

Teachers and head teachers' comments indicate a growing professional confidence and sense of autonomy:

*"Being quite new to teaching it's been a really valuable experience in showing me the way I want to teach"*

Year 5 teacher, Lewisham

## Schools

The project is designed to involve whole schools. One or two teachers from each school have participated directly in the project but the impact has gone further. Schools have used the online teaching sequences and examples of classroom practice to spread the project throughout the school and to develop more creativity in the curriculum.

*"We had originally planned to cascade slowly to the two phases in which our two trainees were based but teachers in other phases were insistent and we have cascaded the project throughout the whole school."*

Head teacher, Brent

## Supporting an inclusive curriculum

The inclusive nature of the Power of Reading approaches supports all children. Teachers have been surprised at the ability of children with special educational needs to participate fully in discussions and activities based on books which teachers consider to be challenging.

On average there are approximately 50% of children with English as an Additional Language in classrooms of teachers taking part in the Power of Reading in London. In some schools the percentage is much higher.

Teachers' data for pupils with EAL suggests that the project approaches and books effectively support children with EAL.

## Improved behaviour of individuals and classes

The collaborative teaching approaches and the books themselves have in many cases changed not only children's responses to literacy but also had positive effects on relationships and behaviour in the classroom.

*"The books selected for the Power of Reading have not only had a positive effect on me and my practice but have also served to raise the children's interest in reading ... The reading sessions in class used to be a nightmare with many children disengaged with reading. However the introduction of the Power of Reading texts shows that children need literature they can relate to and enjoy, most importantly, and the provision of that material has led to a marked improvement in behaviour during reading time and led in turn to an improvement in attainment."*

Year 5 teacher, Wandsworth

The full Arts Council research and the data analysis from the EdudataUK report are available to download from [www.clpe.org.uk](http://www.clpe.org.uk).

*"I love children's books, I like literacy and it's like being given permission. It's restored my belief in my own professional judgement."*

Literacy Coordinator, Redbridge

*"I think the project has empowered teachers, giving them the confidence to try different approaches to their teaching of literacy."*

Head teacher, Haringey



[www.clpe.org.uk](http://www.clpe.org.uk)  
44 Webber Street  
London SE1 8QW  
020 7401 3382

power of reading

# Power of Reading

## Reading for pleasure, achievement for life Research Summary 2005-14

The Power of Reading is a school development project to engage teachers and children in the literacy curriculum using high quality books and proven and creative teaching approaches.

The Power of Reading is entering its 10th year in 2014/15. During the life of the project we have worked with over 3500 teachers from 2000 schools in more than 50 local authorities.

Research from the last ten years has shown that teachers' deeper knowledge of children's books, combined with innovative and consistent teaching, increases children's enjoyment of reading and writing and increases progress and attainment. Rates of progress for boys and reluctant readers are particularly impressive and are therefore narrowing the attainment gap between boys and girls.

This multi-layered professional development project draws on CLPE's highly regarded classroom-based research and experience of working with teachers. It combines an introduction to outstanding books for teachers and children with creative teaching approaches and opportunities to meet leading children's authors and illustrators.

An exceptional and inspiring new website of extensive resources gives teachers access to highly effective teaching sequences, examples of good practice and displays of children's work around key texts.

The project aims to develop a creative and effective approach to teaching literacy across primary schools and to:

- raise attainment in reading and writing;
- increase children's enjoyment of books and literacy;
- increase teachers' knowledge of books and enthusiasm for reading;
- extend the creative use of children's literature in the classroom;
- to develop a range of key teaching approaches.

## Summary of key findings from the research\*

### Impact on children:

- outstanding progress in reading with children making the equivalent of a year's good progress in just 2 terms in reading and in writing. This is the equivalent of just over one full level's progress in a year;
- raised attainment in reading – with rates of progress for boys helping to narrow the gap with girls;
- raised motivation as readers. The percentage of motivated readers increased from 48% to nearly 80%, with evidence of greater motivation for boys;
- raised enjoyment and attainment in writing;
- improved speaking and listening skills.

### Impact on teachers:

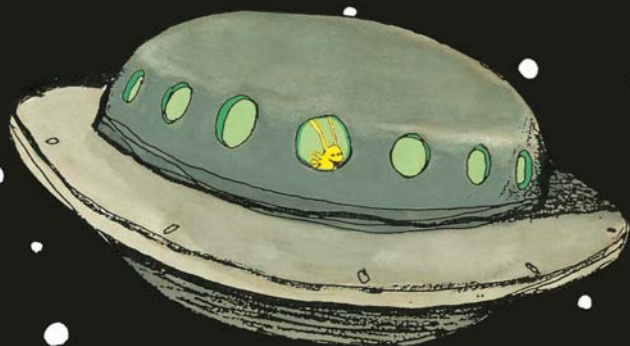
- increased knowledge of children's books;
- raised awareness of their role in enthusing children as readers;
- re-energised and enabled them to develop creative approaches to teaching literacy.

### Impact on schools:

- made a significant contribution to schools' development of a creative curriculum;
- engaged reluctant readers and writers in literacy learning;
- in some cases improved behaviour of individuals and classes;
- supported an inclusive curriculum.

\*There have been two external research projects during the life of the project and this summary combines the findings from both. The first was in 2009 and was funded by the Arts Council which used data from 900 schools. The second was an analysis of data from the project undertaken by Edudata UK in 2012 and 2013 and analysing data from more than 8,000 pupils and more than 60 schools.

Illustrations from *BEEGU* by ALEXIS DEACON  
Published by RED FOX  
Reproduced by permission of The Random House Group Ltd  
*Beegu* is a Power of Reading book



# Key findings from the Power of Reading research 2005-2014

## Children

The Power of Reading project shows the importance of developing children's attitudes and interest in books both for their broader reading development and their attainment.

Reading forms a unique area of the primary curriculum not only because it is the foundation for future academic success but also because becoming a reader involves individual motivation, imagination, and the ability to draw on experience and make personal choices.

As a result of the Power of Reading project, many children have been inspired to read for the first time and to discover what books and stories can offer.

Through classroom book talk sessions, hearing teachers read books aloud, the development of classroom reading areas, book clubs, and the informed use of a wide variety of practical, collaborative and creative teaching approaches children have read more widely, enthusiastically and in greater depth.

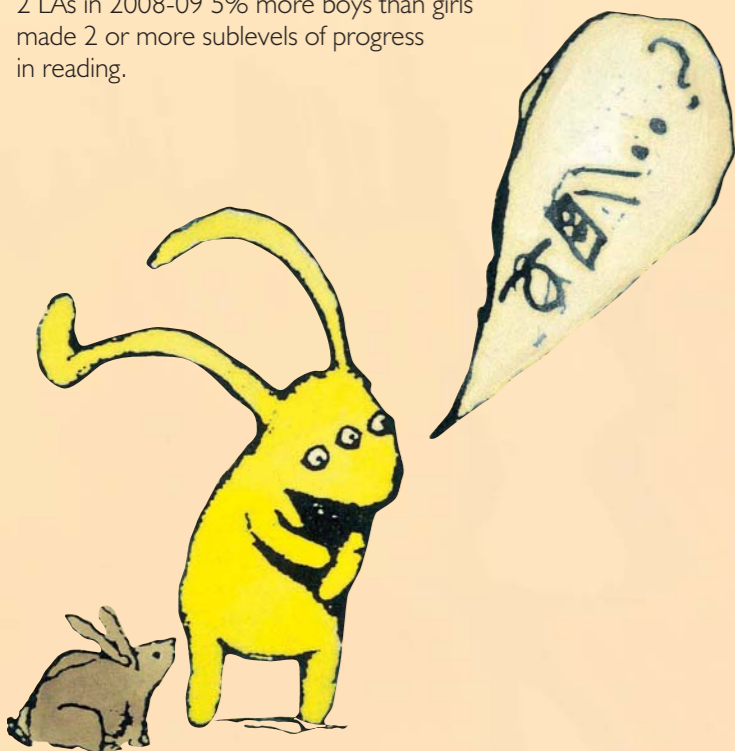
## Improved progress and raised attainment in reading

Those pupils whose teachers were involved in the project made the equivalent of a year's good progress in just 2 terms in reading and in writing. This is the equivalent of just over one full level's progress in a year which is considered 'outstanding'.

There was little difference by gender with both boys and girls showing more than 2 sub-levels progress in the 2 terms.

The "boost" given by Power of Reading was highest in Year 1 (almost half a level), followed by Year 4 (well over one sub-level). Year 5 and Year 2 showed a boost of around one sub-level in the year. Year 6 showed the least additional progress. The overall boost shown by the Power of Reading was around 44%.

Across the project rates of progression for boys are equalling or exceeding that of girls. For example in 2 LAs in 2008-09 5% more boys than girls made 2 or more sublevels of progress in reading.



Lordswood School

## Raised motivation as readers

Children's reading attitudes have changed positively as a result of the project. Children are choosing to read more often in school and at home, are more confident to talk more about their reading, discuss meanings, choose a wider range of books and have become more familiar with authors.

Analysis of data for 2007-08 shows that the percentage of motivated readers in Power of Reading classrooms changed from 50% to 80%. Boys' motivation rose by over 7% more than girls'.

The books chosen for the Power of Reading project have dramatically changed children's attitudes and achievement as readers and in literacy more generally. The project has shown that particular books can transform children as readers and writers.

**"Fantastic engagement with Varjak Paw (SF Said) and Krindlekrax (Philip Ridley) - he is now very enthusiastic about reading. Much improved levels in reading comprehension due to improved attitude and confidence."**

Year 4 teacher, Southwark

The research found that hearing their teachers read aloud inspired children to want to read books themselves, to read more widely and develop greater understanding and empathy.

**"When you hear books being read you can imagine things happening in places you know or imagine that you are there."**

Year 5 child, Wandsworth

## Raised enjoyment and attainment in writing

Involvement with and attainment in writing has increased through the Power of Reading project.

Nationally children's attainment in writing is significantly below that of reading and boys in particular are reluctant writers. Teachers reported significant improvements in children's motivation and achievement as writers, particularly boys, across all year groups.

**"They were quite reluctant writers but the difference between the first book we studied together and the last (which we're still doing) is huge."**

Year 5 teacher, Wandsworth

Creative teaching approaches raise children's engagement with books, reading and writing and improve speaking and listening skills

Creative teaching approaches such as drama, art, music and dance have raised children's engagement with books, reading and writing. This has enabled children to step into the world of stories and characters and in doing so improve their speaking and listening skills.

**"When we did the drama in The Garbage King (Elizabeth Laird) it felt like we were putting ourselves in Mamo or Dani's shoes, and the way we acted it out, it really made you express your feelings."**

Year 6 girl, Lewisham

**"The music and dance - they help us a lot - they take us right into the story!"**

Year 4 boy, Cumbria

## Teachers

Developing teachers' knowledge of children's literature and creative ways to explore books with children in the primary classroom are key focuses within the Power of Reading project.

## Increased teachers' knowledge of children's books

Teachers have developed a broader knowledge of children's literature. Our findings show that at the beginning of the project year a significant percentage of teachers were not regularly reading children's books. In 2008-9 only 16% of 210 teachers returning questionnaires considered themselves knowledgeable or very knowledgeable about children's literature at the beginning of the project year. By the end of the project year this figure had increased to 95%. This figure has been repeated in all subsequent years of the project.

Through the project, teachers are now able to make informed choices about books to read aloud to their classes. At the beginning of the project many teachers were reading a limited range of books to their classes, often sticking to familiar titles frequently drawn from their own childhood favourites. The project has significantly broadened the range of authors and books teachers use as part of the reading curriculum and specifically what they read aloud to their classes. Increased knowledge of high quality books has also raised the profile of reading aloud to children.

**"Having access to the CLPE reading list and using a selection of the recommended texts has allowed me to introduce texts to my class with confidence knowing they have been carefully chosen. Instead of searching with 'hit and miss' accuracy I have a good idea of different children's authors and books children would enjoy."**

Year 6 teacher, Lewisham

## Increased teachers' awareness of their role in enthusing children as readers

Teachers have become more aware of themselves as readers and recognise their role in motivating children to enjoy books and reading.

**"If you don't have teachers who are readers then their impact on the children's reading is not as effective. Teachers have got to like reading themselves to be able to transfer the enthusiasm."**

Literacy coordinator, Lewisham

**"Being involved in this project has enthused and inspired my own love of reading which I believe is also influencing the children I teach."**

PoR teacher

## Teachers re-energised through creative approaches to teaching literacy

In project classrooms literacy teaching has been transformed. All teachers questioned at the end of the first two years of the project said they had either started using whole texts instead of extracts in their literacy teaching for the first time or were using them more extensively. For example, findings from a sample group of 40 teachers in Nottinghamshire in 2009 indicated that 53% were using whole texts regularly at the start of the project and by the end of the project this figure had increased to 91%. Teachers familiar with using whole texts were spending much longer on one book, 'immersing' children in the story, confidently using a range of creative teaching approaches including more speaking and listening, drama, drawing and art work.

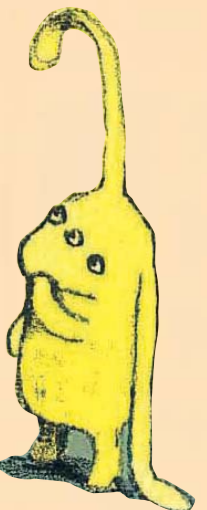
**"Now I could pick up a book and plan around it with a wide range of activities that would be varied and interesting ... I feel I know the sorts of approaches that will work. It's allowed me to go along with a more creative approach."**

Y2 teacher, Redbridge

Teachers show increased enjoyment in their literacy teaching and develop greater professional confidence. A significant finding from the research is teachers' enthusiasm, enjoyment and increased confidence in their own professional judgement. Experienced teachers describe feeling 're-energised' through teaching more creatively and seeing the positive effect this has on children.

**"The best thing about this year ... I've loved it... is that I have regained my love of teaching. I haven't had so much fun for such a long time ... the fun has come from watching my children grow ... from watching this absolute love of books, and books being a central part of their lives in school. They walk into class and they talk about books all the time."**

Year 2 teacher, Redbridge



Bancroft School