Teachers’ knowledge of children’s literature and other texts
Aims of the session

1. To engage with research on teachers’ knowledge of children’s literature and other texts
2. To review our knowledge
3. To share ideas for expanding our repertoires to make more of a difference to RfP
In order to effectively develop children’s RfP, teachers need to develop:

1. Considerable knowledge of children’s literature and other texts
2. Knowledge of children’s reading practices
3. An RfP pedagogy, encompassing:
   • social reading environments
   • reading aloud
   • informal book talk, inside-text talk and recommendations
   • independent reading time
4. As Reading Teachers - teachers who read and readers who teach
5. Reciprocal and interactive reading communities.

(Cremin et al., 2014)
Thinking about your reading as a teacher...

When did you last read a children’s book for pleasure?

What was it called?

Who was it by?

What did you think of it?
Teachers’ knowledge of children’s literature in 2009

Authors- Top 5
- 64% named five or six
- 46% named six
- Roald Dahl (744)
- Michael Morpurgo (343)
- Jacqueline Wilson (323)
- JK Rowling (300)
- Anne Fine (252)

Poets- Top 5
- 56% named only 2, 1 or 0 (18%)
- 11% named six
- Michael Rosen (452)
- Allan Ahlberg (207)
- Roger McGough (197)
- Roald Dahl (165)
- Benjamin Zephaniah (131)

Picture fiction- Top 5
- 59% named only 2, 1 or 0 (24%)
- 11% named six, 303 named books only
- Quentin Blake (423)
- Anthony Browne (175)
- Alan Ahlberg (146)
- Shirley Hughes (123)
- Mick Inkpen (121)

Survey of 1200 primary teachers from 11 English LAs, none were literacy-leads.

(Cremin et al., 2009)
Teachers’ knowledge of children’s literature in 2015

Wordle based on 2,362 teachers’ (from 122 sec. and primary schools) response in the National Literacy Trust survey (7.1% primary).

(Clark and Teravainen, 2015)
Dahl wrote good stories, but we end up teaching our pupils to be Dahl-scholars more than refined consumers of children’s fiction.

(Jonny Walker, Newham Park Primary, 2017)

Are we Dahl dependent?

1. In pairs, discuss if we tend towards Dahl dependency? Won’t the children’s parents/grandparents also know Dahl?

2. Are we also ‘book bound’?
Teachers’ knowledge of children’s literature raises cause for concern

These studies suggest that teachers are:

- Most well acquainted with popular, ‘celebrity’ children’s authors
- Know and can name most Children’s Laureates
- Reliant upon a ‘canon’ of children’s literature

And that they may not know a wide enough range of texts to:

- Make tailored text to child recommendations
- Enable the development of young readers
- Foster reading for pleasure.

Cremin et al., 2009, 2014, Clark and Teraveinen, 2015)
An Alphabet of Authors

In groups, create an Alphabet of Authors from A-Z.

A is for ....Alan Ahlberg
B is for ....Anthony Browne and Frances Hodgson Burnett
C is for ....

Which group has the most in ten minutes?

Now underline e.g. all the poets..., the most contemporary..., science fi authors..., the world literature..., 

What are your gaps?
Research suggests...

Teachers need to widen their repertories, we can never know enough!

This can be achieved through:

- Building in time to read and share
- Reading Award Winners
- Setting personal reading goals

For more ideas, see

https://researchrichpedagogies.org/research/theme/teachers-knowledge-of-childrens-literature-and-other-texts
Building in time to share!

In threes, take some time to convince each other that the book you brought is worth reading!

Also, might you:
• set up a staff swap reading box?
• share 2 minutes of passion at the start of staff meetings?
• share ‘old and gold’ or ‘new and bold’ in assembly?
• Join an OU/UKLA Teachers’ Reading Group
Reading Award Winners

UKLA Book Awards 2017

(7-11 years)

(3-6 years)

(12-16 years)

The only award judged by teachers for teachers

https://researchrichpedagogies.org/research/digital-books-and-reading-for-pleasure-research
The Carnegie Medal: an outstanding book, judged by children’s librarians

Some Carnegie Medal Winners since 1937
Some Kate Greenaway Medal Winners since 1957

- Lauren Child: "I will not ever eat a tomato"
- Lane Smith: "There Is a Tribe of Kids"
- Janet and Allan Ahlberg: "Each Peach Pear Plum"
- Libby Hathorn and Gregory Rogers: "Way Home"
- William Grill: "Shackleton’s Journey"

The Kate Greenaway Medal: an outstandingly illustrated book, judged by children’s librarians
Join the CKG Shadowing Scheme with your class

Upload artwork to the Greenaway Gallery

Talking about the texts and posting reviews on the site was popular and valuable for children and teachers.

(Cremin and Swann, 2013)
Other Awards

• Blue Peter Book Awards

• Excelsior Award Junior (graphic novels and manga)

• Lollies (Laugh out Loud book awards)

• Young People's Book Prize (science)

(Excelsior Junior Winner, 2017)

(BP Winner, Fiction, 2017)
Setting personal reading goals

Perhaps about...

- Award winners
- Digital books
- Picture fiction
- Poetry
- Contemp novelists
- Graphic novels/manga
- Comics/Mags
- Themes
Classroom consequences

In the *Teachers as Readers* research, teachers who developed their reading repertoires made a difference to:

- the children’s knowledge of authors and poets
- the children’s desire and motivation to read
- their classroom practice
- their understanding of reading and the significance of reading for pleasure.

(Cremin et al., 2014)
Why not develop and share your new knowledge on the RfP site?

https://researchrichpedagogies.org/research/theme/teachers-knowledge-of-childrens-literature-and-other-texts
References


