ACTIVITY SUMMARY: Reading aloud

Experience books at their best by inviting teachers and other school staff to share their favourites and bringing them to life by reading them aloud. This activity is simple to organise and creates an uplifting shared experience. The adult readers will benefit from as much preparation time as they can manage.

INGREDIENTS:

A favourite book or poem for each adult.

A slot of time for you to share it with a class in the school, at an assembly or a short series of reading events (for example over a week of lunchtimes or breaktimes in the school library or in a public area of the school.

TIME:

20 minutes reading plus preparation time.

METHOD:

1. Before reading your chosen book to the class consider some of the following points:
   - Which parts would benefit from a variation in tone? How will you use your voice to build suspense? How might you enrich the dialogue using accent, dialect and pitch? What parts of the story would benefit from momentary pauses for dramatic effect? What types of questions might you ask to develop reflection and engagement with the themes, plot and characters of the story?
   - Does the story suggest a prop or is there a powerful illustration within the text that could be used to introduce the book, perhaps enlarged and projected on to a screen behind the reader? This could be used to encourage the audience to speculate on what the story might be about?
   - If it is a longer story that you will not be able to finish in one sitting what would be the best extract to share to entice the students to want to hear more, or to read it for themselves?
   - Reflect on your experience of learning to read and consider what made this book special for you. How can you communicate this feeling to students?
   - Memorise the opening sentence so that you sound confident as you connect with the audience.
2. Read the book aloud and enjoy the special communal feeling that reading stories aloud creates.

Based on activities and ideas created by the Centre for Literacy in Primary Education