



Does an author visit encourage children to be intrinsically motivated to read for pleasure?

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What did you plan to do and why?

As a school we had identified that we needed to develop and cultivate a more positive reading culture within the school after a small group of children worked with specialist support teachers to re-organise our school library. While this did improve the reading culture initially it showed that it was not sustainable on its own. This led me to enrolling on to the ‘Developing and Sustaining Reading for Pleasure’ course.

When working with Scottish Book Trust I learned of the Live Literature grants and I applied for funding. We were successful and planned for an author to visit P3-5. This age group were chosen as it was felt that it may have more impact in the long term reading motivation of this cohort.

We have not organised an author visit to the school before and it was hoped it would be a catalyst to increase reading for pleasure across the school, in particular the cohort chosen to attend. Incorporating it with my enquiry focus allowed me to quantify the impact that it may have on our children, which would then be reflected upon and used to make further bids/bookings in the future.

In order to see impact of visit, I focused on a small group of P3s, used a leuven scale to gauge their intrinsic motivation prior to visit.

What has happened in your enquiry?

P3s answered a reading motivation questionnaire, including a leuven scale, prior to Author Visit.

Classes were introduced to author prior to visit by reading and listening to some of their books. Within my class I also accessed Scottish Book Trust live lessons to further enhance children’s experiences of authors and reading. This allowed children to learn about different authors to help widen their reading for pleasure options. Author visit was undertaken, all children were engaged throughout and positive feedback was given by all children in the group.

Unfortunately my absence from school meant that there was not as many sessions dedicated to authors live than I would have planned. The reading motivation questionnaire was repeated with same children on my return and comparisons were made with previous answers.

What impact has this enquiry had?

In the initial questionnaire children were asked to select words from a selection to show how they feel about reading. On the whole the most common words chosen were positive.

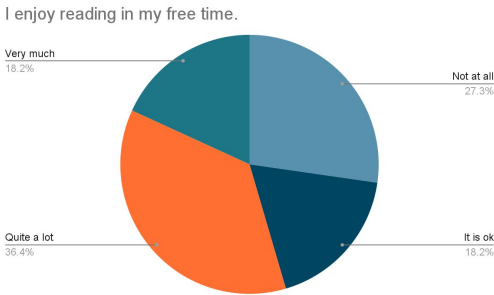
exciting	fun	imagination
peaceful	interesting	relaxing
learning	enjoyable	funny

However, in the leuven scale it showed that 64% (7/11) of the cohort questioned said that they did not enjoy reading in free time (Not at all, not really). This shows that although they place positive feelings around reading for pleasure they do not have an intrinsic motivation to read.

Increased engagement

Having experienced authors in person and on video children have become more aware of books, authors and more adventurous in their book choices in weekly library time. They have requested to read a certain author’s book as part of our read aloud time in class. There has also been an increase in informal ‘book chat’ in the classroom.

When given the same statement at the end of the enquiry ‘I enjoy reading in free time’ the results were much more positive.



Having both children’s observed behaviours around books and reading and having a positive increase in intrinsic motivation, shown in comparing survey answers, to read shows that our author visit did have a positive impact on reading motivation in my school.

What are the implications and next steps?

The implications of this enquiry going forward is to apply to the Reading Schools programme as this will help our Reading Pupil Voice group drive the sustainability of reading for pleasure across the school.

In addition to this I would also like to apply for funding for Live Literature author visits across the school to build on the excitement and curiosity of reading and writing created by our visit this session.

I would also like to share the knowledge gained from this course with colleagues to ensure a cohesive approach to Reading for Pleasure. I would also like to secure some new books, especially graphic novels for the library which will hopefully spark interest in reluctant readers. .

References

National Literacy Trust (June 2023) ‘*Author visits in school, and children and young people’s reading and writing engagement in 2023*’, Clark and Picton

Hoiseth Linda (April 2018) ‘*Are Author visits beneficial to students? An action research study*’

McGeown Sarah et al (2020) ‘*Understanding reading motivation across different text types: qualitative insights from children*’