

# Will using an Immersion Reading approach improve pupils' beliefs of themselves as readers?

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## What did you plan to do and why?

I have several pupils in my class who struggle with seeing themselves as readers either due to being EAL, having severe Dyslexia or simply finding reading tricky due to now being in the category of high interest, low ability. I really wanted to try to help these pupils engage more with reading and to begin to see themselves as readers.

Through my pre-enquiry research I discovered the idea of Immersion Reading which entails children listening to a story being read alongside reading the book themselves. I believe its important to 'go with the times' in that most children now are reading via ICT. As a school we currently do not have much of that available, but we do have books on CD so I decided to harness this. Immersion Reading can help not just with engagement with books but also better focus, easier comprehension, improved language skills and improved academic performance. I believe that hearing stories read aloud can have a huge impact on those children who struggle with reading as they are not having to spend time struggling with new words nor are they having to struggle to simply read the text. It has been evidenced that using an Immersion Reading Style has a huge impact on children who would usually struggle with their reading, and this is why I decide to pursue this particular area of reading support.

Over the space of 6 weeks, I decided to have the chosen pupils spend around 20mins each day listening/reading. I completed a simple questionnaire with each child at the beginning, middle and end of the research.

## What has happened in your enquiry?

I initially asked my chosen pupils if they were happy to participate and sent letters of permission home. I completed my initial questionnaire to get a baseline.

My plan of having the pupils reading each day for 20 mins had to change as I only work 3 days a week and it was difficult for my partner to remember or to fit in the reading time. Although I had decided initially to complete the research over 4 weeks, I extended it as one of the pupils went on holiday during that time.

The children chose the book they wanted to read/listen to from the large selection of CDs we had available.

I asked the same questionnaire questions in the middle of the Enquiry and again at the end to establish whether their opinions of themselves as readers changed. Although the questions were the same through-out I made sure that the pupils gave their initial responses as answers. On my working days I have found that the pupils were excited to go and listen to their books. They have read and finished their first book much quicker than if they were simply reading it and are gaining in confidence when reading their own class reading books.

Later in the enquiry I discovered that the pupils began to ask my partner teacher to go and read their book rather than relying on her to remind them. This demonstrated that their enjoyment of reading was increasing, and they were choosing to read themselves.

## What impact has this enquiry had?

It is evident that the pupils are more excited about reading as they now ask to go read rather than being reminded. Via the mid questionnaire they report that they were beginning to see themselves as more confident readers and are enjoying reading more. Their answers at the end of the Enquiry demonstrated that their experience Immersion Reading had changed the way they viewed themselves. They now had much more positive thoughts about both reading and their ability to read. They are choosing to read and enjoying it.

I have noticed that my EAL pupil is becoming more confident in his reading out loud and also in just speaking in English.

Pupil B's mother reported that her son experienced an improvement in his word recognition and understanding of the story as the difficulties he would usually experience had been removed from the experience.

I am happy that my enquiry has had the desired impact on my pupils. They are now sharing book talk not only with me, but with other pupils who have already read the same book. They feel more included when having whole class book chat and from this they are much more confident is sharing their views and feelings regarding texts. It is lovely to see them beginning to enjoy books.

This course has allowed me to become excited about books and reading again and I love being able to share this with my pupils.

As a teacher with a Librarianship background, I found the opportunity to conduct some research around reading really exciting and interesting and definitely something I would like to continue.

## What are the implications and next steps?

Through my research I found that allowing some pupils the opportunity to engage with both talking books and actual books meant that the reading 'difficulties' were somewhat removed and instead they were provided with the chance to simply enjoy reading. Evidence shows that continuous use of immersion reading can help with focus as well as reading skills so this would be a huge boost for those children who struggle to focus in class too.

My next steps will be to present my findings to my HT and other staff. I have found that EPIC allows free access to books from 7am to 3pm and can provide the listen and read books, which we can assign to particular pupils. I have signed up and added my class and they absolutely love it.

Using EPIC initially with my own class will allow me to see how easy it is for both pupils and staff to use and how easy it is to add further classes etc. If we can add all the classes and teachers can assign texts to pupils this could be an ideal resource. It doesn't provide our specific reading texts but if we use it solely for Reading for Pleasure, I can see this working as well as providing a great resource to support our EAL pupils, in particular. I am looking forward to taking this forward as well as finding other ways to help engage our children.

## References

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