

What is the impact of parents workshops and genres guides on parents’ confidence in supporting varied reading at home?

Carrie Lumsden, P5 teacher, Dalbeattie Primary

What did you plan to do and why?

- I planned to offer a workshop and written guides to the parents of children in my class to develop their knowledge of different genres.
- At Parents’ Night, I had many conversations with parents about them wanting to know about different books. They were pleased their children were reading more but wanted to be able to expand the range of books they read.
 - I knew that the children were familiar with other text types as we have a very well stocked class library that includes many different text types, and I spend a lot of time promoting and sharing different types of reading, so I decided to share this knowledge with parents too.
 - My aim was to empower parents with ways that they could diversify their child’s reading if they or their children wished.
 - After reading the EEF blog about Parental Engagement, I knew that 'Planning carefully for group-based parenting initiatives (such as regular workshops)', was an important factor in parents feeling encouraged and supported to come in to school.
 - The Scottish Book Trust article 'Advice to parents to encourage children and teens reading' advises that 'allowing different formats' is helpful for children to form a ‘reading habit’ and I wanted to share this advice and, as ‘The Reader Teacher, 100 ideas for Reading for Pleasure’ says, ‘inviting parents to workshops can encourage collaboration and help to develop a shared understanding of the importance of reading.’

What has happened in your enquiry?

I surveyed parents, and 75% of them said they were confident in knowing a range of text types for children but 80% said they would be happy to attend a session to increase their knowledge. (I got 14 responses to this survey.)



I began to share ‘guides’ to different text types on our class Dojo page. According to the 'views' on Dojo, a lot of the parents did look at them.

I planned and ran a session to allow parents to come in and look at the range of different text types and think about how all of them can still be used in our upper primary age.

Unfortunately, the event was not well attended (3/28 parents attended) but the ones that did had a lot of questions and said that ‘the way I set the books out in different types had really helped her think about the books in her house.’

One parent also borrowed a book that she wanted to share with her younger child at home because it had themes that she wanted her to think about. (The Proudest Blue, Ibtihaj Muhammad and S.K. Ali, 2019)

What impact has this enquiry had?

How do you know what the impact has been- what evidence do you have?

After the session, all those that attended said that they felt more knowledgeable about different children’s text types.

2. Do you feel more knowledgeable about different children's text types since the session?



After the session, all the parents said that it was very helpful having the texts laid out in distinct categories as they could clearly see how they were different and which ones they think their children would enjoy. They also discussed the idea about how important it was that children read different text types, was it something they should be trying to change or was it okay? I felt that this was one of the most important parts of the evening as the discussion was very child centered.

Since sharing the guides through the class Dojo page, two parents have commented on their usefulness. One parent commented that they found this ‘really useful as they hadn’t considered all the different ways to use different texts,’ and another said, ‘I hadn’t considered wordless picture books as a way to read.’

Children have been appearing at school with books that they have chosen with their parents which has been really encouraging to see.

Looking at individual reading logs, children are attempting to read diverse types of texts and they are eager to show me and talk to me about them. I possibly needed to consider my question more carefully as it is hard to know specifically, whether this is because of the workshop, or because of the work I have done within the classroom. I should have thought more carefully about how to evidence my work.

The positive news from this year, is that so many of the children in the class are enjoying reading and are proud of what they're reading. They know about different genres and can talk about them confidently.

What are the implications and next steps?

Based on what you have found, what new questions do you have?

I would like to offer the session across the whole school to see if, parents feel supported from when their children are an early age, this has an impact as they move through the school and children are able to talk about/enjoy a wider range of texts.

I will do this again next year but do it much earlier in the year and possibly do a follow up at the end to see if parents and children notice a difference in their reading styles and if parents have felt more confident over the year to support their children with choosing books.

I would also like to question whether guiding parents towards library membership allows for a more varied choice of reading as it takes the cost factor away.

References

[parents/EEF_Parental_Engagement_Guidance_Report.pdf](#)

'Working with parents to support children's learning. Education Endowment Fund.'

<https://www.scottishbooktrust.com/articles/advice-for-parents-to-encourage-children-and-teens-reading> -

Evans, S 2023 ‘100 Ideas Reading for Pleasure’, Bloomsbury

Contact Details

gw09lumsdencarolyn@glow.sch.uk