

The World Book Day six approaches to support reading for pleasure align with a recent synthesis of research literature which identified six principles to support reading enjoyment and engagement: access, choice, time, connection, social and success (Love to Read, 2022). These principles are described below, with suggested activities to embed these principles into practice.

### World Book Day elements

- Being read to regularly: Access and Social
- Having books at home and at school: Access
- Having a choice in what to read: Choice
- Finding time to read: Time
- Having trusted help to find a book: Choice and Social
- Making reading FUN! Connection and Success



### Love to Read: Principles to promote reading for pleasure

#### Access

#### **Children need access to books which reflect their interests, preferences, lives, experiences and abilities**

Research highlights the importance of children having access to books which reflect the diversity of the interests, preferences, lives, experiences and abilities (McGeown & Wilkinson, 2021). There is increasing awareness of the importance of representation within books (Picton & Clark, 2022), and different book genres offer different types of reading experiences (Santi *et al.*, 2024). It is important to involve children in new book purchases and consider whether some children's needs are unmet. Reading aloud is also a great way to increase children's access to more diverse books and authors (Gambrell, 2011).



#### Classroom ideas:

- Involve children in new book purchases to ensure book provision reflects the interests, preferences, lives, experiences and abilities of *all* the children in your class or school.
- Read aloud to increase access to books children wouldn't encounter otherwise

- Strengthen the relationship with your local community library to support book provision
- Fundraise or encourage families to get involved in book swaps/donations from home.

## Choice

### **Children should have choice over their reading activities and schools need to create a structure, and children need to be taught the skills, to improve their reading choices**

Ensuring children have choice over what they read is essential to support their motivation to read and engagement in reading (Brandt *et al.*, 2021; McGeown & Wilkinson, 2021). However, children vary in their ability to make good reading choices, that is, books that they enjoy and engage with (Merga, 2017) and even experienced readers often rely on the familiar series or authors. The ability to choose books is a skill that should not be left to chance: children need to be taught how to choose books they will enjoy and engage with.



### Classroom ideas:

Use the **World Book Day resources** for teachers and children to support children's reading choices, this encourages:

- Discussion and teaching of strategies for children to select books
- Scaffolding reading choices, particularly for less experienced readers, by providing fewer book options aligned with their interests and abilities.
- Ensuring books are organised optimally in the school library and/or classrooms to facilitate student choice (e.g., by book, genre) and that children understand this structure. Also include visible reviews (e.g., written by children) to support choice
- Peer to peer and teacher to peer recommendations and book-talk to support each other's reading choices.

## Time

**Children need to have quality time to read books they enjoy, and are engaged with, in school and at home.**

Time spent reading is associated with a wide range of rich and diverse positive experiences and outcomes, for example, reading books improves children's reading and language skills (Nation *et al.*, 2022; Torppa *et al.*, 2019), but also their understanding of the world, themselves and others. Reading can also support children's wellbeing, but only when children are enjoying reading and engaged with what they read. Reading time during class can take different forms (for example, independent reading, book-talk, etc) and children should be encouraged to read at home.



### Classroom ideas:

- Ensure quality time is set aside for reading in school, and that children have a book they enjoy reading during this time
- Nurture reading outside of school by allowing children to take books they enjoy home and encouraging reading time at home
- Create extra opportunities to read in school, for example in breakfast or after school clubs, reading clubs, etc.
- Ensure children have opportunities to swap a book if they are not enjoying it.

## Connection

**Children's need to connect with the books that they read**

Children connect with books when they are personally relevant and align with their own interests, preferences, lives and experiences (Gambrell, 2011; Kuzmičová and Cremin, 2021). Provision of culturally or socially relevant books is essential, as is developing reflective skills which encourage children to explore personally meaningful content as they read (Gambrell, 2011). Books also offer all types of reading experiences, and children read for different reasons (e.g., to relax, laugh, spend time with fictional friends, pursue their interests, etc.) (McGeown *et al.*, 2020).



### Classroom ideas:

- Audit, organise and celebrate diversity within books. Take stock of the books available in your school and classrooms and plan future purchases to reflect the interests, lives and experiences of all your students
- Encourage children to explore personally meaningful content when they read, by introducing reflective literacy practices so that children make connections between what they read and their own interests, lives and experiences
- Encourage children to reflect on why they want to read, and then find books aligned with this. Books offer all types of reading experiences (e.g., make us laugh, relax, escape to new worlds, offer familiarity, etc). Choosing a book aligned with our mood has the potential to lead to greater connection with the book.

## Social

### **Children need to have time, and be taught the skills, to share and discuss books with others.**

Providing inclusive opportunities for students to share, recommend or discuss books with each other, and their teacher, creates communities of readers within a school (Cremin *et al.*, 2014). Social reading activities can take different forms and may consist of talking about books with others (i.e., friends, peers, teachers, family, etc.), reading with others, borrowing and sharing books, sharing writing about books, etc (Cremin *et al.*, 2014; Gambrell, 2011; Guthrie *et al.*, 2007). However not all children naturally enjoy social reading activities, and some prefer to be solitary readers (Guthrie *et al.*, 2007).



### Classroom ideas:

- Introduce book-talk in an inclusive way, recognising that children may like to share their opinions in different ways (e.g., oral, written) and to different people (e.g., friends, whole class, anonymously, etc)
- Develop children's skills and confidence to contribute to book-talk if this is new to them.
- Social reading activities can extend beyond the classroom. Involve families and the local community in your own schools' reading community.

## Success

### **Children should have a range of positive and successful reading experiences and recognise their growing success as readers**

Being a successful reader is about enjoying and engaging with what you read, and choosing to read more. Children's perceptions of themselves as readers has a significant impact on their motivation to read and their engagement with reading (McGeown & Wilkinson et al., 2021) therefore children need to recognise their reading strengths and the various ways in they can, and are, developing as successful readers.



### Classroom ideas:

- Ensure all children have access to quality books which align with their reading interests, preferences lives, experiences and abilities.
- Encourage children to recognise the different ways in which they can, and are, developing as readers. For example, being a successful reader includes becoming more confident choosing books you enjoy, choosing to read more, finding new authors/genres/series that you like, becoming more immersed in the books that you read, learning new things from reading, using your imagination more, becoming more confident at recommending/talking about books with others, or simply just enjoying reading more
- Encourage and support children to set meaningful and achievable reading goals for themselves, recognising the different ways in which they can, and are, developing as readers.

## Acknowledgements

Love to Read was funded by Nuffield Foundation and drew upon a huge range of knowledge, experience and expertise from researchers, teachers, school leaders, other professionals and children from across the UK. The project was led by Dr Sarah McGeown, University of Edinburgh, and was carried out in collaboration with Scottish Book Trust, Education Scotland and National Literacy Trust. To learn more about the Love to Read principles and practices, please visit: <https://blogs.ed.ac.uk/lovetoread/>