



St Peter's C.E.
Primary School

Reading Newsletter

Think before you speak. Read before you think. – Fran Lebowitz

LOCAL AUTHOR VISITS SCHOOL

On Monday 15th November, Sean Perkins visited our school to read us his new book, *Oscar and Ben*, and share the whole writing and illustrating process with the children.

Sean started by telling us that at school he was no good at writing. In particular, he always struggled with punctuation. His sentences would run on and on with no full stops! His teacher would always have to take a giant breath before reading his stories. He also showed us his illustrations and talked about how they aren't perfect- but that's OK! Sometimes when things aren't perfect, they are perfect. He wanted his drawings to look like a child had drawn them (like the illustrations in the *Very Hungry Caterpillar*), and to him, that is perfect.

He read us his book, *Oscar and Ben*. It is a wonderful story about two very mischievous cats. We all loved it and are sure you would too. Afterwards, some children got the chance to interview him about his writing (see page 2).



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READING BUDDIES

- We now have some of our Y6 pupils reading weekly with some of our EYFS children. This is a fantastic opportunity – not only are the older boys great role models but they are helping to develop good reading habits for our youngest readers.



AN INTERVIEW WITH AN AUTHOR

Benjamin (Year 5)- Where did the idea for the book come from?

I used to work in a school a long time ago as a teaching assistant. I spent a long time on the playground sorting out problems. Oscar and Ben are some of the cheeky children I remember, always winding up the children trying to get along nicely. It's all about playground games and the issues that go on when children are playing.

Isabelle (Year 6)- Have you written any other books?

Yes, I have. There is one more in the shops you can buy, a prototype called 'Elephant Calls' that I wrote over lockdown, and if I come and visit you next year, the second Oscar and Ben book will be ready.

“Don't wait for permission to start writing– if you have a good idea, go for it yourself. It could be you reading us your story one day.”

BUY THE BOOK

“Join Oscar and Ben in their woodland den as they venture into the forest to meet a hen, an angry frog, and a tiny mouse living in an underground house...”

Sean's book, *Oscar and Ben*, can be ordered through school for £7.

Alternatively, you can order it, along with his other works, through his website:

www.seanperkinsauthor.com

AN INTERVIEW WITH AN AUTHOR

Thomas (Year 6)- Who is your favourite author?

I really like George Orwell. My favourite book is *Animal Farm* which sounds lovely but isn't. I love dystopian stories about bad governments trying to keep everyone under control. I also love *A Christmas Carol* by Charles Dickens. It's a lovely, simple story.

Jess (Year 6)- Do you write books for older children?

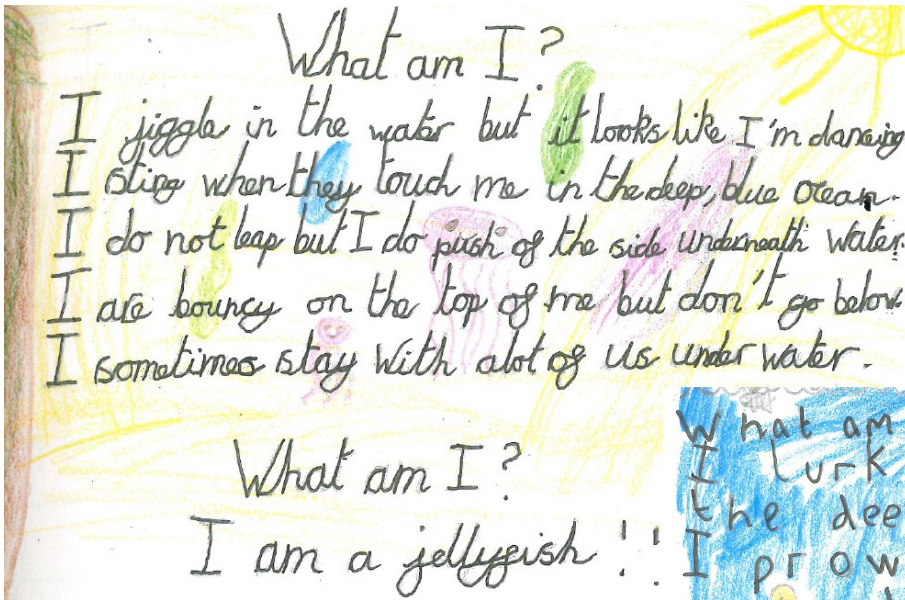
I've start small. One day I might write a book for older children, but I love illustrating. I do love mythology (like the Harry Potter books), so one day I write a book about myths and magic.

Noah (Year 6)- How long does it take you to write a book?

It took two weeks of hard work to write *Oscar and Ben*, but it took 6 months to do all of the illustrations! Having the idea in the first place was the hardest part. The best time to have good ideas is when you're sitting on a bus, or when you're walking down the street. They can come at any time, you just have to be ready

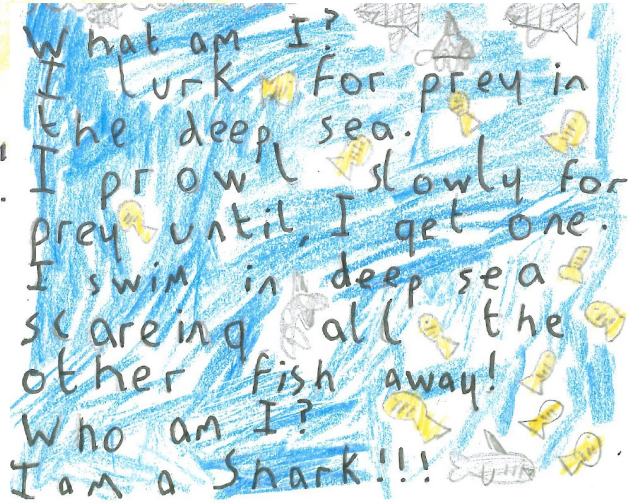
Liam (Year 5)- Why are your characters animals?

I wanted to make the book fun and interesting. I had to think carefully about the animals I chose. A giraffe would always be tripping over himself, a sloth would always fall asleep, but cats are naughty and mischievous– perfect!



Emilia Guy – Year 3

What am I?
I am a jellyfish !!



Beren Eckersley – Year 3

NATIONAL POETRY DAY

Since 1994 National Poetry Day has engaged millions of people with poetry through a range of live events and web-based activities for people throughout the country. Such a variety of poetry is written and read that each year the day is given a new theme, in order to highlight particular poets and styles of poetry.

This year's National Poetry Day was on 7th October, with the theme of Choice.

Each class delved into a variety of different poems. Some analysed the themes, some composed their own (see some lovely examples from Year 3 above) and some practised performing poetry (see the Year 2 Twitter page for an amazing performance of the poem...)

MORE TO LIFE THAN COVID

HAIKUS

Remember last March?
We thought it would be six weeks.
It's been a whole year.
– Lizzie Lidster

My sense of time, flown.
Just last week seems long ago,
that other man, gone.
– Barry Patterson

A small part of me
will miss the quiet gifted
by COVID 19.
– Gerald Kells

Home School's out for spring!
Alice Cooper croon it loud.
First liberation.
– Kay Bee

Two hundred thousand
of our arms were jabbed today.
Mine was one of them.
– Arian Jan Power

Haikus collected by [Liv Torc](#), creator of [Project Haiflu](#)



MrsA-Y2 @Y2Mrsa · 22 Oct

A performance of poetry by Year 2. 🎤 ? 👍 😊



WOULD YOU LIKE TO READ GORILLA?

Hannah loves gorillas and longs to see a real one. Unfortunately, her father is always too busy– or too tired– to take her to the zoo. But on the night before her birthday, something extraordinary happens and Hannah’s wish finally comes true.

SCHOOL BOOK SWAP SHOP

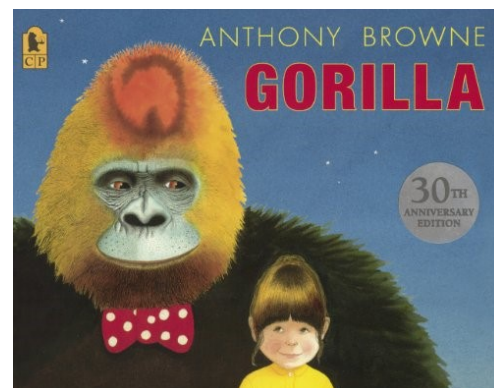
Book Swap continues to be very popular – please send in any unwanted books (from Early Reads to Y6 novels) so that our avid readers can get their hands on them!

CLASS BOOK FOCUS-

This term, Year 4 have been reading *Gorilla* by Anthony Browne.

They’ve used it as their ‘hook for learning’ as they practise:

- creating expanded noun phrases by modifying adjectives, nouns and prepositional phrases
- choosing nouns or pronouns appropriately for clarity and cohesion
- using fronted adverbials
- organising paragraphs around a theme



Year 4 have been reading Gorilla by Anthony Brown

TELL ME ABOUT THE BOOK...

Ruby– At the start there s a girl called Hannah who lives with her dad in a house. Her dad never has time for her. He never walks her to school and always has to walk alone. She loves gorillas and she always wants to go and visit one at the zoo

Samuel– Her dad always says, “Maybe at the weekend or maybe tomorrow”. When it’s the night before her birthday, she goes to bed and wakes up and find a parcel near her bed, she opens it and it’s a toy gorilla. She throws it into the corner of her bedroom and falls asleep again. When she wakes up, the gorilla is real and in front of her on the bed.

Danica- It tells her not to be scared. They go downstairs and the gorilla puts Dad’s coat on. They go to the zoo and the first thing they see is the gorillas. Then, they go to the cinema and then the café. When Hannah gets back home, Dad is waiting for her with a cake and lots of presents. Then, Dad takes her to the zoo.

HOW DID THE BOOK MAKE YOU FEEL?

Samuel- It is quite cool. It is a happy story. I felt happy at the end because it’s like someone’s put a spell on her dad in a good way. He suddenly starts being a good dad again.

Danica- It is really good and made me feel happy when Hannah’s dad took her to the zoo. When it was her birthday, he treated her to she always wanted to do. I think it might just last for her birthday. After that, he will be too busy again. It was a really funny book! When Hannah was sat down, we could see a banana in Dad’s pocket. We though Hannah’s Dad was the gorilla!

Ruby- I thought it was a good book because it had something for us to learn. We have to remember not to ignore our friends but make sure we include them and think about their feelings.

MEET OUR READING AMBASSADORS

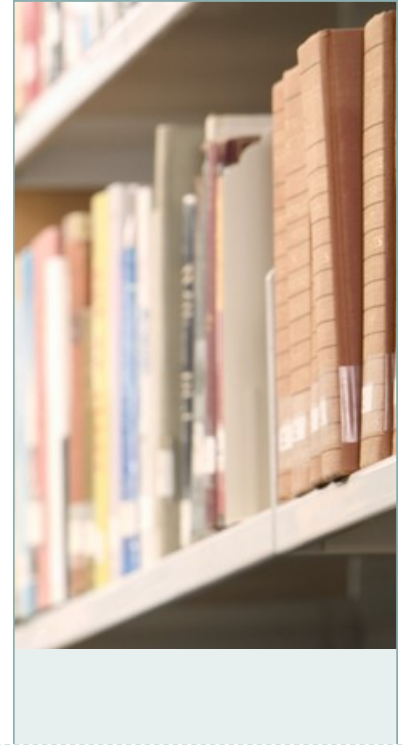
Holly, Lucas and Grace are three of our most avid readers. They have kindly volunteered to lead all things reading across school, with their principle job being journalists for this publication. Look out for their interviews, think-pieces, book reviews and recommendations in future editions. Mr Badley met them to talk about their love of reading. This will be a regular feature in subsequent issues.

What do you love reading?

Holly– I love the ‘*Wizards of Once*’ series. The books are all about bravery, adventure, mystery, magic and fantasy. I love any book that contains magic. I’m also reading *The Hobbit* at the moment as well as *Beetle Boy*. *Beetle Boy* is amazing– its all about the love of nature , friendship and bravery.

Lucas– I love the *Silverwing series* by Kenneth Opel because they contain lots of adventure and mystery. I also love the *Adventures on Trains* series by M. G. Leonard because of all of the mystery and bravery in them.

Grace– I love reading the *Gym Stars* books because they are about things that I love– sports and gymnastics. They also teach you how to persevere when things get tough. I’m also really enjoying Roald Dahl’s *Fantastic Mr Fox* at the moment.



‘Fairy tales don’t tell children that dragons exist... they tell them that dragons can be killed’. -Gilbert K. Chesterton

TEACHER SPOTLIGHT– MR BADLEY

What is your favourite book?

That is a great question and the answer changes all the time! Right now, it must be *Treasure Island* by Robert Louis Stevenson.

Who is your favourite character?

At the minute, its Long John Silver. Stevenson wrote him to be such a terrifying character, but with enough humanity that you find yourself feeling sorry for him at different points in the book.

Where do you like to read?

I love reading everywhere! But my favourite place is my comfy chair in my living room. I will always take a few books on holiday to read on the beach.

Who is your favourite author?

I have loved Terry Pratchett every since I picked up my first Discworld book in secondary school.

What types of books do you read?

I love adventure books.; anything with plenty of danger.

If you were to write a story, what would it be about?

It would probably be about an epic jour-

ney or adventure, with plenty of dangerous trials along the way. Because I love *Treasure Island* it might also have pirates in it.

Do you learn anything from the books that you read?

Books can teach us so much! How to be brave, how to face challenges, how to relate to our world and the people around us, how to get back up after we’ve been knocked down. *Treasure Island* has challenged me to face difficult but necessary challenges. In Year 6, we are reading *Can we save the Tiger?* which has challenged me to consider how the way I live is affecting our world.

Do you enjoy reading?

Gilbert K. Chesterton once said, ‘*Fairy tales don’t tell children that dragons exist... they tell them that dragons can be killed*’. We humans write and read books to help us understand how wonderful but also how difficult our world is. Books have made me laugh, they’ve made me cry, they’ve angered me and they’ve challenged me. A lot of who and what I am is thanks to the books I’ve read, and that is why I love reading so much.



ELS Essential Letters and Sounds

developed by Knowledge Schools Trust

Getting all children to read well, quickly.



READING IN THE EARLY YEARS AND KEY STAGE 1

Teaching children to read quickly and fluently is absolutely vital. The teachers and children in Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 have been working very hard on their phonics using our new approach from *Essential Letters and Sounds*. Parents have been invited to an MS Teams meeting with our phonics coordinator (Mrs Harrison) so that they can help at home, and all the teachers in school have been brushing up on their phonics so that they can help the children no matter where or when in school they might be needed.

We have also bought over £1,000 of extra books that the children can take home with them in order to practise. Ideally we would like children to read each book 3 times. The first for decoding, the second for enjoyment and the third for understanding.

Suggested Questions to ask Readers

Try to ask a range of questions about your child's chosen book as well as the text within. Where possible, encourage them to tell you in their own words what they have just read to help you assess their understanding. Here are some possible questions to ask children when discussing the text with them:

- Where can we find the blurb?
- Is there a contents page?
- What made you choose this book?
- What do you think this book is going to be about?
- What genre do you think this book is?
- Why do you think the text is organised like this?
- Who are the key characters in the book?
- Give me three adjectives to describe one of the characters
- Find a word in paragraph 2 which shows.....
- Can you think of a word that rhymes with?
- What sound does "....." start with? Can you think of any other words which start with the same sound?
- Can the word _____ have more than one meaning?
- What other word could the author have used instead of _____ which has the same meaning?
- What did do?
- What does mean?
- What happened in the beginning of the book?
- Has there been any surprises or twists in the storyline so far?
- When and where did the story take place?
- Which word tells you that.....?
- Give me the main events of the story so far
- Summarise what you have just read to me
- What do you think is going to happen next?

10 Easy Ways to Encourage Motivation to Read



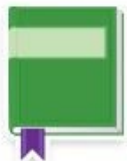
Start early!

Reading with your babies and toddlers helps them connect books with love and comfort.



Head to the library.

Libraries are often filled with resources for children—summer reading programs, story times, craft classes, and of course, shelves and shelves of books!



Read it again.

Young children enjoy anticipating what comes next. Use this to your child's advantage. When stories contain predictable text or rhymes, your child may be able to finish the sentences.



Build your own library.

The more books you have at home, the more opportunities your child will have to pick one up and read. Try rummage sales, library book sales, resale shops, and bookstore clearance racks.



Go "on location."

Reading becomes an adventure when you can connect a book to a real place. Reading about animals? Visit a farm or a zoo. Too far for a visit? Find pictures!



Make books accessible.

Keep books on a low bookshelf or in a basket on the floor, or allow your child to choose her own special spot just for her books.



Let them wiggle!

Some kids get uncomfortable when they have to sit still. But read-alouds are important for wigglers too, so let them wiggle! Coloring, kneading playdough, or building with LEGO bricks can keep hands busy while you read.



Bring stories to life.

Capture your child's attention and make reading fun by reading with expression. Try using different voices for different characters. Exaggerate the rhythm of the text. Let your face and your voice show what the characters are feeling



Set an example.

Let your child see that reading is important, whether it's reading a book for pleasure, reading to learn, or reading a recipe to make dinner!



Change it up!

If you normally read in the same place each day, don't hesitate to try out a new location from time to time. Try a front porch, park bench, or a cozy reading nook.

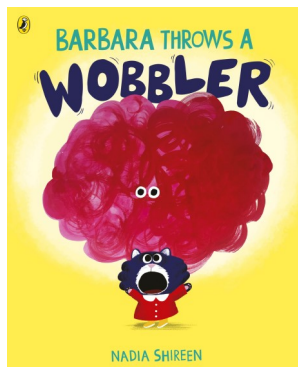
HAVE YOU READ ANY OF OUR BOOK RECOMMENDATIONS?

If you have, we would love to hear from you! Write us a short book review, and send it into school. We'll publish it in our next newsletter; hopefully it'll inspire others to pick up a new



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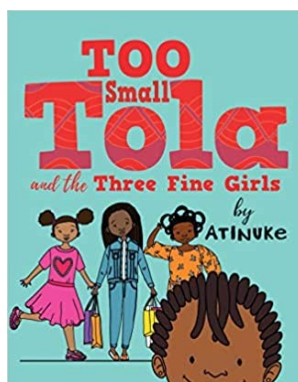
BOOKS YOU SHOULD READ– AS RECOMMENDED BY THE BOOKTRUST



Barbara throws a wobbler– Nadia Shireen **Age 4-5**

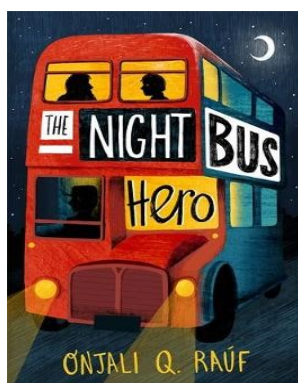
Barbara is not having a great day, and when she drops her ice-cream, a full-blown wobbler erupts. ARGHHH!

The wobbler– a red, jelly-like creature– threatens to take over Barbara altogether, until she talks to it and realises she's in control after all. With a little bit of effort, can Barbara make the Wobbler disappear?



Too Small Tola and the Three Fine girls– **Atinuke** **Age 6-7**

Tola is the youngest of three siblings who live in a tiny flat with their grandmother in the Nigerian city of Lagos. Three stories see the resourceful Tola tricking her elder siblings into helping her with the chores, helping make ends meet when grandmother falls ill and being admired by three posh girls at the masquerade party.



The Night Bus Hero– Onjali Q. Rauf **Age 8-9**

Hector is a bully. He particularly dislikes teacher's pet Mei Lei, and hates a local homeless man, Thomas. When a spate of London landmark sculptures are suddenly stolen, Hector reports Thomas to the police, but realises he's got it horribly wrong. Accepting he needs Mei Lei's help, Hector must race against time to make sure justice is done– and that's not the only thing that needs to change.



The Haunting of Aveline Jones– Phil Hickeys **Age 10-11**

Aveline spends her half-term with her austere Aunt Lilian in Malmouth a windswept village on the Cornish coast. Upon finding a book about local ghosts and phantoms in a dusty, second-hand bookshop, she is intrigued to learn that it once belonged to 11-year-old Primrose Penberthy who mysteriously disappeared from Malmouth 30 years earlier. As Aveline is drawn deeper into the tales, events take an unsettling turn...