

Reading at Allesley

We are passionate about reading and we aim to hook children into reading. We want them to love it; to become richer with language and facts; to find an escape in books and texts for their mental well-being and for simple joy.

In Early Years and KS1, children hear rhymes and poems and participate in them daily; they are read to daily and will join in with repeated refrains and become rich in their knowledge and use of language. Story time can see the same book read several times, so children's familiarity, understanding of the tale and confidence with vocabulary use grows. Teachers and teaching assistants ask varied questions for comprehension. Books are varied and rich in diversity, so all feel included. We want all our children to have rich experiences and gain a love of reading as those who read are advantaged in life.



Children are taught to read by blending sounds into words after being taught graphemes (written representation of sounds). Books are carefully chosen to match ability. As children become increasingly confident and fluent, small group reading begins; this is often referred to as Guided Reading. Comprehension and fluency are key focuses here and a variety of media are used as a stimulus.

In KS2, children begin **Book Talk**.

Book Talk is set into four, half-hour slots across the week and is based around a whole class book. The book is always read from start to finish over the course of a few weeks rather than leaving it mid-way through as this is simply a cause of great irritation to pupils. Imagine watching a film and stopping it half an hour towards the end, never to resume it. The books are chosen to link to themes being taught – enriching children's learning.

Session 1 – half an hour

This is either vocabulary focused where children find new words to enable them to understand the chapter or section they are to read, or a knowledge-based session where a non-fiction text gives much information about something they are about to explore. Poetry can be used to give information about forthcoming characters, place or plot. Comprehension skills of retrieval, inference and authorial choice are often picked up in this session.

Session 2 – Just read.

We begin with fluency with a small 'chunk' of the book and focus, as a class, upon phrasing (stopping for punctuation accurately); then look at intonation and expression and apply this to our reading. This correct way of reading is then encouraged as they read independently in their heads, or as they read aloud to each other – depending on what has been planned for. Children, who are less confident readers, will already know which part they are reading, so they feel less embarrassed and, over the year, we find they are much more confident to read aloud in front of peers and staff.

Closer book talk

In the third half hour, as a class, there is a focus upon an area that we have read. It could be to compare a change in mood or to find clues to what the place is like or to discuss why the author has made choices. The question is usually broad, so much evidence can be found as groups or a class. We usually use flip charts to make notes about children's findings here.

Independent comprehension work

In the last half hour, children use the evidence found together from the previous session to answer a question related to this. For example: How do we know Harry is acting out of the ordinary? Or what sort of place is ...? These questions are usually open-ended and much proof from the text can be used in the answer. We use APE as an acronym for answer, prove and explain for these longer answers. Answer and prove is used in Years 3 and 4 and Answer, Prove Explain in Years 5 and 6. During reading for pleasure slots, teachers ensure they continue to read a few more chapters for the process to begin again.

Using Book Talk, as our way of teaching and enjoying reading, is great as it gives children experience of range of books from different authors; helps build fluency, helps analytical skills; gives children knowledge of the world; helps to ensure practice of all the reading comprehension domains in the National curriculum and ensures success for all.

Here are some of the books we read in their entirety.

