains to children's reading motivation and engagement in your classroom?
- Are there any students in your class who would benefit from more support with time?
- What preparation do you need to undertake to put these activities into practice?
- How could you work with other teachers and teaching assistants to improve time across the school, share learning, and workload?
- Are there any 'time' resources implications that need to be discussed with your school leadership team?

Discuss these points with colleagues, to support each other with the introduction of this principle in the class and school context.

Connection

Teacher definition:

Children can access and choose books, and book reading activities, which are personally relevant, and relevant to their reading goals

Child definition:

I can access and choose books which I connect with

Unit 6. Connection

Teacher definition:

Children can access and choose books, and book reading activities, which are personally relevant, and relevant to their reading goals

Child definition:

I can access and choose books which I connect with

Research insights:

Connection has two related, but distinct dimensions: Children accessing and enjoying books which are personally relevant (e.g., to their lives and interests) and children accessing and enjoying books which are relevant to their reading goals (i.e., the type of reading experience they are seeking). Research related to each is summarised below.

Personal connection:

Research demonstrates that personal connection to the story, authenticity of character's experiences and/or character identification leads readers to experience enhanced immersion in stories (Bal et al., 2011; Calarco et al., 2017), as these features reduce the psychological distance between the reader and the story and characters within it (Kaufman & Libby, 2012). Indeed, research demonstrates that when readers read fiction books, they often identify with characters to whom they feel similar (Oatley, 2016). Furthermore, when books, and book reading activities feel relevant to, and resonate with children and their own lives, then children are more motivated to read and engaged in what they are reading (Gambrell, 2011). Gambrell (2011) suggests that encouraging children to complete short reflective diaries can support children to make connections between what they read and themselves.

Similarly Kuzmičová & Bálint, (2019) and Kuzmičová & Cremin, (2021), highlighted the importance of personal relevance when reading fiction, recognising that readers' previous life experiences influence the reading process, and that readers often perceive similarities between fictional characters and themselves. Indeed, they comment that with age, children are learning to read in a 'life-resonant' manner, in other words, 'engaging in the metacognitive exercise of noticing links between text and life' (Kuzmičová and Cremin, 2021, p.2). Furthermore, they found that different genres of books offered different opportunities for children to engage in life resonant reading. Similarly, Brandt et al., (2021) discuss 'authenticity', a concept related to connection, where reading is meaningful and reflect students' needs, interests and identities.

Indeed, it is important that children have access to books that are culturally relevant and meaningful to children's and their families' lives. Picton (2017), highlights the importance of books reflecting ethnicity and cultural background, to ensure children see a person 'like them' represented in their books. Of course, visibility is essential in a much broader sense too, for example positive reflections of disability, family structure, family background etc.

Combined, this research highlights the importance of ensuring students have access to, and opportunities to read, books that they feel are personally relevant to them. Culturally or socially relevant books, and/or books relevant to their interests, hobbies and so on have the potential to be engaging if students feel a strong connection with the characters, story or topic.

Related to this, but also distinct from personal connection, is the importance of children having access to, and reading, books which reflect the lives of others. Fiction books can introduce children to more diverse social experiences and groups than they may encounter in their daily lives and allow children to develop an enriched understanding, and reduced prejudice, towards those they perceive as different (Vezzali et al., 2015).

Indeed, Bishop's (1991) analogy of reading as providing a mirror, window and sliding glass door is relevant. Bishop (1991) proposed that reading fiction provides opportunities for children to explore personally meaningful content as they see themselves reflected in what they read (mirror), explore and understand the lives, perspectives and experiences of others who are different to them (window) and/or enter into the story world in a more immersive way (sliding glass door). Put simply, books can help children understand themselves, and others, better (Mar, 2018).

Connected to reading goals:

Students are more engaged when reading if the books they read, and the reading activities they participate in, align with their reading goals (i.e., why they want to read/what type of reading experience they are seeking). Students read for different reasons (e.g., to relax, laugh, for escapism, for excitement, to spend time with favourite fictional friends, to learn more about their interests, etc.) (McGeown et al., 2020a). Encouraging students to reflect

on why they want to read, and then finding books aligned with that experience (i.e., relevant to their reading goal), has the potential to promote greater depth of engagement.

Similarly, to support non-fiction reading, connecting students' recent knowledge or experiences with a relevant text can be useful. For example, when classroom practices include hands-on activities closely integrated with the content of books provided to students, then this can lead to gains in students' reading motivation and comprehension (Guthrie et al., 2006).

In addition to relevant books, relevant class or school based reading activities which align with students' interests and needs is also important. To cater to these different interests/needs, teachers could provide students with options for different reading activities, e.g., book talk, writing book review, independent reading for pleasure, and allow children to select their own reading experience.

Insights from children:

Seeking children's opinions and experiences is essential to understand each of the Love to Read principles from their perspectives. In the development of the Love to Read programme, we asked children about each of the principles to ensure their voices informed the programme. Here's what children had to say about connection:

Children connected to books in which they can **see themselves reflected** in the characters and when they feel they have **shared experiences** with the characters. Children also feel connected to stories when they feel **involved** in the plot, for example, by feeling like they're a friend of the main character or going along with the characters on an adventure.

However, there are barriers to connect with books, such as **physical access** and **challenges** to find books aligned with reading skills.

Children think **recommendations** would help them be able to choose a book they really connect with, either from teachers or other children.

"I like the book because it's about our religion and about Pakistan"

"Teachers could give you like a little book test where you like tick what you liked and then she gives you some books that she thinks you'll like"

"I once read Diary of a Wimpy Kid and I kind of felt like I was one of Greg's friends and I was in his band"

"It's difficult to find the books because there's limited things you have access to as a child"

"I connected with the character because it feels like I can see what he's seeing"

Connection summary:

- When children have access to books which are personally relevant (i.e., align with their interests, lives and experiences) there is greater potential for depth of engagement.
- Reflective diaries can support children as they explore personally meaningful content.
- Children can view books as offering different types of 'experiences' and can learn to select books which align with the experience they are seeking by reflecting on their reading goals (e.g., whether they want to laugh, relax, pursue their interests, go on an adventure, etc).
- Children reported that they connect to books when they see themselves (positively) reflected and have shared experiences with the characters. However, some said that they can't access books which reflect their interests, lives or experiences. Recommendations from teachers, peers and others can support children to find books they will connect with.

Classroom activities

Teacher definition: Children can access and choose books, and book reading activities, which are personally relevant, and relevant to their reading goals

Child definition: I can access and choose books which I connect with

Key Points:

1. Audit, organise and celebrate diversity within books
   - Take stock of the books available in your school and classrooms and plan future purchases to reflect the interests, lives and experiences of your students.

2. Introduce reflective literacy practices
   - Encourage children to explore personally meaningful content when they read, making connections between books and their own interests, lives and experiences. Also encourage children to read books to learn more about the lives of others.

3. Support children to understand the diverse reading experiences that books offer and encourage children to find books that connect with the type of reading experience they are seeking.
   - Support children to think about what type of reading experience they are seeking, and then select books aligned with this.

Audit, organise and celebrate diversity within books (Key Point 1)

It is important that children can access and find personally relevant books, and books which reflect their interests and the types of reading experiences they are seeking.

Activity Co.1. Ensure book provision reflects your school community

- Ensure the books in your class/library reflect the lives, cultures, family structures etc of your school community. Diversity considerations include ethnicity, culture and religion, but also neurodiversity, LGBTQ+, family structure, etc. Ask children in your class/school what types of books in school are missing and use this to inform purchasing decisions – this can be done anonymously. In addition, the 'It's Book To Know You' activity (Access1) can be used to get to know your students better which can inform book purchases which will resonate with their lives and interests.

Activity Co.2. Develop your knowledge of children's literature

- Develop your own knowledge of children's literature, particularly in relation to diversity to help children identify books to explore personally meaningful content. Discuss this with other teachers at school and ensure class novels throughout children's time in school reflect the rich and diverse society we live in.

Activity Co.3. Organise library/book corners to facilitate connection

- Libraries or book corners may be organised by character or storyline rather than genre (e.g., *these books are based in a different country*, *these books have a neurodivergent character*). Alternatively, individual books can have a one sentence snapshot stuck/paperclipped on to them e.g. *I'm about.., I feature...* This can help children quickly identify if they think it is a book they will connect with.

Activity Co.4. Celebrate diversity across the school year via reading

- Have reading for pleasure focus weeks. Use the school calendar to ensure cultural dates and celebrations, national days etc are represented through the books you read with your class. For example, Eid, Chinese New Year, Ramadan, Shabbat, Gay Pride, Learning Disability week. Highlight books which reflect these different dates and celebrations, for example a book with an autistic character during Autism Awareness Week. Encourage children to get involved in discussions about this and book selection.

Introduce reflective literacy practices (Key Point 2)

When children read books which they feel reflect them and their own lives and experiences, they often feel more connected to the text. Encouraging children to explore personally meaningful content is therefore important. However, books also allow us to connect more closely to others who are different from ourselves, as we develop an enriched understanding of them and their lives. Encourage children to ask questions about cultures and communities they are unfamiliar with, discuss why it's important to learn more about others, and explore how books can support with this.

Activity Co.5. Encourage reflective literacy practices in school

- Model the process of engaging in reflective literacy practices, using prompts for children to consider similarities to themselves, but also the opportunity to learn and see things from others' perspectives. Prompt discussions about books focusing on these reflective literacy practices. If appropriate, allow children to select their own reading groups to do this to ensure they feel comfortable with those they are working with. See resource Connection5.

Activity Co.6. Encourage reflective literacy practices at home

- Similar to the activity above, but encourage children to discuss these reflective points with their families/others at home by sending guidance/resource Connection5 home to families.

Encourage children to find books that connect with the type of reading experience they are seeking (Key Point 3)

Books offer children different types of reading experiences (e.g., to laugh, relax, go on an adventure, escape to a new world, pursue interests, be excited, etc). Encourage children to reflect on the type of reading experience they are looking for and then find a book to align with that experience.

Activity Co.7. Promote diverse reading experiences

- Have a class area/display with the different types of reading experiences that books can offer and ask children to add recommendations. For example: *books that make you laugh, books that make you think, books that take you on an adventure, etc*. Children should be encouraged to think about the different types of reading experiences that books offer and can use these displays to help them find new books to read.   See resource Connection7.

> ### Activity Co.8. Model book selection via an experience driven approach
>
> - Model selecting a book that aligns with the type of reading experience you are seeking (including the thought process behind picking a book – what you're in the mood for, when you think you'll be reading it and where). Talk about how, when and where you are reading can also influence whether a book feels right. Talk about how different genres lend themselves to different types of reading experiences and that selecting a book is often about finding the right fit.

After participating in Love to Read, these are some of the things teachers and children had to say about their experiences of the 'connection' activities, and the related outcomes. Teachers' responses are presented in the darker green quotes, and children's responses are presented in the lighter green quotes.

"a child, he said that the music today didn't match what I was reading today, which I thought was really interesting. He said that's too slow, I'm reading a chase scene and that's too slow.And I thought, that's fascinating.He was really reflective after that"

"for me reading isn't just a thing you do anymore, it's sort of like another life"

"I gave the class the task of finding a book that they connect with and to share it with someone who they think would connect with too. The class really enjoyed this as many children were able to connect and read with people other than their friends"

"Before I just thought that reading was like, you read a book and then you finish the book, but now I feel that you can like think a lot more about the book and like relate yourself to the characters and the storyline and stuff"

"I feel like you almost like connect more to the characters"

"I think I'm a lot more into the world of the book, and like the characters, so I think that's probably one thing it's helped me with, cause when I used to read, I never really got into the books"

Teacher Reflection

General

- What are the key messages from this section for you and your colleagues?
- Reflect on how connection is currently supported within your class and school context.

For delivery

- Which connection activities would make the biggest gains to children's reading motivation and engagement in your classroom?
- Are there any students in your class who would benefit from more support with connection?
- What preparation do you need to undertake to put these activities into practice?
- How could you work with other teachers and teaching assistants to improve connection across the school, share learning, and workload?
- Are there any 'connection' resources implications that need to be discussed with your school leadership team?

Discuss these points with colleagues, to support each other with the introduction of this principle in the class and school context.

Social

Teacher definition:

Children have the time, skills and confidence to share and discuss books with others

Child definition:

I enjoy sharing and discussing books with others

Unit 7. Social

Teacher definition:

Children have the time, skills and confidence to share and discuss books with others

Child definition:

I enjoy sharing and discussing books with others

Research insights:

Providing inclusive opportunities for students to share, recommend or discuss books with each other, and their teacher, creates communities of readers within a school (Cremin et al., 2014). Indeed, classroom practices which aim to support children's reading motivation include social or collaborative practices as key (Guthrie et al., 2007). Similarly, Neugebauer & Gilmour (2020) found that more intimate and personalised reading interactions between teachers and students (i.e., one-to-one discussions between teachers and students, and/or classroom activities where teachers worked with smaller groups) were more effective in supporting students' reading motivation than classrooms with limited interactions, or fewer in-depth interactions.

Indeed, there is a considerable body of research, from different disciplinary approaches, which highlights the importance of diverse quality social interactions to promote reading motivation and engagement among children (Cremin et al., 2014; Gambrell, 2011; Guthrie et al., 2007). Social interactions can take different forms and may consist of talking about books with others (i.e., friends, peers, teachers, family, etc.), reading together with others, borrowing and sharing books with others, sharing writing about books with others, talking with the teacher about reading and expressing enjoyment of reading books recommended by others (Gambrell, 2011; Guthrie et al., 2000; 2007).

Cremin et al., (2014) highlights the value of social reading environments and informal book talk to create 'richly reciprocal reading communities'. Informal book talk includes teacher-child, child-teacher and child-child discussions and recommendations which are often spontaneous, and always unassessed, allowing children to share their views, thoughts, and book preferences as they wish. A second common social practice is reading aloud, which

can increase children's affective engagement with books and creates a collection of 'texts in common' where all children have a shared knowledge and understanding of specific books which can support discussions (Cremin et al., 2014).

Similarly, Taboada Barber and Klauda (2020) discuss how social interactions can promote reading motivation and engagement, but in different ways. They note that book discussions can result in deeper reading and understanding of a book, as children may read more carefully and reflect on the book more if they know they will discuss the book after. They also note that when students interact socially in reading discussions, they can learn from each other, but also learn what their peers feel about reading.

Finally, social reading interactions are also underpinned by relevant theories, specifically the reading engagement model (Guthrie et al., 2004; Guthrie & Wigfield, 2000) which posits that social reading interactions is one of four characteristics of engaged readers, along with cognitive, behavioural, and emotional involvement in reading activities.

Of course, children often need supported to engage in social reading practices; not all children are confident contributing to discussions about books. Structured reading discussions (e.g., reciprocal teaching/reading) (Rosenshine & Meister, 1994) are used widely, but focus on cognitive strategies (e.g., summarisation, question generation, prediction etc.) to support comprehension. It is unclear whether, to what extent, and/or which children would benefit from a similar structure to initially support book discussions aimed at enhancing reading enjoyment and engagement. In addition, it is important to note that not all children naturally choose to engage in social reading interactions. For example, Guthrie et al., (2007) found that children who were confident readers and enjoyed reading, sometimes reported preferring to be solitary readers (Guthrie et al., 2007). This suggests that social interactions, while beneficial and important, are not necessarily essential for children to enjoy reading, or form a view of themselves as readers. Finally, it is essential that social reading interactions are inclusive, to allow all children to participate in ways they feel comfortable.

Insights from children:

Seeking children's opinions and experiences is essential to understand each of the Love to Read principles from their perspectives. In the development of the Love to Read programme, we asked children about each of the principles to ensure their voices informed the programme. Here's what children had to say about social:

When discussing the social aspects of reading, children spoke often about **family**, talking about reading together and discussing books with parents or siblings. Children also spoke of **encouragement**, either in the form of recommending books to others, or encouraging friends to keep reading. However, some were also **concerned** that others would reveal plot points or felt **under pressure** to openly discuss their opinions about books.

"We used to have this book that you take home or read it in the class, and my mum would read it to me, or she could read the book and I say it back to her, and then start talking about what happened"

"When you finish the book, you go to someone with the same book as you, you talk about it, and you help"

"If I'm reading a book that someone else had read, they'll spoil it for me"

"I really like talking about books with others because maybe they could tell me about their book [...] maybe I'd find that interesting and read more of the books that they had"

Social summary:

- Providing inclusive opportunities for children to share, recommend or discuss books with each other, and their teacher, creates reading communities within a school.
- Social reading activities can take different forms (e.g., oral, written) and children may have preferred ways of discussing/sharing books with others.
- Books discussions can result in deeper reading and understanding of the book, and children can learn from each other as they discuss books.
- Children may need support (e.g., via explicit instruction, modelling) to take part in positive and meaningful discussions about books.
- Not all children naturally enjoy discussing books with others. Ensure any social reading interactions are inclusive and allow children to contribute in ways they feel comfortable
- Children reported that they discuss books with family, in addition to peers/teachers, and this can also be a way to encourage each other to keep reading. Children like to 'discuss' books in different ways (e.g., writing, talking) and sometimes they'd rather not discuss books at all because they are worried about spoilers!

Classroom activities

Teacher definition: Children have the time, skills and confidence to share and discuss books with others.

Child definition: I enjoy sharing and discussing books with others

Key Points:

1) School based reading
   - Create different time and opportunities for children to read together in school, including out of class/extracurricular opportunities.

2) Book talk
   - Book talk can take different forms: Whole class, small group, peer-peer, teacher-peer. Find effective and inclusive ways to introduce this into your classroom and develop children's skills/confidence to contribute.

3) Writing and expressive activities
   - Writing activities provide opportunities for children to express their thoughts and feelings about books, and connect with others. In addition, drawings/art or short self-made videos are other good ways for children to express themselves.

4) Involving family and the community
   - Social reading activities should extend beyond the classroom. Finding effective ways to involve the family and local community is important.

School based reading (Key Point 1)

Reading together, whether in small groups, as a whole class, or with friends, gives children the opportunity to discuss, share, recommend and enjoy texts together. These discussions

can also result in deeper reading/understanding of a book and help children see multiple perspectives of the same book.

Activity So.1. Book buddies

- Support older children to be able to take part in 'paired reading' activities with younger children. Give time each week or month for them to meet with their 'book buddies' to read and share books together. This is great for empowering older or reluctant readers as it provides a leadership opportunity to support younger readers. Older buddies can be given some short training in the types of questions to ask when reading with younger pupils. This will also help them to know how to talk about books with their peers. Encourage the buddies to talk about the types of books they enjoy. Buddies can go to the library together and help each other pick books. Once established, this activity could become a regular routine within your school, with each year group given the opportunity to be involved.

Activity So.2. Reading clubs

- This can be within a class or run as an extracurricular activity. Books can be borrowed from public libraries to supplement copies from school libraries, or pupils can pay a few pounds a month to cover the book fees (if it was an extracurricular activity). It could also be funded through the parent council, with the collections of the books bought for the club then kept for school reading after. Make the club cosy, exciting and inviting to encourage and engage as many children to come along. Have hot chocolate/juice and biscuits/fruit available. Ideally clubs should be based around the interests of pupils and led by pupils, if possible.

Activity So.3. Texts in common

- Create a 'reading spine'; a collection of books that you think all children should have access to during their time in primary school. These books can be accessed in different way – independent reading or read alouds. These texts in common can promote discussion among pupils. Ensure the 'reading spine' reflects your school community, is inclusive, reflects a range of genres, and is refreshed regularly to reflect recent publications.

Book Talk (Key Point 2)

Book discussions within class can deepen children's understanding of the story as they learn from each other and see what their peers are reading. However, not all children will naturally feel confident or comfortable talking about books with their peers.

Activity So.4. Reciprocal reading goes social

- Similar to reciprocal reading, give each child a 'role' within book talk as children are initially developing the skills and confidence to talk about books with each other. For example. 1) the 'connector' – the child who discusses connections between the story/topic and their existing knowledge, experiences, interests and/or life, 2) the 'character/subject' – the child who discusses the main character or subject in more detail, 3) the 'best bit' – the child who shares their favourite part of the story/book and 4) the 'better if' – the child who suggests what would make the story/book more enjoyable/ exciting/funny/realistic/interesting etc. Encourage children to swap around these roles as they read so that everyone has a chance to share their thoughts in relation to each of these roles. This can be used for different books in the class, with prompts for fiction and non-fiction. When creating these groups, it is essential that all children are working with a book that they find accessible/enjoyable/interesting. See resource Social4.

Activity So.5. Sentence stems

- Sentence stems provide a good model to show students who are not confident how to take part in book talk e.g. *My favourite character was…….because…….. , I liked/didn't like…. because…., I would have done the same/something different because…., The character/part of the story made me feel like ….. because…..* These discussions about books can prompt depth of engagement and discussion, and gives children opportunities to talk about how books made them feel, what they did and didn't like, alternative endings, what felt similar and different to their own life, how they felt about the character, etc. Please be aware of sensitive topics within these types of discussion and ask children to be respectful as they listen to different perspectives. See resource Social5.

Writing and expressive activities (Key Point 3)

Writing provides opportunities for children to express their own thoughts and feelings about the books they have read and is an excellent way for them to connect with others, and share/discuss their thoughts with others. Alternatively, or additionally, self-made videos and/or drawings can achieve this too.

Activity So.6. Contact authors

- What could be more exciting than contacting a favourite author? Encourage children to write letters and/or draw pictures to authors and publishers. If an author comes in and does a visit or web visit, have the children write them a thank you letter including any additional questions they had for the book or ideas about spin off – what should the character be doing next? We have included some paper for children to write on. See resource Social6.

Activity So.7. Fanfiction

- Fanfiction is fiction written by a fan (in this case, a child) of an authors' work, featuring characters or settings from the original book. As a teacher, supporting fanfiction is a great way to encourage children's thinking and writing. Children may enjoy writing an alternative ending to a book, or a sequel or prequel to their favourite story. Encourage them to share this throughout the class/school or possibly online (although any online sharing should be under close supervision).

Involving family and the community (Key Point 4)

Social reading activities should extend beyond the school and classroom; finding effective ways to engage children's families and their community is important.

Activity So.8. Reading in a different language

- Include bi-/multi-lingual families by having them read a book in another language – the children who don't speak the language can guess what's going on. This sends home the message that reading for pleasure doesn't have to be in English and helps emphasise the value of other languages.

Activity So.9. Parent Readers

- Ask parents to record / film themselves reading books to younger children. Surprise the children by transporting their parents' / carers' voices into the classroom reading and sharing stories. Include grandparents/other family members, not just parents. Parents can also be invited to come in and read with children or small groups.

Activity So.10. Share reading recommendations with the community

- Have children's reading recommendations or reviews out in the community. For example, you can ask your local supermarket or bookshop to display children's work. Children will be excited about going to see their review in the community. If reviews are waterproofed they can be put up on trees/lampposts etc. in the local area, creating a 'recommended reading walk' that families can do together. Books can also be hidden on this walk (inside a plastic folder to keep them safe from rain) and once read, parents have to hide them somewhere else on the walk. See resource Social10.

Activity So.11. Use social media

- Get in touch with other primary school classes via social media e.g. Twitter to see what they are reading. You could organise video calls with other classes in different schools and talk about the books they've been reading and what they like about them.

After participating in Love to Read, these are some of the things teachers and children had to say about their experiences of the 'social' activities, and the related outcomes. Teachers' responses are presented in the darker purple quotes, and children's responses are presented in the lighter purple quotes.

"I like how the Love to Read project made me more like encouraged to talk about reading, because I used to think it was a bit weird to like reading [...] but now, after Love to Read project, it's encouraged me to actually just like, encourage others to read as well"

"I think it made me more confident reading out loud to like my friends and the teacher"

"I felt more confident discussing it with other people, because me and my friend used to talk more about different things than books, but now we talk about what we read"

"Pupils really enjoyed organising the class library, making category signs, and had super conversations about what books they have read and whether they'd recommend"

"I like reading with my friends, and it's helped me find the right book for me"

Teacher Reflection

General

- What are the key messages from this section for you and your colleagues?
- Reflect on how social is currently supported within your class and school context.

For delivery

- Which social activities would make the biggest gains to children's reading motivation and engagement in your classroom?
- Are there any students in your class who would benefit from more support with 'social'?
- What preparation do you need to put these activities into practice?
- How could you work with other teachers and teaching assistants to improve 'social' across the school, share learning, and workload?
- Are there any 'social' resource implications that need to be discussed with your school leadership team?

Discuss these points with colleagues, to support each other with the introduction of this principle in the class and school context.

Success

Teacher definition:

Children have a range of rich and diverse positive reading experiences, can set meaningful goals and can recognise their growing success as readers

Child definition:

I have positive reading experiences and feel I am developing as a reader

Unit 8. Success

Teacher definition:

Children have a range of rich and diverse positive reading experiences, can set meaningful goals and can recognise their growing success as readers

Child definition:

I have positive reading experiences and feel I am developing as a reader

Research insights:

Being a successful reader is so much more than having good reading skills, and in Love to Read, reading success is conceptualised much more broadly. McGeown and Wilkinson (2020), suggest that success for a student may involve starting to read books at home when they didn't previously, discovering a new author they love, improving their skills in selecting books they enjoy, becoming interested in a new genre, or feeling more confident about contributing to book discussions. This broader conceptualisation of success has potential for children to form a more comprehensive view of themselves as readers. Aligned with this, encouraging students to set 'success' goals for themselves, which are challenging but achievable, and aligned with their own reading goals (i.e., what they want to achieve), also provides children with greater autonomy over their direction as readers (McGeown & Wilkinson, 2020). Indeed, goal setting and progress tracking are often key components of reading motivation programmes (McBreen & Savage, 2021).

The concept of 'success' is embedded in reading motivation theories, for example, expectancy-value theory (Wigfield & Eccles, 2000) which cites 'expectations of success' as an important component of motivation, while self-determination theory (Ryan & Deci, 2000) recognises success through 'competence', where children who feel they have the skills to achieve success will be more motivated (Conradi et al., 2014). Indeed, children's

self-concept or self-efficacy (i.e., perceptions of themselves as readers and/or beliefs in their own ability to learn or achieve) are considered key principles underpinning reading motivation (Conradi et al., 2014; Guthrie et al., 2007).

It is important to recognise that reading skill has been widely cited as important for children's reading motivation and engagement (Toste et al., 2020, van Bergen et al., 2020). More skilled readers are, on average, more motivated to read and choose to read more frequently, which in turn improves their reading skills. Research has demonstrated a reciprocal relationship between students' reading skills and their reading motivation, with initial reading skill a stronger predictor of later motivation than motivation is of reading skill (Toste et al., 2020). Therefore, supporting reading skill development is essential, but not all that is required to inspire and sustain a love of reading.

Given the role of skill in motivation, it is important that all children experience success when reading. Gambrell (2011) notes that books need to be of the appropriate level (i.e., not too easy, nor too challenging) for children to experience both success, and a sense of competence and accomplishment. Supporting children to develop a positive sense of themselves as readers, by selecting books which reflect and develop their reading skills, is therefore essential. Books at an appropriate reading level is particularly important for struggling readers, who often report low levels of reading confidence (McGeown et al., 2012).

Finally, to feel successful as readers, children need to experience a sense of control; they need to feel that success is within their own control, and that they can put into place strategies, or request support from others, in order to continue to develop as readers. There is a considerable body of evidence demonstrating the positive benefits of feedback for children (Hattie & Timperley, 2007). Feedback can include praise and encouragement, but also needs to include specific formative feedback (i.e., clear and specific guidance to support children to develop as readers). Indeed, personalised practical feedback is necessary to support children to develop and recognise their growing success as readers.

Insights from children:

Seeking children's opinions and experiences is essential to understand each of the Love to Read principles from their perspectives. In the development of the Love to Read programme, we asked children about each of the principles to ensure their voices informed the programme. Here's what children had to say about success:

Children believe that successful readers are both **skilled** and **confident** when engaged in reading tasks. A successful reader also **enjoys** reading and reads **frequently**.

However, to feel successful, a child needs the right **environment** in which to read, and **motivation** to read as well as the right **choice of** book. Teachers or friends can help children to be successful readers by **recommending** books and being **encouraging** about reading.

"[A successful reader is] a person that, like reads a lot"

"I'd also describe [successful readers] as just having fun, having fun reading and enjoying themselves"

"[A successful reader] has different reading strategies and stuff, and they can read fluently in front of a lot of different people"

"Maybe read in a comfortable spot that you feel really connected to, and then you maybe become connected to that book as well"

"Cheerleaders like for example, they cheer on their team. I think teachers need to be a bit more like cheerleaders at times"

Success summary:

- Children with good reading skills are, on average, more likely to be motivated and engaged readers. However, children's reading motivation and engagement can have positive consequences for their reading skill; therefore fostering motivation and engagement is essential!
- Books need to be at the appropriate reading level for children to experience reading success, and should ideally reflect, but also develop, reading skills.
- Reading success must be conceptualised broadly to include the diverse ways in which children can develop meaningfully as readers (e.g., in their interests, attitudes, confidence, habits, etc).
- Children can learn to set achievable and meaningful reading goals for themselves (e.g. to finish a book, to choose a book for themselves, to read a new genre etc.), to see their growing success as readers.
- Praise and encouragement is important, but should be personalised and specific.
- Children believe successful readers are skilled at reading, confident, enjoy reading and read frequently. Children's physical environment, motivation and connection with the book are important for feelings of success. Children can be supported to become successful readers by receiving book recommendations from others, and by being encouraged to read by those around them.

Classroom activities

Teacher definition: Children have a range of rich and diverse positive reading experiences, can set meaningful goals, and recognise their growing success as readers

Child definition: I have positive reading experiences, and feel I am developing as a reader

Key Points

1) Provide access and good choice strategies so struggling readers experience success
- To have positive and successful reading experiences, children need to be able to access and choose books which reflect their reading abilities, as well as their interests.

2) Success is a broad concept and is different for all children
- Reading success is not synonymous with reading skill. It reflects reading confidence, enjoyment, engagement, knowledge of reading interests, ability to self-select books, positive participation in book-talk, ability to set personally important reading goals, and recognition of one's own development as a reader.

3) Individual goals for success
- Children should be encouraged, and supported, to set meaningful and achievable reading goals for themselves, recognising the different ways in which they can develop as readers.

4) Personalised praise, encouragement and recognition of success
- Children should receive personalised praise and encouragement so they can recognise their growing success as readers. Children can also help those around them (teachers, family) to develop as readers too.

Provide access to appropriate reading materials to ensure success (Key Point 1)

Access to books aligned with abilities, in addition to interests, is essential.

Activity Su.1. Ensure struggling readers can access and choose engaging books

- Ensure children who struggle with reading (for whatever reason) have access to books that are engaging but also at an appropriate reading level. This may involve carefully selected books (e.g., Barrington Stoke) but also having a breadth of other text types (e.g., graphic novels, comics). Improve access to popular books through audio books or apps/technology (e.g., Epic, Claro ScanPen) so that children feel a part of the class reading community and know the books their peers are reading.   Audio books can also be accessed via public libraries for free. In addition to improving access, ensure children have the skills and strategies to select books aligned with the interests and abilities.

Success is a broad construct and is different for all children (Key Point 2)

Reading success is a broad construct and children need to be made aware of this, so that they all recognise the different ways in which they can develop as readers.

Activity Su.2. What is a successful reader?

- In small groups, or as a whole class, ask children to contribute ideas about what it means to be a successful reader, but without mentioning reading skill. Provide post-it notes for children to write their ideas down in case they don't want to say them aloud or wish to remain anonymous. These post-it notes could go on a display in the school classroom or corridors to highlight and remind children of the various ways to be a successful reader.

Activity Su.3. Success charts (broadest concept of success)

- Based on children's suggestions (activity Su. 2), create a success chart with different reading success targets on them e.g. *try a new genre, try a new author* etc.. This helps children to see the many different ways in which they can develop as readers and can give some ideas for their reading rockets. See resource Success3.

Activity Su.4. Building positive perceptions for all, but particularly struggling readers

- Understand that struggling readers may have poor perceptions of themselves as readers. Provide more individualised input and support, building their confidence and interest in reading and helping them to see the progress and success they are making as readers. Please note that this should not supplement other sources of reading support children are receiving (e.g., phonics or fluency programmes), but should complement it.   Furthermore, children who struggle with reading are often acutely aware of their difficulties and challenges, but frequently don't recognise their strengths and progress. Ensure they know these (e.g., create a 'golden book' which records strengths and progress and can be shared with those at home). It is essential to work on building the confidence of these readers, changing the narrative they may hold about themselves, and giving them the skills to be able to self-select books which are accessible and enjoyable. See resource Success4.

Activity Su.5. Model being a successful reader

- Model what makes you feel like a successful reader. For example, I'm a successful reader because: 'I've just discovered a new author that I didn't know about and their books are brilliant', or 'I had a really good discussion with someone about a book we both read', or 'I finally worked out what the word X means'. It's also important to model how to turn *unsuccessful* reading into *successful* reading e.g. 'I wasn't that interested in this book so I decided not to finish it and I found a better one', or 'I didn't understand some of the words in this book so I looked them up'. Allow children to have confidence in being unsuccessful initially and give them strategies to experience success.

Individualised goals for success (Key Point 3)

Encourage children to reflect on the different ways they can develop as readers, and work with them to create individualised goals to support reading development and success.

Activity Su.6. Children set and reflect on meaningful personalised goals

- Support children to set meaningful personalised goals for their reading over a specific period of time (e.g., a school term). A reading rocket allows children to write 1-2 of their own individual reading goals, and teachers to contribute 1-2 as well (see resource Success6). These can be a combination of skill, practice and enjoyment based goals. For example, reading an entire book, finding a new author they like, trying a new genre, persuading a friend or family member to try a book/start reading, sharing their opinion about a book, reading for 1 hour each week at home, reading to a family member, writing a book review etc. Encourage children to regularly evaluate and reflect on their reading goals, recognising their growing success as readers. See resource Success 6.

Praise, encouragement and recognition of success (Key Point 4)

Praise and encourage children as they develop as readers, make this personalised and recognise the individual progress they are making.

Activity Su.7. Make praise specific

Praise can be given at a whole class level (e.g., 'you all listened very well when X was reading aloud, this helped us all to hear the story') or in small groups (e.g., 'you discussed this book very well as a group and I noticed that everyone had the opportunity to contribute') but it's also important that children receive individual personalised feedback and encouragement on their successes as readers. When giving praise at a whole class, group or individual level, be clear about why you are praising them and how their positive attitudes/behaviours were important (as in the examples above) – otherwise children will not know what they are being praised for.

Activity Su.8. Share progress with parents/guardians

- Ensure parents/guardians receive updates on children's progress as readers, providing personalised information on their recent successes as well as goals they have set themselves to develop. This can be included in reading diaries. Encourage parents to talk with children about their reading goals and praise and encourage them too.

Activity Su.9. Reading Journey

- At the start of the year, begin a 'reading journey' with all children to continue through the academic year. This could be in the format of a 'reading river', with all the books the child has read that year, but can also include key questions such as 'the book that changed me' 'the best book that year' or 'the book that made me think' etc. This visible river helps children to recognise their own success as readers and can be taken home to be shared with family members. See resource Success9.

After participating in Love to Read, these are some of the things teachers and children had to say about their experiences of the 'success' activities, and the related outcomes. Teachers' responses are presented in the darker yellow quotes, and children's responses are presented in the lighter yellow quotes.

"The 'what makes a successful reader discussion really hit home for some children. It's not just the kids who read the massive Harry Potter books that are good readers!!"

"I think that the love to read just like showed us the better sides of reading not just that you had to do it for your homework, you could actually do it as a like hobby and stuff"

"for our SEN child to really be like I love reading now, I will sit and read, is amazing"

"I used to just think that I wasn't that good at reading and I could only read short stories. But when I started reading bigger books, I realized that you achieve it if you put your mind to it"

"What is a successful reader? This activity worked well on post it notes and allowed for anonymity and lots of discussion"

"Probably cause I've now like experienced what reading, and how fun reading can be, and it's yeah. It's just been a lot more fun ever since"

Teacher Reflection

General

- What are the key messages from this section for you and your colleagues?
- Reflect on how success is currently supported within your class and school context.

For delivery

- Which success activities would make the biggest gains to children's reading motivation and engagement in your classroom?
- Are there any students in your class who would benefit from more support with success?
- What preparation do you need to undertake to put these activities into practice?
- How could you work with other teachers and teaching assistants to improve success across the school, share learning, and workload?
- Are there any 'success' resources implications that need to be discussed with your school leadership team?

Discuss these points with colleagues, to support each other with the introduction of this principle in the class and school context.

Love to Read Classroom Resources

There are resources associated with many of the activities in the Love to Read programme. These are easy to identify by name se are available as separate files. Please visit the Love to Read website: https://blogs.ed.ac.uk/lovetoread/

Unit 9: What to expect from Love to Read

Love to Read was evaluated following its development, in four primary schools (425 children from 18 classes) across the UK. The evaluation focused on a) implementation, that is, how acceptable and feasible the Love to Read programme was for teachers to use in practice, and b) effectiveness, that is, whether, to what extent, and for whom, the Love to Read programme led to positive changes. The effectiveness evaluation focused on a) teachers, and the extent to which Love to Read improved their depth of research knowledge and reading for pleasure pedagogy and b) children, and the extent to which Love to Read improved their attitudes, behaviours and skills in relation to reading for pleasure, and whether it changed their levels of reading motivation and engagement.

In order to know what to expect from Love to Read, but also understand how the evaluation has informed this programme, a summary of key findings are provided below. We have also included quotes throughout the programme (i.e., at the end of each principle) to exemplify children's and teachers' perspectives of each principle. You can learn more about the evaluation of Love to Read here: https://blogs.ed.ac.uk/lovetoread/

Implementation

In total, 19 classes started the programme, but only 18 completed it, with one class dropping out after 2 weeks, citing other existing commitments. Teachers were asked to complete diaries during Love to Read delivery, and it was found that preparation time for each activity varied (0-15 minutes) which was deemed acceptable from teachers' perspectives. For this evaluation, teachers were asked to deliver the programme over 6 weeks, focusing on one principle each week in the order listed in the programme, for 90 minutes each week. During the evaluation, time spent on Love to Read varied each week and across each school from 25-215 minutes (dependent on number of activities/activities selected), with an average of 71 minutes. Based on the evaluation, we have suggested revisions – e.g., 12 week delivery, with approximately 45 minutes each week.

"We discussed as a class what our library has and it reflected the fact we don't have a wide variety of diverse books"

"[pupils] had super conversations about what books they have read and whether they'd recommend"

Classroom observations provided insight into the different ways in which the same activity can be embedded in practice. These observations highlighted the value of teachers having depth of knowledge, but also enthusiasm to deliver the programme, with sufficient pre-reading/preparation time being essential. Love to Read was delivered best when the activities themselves really engaged the children, the children were 'on task' and it attended to children's needs and interests. Indeed, issues with delivery were raised by children during discussions we had with them after taking part in the programme. For example: 'so you were sitting down on the carpet for ages, and erm, you didn't have movement breaks and you didn't get out your seat or anything outside you were just sitting on the carpet for hours'; '(teacher) was doing a PowerPoint with us and she was just explaining the same thing over and over and it was getting kind of boring.' Based on these comments from children, we would recommend ongoing reflection and evaluation of how you deliver Love to Read in your classroom, seeking children's opinions whenever possible.

Once teachers had completed the programme, **interview/survey data** provided insight into positive and negative aspects regarding delivery. Please note that this version of the Love to Read programme has been revised following this feedback, especially in relation to points f, g, h, i and j. For example, approximately 20 activities have been removed, activities reordered and quality of resources improved. Guidance regarding implementation also recognises the importance of flexibility. Finally, we would also encourage schools to evaluate the quality of book provision they have in school (or can access via libraries/funding/external support) before starting Love to Read.

"TAs have fed back how beautiful it was"

"Really nice programme to deliver"

"I struggled... because diversity range of our books is quite minimal"

"[need] a bigger resource bank"

Post programme interview/survey provided insight into teachers' perceptions with regard to implementation, in terms of **a) ease of implementation**: Very easy to follow' ;'Not a lot of prep time' ;'Really nice programme to deliver' ; **b) programme structure and quality of information**: 'it was really well organised' ;'I liked the structure of the six themes' ;'I like reading the research behind the aspects' ; 'fantastic amount of information' ; 'allowed a lot of choice through the activities' ; **c) visual features and accompany resources**: 'children enjoyed the visuals' ;'bookmarks were a huge hit!' ; 'TA's have fed back how beautiful it was'.

However, teachers also remarked on concerns regarding implementation, including **d) proposed duration**: 'to do it in six weeks was not nearly long enough' ;'difficult to do the programme justice within 6 weeks'; **e) it took curriculum time** from other things: 'it took curriculum time. I wasn't necessarily teaching them reading skills. But you know, it's a different focus' ;'I just don't have enough time in a day to [do my reading session + Love to Read]. Would advocate in first 4 weeks of a new year' ; **f) a preference for flexibility in**

delivery: 'would be nice to have more flexibility in not having to follow it week by week'; **g) a lack of existing resources to support the programme:** 'I struggled...because diversity range of our books is quite minimal', **h) that content duplicated existing pedagogy**: 'some of the things in the programme we were already doing', **i) that there were too many activity options or options weren't presented optimally**: 'because there were so many choices of activities per session, you don't know where to really start sometimes'; 'some of the tasks were a bit repetitive' ; 'some of the activities were not in the best logical order' **; j) the quality of accompanying resources supporting the programme**: 'there wasn't much prepared resources already'; '[need] a bigger resource bank!' ; 'a few of the resources were also a little poor in terms of quality'

Effectiveness

Quantitative data from children

Following six weeks of participating in the programme, no statistically significant changes were found in motivation or engagement for the entire sample of children participating. However, our measures were not sufficiently sensitive to detect change for the group of children participating as the scores were high prior to taking part in the programme. Therefore we ran analysis for a subgroup of 59 children who scored low on reading engagement prior to the programme (i.e., scores in the bottom 15%). **For children with low reading engagement prior to taking part, significant changes were found between pre and post programme. While promising, these results should be viewed with caution as the analyses were exploratory (i.e., not planned).** Further, selecting participants with low scores on a construct increases the likelihood of observing a positive change in that construct. You can read about our entire evaluation in full, in our main public output, available on our website.

Qualitative data from children

Interviews with 93 children after taking part in the programme provided insight into **children's perspectives of positive changes** to their **attitudes:** 'I used to like not like reading because I thought that it was just taking up my time but now … I've realised that it's actually fun and it's relaxing', 'Before, you didn't really think about books that much and what they would bring to you, but now like if you know there's different genres and like there different points of stories' , **confidence:** 'I think the Love to Read has kind of boosted my confidence with books because now I'm trying out new genres like comedy, where I used to be just fantasy' ; 'I think it made me more confident reading out loud to like my friends and the teacher', **skills: '**now when I pick up book I look at the front cover. From the front cover, maybe it has pictures, or maybe it has big words on it or things like that. I think about what story could be about…' ; 'now I feel that you can like think a lot more about the book and like relate yourself to the characters and the storyline and stuff' and **behaviours**: 'After the first week my thoughts and feelings changed about reading because I used to think oh I'll just do this once a week but now I want to do it like every night or every morning' ; ''I go to the library every Friday now after swimming and get lots of books out' ; 'it's because I used to not read books, and I've started to like books more and more … because I've found books that I like!'.

"I've realised that it's actually fun and it's relaxing"

"I think the Love to Read has kind of boosted my confidence with books"

"..now I feel that you can like think a lot more about the book and like relate yourself to the characters and the storyline and stuff'"

"I used to like never read, I would just like play with like toys before I went to bed and now that I've like, stared reading I read books every night when I go to bed"

However, **some children did not enjoy Love to Read**, for reasons including **delivery,** as mentioned earlier. In addition, a **lack of quality book provision in school** echoed similar points made by teachers: 'I didn't really like an activity because I didn't really find a book that I liked'. Finally, some children just reported **a general dislike of reading**: 'I liked the activities but I didn't like reading'; 'I just don't like reading'. This is most challenging, and suggests targeted 1-1 work with specific children may be useful (if possible) to understand the reasons behind this before tailoring support.

Teacher post programme interviews/surveys also provided insight into their perceptions of changes to children's **reading attitudes**: 'if I say its love to read time within 10 seconds they got their cushions, the blankets, their dens and are starting to read which is, and I hadn't really thought that was going to be thing'; 'it has definitely instilled in some who didn't rate reading, they are now enjoying it more', **skills:** 'highlighted that many children did not have strategies on how to select a book.. the weaker children in particular began to make better choice of reading material' ; 'they'd be like, oh this book would be liked by X in our class' **and behaviours**: 'I was surprised at …so keen to read more generally' ; 'improved their focus in the next lesson'.

"down time was not just for reading but also to de-stress and slow down"

"for our SEN child to really be like I love reading now, I will sit and read, is amazing"

"Organising the class library by genre was incredible. Suddenly my reluctant readers were reading blurbs to try and categorise them!"

"[the programme] highlighted that many children did not have strategies on how to select a book"

Furthermore, teachers commented on changes to themselves and/or their **pedagogy/practice**: 'it's made us more focussed on what reading looks like across our school' ; 'Emptying the class library was one of the best things we ever did… now half the size but reflects much more what they want to read. I'm definitely doing this every term moving forward'; 'Loved connecting with our local library' ; 'Made us stop and take time to enjoy books – teachers and TA's too… down time was not just for reading but also to de-stress and slow down'; 'in the evaluation yesterday, when I was filling it all in I was like actually reflecting back on how far we've come in 6 weeks is amazing'

Our conclusions based on this evaluation is that Love to Read is a programme which can be implemented relatively easily and successfully, but that time to read and reflect on programme content, and prepare prior to delivery, will improve effectiveness. Both teachers and children were generally very positive about Love to Read, and there was good evidence of intermediate outcomes (e.g., positive changes to attitudes, behaviour and skills in relation to reading for enjoyment) as they took part in the programme.

Following the evaluation, we suggest teachers implement Love to Read over 12 weeks, for approximately 45 minutes each week, with two consecutive weeks on each principle. Furthermore, while this programme may help to kick-start a reading for enjoyment culture, the principles and practices should be embedded throughout the school year. We also encourage teachers and school leaders to draw upon their professional and contextual knowledge to decide how to optimally embed these principles into practice, and to think

carefully about whether there is sufficient quality book provision before doing so.   We hope you find this programme helpful, as you begin to build a culture of reading for enjoyment within your class and school!

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